



A Collaboration among Nutrition Societies in Southeast Asia Region

*Promoting regional collaboration
for community nutrition improvement*

**Annual Report
Year 2023**

Members



Associate Members





Message from the Chairman

In 2023, the Network marked its 9th year of fostering public-private collaboration to advance public health nutrition promotion in the SEA region. The primary focus was on generating more opportunities for discussion and engagements among nutritionists in the SEA region, expanding its reach to a broader audience and stakeholders through virtual platforms.

Throughout 2023, 4 major activities were undertaken, including the Network's general meeting, 2 webinars, publication of review paper on recommended energy and nutrient intake values in Southeast Asia countries and a dedicated symposium session at the 14th Asian Congress of Nutrition. More comprehensive summaries about the Network's activities in 2023 are available in this report and the Network website.

Looking ahead to 2024, the Network is committed to continue providing platform for interaction and networking among nutritionist in the region, via virtual and potentially physical events. Among the planned activities include:

- Publication of a monograph on updated food-based dietary guidelines in SEA countries
- The continuation of the Public Health Nutrition Webinar Series
- Organisation of the 2nd Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition Conference

The ongoing public-private collaboration between nutrition societies and corporate partners is considered a valuable and effective approach in promoting the advancement of public health nutrition in the region. The Network expresses its gratitude to all societies and corporate partners for the enduring trust, longstanding support and commitment, which have played a crucial role in establishing a stronger foundation for the Network in the region.

E Siong Tee, PhD

Chairman

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

9 January 2024

Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition (SEA-PHN) Network

Background

Established in June 2014, the Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition (SEA-PHN) Network is a public-private partnership, namely nutrition societies and corporate companies in the SEA region, dedicated to promoting public health nutrition through maintaining an interactive network among nutritionists in the region and promoting periodic exchange of experiences and activities in all public health nutrition issues.

Network's Aims

- Facilitate more effective implementation of public health nutrition measures to improve nutritional wellbeing of populations in the region
- Share available information and documentation such as technical publications with all stakeholders involved in public health nutrition, including professional bodies, government agencies and private sector
- Conduct activities to promote public health nutrition to benefit the communities in SEA region while ensuring avoidance of potential conflicts of interest.
- Consolidate efforts among nutritionists, both in the public and private sector, for the advancement of public health nutrition

Members of the Network

The SEA-PHN Network is a not-for-profit professional organisation, managed by a Council elected every three years by the members. The conduct/running of the Network activities is facilitated by a Secretariat, with the Council overseeing all activities.

Member Societies/Associations

The member societies of the Network comprise Nutrition Societies/Associations affiliated to the Federation of Asian Nutrition Societies (FANS) and the International Union of Nutritional Sciences (IUNS). Current member societies include:



Food and Nutrition Society of Indonesia (Pergizi Pangan Indonesia)



Nutrition Society of Malaysia (NSM)



Nutrition Foundation of the Philippines, Inc (NFP)



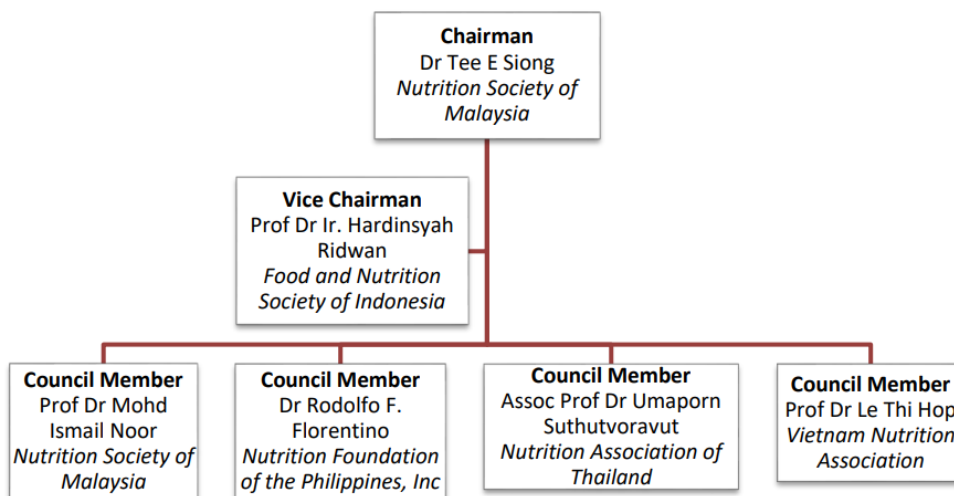
Nutrition Association of Thailand (NAT)



Vietnam Nutrition Association (VINUTAS)

The membership to the Network is confined to societies who are affiliates of FANS and IUNS.

