



ANNUAL REPORT 2018

THE NUTRITION SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA



The Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka

Annual Report - 2018

Presented at the Annual General Meeting on 13th January 2019

This is a brief report of the activities completed by the council and members of The Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka in collaboration with academics, nutritionists, administrators and policy makers. These activities demonstrated the focus, commitment and leadership of the council and the members towards advocacy, capacity building, and research and community services in the field of nutrition in Sri Lanka.

Prepared by Joint Secretaries

Chandima Madhu Wickramatilake

Roshan Dela Bandara

Council of the Nutrition Society 2018/2019

Prof. Anoma Chandrasekara	President
Dr Sujeewa Gunaratne	Vice President (Resigned)
Mr Roshan Dela Bandara	Joint Secretary
Dr Chandima Madhu Wickramatilake	Joint Secretary
Dr Dhammika Senanayake	Treasurer
Mr Chalindra Pathirana	Editor
Ms Visakha Tillekeratne	Council members
Dr Sanath Mahawithanage	Council member
Prof. Chandrani Liyanage	Council member
Dr. K.D. Disna Kumari	Council member
Dr. Kumari Rathnayake	Council member
Ms. R. P. M. Sandamali	Council member
Mr. M Piratheeban	Council member
Mr. J. Arun	Council member
Mr. Mudith Dharmapriya	Council member



The Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka - Council 2018-2019



Seated from left: Ms. Manjula Sandamali (Council member), Dr. Dhammika Senanayake (Treasurer), Mr. Roshan Delabandara (Joint secretary), Prof. Anoma Chandrasekara (President), Dr. Chandima Wickramathilaka (Joint secretary), Mr. Chalindra Pathirana (Editor), Ms. Visakha Tillekeratne (Council member).

Standing form left: Mr. Mayuran Piratheeban (Council member), Dr. Disna Kumari (Council member), Mr. Jentrick Arun (Council member), Mr. Mudith Dharmapriya (Council member).

Absent: Dr. Sanatha Mahawithanage (Council member), Dr. Kumari Rathnayake (Council member), Prof. Chandrani Liyanage (Council member).

Annual Scientific Sessions 2018

The Annual Scientific Sessions of Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka (NSSL) 2018 were held on 28th and 29th of January 2018 at the Galadari Hotel, Colombo. There were 172 participants at the sessions. The main financial sponsorship (one million of Sri Lankan rupees) was spent by the Ministry of Science and Technology under the patronage of the Minister, Hon. Susil Premajayantha. Sessions were held in collaboration with the Wayamba University of Sri Lanka. The main theme of the scientific sessions was “Investing in Nutrition for Economic Prosperity”. Prof. E. M. P. Ekanayake, Vice Chancellor of the Wayamba University of Sri Lanka was the Guest of Honour. The keynote speech was delivered by Hon. Eran Wickramaratne, State Minister for Finance and Mass Media.

The Prof. T.W. Wikramanayake Memorial Oration was delivered by Prof. Lakshman Samaranayake who is attached to the University of Hong Kong. The topic of the oration was Nutrition, Caries and Microbes. Prof. Samaranayake touched upon an important recommendation from WHO, which is to have an intake of less than 15% energy from free sugars for a caries free life.



The plenary lectures were delivered by key figures in the relevant fields on the subthemes, namely Investing in Nutrition for Economic Prosperity- Lessons learned,

Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition Linkages, Investing in Nutrition, Health and Productivity and Nutrition Investments- Policy, and Regulatory and Institutional Aspects. The free communication session, was, enriched with oral and poster presentations, comprised of 20 abstracts that facilitated the dissemination of novel findings to the field of nutrition. Dr Sanath Mahawithanage was the conference coordinator for the annual sessions of NSSL 2018.

Key Recommendations from the Technical component of the Annual Sessions:

- Putting the malnourished child in the centre and determining all causes for her particular status, in a holistic approach, so that the interventions are accurate and not “one size fits all”
- Implementing an effective community participatory approach at scale, so that competent and trained volunteers support the multi-sectoral approach on nutrition. Each volunteer should be assigned a limited number of children to look after.
- Those with NCDs are treated holistically with proper dietary follow up/nutrition counselling by nutritionists.
- Nutrition sensitive agriculture and encouraging the cultivation of underutilized crops will lead to a sustainable healthy diet as well as protect biodiversity.
- To invest at least Rs 5 billion a year on interventions proven to be most effective. Impactful low coverage interventions should be studied and inventorised. This investment will lead to an impact in human development at least 16 times that of the investment.
- Interinstitutional coordination is most important in a multisector approach from planning to monitoring and evaluation.



