



***A Collaboration among Nutrition Societies in Southeast Asia Region***

***Promoting regional collaboration  
for community nutrition improvement***

## **Annual Report Year 2015**

### **Members**



### **Associate Members**



## Contents

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	<b>Page</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. SEA-PHN Network Background</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Membership Profile Year 2015</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. Network Progress in Year 2015</b>	
<b>3.1 SEA-PHN Network 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3.2 SEA-PHN Network Website As Channel of Information Sharing</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.3 Food-Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDGs) of Southeast Asia Countries: Compilation &amp; Analysis</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3.4 Groundwork for 1<sup>st</sup> Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition Conference 2017</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3.5 Proposed Collaborative Child Nutrition Project</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>4. Conclusions - Contributions of SEA-PHN Network</b>	<b>16</b>

## **Executive Summary**

The end of Year 2015 marked another successful year for the SEA-PHN Network as several activities of the network have been carried out as planned. It is the hard work, commitment and strong supports of the Council Members and Associate Members that move the Network forward, without which the Network would not have been possible to come this far, since its establishment in June 2014.

The Network had the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) which was successfully organised in Jakarta on 6th June 2015. Several milestones have been achieved for the network's projects including two manuscripts on compilation and analysis of food-based dietary guidelines (FBDG) of SEA countries, which have been prepared to be published in the Malaysian Journal of Nutrition. We are now in the process of compiling school-based nutrition intervention studies in SEA countries, as a preparation to embark on the network's collaborative school nutrition intervention programme. Also of significance is that groundwork has been initiated for the landmark 1<sup>st</sup> Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition Conference that has been agreed during the 2<sup>nd</sup> AGM.

This 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Report of the Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition (SEA-PHN) Network provides a recapitulation of the formation of the Network, its rationale and objectives, and membership profile. It also provides a summary of both the completed activities and the progress of the Network's on-going activities in year 2015.

The report is structured in four parts:

Part 1 provides a recapitulation of the formation of the Network, its objective and key activities.

Part 2 provides the information of the Network's membership profile for Year 2015.

Part 3 focuses on the reporting the progress of activities undertaken by the Network.

Part 4 gives a brief summary on the contributions of the Network to public health nutrition in the SEA region.

## 1. SEA-PHN Network Background

The Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition (SEA-PHN) Network is a collaboration of nutrition societies/associations in the region, and working in partnership with other key stakeholders namely government agencies and corporate partners, dedicated to promoting public health nutrition among the population and alleviating nutrition problems. It is believed that this network can contribute to more effective implementation of public health nutrition measures in the region. Recognising this, the Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition (SEA-PHN) Network was established on June 2, 2014 with the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur and officially launched on 3 June 2014 by YB Dato' Seri Dr Hilmi bin Haji Yahaya, Deputy Minister of Health, Malaysia.

The main objectives of the Network are to:

1. Establish and maintain an interactive network among public health nutritionists in the Southeast Asia region
2. Promote the periodic exchange of experiences, activities in all public health nutrition issues, including nutrient deficiencies and diet-related chronic diseases
3. Consolidate efforts among nutritionists, both in the public and private sector, for the advancement of public health nutrition
4. Share available information and documentation with all stakeholders involved in public health nutrition, including professional bodies, government agencies and private sector
5. Conduct activities to promote public health nutrition to benefit the communities in Southeast Asia region while ensuring avoidance of potential conflicts of interest.
6. Promote and conduct collaborative projects amongst members of the SEA-PHN Network, government agencies and private sector for community nutrition improvement, in the spirit of public-private partnership.

The key activities of the Network are:

- Conduct annual meetings among members of the Network, preferably in conjunction with a scientific meeting.
- Interaction through a dedicated website: [www.sea-phn.org](http://www.sea-phn.org).
- Conduct collaborative projects among members of the Network and its partners.
- Teleconferences as and when needed.
- Organise scientific meetings or conferences.

