



The Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka

Annual Report – 2022

Presented at the Annual General Meeting on 21st January 2023 at the Mandarin Hotel, Colombo 3. This is a brief report of the activities completed by the council and members of The Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka in collaboration with nutritionists, academics, administrators, and policy makers. These activities demonstrate the focus, commitment and leadership of the council and members towards advocacy, capacity building, research and community services in the field of nutrition in Sri Lanka.

Prepared by the Joint Secretaries,

Malika Gayathri Fernando and Joshepkumar Thamilini

Council of the Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka 2021/2022

- President : Dr. Dhammika Senanayake
- Vice President : Dr. Ananda Chandrasekara
- Joint Secretary : Dr. Malika Gayathri Fernando
- Joint Secretary : Ms Joshepkumar Thamilini
- Treasurer : Mr. T. S. M Thilakarathna
- Editor : Dr. Eranga Harshani Silva

Council members

- Prof. Chandima Wickramatilake (Immediate past president)
- Dr. Kumari Rathnayaka
- Dr. Thushanthi Perera
- Dr. Manoj Gayan Hikkaduwa Liyanage
- Prof. Samath Dhammika Dharmarathne
- Dr. S K N DE S Jeewakarathne
- Ms. Harshani Perera
- Ms. D.M.U.A.J.K. DassanayakeMs.
- Mr. Hasanka Kodagoda



Sitting (Left to Right):

Mr. T. S. M Thilakarathna (Treasurer), Prof Ananda Chandrasekara (Vice-President), Dr Dhammika Senanayake (President), Ms Thamilini Joshepkumar (Joint Secretary), Prof Chandima Wickramathilake (Immediate Past President)

Standing (Left to Right)

Dr Kumari Rathnayake, Dr Manoj GH Liyanage, Dr Thushanthi Perera, Dr S K N DE S Jeewakarathne

Absent:

Dr Malika Fernando (Joint Secretary), Dr Eranga H Silva (Editor), Ms. Harshani Perera, Ms. D.M.U.A.J.K. DassanayakeMs., Mr. Hasanka Kodagoda

Annual Scientific Sessions 2022

The Annual Scientific Sessions of Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka (NSSL) 2022 were held on 22nd and 23rd January 2022 at the Institute of Sports Medicine, No 33, Maitland place, Colombo 7. This was organized as a hybrid event due to existing COVID-19 pandemic and physical attendance was limited to the council members, sessions chairs, plenary lectures and judges as well as to some attendees. The theme of the conference was “Nutrition, Health and Wellbeing in a Challenging Era: Moving Forward with 50 Years of Experience”. Dr Dhammika Senanayake was the conference chairperson. Around 120 participants attended or virtually joined the sessions on both days.

Dr. Francesco Branca, The Director, Department of Nutrition for Health and Development, World Health Organization, Geneva graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The keynote address was delivered by Prof. Narada Warnasuriya (Past President- NSSL), Department of Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, General Sir John Kotelawala Defense University, on the topic “Recollections on nutrition in a professional career as a clinical teacher in Paediatrics”.

Prof. T.W. Wikramanayake Oration was delivered by Prof. Renuka Silva (Past President- NSSL), Professor of Nutrition, Department of Applied Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka on “Poor dietary diversity and nutritional inadequacy: unveiling the nutrition paradox in Sri Lanka”

The sessions were comprised of four symposia, titled;

- Aging, Chronic Diseases & Nutrition
- Communicable Diseases, Health & Nutrition
- Food Security & Nutritional Wellbeing
- Safe Food for Healthy Future

Four plenary lectures were delivered by prominent academics and professionals of the relevant fields:

- Prof. S. A. M. Kularatne, Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya

Ageing & Non-communicable Diseases

- Prof. Samath Dharmaratne, Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya

Novel Epidemiological Approaches in the Management of Communicable Disease

- Prof. Jeevika Weerahewa, Department of Agricultural Economics and Business Management, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya

Food Security and Nutritional Wellbeing in Sri Lanka: Implications for Food Price Policies

- Dr. Senaka Ranadheera, Senior Lecturer (Food Processing and Preservation), School of Agriculture and Food, University of Melbourne

Food Safety in the Era of COVID-19 Pandemic

The resource personnel for the symposium lectures were the experts of their respective fields and used their experience to produce a fruitful dialog by sharing knowledge and lifelong experiences. Presidential address was on “Have we paid adequate attention to the trends in the nutritional health of adolescents?” and delivered by Prof Chandima Wickramatilake, the President of NSSL, Professor in Biochemistry, Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna. The free communication session included 22 oral presentations and 28 flash talks comprised of abstracts that facilitated the dissemination of novel findings in the field of nutrition.

Activities for 2022

The strategic plan of the Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka for 2022 was laid down at the inaugural council meeting held on 16th February 2022 virtually. The action plan was developed and it was decided to review the progress of the strategic plan every month at the council meetings.

1. Membership promotion

Several initiatives were taken to promote membership of the NSSL. Membership fees were revised through the consultative process within the council and revised fees were approved at the AGM, 2020. Comparatively, high number of Life Members were joined with the council during 2022 compared to the previous years.

2. Collaboration with the state and non-state stakeholders in activities

2.1. Collaboration with CIC holdings on CSR Projects

An agreement was signed with CIC holdings for child nutrition guideline (CNG) project. The main objective is to improve the nutritional status of primary school children and promote the quality of life of the adult population at the later stages. This project is led by Prof. Anoma Chandrasekara, (Past President) and Mr Roshan Dela Bandara (Life member).

2.2. Sri Lanka Port Authority

There was a collaboration with Port authority on Food Service Management System. Different activities were carried out to ensure the proper food service system to the employees, including, Nutrition Awareness and remodification of the canteen foods into nutritious meals. This programme was led by Dr Dhammika Senanayake (President) and Prof Ananda Chandrasekara (Vice-President). Council members and several life members were contributed their valuable service towards this project

2.3. Healthy Canteen Implementation for Loadstar (Pvt) Ltd

This activity was initiated in 2021 with three different components; education and awareness on food preparation and importance of nutrition, food safety and menu standardization. The initial awareness sessions were conducted in 2021 and the menu modification was done and the project was finalized in 2022. Sixty different nutritious menus with different food items were developed and assessed with the kitchen staff and chefs. Menus were developed by council members (Dr. Malika Fernando & Ms. Thamilini Joshepkumar) and life members (Dr. Disna Kumari & Ms. Upuli Dahanayake) of the Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka.

2.4. Multi-stakeholder approach to address the food security and nutrition among the public in Southern Province

Prof. Chandima Wickramatilake participated as a resource person in the Southern Province's workshops organized by the Chief Secretariat, Southern Provinces in December 2022 to develop the plan for the multi-stakeholder approach to address the food security and nutrition among the public in Southern Province.

2.5. Collaboration with the State Pharmaceutical Cooperation and the Institute of Sports Medicine

Prof. C. M. Wickramatilake, Prof. Ananda Chandrasekara, and Dr. Dhammika Senanayake initiated the discussions on the development of electrolytes solutions (sports drink) locally in collaboration with the State Pharmaceutical Cooperation and the Institute of Sports Medicine. Dr. A. S. Ranaweera, attached to the Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Science, University of Ruhuna, also supported in the calculation of formula.

3. To disseminate knowledge and empower the general community and scientific community

The COVID-19 pandemic has promoted a global shift in meetings and events, many moving from in-person gatherings to more virtual implementation. The NSSL arranged different awareness sessions virtually to educate the community on nutrition and nutrition related issues

Webinars & Virtual discussions

3.1. Webinar on “End Malnutrition, for a Better Sri Lanka”

A webinar on the topic of “End Malnutrition: for a Better Sri Lanka” was conducted by Prof. Ananda Chandrasekara, the Vice President in collaboration with G17 University Ambassadors, University of Ruhuna.

