

## Dr Saman Kelegama: scholar, policy influencer and caring human being

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### Professor David Hulme pays tribute to Dr Saman Kelegama

The **sad news** of Dr Saman Kelegama's untimely death had shocked friends and academic collaborators across the world. At Manchester, as elsewhere, we feel the loss. Our condolences go out to all of his family and colleagues – we understand how deeply you will grieve.

Saman had been Sri Lanka's leading economist and public policy analyst since the 1990s. He directed the Institute of Policy Studies in Colombo for many years until his death, applying his sharp intellect and well heeled diplomatic skills to ensure evidence and careful analysis informed debates about economic and social conditions across the country. He was a real scholar, thinking deeply about theory, methods, data and analysis, while feeding 'useful knowledge' into national policy debates at times that were often very politically charged.

The loss is not just for Sri Lanka – it is felt deeply across South Asia and amongst all who study the region. Saman was a leading member of the region's economic associations and policy analysis networks, thinking carefully about the work of colleagues and constructively guiding them into more rigorous and accurate studies and developing regional perspectives.

Beyond his academic and policy work, Dr Saman Kelegama was a kind and caring human being. My professional image of Saman is of him presenting excellent papers at scholarly meetings. My personal memory of Saman will be of cups of tea in the garden of the Galle Face Hotel in the 1990s, gently mulling over ideas about the ways in which human progress might be achieved across the world.

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Note: This article gives the views of the author/academic featured and does not represent the views of the Global Development Institute as a whole.