Achievements and Challenges for Sustainable Development in Health
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The year 2016 marks the 50th anniversary of SEAMEO TROPMED Network. Established in 1966, the spirit of cooperation and partnership has prevailed through the years and has expanded not only in terms of the number of partners but also in terms of the scope of cooperation and partnership.

Today, the scholars of SEAMEO TROPMED network as well as the thousands of fellows who attended its training courses are serving as leaders at the national, regional and global arenas and making significant contribution to health development. The research activities of the TROPMED Centres have influenced to a great extent health policies and programmes. Its special projects serve as models of prevention and control programmes.

In this auspicious occasion, allow me to thank the Founding Fathers of the network whose vision brought to where TROPMED Network is today. Let me mention special thanks to Prof. Dr. Chamlong Harinasuta whose leadership not only steered the Network to greater heights but also served as an inspiration for the succeeding officials and staff of the Network.

I also would like to humbly acknowledge the SEAMEO Council; SEAMEO Secretariat, the Governing Board Members through the years, the Host Countries and Institutions of the TROPMED Regional Centres, the Member Countries, Development Partners, and everyone who has and is supporting the TROPMED Network.

This monograph is our way of reflecting on the 50 years journey of SEAMO TROPMED Network and our way of celebrating the spirit of cooperation and partnership.

Dr. Pratap Singhasivanon
Secretary General/Coordinator
The Beginning
SEAMEO TROPMED Project was officially approved by South East Asian Ministers of Education Council (SEAMEC) at its Second Meeting in Manila in November 1966, during which there was a general recognition among the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education that

“healthy economy needs healthy community”

and for this reason it was decided that steps should be taken at the regional level to solve the health problems, through a regional cooperation.
Excerpts from the Speeches of the founding fathers of SEAMEO:

“the spirit of gotong-royong which means not only working together or cooperation, but also the feeling of needing each other and being needed by each other as one can experience in a harmonious family life..”

H.E. Sarino Mangunpranoto, Indonesia

“... though we may lack some talent and resources, we are not lacking in faith, in unity and in cooperation”

H.E. Mohamed Khir Johari, Malaysia
“...cooperation covers common good faith and common endeavors. Good faith without endeavor is futile, and endeavor without good faith leads to cross-purposes which are ineluctably self-defeating.”

H.E. Carlos P. Romulo, Philippines

“To be educated is just as much a human right as it is a means for the state to carve out its national identity.”

H.E. Toh Chin Chye, Singapore
“The need for regional cooperation is so obvious. Our countries are neighboring countries. The problems of our region are our problems. If we do not cooperate and start solving problems now, who else can better solve our problems for us? Take tropical medicine. We live in the tropics. Tropical diseases are our problems. A coordinated programme of research and training in this region will eliminate the possibility of overlapping of work.”

H.E. M.L. Pin Malakul, Thailand

“The road to Southeast Asian Community is still a long one but we are confident that SEAMES will prove itself an efficient setup; the first step towards better understanding and mutual confidence between our countries.”

H.E. Nguyen Van Tho, Vietnam
“...We do not need a greater population to help building up our countries; with the same number of population but healthier, a new face of Southeast Asia can be expected with brighter future...

What do we gain by pooling our forces and setting up a cooperative programme like this?

“...To solve our health problems which are of such importance to the well-being of our people, it is not possible for us to invest in each of our countries in all fields of medicine; therefore, a decision has to be made among ourselves that each of us would concentrate on different aspects of tropical medicine. The facilities in each country are usable among the member states. The realization of this fact and the understanding shared among members of this Central Coordinating Board has made the spirit of the “Region” become true.”