Founding council members of the SEA-PHN Network (year 2014-2017)



Council members of the SEA-PHN Network (year 2017-2023)

	Chairman	Vice-chairman	Council members			
2017-2020 (2nd Council)	Dr Tee E Siong (NSM)	Prof Dr Le Thi Hop (VINUTAS)	Prof Dr Hardinsyah (FNSI)	Prof Dr Mohd Ismail Noor (NSM)	Dr Rodolfo F. Florentino (NFP)	Assoc Prof Dr Ladda Mo-suwan (NAT)
2020-2023 (3rd Council)	Dr Tee E Siong (NSM)	Clin Prof Dr Nalinee Chongviriyaphan (NAT)	Prof Dr Hardinsyah (FNSI)	Assoc Prof Dr Mahenderan Appukutty (NSM)	Dr Rodolfo F. Florentino (NFP)	Assoc Prof Dr Truong Tuyet Mai

Founding Associate Members (year 2014-2023)

Private sector companies were invited to participate in Network activities as Associate Members, including attend Network’s meetings (represented by technical experts), discuss nutrition matters, provide technical expertise and contribute to planning of nutrition projects and activities of the Network. Private sector companies also provided financial support for the activities of the Network.



4th Council of the SEA-PHN Network (Year 2023 to 2026)



CHAIRMAN

Dr Tee E Siong,
Nutrition Society of Malaysia



VICE-CHAIRMAN

Clin Prof Dr Nalinee Chongviriyaphan,
Nutrition Association of Thailand



COUNCIL MEMBER

Prof Dr Ir. Hardinsyah Ridwan,
Food and Nutrition Society of Indonesia



COUNCIL MEMBER

Assoc Prof Dr Mahenderan Appukutty,
Nutrition Society of Malaysia



COUNCIL MEMBER

Dr Rodolfo F. Florentino,
Nutrition Foundation of the Philippines, Inc



COUNCIL MEMBER

Assoc Prof Dr Truong Tuyet Mai
Vietnam Nutrition Association

Associate members - 2023

Current Associate Members from the private sector companies and their respective technical representatives are:



BENEO-Institute

Technical representatives:

Ms Goh Peen Ern

Dr Antje Jungclaus



PepsiCo Services Asia Co., Ltd

Technical representatives:

Dr Kit Phanvihitsiri

Mr Liu Feng

Key Activities of the Network

Since its establishment, the Network's activities have been steadily expanding with a primary focus on:

- Maintaining regular communication among Network members through scheduled meetings to strategies and implement projects/activities. Additionally, members exchange experiences by providing updates on major nutrition-related initiatives
- Maintaining a dedicated website (www.sea-phn.org) as a communication channel and repository for public health nutrition documents within the region
- Collaborating on projects involving Network members and private sector to promote public health nutrition and address common nutritional issues in the region (e.g. school nutrition promotion), fostering a spirit of public-private partnership
- Organise scientific meetings, webinars or conferences to foster knowledge and experience sharing and collaboration
- Publishing monographs and review papers on public health nutrition related topics such as food-based dietary guidelines, nutrition action plans, recommended nutrients intake in SEA countries
- Implementing public health nutrition leadership programme to enhance the capacity of young nutritionists in the region

More details of the Network and the materials and reports of the activities are available on the Network website: <http://sea-phn.org>.