The SEA-PHN Network is a not-for-profit professional organization, managed by a Council elected every three years by the members (see below). The conduct/running of the Network activities is facilitated by a Secretariat, oversee by the Council. Members of the 1st Council of the SEA-PHN Network (2014-2017):



**Figure 1 Council Members of the SEA-PHN Network (year 2014 to 2017).**



**Figure 2 Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition Network officially launched on 3 June 2014 by YB Dato' Seri Dr Hilmi bin Haji Yahaya, Deputy Minister of Health, Malaysia, at the 29<sup>th</sup> Scientific Conference of the Nutrition Society of Malaysia.**

## 2. Membership Profile Year 2015

The members of the Network comprise Nutrition Societies/Associations affiliated to the Federation of Asian Nutrition Societies (FANS). Current members include:



**Food and  
Nutrition Society  
of Indonesia**



**Nutrition Society  
of Malaysia**



**Nutrition  
Foundation of  
the Philippines,  
Inc**



**Nutrition  
Association of  
Thailand (NAT)  
under the  
Patronage of  
Her Royal  
Highness  
Princess Maha  
Chakri  
Sirindhorn**



**Vietnam Nutrition  
Association  
(Vinutas)**

When other nutrition societies are formed and join FANS and IUNS, they shall be invited to be part of this Network.

Corporate companies are invited to participate in Network activities as associate members, including attend annual Network meetings (represented by appropriate technical experts), collaborate in projects of the Network, and access to documents on the Network website. Private sector companies also provide financial support and technical expertise for the activities of the Network. The Associate Members for year 2015 from the private sector companies and their respective technical representatives are:



**Beneo GmbH**

Technical  
representative:  
*Ms Anke Sentko*



**Danone Asia  
Pacific Holdings  
Pte Ltd**

Technical  
representative:  
*Dr Jacques G.  
Bindels*



**Dupont Nutrition  
& Health**

Technical  
representative:  
*Ms Cyndy Au*



**Nestle Products  
Sdn Bhd**

Technical  
representative:  
*Mr Gerard  
Vinyes Parés*



**PepsiCo  
Services  
Asia Ltd**

Technical  
representative:  
*Ms Yashna Harjani*

Senior officers of Nutrition Departments of the Ministries of Health of the 5 member society countries have been invited to participate in the annual meetings and other activities of the Network.

### 3. Network Progress in Year 2015

#### 3.1 SEA-PHN Network 2nd Annual Meeting

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting of SEA-PHN network was fruitfully held on 6 June 2015, attended by all 6 founding council members of the network (from 5 member nutrition societies/associations), 4 corporate company representatives as Associate Members, and MOH representatives from Malaysia, Vietnam and Indonesia (Fig 3). The attendees are as follows:

Members (Nutrition Societies)	Chairman <i>Dr Tee E Siong (NSM)</i>
	Vice-chairman <i>Prof Dr Hardinsyah (PERGIZI PANGAN)</i>
	Council member <i>Emeritus Prof Dr Mohd Ismail Noor (NSM)</i>
	Council member <i>Dr Rodolfo F. Florentino (NFP)</i>
	Council member <i>Assoc Prof Dr Umaporn Suthutvoravut (NAT)</i>
	Council member <i>Prof Dr Lee Thi Hop (VINUTAS)</i>
Representatives from Government Ministries	Malaysia <i>Ms Rokiah Bt Don</i>
	Vietnam <i>Dr Phan Thi Ninh</i>
	Indonesia <i>Mr Irianis, representing Mr Doddy Izwardy</i>
Associate Members (Corporate companies)	Beneo Asia Pacific Pte Ltd <i>Ms Anke Sentko</i>
	Danone Nutricia Early Life Nutrition Asia-Pacific <i>Dr Jacques G. Bindels</i>
	Du Pont Nutrition & Health <i>Ms Cyndy Au</i>
	PepsiCo Services Asia Ltd <i>Ms Yashna Harjani</i>
Secretariat (VersaComm Sdn Bhd)	<i>Ms Muhaini Hussin</i> <i>Ms Lai Meng Li</i>

All Council Members shared a brief update on activities from respective association or country in the past year. Recent public health nutrition initiatives by the corporate company Associate Members were also shared by their respective representative. Members also discussed the progress of key network activities and proposal was made for the future activities of the Network. Overall, the Network aspires to bring nutrition to a higher level to make greater contribution and reinforce activities together with the ministries of health in the region.