Dr. Chamlong Harinasuta
1st Secretary General,
SEAMEO TROPMED Network
What it is today...
SEAMEO TROPMED Network

✧ A regional cooperation network for education, training and research in tropical medicine and public health
✧ Under the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization
✧ Serves as a focal point in higher education and research in tropical medicine and public health

Vision

To be an international forum for development in health

Mission

To develop the capacity of individuals and institutions in delivering quality health care

Objectives

✧ To train health workers in quality healthcare management at different levels of the health system, with due regard to diversities in culture, needs and expectations of people for whom these services are intended
✧ To support research on endemic and newly emerging diseases associated with changing environments
✧ To advocate relevant health policies that are compatible with equitable and sustainable development
✧ To empower communities with the necessary knowledge and skills for understanding and finding solutions to health problems
✧ To encourage the use of traditional and modern-day tools for health promotion and disease prevention whenever and wherever applicable
✧ To minimize the economic burden of disease
Current Organizational Structure

SEAMEO TROPMED GOVERNING BOARD

SEAMEO TROPMED NETWORK CENTRAL OFFICE

SEAMEO TROPMED REGIONAL CENTRES

TROPMED Malaysia
Regional Centre for Microbiology, Parasitology & Entomology
Institute for Medical Research, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

TROPMED Philippines
Regional Centre for Public Health, Hospital Administration, Environmental and Occupational Health, College of Public Health, University of the Philippines, Manila, Philippines

TROPMED Thailand
Regional Centre for Tropical Medicine, Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand
Current Leadership of TROPMED Network
TROPMED Malaysia

Dato’ Dr. Fadzilah binti Kamaludin
Director, TROPMED Malaysia and
Director, Institute for Medical Research
Ministry of Health, Malaysia

Dr. Rohani Ahmad
Research Officer and Deputy Dean, DAPE
Entomology Unit
Institute for Medical Research
Prof. Eng. Romeo R. Quizon
Director, TROPMED Philippines and
Dean, College of Public Health
University of the Philippines Manila

Prof. Ma. Carmen C. Tolabing
Professor of Epidemiology
Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics,
College of Public Health
University of the Philippines Manila
Prof. Yaowalark Sukthana
Director, TROPMED Thailand and Dean, Faculty of Tropical Medicine Mahidol University

Assoc. Prof. Emsri Pongponratn
Consultant to the Dean for International Affairs and Alliance, Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University
Governing Board Members

Dr. Hajah Rafidah binti Haji Gharif
Dean, Pengiran Anak Puteri Rashidah Sa’adatul Bolkiah (PAPRSB)
Institute of Health Science
Universiti Brunei Darussalam

H.E. Prof. Dr. Eng Huot
Secretary of State
Ministry of Health
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Prof. Dr. Ir. Muhammad Anis, M. Met
Rector
University of Indonesia
Jakarta, Indonesia

Dr. Somchanh Xaysida
Director General,
Department of Training and Research
Ministry of Health
Vientiane, Lao PDR

Datuk Dr. Noor Hisham Abdullah
Director General of Health
Ministry of Health
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Dr. Kyaw Khaing
Director, International Health Division
Ministry of Health
Nay-Pyi-Taw, Myanmar

Dr. Jaime Z Galvez-Tan
Professor
Department of Family and Community Medicine
College of Medicine
University of the Philippines Manila

Professor John Eu Li Wong
Deputy Chief Executive of the NUHS
Dean, NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine
Singapore

Dr. Tran Thi Giang Huong
Director General
Department of International Cooperation
Ministry of Health
Hanoi, Vietnam

Dr. Amnuay Gajeena
Director-General
Department of Disease Control
Ministry of Public Health, Thailand

Ex-officio Members:

Dr. Gatot Hari Priowirjanto
Director
SEAMEO Secretariat

Assoc. Prof. Pratap Singhasivanon
Secretary-General/Coordinator
SEAMEO TROPMED Network
Milestones
in its history...
1965

✦ Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) was organized

1966

✦ Project for Tropical Medicine and Public Health consisting of 7 National Centres and one Central Coordinating Board officially approved by SEAMEO Council during its 2nd Meeting in Manila Philippines

1967

✦ Post-Graduate Course for Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene in Bangkok, Thailand was first offered to SEAMEC scholars as an international course

1968

✦ Name was changed to SEAMEC Regional Tropical Medicine and Public Health Project (SEAMEO TROPMED) during the SEAMEO Council’s 3rd meeting in Singapore

✦ Regional Specializations of the 7 National Centres were approved at the 5th Meeting of the Central Coordinating Board (CCBTM) in Tokyo

✦ Master of Public Health and Master of Science in Hygiene in Manila, Philippines were first offered to SEAMEC scholars
The 1970s.....