Activities of the NSSL for 2018

The strategic plan of the Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka for the next two years (2018/2019) was laid down at the inaugural council meeting held on 16th of February 2018. The action plan was targeted towards three focused areas and it was decided to review the progress of the strategic plan every four months at the council meetings.

(1) Advocacy and communications

- Advocacy on breast feeding
- Nutrition Education Program for School Children
- Continued Dialogue on 10 Year Plan for Food Security with Key Stakeholders
- Propose Amendment to Medical Ordinance

(2) Community Nutrition

- Seminars and workshops to promote healthy eating
- Establishment of Nutrition Counseling Centre
- Develop guidelines for corporate membership
- Promoting food based dietary guidelines (FBGDs)

(3) Capacity building

- Seminars/workshops
- Partnerships with professional bodies and private sector
- Publications of Nutrition Society

Note: Some activities listed above generated much required funds.



1. Advocacy and Communications

1.1 Advocacy on breast feeding

Completing the cycle of breastfeeding while continuing to work is a woman's right as well as the best for infant in order to create an intelligent, strong, healthy and vibrant workforce – and better society.

World Vision Lanka in collaboration with the NSSL continued the study in the organizations on working mother and breast feeding among both the private and government sector organizations. This involved the continuation of assessing the existing environment supporting pregnant women and breast feeding mothers. This year this exercise received the support of the volunteers of the Sarvodaya Women's Movement to collect the information from most of the districts in Sri Lanka. The programme was continued from last year where a request was made to the Commissioner General Department of Labour for a complete six months maternity leave for all working mothers. This included the informal sector as well where mothers had no access to paid maternity leave. Ms Dilka Peiris took an active lead on behalf of Nutrition Society, in collaboration with World Vision Lanka.

1.2 Nutrition education program for school children

The gaps in the existing school nutrition education programme was discussed with Miss Renuka Peris, Director Health and Nutrition, Ministry of Education. Ms Peris expressed her fullest support to do an Impact Assessment of the mid-day meal program as a first step of collaboration. Prof. Chandrani Liyanage, Mr. Roshan Dela Bandara and Mr. J. Arun were involved in the discussion. A proposal would be submitted to do the assessment in the coming year.

1.3 Continued dialogue on 10 year plan for food security with key stakeholders

The dialogue in relation to the 10 year evidence based Plan for Food Security was discussed further with the Additional Director General National Planning who included an allocation in the budget for nutrition education and experimentation. As the NSSL put forward the idea for a 10 year plan to partners, the NSSL was invited to a number of relevant workshops owing to the involvement in this dialogue.

1.4 Proposing amendment to the medical ordinance

NSSL, Prof. Anoma Chandrasekara and Mr. Roshan Dela Bandara were parties of the petition filed against the proposed bill to amend the Sri Lanka Medical Ordinance (chapter 105). The NSSL was one party of several professional bodies that filed similar cases against the above bill at Supreme Court. The proposed amendment provided the opportunity to physicians to specialize in non-medical domain including allied health professions, nutrition, informatics, administration, etc. and these fields may come under the umbrella of medical specialties. Therefore, above action was taken to protect non-medical professionals governed by the Medical Ordinance and to avoid development of monopoly over the other non-medical fields.

2. Community Nutrition

2.1 Establishment of Nutrition Counseling Centre

Council member, Ms. K.D. Disna Kumari took over the challenging task to establish a Centre for Nutrition counselling, since June 2018, at the office of the NSSL. The aim was to deliver nutritional counselling for a reasonable fee for the patients. Part of fee is used for the maintenance of the office of NSSL. Registered nutritionists and dieticians serve on a volunteer basis. This will be a continuous means of generating funds for the society in future. Generous support from Mr. Mudith Dharmapriya, Council Member, in providing the instruments necessary for the Centre is highly appreciated.

2.2 Nutrition counseling for preschool children

A nutrition counselling program for children was conducted at the event called “Aruna Dakina Rata”, an art exhibition organized by the Children’s Secretariat of the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs at the Youth Services Council premises in Maharagama on the 11th of September 2018. Special permission was received by the Nutrition Society from the Children’s Secretariat to conduct a nutrition counseling program for the pre-school children whose pictures were selected for the national art exhibition. Both weight and height of the children were measured and appropriate nutrition counselling was given to parents of those children accordingly. Nearly 150 children received the counselling service. Ms Manjula Sandamali coordinated and Dr Disna Kumari in collaboration with her dietician colleagues facilitated the event. Financial support was provided by World Vision Lanka.