The main discussions related to activities of the network and potential collaboration are as summarised below:

### ***Update of SEA-PHN Network Website***

- The meeting discussed ways to increase number of visitors to the website and to promote the usage of the website. Council/Associate members were encouraged to register themselves as a member for the website; share more documentations with secretariat to be uploaded on the website and to link the Network website with their respective association's website.

### ***Compilation of Food-Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDGs) of Southeast Asian countries***

- Compilation of FBDGs in the SEA region was one of the network activities initiated in year 2014. The meeting viewed the compilation of the FBDGs which consisted of methodology, format of the FBDGs in the SEA countries, grouping of key messages, comparison of similarities, differences and rationale of the key messages as well as pictorial guides used by each SEA countries. A draft manuscript was prepared for the compilation. The meeting proposed that the manuscript to be published as a supplement in Malaysian Journal of Nutrition by end of 2015.

### ***Collaborative Child Nutrition Project***

- Collaborative intervention projects among the member countries that will benefit the communities was one of the main items discussed. The meeting discussed the joint nutrition intervention programme targeted at children, parents and community that has been proposed in 2014.
- A draft proposal on nutrition intervention programme among school children was prepared and discussed at the meeting. The meeting agreed in principle the general outline and approaches of the proposal. It was generally felt that it is a useful project and had no major objections in the implementation of the project. Several concerns and challenges in implementing the project educating children and changing their practices were discussed.
- The meeting agreed the following as the next steps:
  - Members to share various nutrition intervention programmes (target at primary school children) that have been done for the past 8 years or currently running in their respective countries for compilation.
  - A template shall be prepared so that the necessary information from research papers can be extracted and included in the matrix for analysis.
  - Further discussions will be held to discuss the information obtained and analysis and come out with recommendations on the best way approach for the intervention project.



### ***Proposal for the 1<sup>st</sup> Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition Conference***

- Recognizing the need of providing a regional platform for multiple stakeholders working on public health nutrition to share strategies, develop partnerships and coordinate their efforts, organisation of 1<sup>st</sup> Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition Conference was proposed. Preliminary preparations were discussed and suggestions were made to the programme content.
- The meeting also discussed on whether the conference to be held periodically and was generally agreed that there will not be a specific period of organising the conference. Instead, a scientific meeting of the SEA-PHN could be held in conjunction or as satellite meetings of other larger regional or international conferences.
- The meeting agreed the following as the next steps
  - The 1<sup>st</sup> Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition Conference proposal to be presented to the NSM Council Member to formally endorse the organising of the conference and approaches.
  - A preliminary announcement of the conference to be disseminated, preferably before end of the year.
  - A website for the conference to be set up.
  - A marketing kit for the conference sponsorship to be prepared

### ***Future Projects and Activities***

- In recognise the increasing importance of nutrition policies and action plans in recent years, especially with the convening of International Conference for Nutrition II in November 2014, the compilation, documentation or translation of the nutrition policies and action plans in the SEA region were suggested. Council members were encouraged to share any existing nutrition policies and action plans to the secretariat. Members can then decide if the Network to proceed with this compilation of nutrition policies and action plans.
- The meeting also explored the possibility of carrying out leadership training programmes that would be beneficial to young nutritionists in the region, both in the public and private sectors. These programmes should further enhance the knowledge and skill of the young nutritionists, not just in nutrition, but in other areas e.g. confidence and overall capability. The meeting agreed to further explore the possibility of conducting such leadership training programmes that would be beneficial to nutritionists both in the public and private sectors.