Summary Report of Year 2023's Activities

1. SEA-PHN Network 12th General Meeting

The 12th General Meeting of the Network took place virtually through the Zoom online platform on January 18, 2023. Attendees included Council Members, representatives from Associate Members, invited guest and the Network's Secretariat, as outlined below:

Council Members	Chairman Dr Tee E Siong (Nutrition Society of Malaysia, NSM) Vice-chairman Clin Prof Dr Nalinee Chongviriyapha (Nutrition Association of Thailand, NAT) Council members Assoc Prof Dr Mahenderan Appukutty (Nutrition Society of Malaysia, NSM) Dr Rodolfo F. Florentino (Nutrition Foundation of the Philippines, Inc, NFP)
Associate Members	Ms Goh Peen Ern, BENEIO-Institute Dr Antje Jungclaus, BENEIO-Institute Dr Kit Phanvihitsiri, Pepsico Services Asia Ltd Ms Cyndy Au, IFF Ms Vicky Chia Min Huei, Malaysian Palm Oil Council (MPOC)
Guest	Mrs Maria Lourdes Vega (Nutrition Foundation of the Philippines, Inc, NFP)
Secretariat (VersaComm Sdn Bhd)	Ms Muhaini Hussin Ms Voon Siok Hui Ms Presanna Arumugam

Members shared and exchanged nutrition experiences by providing updates on significant nutrition activities and programme within their respective association or country over the past one year. Additionally, members reviewed the primary activities carried out by the Network in Year 2022 and deliberated on the direction of activities for year 2022.



Figure 1. Sharing of nutrition activities and updates by members at 12th General Meeting of the Network

2. Public Health Nutrition Webinar Series

The Network continued to provide an interaction platform for nutritionists in the region through its public health nutrition webinar series. Webinars on two important topics had been organised this year.

Webinar 1/2023: Addressing Food and Nutrition Security in Challenging Times – Experiences in Southeast Asia Countries, 8 August 2023

Access to nutritious, safe and affordable foods are fundamental for good nutrition and health of the population, to end hunger and prevent all forms of malnutrition. However, this remain unaffordable and has become increasingly challenging for many individuals and families worldwide, including Southeast Asian (SEA) countries. Many of the barriers to food and nutrition security e.g. poverty, inequality have persisted over time and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, humanitarian crises and climate change, alongside other challenges such as changes in eating habits and preference to less healthy foods. These conditions and developments further stressing the price, quantity and quality of foods available, leading to increased food and nutrition insecurity. Action across the SEA region to drive progress and address food and nutrition security through improving sustainability of the food system, innovative/evidence-based programmes, policies and researches are crucial.

The webinar on the topic of food and nutrition security was organised with the aims of enabling experiences exchange on innovations, evidence-based interventions, programmes, initiatives across different SEA countries to address food and nutrition security in different settings and explore possible opportunities for adapting solutions/strategies from various countries for use in local projects. The webinar was attended by 251 participants including nutritionists, dietitians, members of academia, researchers, policy makers, public health workers, nutrition graduates and postgraduate students as well as other healthcare professionals. Six invited speakers from SEA countries shared their country's experiences in addressing food and nutrition security risk. The panelists of the webinar also discussed gaps, challenges, lesson learned and opportunities, as well as multisectoral roles in addressing food and nutrition security issues in SEA countries



Figure 2. Invited speakers shared country's experiences in addressing food and nutrition security

Webinar 2/2023: Whole Grains in Southeast Asia: Health Benefits, Regulations, Dietary Guidelines and Consumption, 23 November 2023

Whole grains are valuable sources of nutrients and their roles in reducing risk to chronic diseases are well established. Health authorities have taken note of the scientific evidence and are giving greater emphasis to recommending greater consumption of whole grains. Despite this, whole grains consumption worldwide, including SEA countries, tends to be lower than recommended level. The burden of diet-related diseases has been on the rise in the region, thus the need to close the gap between whole grain intakes and recommendations. Understanding health benefits, consumer consumption data, development of actionable dietary guidelines messages and food regulations related to whole grains are important, as these could bring impact to whole grains and wholegrain foods provision, public health policy initiatives, public health messaging around increasing whole grain intake as well as development of innovative wholegrain products.

The webinar on whole grains was organised to provide an overview and better understanding on health benefits of whole grains, the status of whole grain regulations, dietary guidelines recommendations and whole grain consumption data across Southeast Asian countries. The webinar was attended by 298 participants including nutritionists, dietitians, members of academia, and other healthcare professionals. Invited speakers from four SEA countries shared an update on the whole grains related regulations, dietary guidelines and consumption data in respective country. Presentations made at the webinar indicate that there are significant differences in various aspects of whole grains in SEA countries, including messages on whole grain intake recommendations. There is also lack of data on whole grain consumption, consumer understanding of whole grains, and only a few countries have enacted regulations on whole grains recommendations.