3.2. Webinar on sports medicine and nutrition for coaches, athletes and other sports related personnel

An online webinar was conducted on sports medicine for coaches, athletes and other sports related personnel. Four different topics were covered by experts in sports medicine and nutrition; Dr. Kaushal Karunarathna (Consultant Orthopedic Surgeon), Prof. Ananda Chandrasekara (Senior Lecturer, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka), Mr. Dulan Kodikara (Sports & Exercise Physiotherapist) and Dr. Sameera Senanayake (Senior Lecturer, Kotalawela Defence University).

3.3. Sports medicine webinar in collaboration with Institute of Sports Medicine

Virtual session on sports medicine was conducted by the NSSL in collaboration with the Institute of Sports Medicine. There were two major areas covered; sports nutrition for martial art sports and sports injury management by Dr. Lal Ekanayake (DG, Sports medicine), Dr. Dhammika Senanayake (The President, NSSL) and Ms. Upuli Dhahanayake (Life member, The NSSL).

3.4. Webinar on Cash Management for health & wellbeing (Tamil Medium)

Ms. Thamilini Joshepkumar, the joint Secretary was participated as the resource person of this one-day webinar on cash management for health and wellbeing (Tamil medium) conducted by SUN PF and Family Health Bureau.

3.5. Webinar on “Economic crisis in Sri Lanka: problems and solutions”

An online webinar on economic crisis in Sri Lanka emphasizing the problems and solutions was conducted by Senior Prof. Buddhi Marmbe, University of Peradeniya and Prof. Gamini Pushpakumara, University of Peradeniya. The webinar was moderated by Prof. Renuka Silva, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka, Past President of the NSSL.

Workshops

3.6. Culinary Club Workshop on “Nutritious snacks for busy life”

A workshop on ‘Nutritious Snacks for Busy life’ for the undergraduates was conducted on 14th January 2023 in collaboration with the Culinary Club, Cultural Centre of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna. Dr. Disna Kumari was the resource person for the workshop and Prof. Chandima Wickramatilake coordinated the event

3.7. Workshop on “Starting up a Quality Biomedical Research.”

The NSSL in collaboration with Faculty of Applied Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka, organized a virtual research workshop on “Research methodology beyond the basics”. The workshop plan was developed by Dr. Thushanthi Perera and Dr. Kumari Rathnayake. The event was coordinated by Dr. Thushanthi Perera, a council member of the NSSL.

There were three major areas covered.

1. Art of Abstract Writing – Prof. Warshi Dandeniya, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya

2. How to Write a High-Impact Research Paper or Grant Proposal? – Prof. Priyanga Ranasinghe, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo
3. Get Your Research Published and Address Reviewer Comments – Prof. Prasanna Gunathilake, Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka.

The registration link with flyer and programme was shared through emails, Facebook, WhatsApp and Viber. The event was successfully completed with 27 registrants. Certificates were awarded to each participant and resource person of the programme.

3.8. Newsletter

The NSSL has aligned many academic and public programs that are spanned throughout the year focusing on the need to increase the quality output of research, to improve the public awareness that could lead to behavior change and to establish multi-disciplinary team care to combat nutrition related health issues among Sri Lankans. To fulfill this purpose, annual newsletter was developed and shared among public to make them aware on important aspects on nutrition. This activity is coordinated by Dr. Eranga Silva, the Editor of the NSSL.

3.9. The Journal of Nutrition and Food Sciences

To commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the NSSL, The Journal of Nutrition and Food Sciences, the official Journal of the NSSL, was announced and the invitations for manuscripts were made. The journal will be launched simultaneously with the Annual Scientific Sessions of the NSSL in January 2023. The journal expects to provide a space for the nutrition and food science researchers to publish their high-quality research output. All manuscripts will be peer-reviewed before publishing, in order to assure the quality of the journal. The NSSL expects to index the journal in reputed indexes and publish bi-annually. The journal will be published online and included into Sri Lanka Journals online database.