**Figure 3 Group photo of SEA-PHN Network's Council Members, representatives from Associate Members (corporate partners) and representatives from Government Ministries at the 2nd annual meeting on June 5, 2015 at Jakarta.**

### **3.2 SEA-PHN Network Website As Channel of Information Sharing**

The official website of the Network [www.sea-phn.org](http://www.sea-phn.org) serves as a platform for exchange of views and experiences on specific projects or topics. It is also a useful repository of public health nutrition documents and activities uploaded by Network members. A 'Resource area' at the website is dedicated for this purpose - sharing of reports/abstracts of completed projects and scientific meetings by the members as well as relevant documents and publications from government agencies or national society.

There has seen a significant increase in the number of users of the Network website in 2015. The website was visited by 5111 users from 1 January to 31 December 2015. There was an average of 33 active users per day. However, the total number of users subscribed to the Resources Area was still low, which was 33 subscribers in total.

The updating of the website is an on-going process. Council members and associate members have been actively involved in sharing their respective scientific projects report and public health nutrition publications. Several updates have been made, including adding a new sector, namely 'Publications from Associate Members' to the existing 4 major sections at Resources Area (National Nutrition Plans & Guidelines, Nutrition Society Publications & Reports, Journals Portals and Professional Links).

To date, there are 15 National Nutrition Plans & Guidelines, 6 Nutrition Society Publications & Reports and 2 Publications by Associate Members, 9 Journal Portals and 6 Professional Links available at the Resources Area.

<b>National Nutrition Plans &amp; Guidelines</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food-Based Dietary Guidelines: Pedoman Gizi Seimbang 2014</li> <li>• National Nutrition Policy Malaysia 2005</li> <li>• National Plan of Action for Nutrition of Malaysia (2006-2015)</li> <li>• Malaysian Dietary Guidelines 2010</li> <li>• Malaysian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents 2013</li> <li>• Nutrition Research Priorities in Malaysia for 10<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan (2011-2015)</li> <li>• Guide to Nutrition Labelling and Claims</li> <li>• Pinggang-Pinoy – Healthy Food Plate for Filipino Adults</li> <li>• Food-Based Dietary Guidelines: Review</li> <li>• Strategic Framework for Food Management in Thailand</li> <li>• Thai Food-based Dietary Guidelines for Infants and Young Children</li> <li>• Pyramid of Foods of Vietnamese</li> <li>• Vietnamese Food-based Dietary Guidelines</li> <li>• Vietnam Food-Based Dietary Guidelines Towards 2020</li> <li>• National Nutrition Strategy For 2011-2020, With A Vision Toward 2030</li> </ul>
<b>Nutrition Society Publications &amp; Reports</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malaysian Journal of Nutrition (latest issue to be updated from time to time)</li> <li>• NSM Newsletter 2014-2015</li> <li>• NSM Newsletter 2013-2014</li> <li>• Community Nutrition Promotion Publications by NSM</li> </ul>
<b>Publications By Associate Members</b>
<p><i>Maternal &amp; Child Nutrition Topic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The First 1000 Days by Danone Nutricia</li> <li>• Nestle Healthy Kids Programme Overview in Malaysia</li> </ul>

Upcoming and past nutrition events in the SEA region as well as the nutrition activities conducted by the member societies are also being updated regularly at the website.