2.3 FAO consultancy on developing Food Based Dietary guidelines (FBDG) for Maldives

The Society was awarded a consultancy by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations to complete the first steps of implementing the Maldives Food Based Dietary Guidelines. This is a result of FAO staff participating at the Symposium organized by the Society at the International Nutrition Congress held in Buenos Aires Argentina on the topic “seemingly effective pathways for behavior change”, where members of the Society highlighted their experiences in successful nutrition behavior change programs.

The consultancy involved the conduct of an implementation inception workshop and completing a stakeholder analysis, formulating a results based management plan for rolling out the guidelines, development of communication tools, carrying out a TOT workshop and launching the guidelines through an advocacy and media workshop. Mr. Roshan Dela Bandara and Ms Visakha Tillekeratne successfully completed the consultancy on behalf of the NSSL. This resulted in the Society gaining repute and also the earning much needed funds for the Society in an ethical manner. Action has been initiated by the Society to establish the Nutrition Society of Maldives as an extension activity. This will be instrumental in 2019 with the leadership of the president of NSSL .





2.4 FAO consultancy on Revision and Implementation of FBDG for Sri Lanka

Based on the successful completion of the consultancy in the Maldives, the Society was also awarded a consultancy to facilitate the revision and implementation of the Sri Lankan Food based dietary guidelines. This will be for a period of 18 months from January 2019.



2.5 Nutrition and Health education in Galle

Dr. Chandima Madhu Wickramatilake participated as a resource person in the educational programme conducted for parents of Grade 6 and 7 students of Sacred Heart Convent on Healthy life and dietary behavior on 25th January 2018.

Further she contributed as a resource person in the educational programme on Healthy Life and Dietary Behavior in March 2018 which was conducted for the general public in Imaduwa, Galle, organized by New City Sahajeewana Foundation, Imaduwa, Galle.

Dr. Chandima Madhu Wickramatilake took part in the final judge panel of “Ruhunu Rasasaraniya” which was held in October 2018. It was organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Agrarian Development, Irrigation, Water supply and Drainage, Food Supply and Distribution, Trade and Cooperative Development-Southern Province. Aim of the exhibition was to promote local foods and traditional recipes for a healthier nation.

2.6 Nutrition awareness programme for Staff of the Parliament of Sri Lanka

The Scaling up Nutrition Peoples Forum (SUNPF) organized a nutrition awareness program on “Eat Healthy Stay Healthy” on 1st November 2018 to the parliament staff. The program was attended by over 90 working staff and the main objectives of the program were sensitization on the importance of good nutrition, creating an enabling environment for good health among parliament staff and creating knowledge to implement programmes for parliamentarians. The Nutrition Society collaborate in the program by providing technical support and resource persons. Mr Roshan Dela Bandara conducted sessions on Food selection for healthy life and a balanced meal. Dr Disna Kumari talked to the audience on dietary guidance for prevention and management of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). The activity was coordinated by Mr Roshan Dela Bandara.



2.7 Finalization of corporate membership guidelines - sustaining partners of NSSL

Companies and organizations who demonstrate the highest level of commitment to the nutrition profession will be recognized as NSSL Sustaining Partners. Recognition includes print and online exposure, annual general meeting benefits, and first choice to sponsor educational sessions, grants, awards and other opportunities as they arise and invitation to a roundtable with the government on industry related issues.

The tax-deductible, unrestricted contribution is used to support educational programs and awards that help the NSSL in fulfilling its mission to be the leading nutrition society dedicated to improving the health and well-being of individuals and populations in Sri Lanka.

Decision of enrolling a company/institution will be made following the by an interview of the officials of said institution with the council appointed committee of NSSL.

Criteria for membership:

- The company/organization should be in the business of food production, manufacture of processed food, food and nutrition research, food service, hospitality and or any other related activities.
- The company should demonstrate evidences on following commitments;
- There should not be breast milk substitutes are manufactured by the company.
- The company does not practice uncontrolled harmful use of pesticides and other agro chemicals in the manufacture of fresh produce. The safe use of pesticide policy requires to be furnished at the time of applying for membership.
- That no cola drinks/sodas (aerated drinks) are produced by the company or any subsidiary, if it is part of a chain or conglomerate.
- That committed to reduce salt and sugar in the manufacture of processed food.