Figure 3. Invited speakers shared updates on health benefits, regulatory aspects, and consumption of whole grains in SEA countries

The reports for the webinars are available at the Network website.

3. Publication of Review of Recommended Energy and Nutrient Intake Values in SEA Countries in Malaysian Journal of Nutrition

The Network had worked on compiling and comparing the officially published recommended energy and nutrient intake values in five SEA countries namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, with the aim to provide an overview of the availability of nutrient recommendations in SEA countries and the approaches and scientific principles undertaken by countries to formulate their own national energy and nutrient recommendations.

This work had been published as special invited review in the Malaysian Journal of Nutrition (doi: <https://doi.org/10.31246/mjn-2023-29-2-rni-rda-sea-review>). The paper also provided an understanding of the similarities and differences of the recommendations among the countries. Future works on recommended nutrient intakes in the region, including opportunities for collaboration and harmonisation were also discussed.



Figure 4. Special invited review on recommended energy and nutrient intake values in SEA countries published in Malaysian Journal of Nutrition

4. SEA-PHN Network's Symposium at the 14th Asian Congress of Nutrition (ACN) in Chengdu, China

The Network had participated the 14th ACN in China through a symposium session on the theme 'Making a difference in public health nutrition in Southeast Asia'. Through this symposium, the Network reached out to wider stakeholders and audiences in the region, particularly in sharing its vision and commitment in advocating and promoting public health nutrition in Southeast Asia region. Council members of the Network presented several activities of the Network, especially those of public health nutrition importance to the region.

Symposium:
Making a difference in public health nutrition in Southeast Asia

14th ACN 2023
16-17 September 2023

Saturday, 16 September 2023
10:30 – 12:00 noon
Room 408B

Concurrent Symposia Program Schedule

Making a difference in public health nutrition in Southeast Asia Date: Sept. 16, 10:30-12:00
Room: 408B

Hosted by: Southeast Asia Public Health Nutrition (SEA-PHN) Network
Chair: Dr. E Siong Tee

10:30-10:35 **Introduction, welcome remarks**
E Siong Tee, PhD
SEA-PHN Network, Chair; Nutrition Society of Malaysia, President

10:35-10:50 **About SEA-PHN Network – Rationale, Objectives, Operational Framework, Key network activities**
Nalinee Chongviriyaphan, MD, Professor
SEA-PHN Network, Vice-Chairman; Nutrition Association of Thailand, President

10:50-11:05 **School nutrition promotion programme using the GNHKC module**
Hardinsyah, PhD, Professor
Federation of Asian Nutrition Societies, President; SEA-PHN Network, Council Member; Food and Nutrition Association of Indonesia, President

11:05-11:20 **Food-based dietary guidelines in Southeast Asia countries**
Le Thi Hop, PhD, Professor
Vietnam Nutrition Association, Council Member

11:20-11:35 **Recommended energy and nutrient intake values in Southeast Asian countries**
E Siong Tee, PhD
SEA-PHN Network, Chair; Nutrition Society of Malaysia, President

11:35-11:50 **Discussion, Q & A**
Chair and all speakers of session

11:50-11:55 **Closing remarks**
E Siong Tee, PhD
SEA-PHN Network, Chair; Nutrition Society of Malaysia, President










Figure 5. Council members presented at the 14th ACN

SEA-PHN Network Website – A Repository of Public Health Nutrition Documents in SEA

The Network's website www.sea-phn.org, maintained its role as a conduit for communication and information exchange among members and public health nutrition professionals in the region. Apart from scientific publications and reports detailing completed Network projects, the website now hosts more materials, including presentation slides (with speakers' consent) from webinars and workshops, for wider dissemination among users.

The Network has made strides in boosting its visibility on a regional scale, with the series of conducted webinars contributing to increased visits to the website. regionally. The series of webinars conducted have encouraged more new visits to the Network's website. In year 2023, there were 2299 new users to the website. The overall pageviews for the website was 6460 in 2023.

The figure below illustrates the distribution of website visitors by country for the year 2023 (top 10).

Country	% Users
1.  United States	34.33%
2.  Malaysia	16.97%
3. (not set)	13.84%
4.  Philippines	7.03%
5.  China	5.79%
6.  Thailand	3.81%
7.  Germany	2.87%
8.  Singapore	2.27%
9.  Indonesia	2.14%
10.  France	1.07%