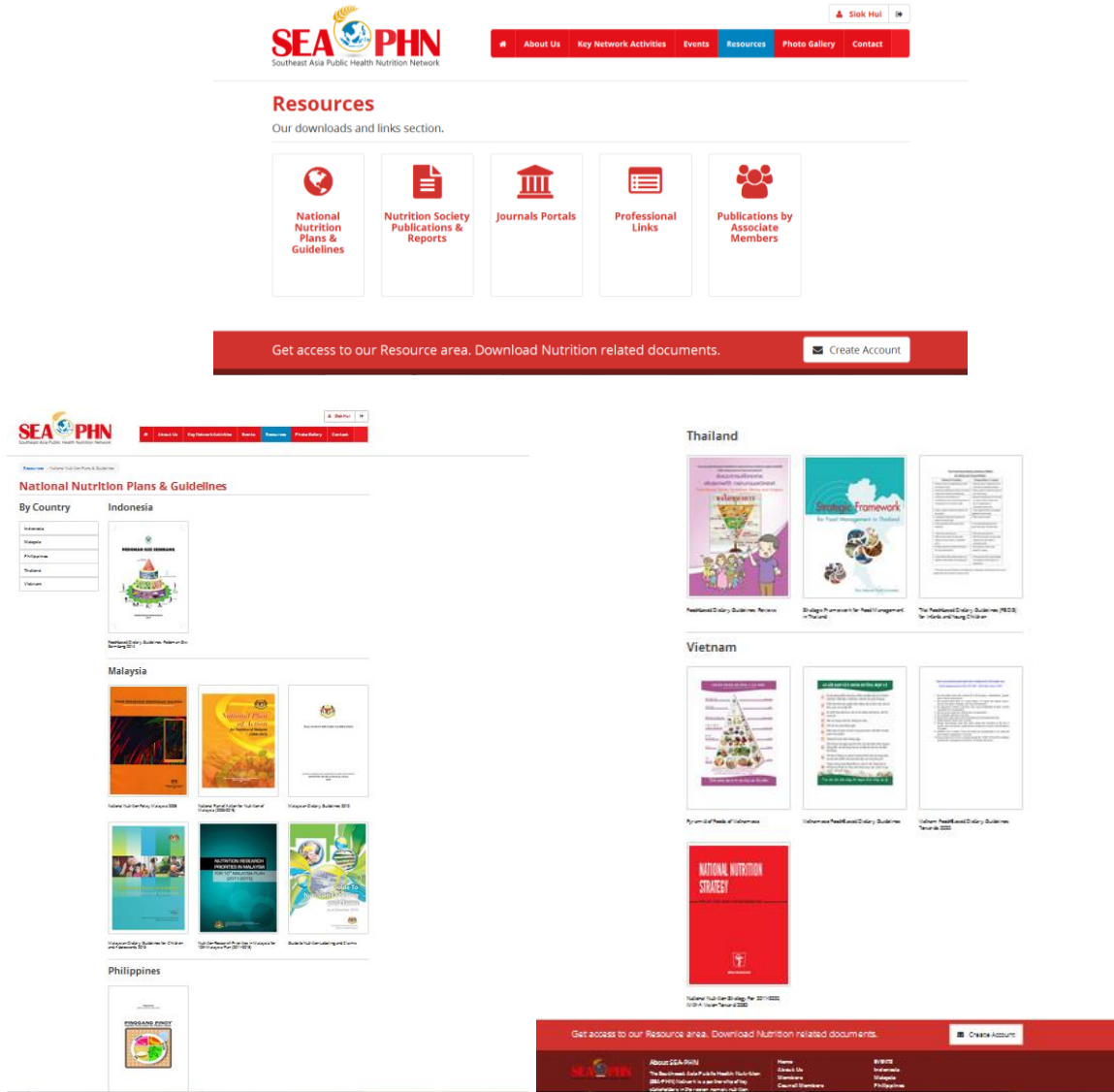
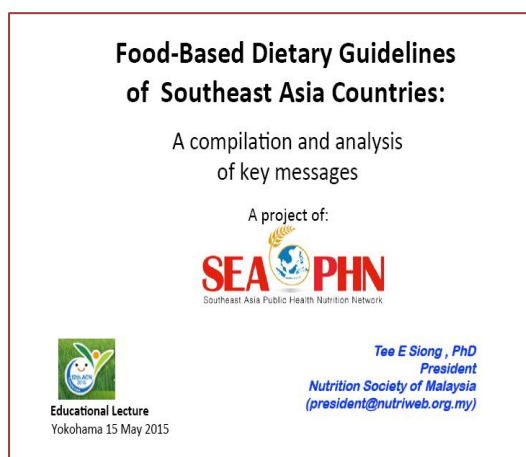


Figure 4 Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition (SEA-PHN) Network website's Resources Area

### 3.3 Food-Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDGs) of Southeast Asia Countries: Compilation and Analysis

In accordance with its objective of promoting closer collaboration among countries in the region, the Network carried out a compilation and analysis of the key messages, scientific rationale of the FBDGs and pictorial food guides of the SEA countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam). The project aims to share experiences and approaches in the development of these key public health guidelines among members of the Network.