2.8 Public communications

Thirty articles were written and published in several issues of Doctor magazine by the members of NSSL. In July 2018 first set of articles were published celebrating



2.9 Foods & nutrition for physical fitness

Prof. Anoma Chandrasekara served as a resource person for a two hour interactive session on Food and nutrition for fitness on 18^h May 2018 for fitness Instructors in Kurunegala. The activity was organized by the Department of Sports Development, District Secretariat, Kurunegala. More than 60 participants attended the session. Lengthy programmes on nutrition for fitness were requested by participants.



3. Capacity building

3.1 Food industry Asia and NSSL collaborate with regard to workshop on sweeteners.

The Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka in collaboration with Food Industry Asia organized a seminar on “Current Concerns in Sri Lankan Food Industry and the Use of Sweeteners” on 27th of March 2018.

It was held at the Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute and was attended by over 40 participants representing public and private sector, academia and authorities attached to the health sector and food industry of the country. This programme was a continuation of the Nutrition Society’s initiative, “Taste Without Sugar” series which were successfully held in the 2017.

The objective of the programme was to create an informative forum and discussion floor on the negative narrative influences by misinformation and pseudo-science on the topic of low/non-calorie sweeteners (LNCS) and its influence on diet and health. The seminar was conducted by Mr. Steven Bartholomeusz, Policy Director Food Industry Asia followed by an open forum discussion among the participants. The activity was coordinated by Dr. Sujeewa Gunaratne and Mr. Chalindra Pathirana.





3.2 workshop on scientific abstract writing

Workshop on how to write an abstract
11 August 2018
9 am-1pm

At Girl Guide Head Quarters, Colombo 07

By
Dr Ananda Chandrasekara
Nutritionist /Senior Lecturer , Wayamba University of Sri Lanka

For whom;
research fellows, postgraduate students; nutritionist, dietitians, nutrition officers, professionals in health sector, nutrition officers, programme coordinators and undergraduate students & those who wish to submit an abstract to NSSL annual sessions in 2019

A workshop on scientific abstract writing was conducted by Dr. Ananda Chandrasekara, a life member of the NSSL on 11th August 2018 at Girl Guide Head Quarters, Colombo. The aim of the workshop was to impart the skills on writing an effective abstract on the part of students and researchers. It was hoped that quality abstracts would be submitted for the annual sessions of NSSL following this

workshop. A total of 12 members participated at the workshop. The activity was coordinated by Prof. Anoma Chandrasekara and Mr. Roshan Dela Bandara.



3.3 Workshop on effective presentation

How to deliver an effective presentation ?

29 September 2018
8.30 am-1pm
At Nagarodaya – Colombo

Prof Buddhi Marambe
University of Peradeniya

Prof Anoma Chandrasekara
Dr Ananda Chandrasekara
Ms Jeewanadi Hettiarchchi
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka

For whom;
research fellows, postgraduate students, nutritionists,
dietitians, nutrition officers, professionals in health
sector, nutrition officers, programme coordinators
and undergraduate students

A workshop on Effective Presentation was held on the 29th September 2018 at the Nagarodaya Centre in Colombo 9. The resource persons who contributed for the programme were Dr. Ananda Chandrasekara, Ms Jeewanadi Hettiarachchi and Prof. Anoma Chandrasekara. The objective of the workshop was to improve the presentation skills of the NSSL members and all relevant target groups. A total of 20 members participated in the workshop. The program was highly appreciated by the participants. The activity was coordinated by Prof. Anoma Chandrasekara and Mr. Roshan Dela Bandara.



4. Other highlights from NSSL activities

4.1 50th Anniversary celebrations of NSSL (in 2022)

The council is taking preparative actions for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of NSSL in 2022. The suggested broad theme is “Social Harmony and Nutrition”. There would be several meaningful activities organized in the next four years.

4.2 International technical workshop on FBDGs development methodology

FAO in partnership with Wageningen University organized an International Technical Workshop in the Netherlands, from 23-25 November 2018. This workshop brought together experts from all over the world, with the aim of discussing the current FBDGs development methodology used, in order to try and improve some of the steps involved (including the integration of sustainability dimensions into the methodology), so that they are relevant especially for low- and middle-income countries. The Council Member/Team Leader who executed the roll out of the Maldives Food Based Dietary Guidelines was invited to attend this workshop, as implementation of the Guidelines is as important as developing really good guidelines. Ms Visakha Thillekeratne participated in the workshop.

4.3 Participation at IuFOST



Prof Anoma Chandrasekara participated as an invited speaker at the 19th World Congress of International Union of Food Science and Technology held in Navi Mumbai, India in October 2018. She delivered a speech on Rice & legume blends in functional foods to promote health. The congress was attended by more than 4000 participants from all around the world.