1970
- Post-Graduate Course for Diploma in Applied Parasitology and Entomology in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia was first organized
- Post-Graduate Course in Diploma in Applied Nutrition first offering was started in Jakarta, Indonesia
- The Southeast Asian Journal of Tropical Medicine and Public Health was first published as the official organ of SEAMEO TROPME

1971
- Diploma in Public Health started and later changed to Master of Science in Public Health in Singapore
- Personnel exchange between the Centres began

1973
- Master of Science in Occupational Medicine was first offered to SEAMEC scholars in Singapore
- Diploma in Tropical Microbiology first offered in Saigon

1975
- Nomenclature “Central Coordinating Board of TROPME” changed to “TROPME Governing Board” and the CCBTM Office to “TROPME Central Office”
1976

- Diploma in Tropical Microbiology renamed Diploma in Medical Microbiology and was hosted for two years by the Philippines

- New Masters Programmes were started:
  - Master of Science in Tropical Medicine
  - Master of Science in Public Health
  - Master of Science in Applied Nutrition
  - Master of Hospital Administration

1977

- Master of Science in Occupational Medicine was renamed Master of Occupational Health and was moved to the Philippines

- Master of Science in Public Health in Singapore was moved to Thailand and was renamed "Master of Public Health (Urban)"

1978

- Diploma in Medical Microbiology was moved to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
The 80s and the 90s.....

1982

- New Post-graduate programmes were started:
  - Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Nutrition
  - Doctor of Public Health
  - Doctor of Philosophy in Tropical Medicine
  - Master of Science in Clinical Tropical Medicine

- Personnel Exchange continued

1993

- SEAMEC in its 28th Conference in Singapore approved restructuring of SEAMEO TROPMED’s organization

  SEAMEO TROPMED Network with:
  - SEAMEO TROPMED Network Central Office
  - TROPMED Indonesia
  - TROPMED Malaysia
  - TROPMED Philippines
  - TROPMED Thailand

- Master of Science in Epidemiology (Modular Programme) was started with Free University of Berlin, College of Public Health University of the Philippines Manila, Faculty of Tropical Medicine Mahidol University and Khon Kaen University
The 21st Century.....

2000
- Masters of Arts in Health Policy Studies began in Manila Philippines

2011
- TROPMED Indonesia became a separate SEAMEO Regional Centre - SEAMEO RECFON

2012
- Diploma in Biomedical and Health Informatics began in Thailand
- Master’s Degree in Biomedical and Health Informatics started in Thailand

2014
- Masters in School Health and Nutrition was started in Thailand
What friends are saying about SEAMEO TROPMED Network...
“Having been associated with SEAMEO and its TROPMED program for three decades from 1968 until 1998, in various capacities, ranging from being a student (and gold medallist) at the DTMH course in Bangkok in 1969 to helming the DMM course at the IMR from its inception to being the IMR’s TROPMED Center Director from 1989 to 1998, I can be excused for having a very personal and emotional tie with the organisation.

Notwithstanding that I can without reservation proclaim how proud I am of the roles that the network played in the most important task of capacity building and capability strengthening in each of the member countries in the many challenges that constituted the core business of the tropical medicine initiative,

The training programs of the network resulted in hundreds of well trained and dedicated healthcare personnel who formed the backbone of the preventive and curative services in their respective countries and undoubtedly have left their indelible footprints in the sands of progress witnessed over the last fifty decades since the founding fathers gave life to the network.”

Tan Sri Dato’ Dr. M. Jegathesan
Collaboration is essential to public health work. This has guided the joint work of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Tropical Medicine and Public Health Network (SEAMEO TROPMED) in the development and advancement of health research, education and training through the years.