The compilation and analysis work started in August 2014 and completed May 2015. The findings of this project had been shared with nutritionists in Asian countries by Dr Tee E Siong, on behalf of the council members during the educational lecture session at the 12<sup>th</sup> Asian Congress of Nutrition in Yokohama, May 2015.

Two manuscripts were then written in preparation for the publication in journal. The two manuscripts were co-authored by the council members of the Network, who are also the president of the member nutrition societies/association.

#### *Manuscript 1*

*Food-Based Dietary Guidelines of Southeast Asia Countries. Part 1: A Compilation and Analysis of Key Messages*

- Part 1 of the manuscript compiled and analysed the key messages and scientific rationale of the officially published food-based dietary guidelines (FBDGs) in six Southeast Asian countries. A total of 17 topics were identified, covering a wide range of subjects. It can be noted that there are more similarities than differences in these key messages. The scientific rationales used by the countries to substantiate the key messages are also rather similar for almost all the topics.

#### *Manuscript 2*

*Food-Based Dietary Guidelines of Southeast Asian Countries. Part 2: Analysis of Pictorial Food Guides*

- Part 2 of the manuscript compare the officially published food-based dietary guidelines (FBDGs) of six countries of the Southeast Asia region focuses on the main pictorial food guides and food plates in these guidelines. All the 6 countries surveyed had adopted different pictorial food guides. While differing in their visual presentations and several minor details, the six pictorial food guides are similar in their essential attributes.

The two manuscripts, together with the 4 Appendix (compilation of key messages and format of FBDGs of six SEA countries, compilation of key messages and scientific rationale according to topics, images of pictorial food guides and related key messages used in FBDGs of six SEA countries, images of food plates and related messages used in FBDGs of some SEA countries) are currently being reviewed to be published as a supplement in Malaysian Journal of Malaysia.

This compilation and analysis can be a useful reference for other countries in the region that have yet to develop their own FBDGs as well as for those which are reviewing and updating their current guidelines. There could be sharing of approaches and scientific rationale in developing these guidelines. The Network will continue to provide a platform for all stakeholders, from public and

private sectors, to deliberate and share experiences in FBDG, e.g. in the dissemination and promotion of these guidelines.

### 3.4 Groundwork for 1<sup>st</sup> Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition Conference 2017 Initiated

Rapid advances in the socio-economic situation of Southeast Asian countries in the last four decades have resulted in significant changes to the lifestyle of communities, including food consumption patterns. This in turn resulted in marked changes to the nutrition scene, namely a decline in nutrient deficiencies and a rise in the prevalence of diet-related chronic diseases (NCDs) among the population in the region.

It is believed that nutrition societies in the region can play a significant role in contributing to nutrition research and intervention programmes in the region. It is also noted that there has not been a public health nutrition conference in the Southeast Asia.

The SEA-PHN Network recognises that there is a need to provide a regional platform for multiple stakeholders working on public health nutrition to share strategies, develop partnerships and coordinate their efforts in promoting public health nutrition. Thus, the 1<sup>st</sup> Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition Conference was proposed at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Network in Jakarta.

A working paper for the proposed Conference has been developed. The proposed Conference will be organised in conjunction with the Nutrition Society of Malaysia 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Scientific Conference, with the theme 'Together in Advancing Public Health Nutrition'. The goals of the Conference are to bring together diverse stakeholders to share and discuss the latest scientific knowledge, experiences, effective intervention policies, strategies, research programmes and regulatory updates to promote and sustain public health nutrition in the SEA region. More importantly, three regional roundtable discussions will be taking place during this Conference with the focus on nutrition promotion programmes at school, maternal nutrition and childhood obesity.