The journal accepts the manuscripts that belong to the categories including, full length original research articles, review articles, systematic reviews and meta-analysis, short communications and case reports as well as case series. The scope

of the journal includes but not limited to the areas, clinical nutrition, community nutrition, functional foods, food and nutrition security, nutrigenomics, food toxicology, dietetics, nutritional biochemistry and metabolism, food process engineering, food microbiology, safety and quality, food chemistry and analysis and sports nutrition.

4. Special activities for the year 2022: Organizing series of programs for school children with the Ministry of Education

4.1. “NutriCa” Arts Competition - 2022 in collaboration with the Ministry of Education under the theme of “Food for a Healthy Life”

The NSSL in collaboration with the Ministry of Education organized an art competition for school children under the theme of “Food for a Healthy Life “. Atlas Axillia Co. (Pvt) Ltd sponsored for this event as one of their annual events. Public awareness on this art competition was done mainly through the NSSL website/FB page, newspaper articles, and TV commercials. In the competition, properly certified scanned copies of drawings were collected through email, WhatsApp and Viber. Nearly 78 drawings were received for the competition. The drawings were categorized into 4 groups; category 1 (grade 1-2), category 2 (grade 3-5), category 3 (grade 6-9) and category 4 (grade 10-13), according to the age/grade of the children. From each category, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 10 merit places were selected. Dr Dhammika Senannayake, The President of NSSL was the overall coordinator of this event. The event was successfully completed with winners across the country. Technical guidance for selection of best drawings was provided by the officials of Ministry of Education under the directions of Ms. Kamani Gunaratne, the Director of Education, Division of School Health and Nutrition.

4.2. “NutriEssay” Competition - 2022 in collaboration with the Ministry of Education

The NSSL in collaboration with the Ministry of Education organized an essay competition for school children under three categories with different themes;

Category 1: “You are what you eat”

Category 2: “Food for a healthy world in a challenging era”

Category 3: “Solutions for the future food crisis in Sri Lanka”

Atlas Axillia Co. (Pvt) Ltd sponsored this event. Public awareness on this competition was done through NSSL website/FB page and newspaper articles. In the competition, properly certified scanned copies of essays were collected through email, WhatsApp and Viber. Essays were categorized into 3 groups; category 1 (grade 5-7), category 2 (grade 8-10), category 3 (grade 11-13), according to the age/grade of the children. From each category, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 10 merit places were selected. Dr. Manoj Gayan Hikkaduwa Liyanage and Ms. D.M.U.A.J.K. Dassanayaka, council members of NSSL were the overall coordinators of this event.

4.3. Mobile photographic challenge for youth

The NSSL organized a mobile photography challenge for youth who are in the age category of 15-24 years under the main theme of “Colour your plate today, to colour your future tomorrow”. There were three sub themes; “Add colour to your plate from home garden”, “Eat fresh, stay healthy” and “Enjoy natural foods with variety”, to facilitate the competitor to capture the most creative photographs. Wijaya Products sponsored this event. Public awareness on this competition was mainly through the NSSL website/FB page and newspaper articles. There were 3 categories for awards; the best photograph, the most creative photograph, and the most innovative concept as well as five merit places. More than 80 photographs were received for this event. Mr. Shanaka Thilakerathne, a council member of NSSL was the overall coordinator of this event.