4.4 Advertisement searching for permanent place for NSSL

Ms. Visakha Tillekeratne, the immediate past President published a half page advertisement in the Sunday Paper requesting premises/donations/funds for the NSSL to have its permanent office in future. There were 3 offers of shared accommodation in response to this advertisement, which requires to be pursued in the future.

4.5 Improvements in the NSSL website

New member enrollment was started via an online system to prevent the delays and the difficulties faced by members. Participant registration for the Annual Scientific Conference 2019 was done via an online system. Mr. J. Arun extended his expertise upgrading the website with the technical support from Mr. Thushara Kerthisena.

4.6 Fund raising campaign 2016

Raffle draw was completed and winners were selected and to be announced at the Annual Scientific Sessions 2019.

4.7 Establishment of a medal for council members

A gold medal was proposed by the president Prof Anoma Chandrasekara and established to encourage council members of NSSL who dedicated their time voluntarily for the activities planning, implementation and serving to improve nutritional status of the population. The gold medal is sponsored by the president of the NSSL. The factors that would be considered includes, attendance for the meetings, vigilance of responsibilities, commitments made, resourcefulness, willingness in achieving targets, and leadership.



List of new members enrolled during 2018

Life members

- 1 Mr Paramanathan Sayanthan
- 2 Ms A M Priyangani Herath
- 3 Ms I G N Hansika Senevirathne
- 4 Mr. K. Karthijekan
- 5 Mr Suthan Baskaran
- 6 Miss Vederalage Fathima Sadiya Badurdeen
- 7 Dr A.K.N.Dilina
- 8 Mr.W.A.G.E.Wijelath
- 9 Miss Shakila Thisaramala Gamage
- 10 Mr. P.S.M Kumaratunga

Annual members

1. Mrs. W.K.D Shashini Anushka Wickramarachchi
2. Miss.S.Sarvaka
3. Mr.J.sajivan
4. Miss S.A.R.U. sooriyapperuma
5. Mrs Nazreena Anzar
5. Miss D.T.Kannangara
7. Miss H.A.S.S Hettiarachchi
3. Miss L.J.M.M.M.Kumarihami
9. Mr. P G N M Dharmasiri
10. Miss K.L.Hansani
11. Miss L.H.K.S Ariyarathna
12. Miss R.G.Dimalka Dhanushi
13. Mr A.N.M. Athugala
14. Miss.H.M.S.Thasneem

15. Miss. V.Dayalini
16. Miss M.S.F.Nasriya
17. Miss. M.S.P.Jayarathna
18. Miss J.F.Zimra
19. Miss K.H.A.S.Imasha
20. Miss M. I. F. Sameera
21. Miss H.H.D.I.Lakmalie Hettiarachchi
22. Miss K. K. N. Maduwanthi
23. Miss SASR Samarasinghe
24. Miss S.Sugirtha
25. Miss K.Kayathtri
26. Miss H. S. S. Sandeepani
27. Miss H. M. A Sudusinghe
28. Miss S.T.K Hikma
29. Mr K.G.C Tharuka
30. Miss. A.R.Monisha
31. Miss S.M.H.D Sitisekara
32. Miss H.G.M.P. Siriwardana
33. Miss S.P Samarawickrama
34. Mr. A.S Yapa
35. Miss.T.S.Hettiarachchi

The attendance of council members for meetings in the year 2018

No	Name	Position	Attendance
1	Prof. Anoma Chandrasekara	President	11/11
2	Dr Sujeewa Gunaratne	Vice President	Resigned from May
3	Mr Roshan Dela Bandara	Joint Secretary	11/11
4	Dr Chandima Madhu Wickramatilake	Joint Secretary	8/11
5	Dr Dhammika Senanayake	Treasurer	6/11
6	Mr Chalindra Pathirana	Editor	6/11
7	Ms Visakha Tillekeratne	Council member (Past President)	7/11
8	Dr Sanath Mahawithanage	Council member	2/11
9	Prof. Chandrani Liyanage	Council member	2/11
10	Dr. K.D. Disna Kumari	Council member	10/11
11	Dr. Kumari Rathnayake	Council member	5/11
12	Ms. R. P. M. Sandamali	Council member	10/11
13	Mr. M Piratheeban	Council member	7/11
14	Mr. J. Arun	Council member	7/11
15	Mr. Mudith Dharmapriya	Council member	6/11

The Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka wishes to acknowledge the generous support extended by all the members, partners, donors and sponsors in its multiple activities. We expect your sincere assistance and collaboration with NSSL to make our endeavors a success.

A better nutrition and healthier nation in future!