Other preparation works have also been initiated post 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting. The working paper has been presented to Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau in order to bid for financial and conference support. A local organizing committee consist of council members of the Nutrition Society of Malaysia, public health nutrition experts and doctors, senior nutritionists and dietitian officers from Ministry of Health Malaysia has been formed on 15 December 2015 to work on the conference. Teleconference was also conducted among the Network's Council and Associate Members to discuss on the programme, marketing kit and several key items of the Conference.



**1<sup>st</sup> Southeast Asia  
Public Health Nutrition Conference**

Conference Working Document  
for Council & Associate Members

Draft Programme Structure/Overview						
Time	18th May, Monday	19th May, Tuesday	19th May, Tuesday	20th May, Wednesday	20th May, Wednesday	20th May, Wednesday
0800-0900	REGISTRATION	REGISTRATION	REGISTRATION	REGISTRATION	REGISTRATION	REGISTRATION
0900-0930	MEMORIAL ADDRESS & OPENING CEREMONY	Memorial Lecture 1	Memorial Lecture 2	Memorial Lecture 3	Memorial Lecture 4	Memorial Lecture 5
0930-1000	Symposium 7	Symposium 8	Symposium 9	Symposium 10	Symposium 11	Symposium 12
1000-1030	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break
1030-1100	Plenary Lecture 1	Symposium 9	Symposium 10	Symposium 11	Symposium 12	Symposium 13
1100-1130	Symposium 1	Symposium 2	Symposium 3	Symposium 4	Symposium 5	Symposium 6
1130-1200	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1200-1230	Plenary Lecture 2	Plenary Lecture 3	Plenary Lecture 4	Plenary Lecture 5	Plenary Lecture 6	Plenary Lecture 7
1300-1400	Poster Viewing/ Trade Exhibition	Poster Viewing/ Trade Exhibition	Poster Viewing/ Trade Exhibition	Poster Viewing/ Trade Exhibition	Poster Viewing/ Trade Exhibition	Poster Viewing/ Trade Exhibition
1400-1430	Plenary Lecture 1	Plenary Lecture 2	Plenary Lecture 3	Plenary Lecture 4	Plenary Lecture 5	Plenary Lecture 6
1430-1500	Symposium 3	Symposium 4	Symposium 5	Symposium 6	Symposium 7	Symposium 8
1500-1530	Symposium 9	Symposium 10	Symposium 11	Symposium 12	Symposium 13	Symposium 14
1530-1600	Round Table Discussion 1	Round Table Discussion 2	Round Table Discussion 3	Round Table Discussion 4	Round Table Discussion 5	Round Table Discussion 6
1600-1630	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break
1630-1700	End of Day 1	End of Day 2	End of Day 3	End of Day 4	End of Day 5	End of Day 6
1700-1730	WELCOME RECEPTION	WELCOME RECEPTION	WELCOME RECEPTION	WELCOME RECEPTION	WELCOME RECEPTION	WELCOME RECEPTION
1730-1800	CONFERENCE DINNER	CONFERENCE DINNER	CONFERENCE DINNER	CONFERENCE DINNER	CONFERENCE DINNER	CONFERENCE DINNER

### **3.5 Proposed Collaborative Child Nutrition Project**

In recognition of the existence of the double-burden of under- and over- nutrition in the countries of the region, nutrition intervention programmes in the region have been geared towards tackling both extremes of the nutritional problem. Since establishment, the Network has explored the possibility of conducting a joint nutrition intervention programme targeted at children, parents and the community in five countries in the region (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam), by using the common protocol/approach.