New members enrolled in 2022

Life members		
01	Dr. S.P.P De Alvis	MBBS
02	Ms. L.D.D.K. Meegoda	B. Sc. (Hons) in Sport Sciences and Management
03	Mrs. R.M.L.R. Thilakarathne	B. Sc. (Hons) Nutrition, M.Sc. in Food and Nutrition
04	Dr. A.M.D.K Attanayake	M. Sc. in sports and exercise medicine
05	Ms. A.A.K.S.Abeysinghe	B. Sc. (Hons) in Food Science & Nutrition
06	Mrs. D.V.S.S. Diyapaththugama	B. Sc. (Hons) Food Science and Nutrition
07	Ms. M.D. Jayasinghe	M.Sc. Crop Protection and Plant Biotechnology
08	Ms. M. D. W. Samaranayake	B.Sc. (Chemistry)
09	Dr. K. G. P. Wasana	PhD Biochemistry
10	Ms. V. H. H. Nadeeshani	M.Phil. and B.Sc. in Food Science and Technology
11	Mr. P.C. Arampath	B.Sc. Agric (Hon), Specialization of Food Science & Technology, M.Sc. Postharvest and Food Process Engineering
12	Mr. B.I.L.M. Mendis	B. Sc. in Food Production and Technology Management, MSc. Food and Nutrition (Reading)
13	Mrs. S.M.H.D.Sitisekara	B. Sc. (Hons) in Food Science and Nutrition
14	Mrs. C R DIAS	M. Sc. Food and Nutrition
15	Mrs. G H M Gunarathna	B. Sc. (Hons) in Food Science and Nutrition
16	Ms. Mahendran. S	B. Sc. (Hons) in Food Science and Nutrition
17	Ms. K.B. Malshika Madushani	B. Sc. (Hons) in Food Science and Nutrition
18	Ms. P. P. Jayawickrama	B. Sc. (Hons) in Food Science and Nutrition
19	Ms. W. G. Nilmini Wijesinghe	B. Sc. (Hons) in Food Science and Nutrition
20	Ms. H.M.N.J. Karunarathna	B. Sc. (Hons) in Food Science and Nutrition
21	Mr. R.N. Chanaka	B. Sc. (Hons) in Food Science and Nutrition
22	Ms. M.S.N. Sahabandu	B. Sc. (Hons) in Food Science and Nutrition

23	Mr. Rajkumar N	MSc in Public Health and Nutrition
24	Ms. H.P.T.D. Wickramarathna	B. Sc. (Hons) in Food Science and Nutrition
25	Ms. M A Illapperuma	B. Sc., PGDip, M. Sc. (Nutrition)
26	Mr. T. P. Pathirage	B. Sc. (Hons) in Food Science and Nutrition
27	Mr. R.S. DeSilva	M. Sc. Applied Psychology
28	Ms. U.S.A. Gunathilaka	B. Sc. (Hons) in Food Science and Technology
Annual members		
01	Ms. S. Yalini	M. Sc. in Food and Nutritional Sciences

The attendance of council members for meetings in the year 2022

	Name	Position	Attendance
1	Dr. Dhammika Senanayake	President	11/11
2	Dr. Ananda Chandrasekara	Vice President	8/11
3	Ms. Demetrius Thamilini	Joint Secretary	11/11
4	Ms. Malika Gayathri Fernando	Joint Secretary	8/11
5	Ms. Eranga Harshani Silva	Editor	5/11
6	Mr. T.S.M. Tillakaratne	Treasurer	10/11
7	Prof .C Wickramathilake (Immediate past president)	Council member	11/11
8	Dr. S.K.N.DE. S Jeewakarathne	Council member	4/11
9	Dr. Kumari Rathnayaka	Council member	9/11
10	Prof. Samath Dhammika Dharmarathne	Council member	2/11
11	Dr. Thushanthi Perera	Council member	8/11
12	Dr. Manoj Gayan Hikkaduwa Liyanage	Council member	7/11
13	Ms. D.M.U.A.J.K. Dassanayake	Council member	7/11
14	Mr. Hasanka Kodagoda	Council member	4/11
15	Ms. Harshani Perera	Council member	5/11

The Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka wishes to acknowledge the unstinting 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.