In May 2015, a proposal for the nutrition intervention programme was prepared. The project will take on a holistic approach to nutrition education, involving the school children as well as the environment. The project also aims to raise the level of awareness on the importance of nutrition education to school-age children and send a clear message that teaching of nutrition to school children is important and that government should pay serious attention to this. It is also hoped that this project goes beyond imparting nutrition knowledge to school children, parents and community, where it signifies the ability of 5 nutrition societies to work together in an intervention programme, and the possibility of public-private partnership without any conflict of interest.

Ground work has been carried out started in July 2015 such as literature search, compile, summarise and analyse the published intervention programmes, especially those targeting children, carried out in various countries in the region. It is hoped that the Network can learn from previous researchers on approaches used, limitations, pitfalls, challenges and other issues in order to ensure a better plan for the intervention programme.

To date, Council Members and Associate Members have shared several related research and review papers on nutrition education intervention to primary school children that had been done for the past 8 years or currently running in their respective countries. A template was developed to extract necessary information from the research papers. The information from the research papers such as research group, study year, programme name, country, study population, inclusion criteria, age group, study design, objective, duration of intervention, approaches, intervention topics covered, outcome measures, main findings, challenges, limitations, recommendations have been extracted and tabulated in the template.



#### **4. Contributions of SEA-PHN Network**

Almost two years since its inception, the SEA-PHN Network has made significant progress towards promoting public health nutrition in Southeast Asian region in several ways.

The Network helps to promote scientific/experiences exchanges among nutrition societies in the region through the general meeting that is held annually, in conjunction with a scientific meeting. This is the only network that facilitates this periodic exchange. The annual meeting serves as a platform for the update of nutrition issues and activities by members of each country as well as by Associate Members. Discussion/review progress of collaborative projects undertaken by the Network is also carried out during the annual meeting. This helps to promote the sharing and exchanges of experiences by each country in implementing the public health nutrition measures. The Network has had 2 annual meetings since its establishment, with the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting being held at Kuala Lumpur in year 2014 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting held at Jakarta year 2015. In between annual physical meetings, teleconferences among Council Members and Associate Members are also conducted to enable updates on issues and discussions on activities to be carried out.

The Network also promotes interaction among nutrition societies in the region through a dedicated website [www.sea-phn.org](http://www.sea-phn.org). The website also serves as a repository of public health nutrition documents and activities to be uploaded by Network members, including announcements of current and upcoming projects and meetings; reports/abstracts of completed projects and meetings; as well as relevant documents and publications from government agencies or member society/association.

SEA-PHN Network enables collaborative projects among member societies of the Network and its partners to be carried out. It provides a platform and opportunities for collaboration among members of the SEA-PHN Network, government agencies and private sector in conducting community nutrition improvement programmes. Upon understanding the food and nutrition situation in countries in the region, identifying the needs of the communities and building on the available expertise among the stakeholders, collaboration projects can be identified. This includes the collaborative intervention projects that will benefit the communities. The first collaborative project of the Network was the compilation of the Food-Based Dietary Guidelines in the SEA region. This compilation can serve as a reference for other countries in the region intending to establish or review FBDGs. The compilation is being published as a supplement of the Malaysian Journal of Nutrition (2016).

The organisation of 1<sup>st</sup> Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition Conference by Nutrition Society of Malaysia under the auspices of SEA-PHN Network will be an important milestone in promoting the public health nutrition in the SEA region. Being the first of its kind in the SEA region, this regional nutrition network will not only bring together diverse stakeholders from the region to share and discuss latest scientific knowledges, effective intervention policy and strategies to promote and sustain public health nutrition in the region, it will also facilitate the interaction, partnership among the nutrition societies, government agencies and the private sector in combating public health nutrition issues of the SEA region.

The achievements, summarized above, are just the beginning. There remains much to be done by the SEA-PHN Network Members and its Associate Members. Continued support and commitment of all is vital for its further advancement. Our dedication is required if we are to be recognized as a significant contributor to promoting healthy nutrition in the region.

E-Siong Tee, PhD

Chairman

Southeast Asia Nutrition Public Health Nutrition (SEA-PHN) Network

March 2016