The highlight of this collaboration is through the Health Promotion Leadership Training Programme or ProLEAD that was first convened in 2004 by the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific in partnership with the Network. ProLEAD aimed to produce leaders adept at problem solving, mentoring and applying a systems approach to develop autonomous infrastructure and sustainable financing for health promotion.

Twelve years later, the ProLEAD initiative has contributed to the development of the Korean Health Promotion Foundation, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic Tobacco Fund, Malaysian Health Promotion Board (My Sihat), Mongolian Health Promotion Foundation, Tonga Health Promotion Foundation, VietNam Tobacco Fund and collaboration for the Brunei Health Promotion Centre and sintax law in the Philippines. SEAMEO TROPMED is very much instrumental on a larger scale in securing the state of public health currently enjoyed by the population of Southeast Asian countries. Over the past fifty years, the Network has witnessed the decline of major communicable diseases along side the rising epidemic of non communicable diseases (NCDs). The Network has made it possible to steadily re-orient the current cadre of public health experts towards the double burden of disease.

As we transition from the millennium development goals (MDGs) towards the sustainable development goals (SDGs), WHO envisions continuing collaboration with the Network to support our Member States as they plan and act on pressing concerns on health and the health of the planet.

Fifty years is indeed a major milestone for any institution, and fifty years would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of all those behind the scenes. It is then with great pleasure and gratitude that I congratulate SEAMEO TROPMED on its 50th anniversary.

We look forward to the next 50 years of collaboration between WHO and the Network, as a leading example of partnership in global public health, preventing disease and saving lives.

Dr. Susan Mercado
Director
Non Communicable Disease and Health Through the Life-Course
WHO-Regional Office for the Western Pacific
SEAMEO-TROPMED COLLABORATION with GTZ

Since the start of our collaboration in 1980 the programme aimed for a comprehensive institutional development process. This included expansion and improvement of infrastructure for teaching and research, establishing laboratories in rural and urban areas for community based projects and related operational research, promotion of professional staff (ToT), curriculum development, expansion and deepening of regional exchange with scholarships, staff exchange and regional seminars. Since this first decade coincided with WHO promotion of PHC the main focus was on how to optimize its operational aspects.

According to assessed needs special projects concentrated on: Community Health Development, Occupational and Environmental Health, Community Nutrition, Control of HIV/STD.

With this improved quality and need based training many hundred health professionals from ASEAN and other countries were enabled to become prime-movers of health development in their respective areas. (See the excellent documentation by T.V. Tiglao 2002). By now in most countries such degrees are prerequisite for leading positions in health-administration.

During the two decades lifetime of these projects ownership of involved partners was always considered essential, even if implementation was sometimes slowed. But ongoing multiplication and sustainability was achieved.

With the professional experience and consultancy of academic staff of SEAMEO TROPMED centres GTZ could plan and improve bilateral programmes for health development in the region (Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Nepal, Mongolia). With this lasting support more appropriate solutions could be found and linkages to the SEAMEO TROPMED Network and its training-facilities established.

The collaboration with SEAMEO Network has grown into strong professional institutions with intensified regional networking and high multiplication for health promotion.

Dr. Alfred Merkle, MSc
Former Senior Planning Officer Health, Population, Nutrition GTZ
I had a privilege to participate in the activities of SEAMEO TROPMED NETWORK throughout the first 30 years of its existence. I really enjoyed the spirit of cooperation and friendship among TROPMED participants.

I would like to congratulate SEAMEO TROPMED NETWORK on its 50th anniversary. It is a successful regional cooperation network for education, training and research in tropical medicine and public health, developing through changings in social, political setting in the region as well as scientific progress.

Prof. Emeritus Tan Chongsuphajaisiddhi
The influence of one regional cooperation network can transform the lives of many. Being one of the earliest SEAMEO Regional Centres established, SEAMEO TROPMED Network exhibits significant impact in education, training and research in tropical medicine and public health through its various programmes and activities. When SEAMEO TROPMED was formed, it has unique set up consisting of a Centre located in 4 of SEAMEO founding Member Countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand. The SEAMEO TROPMED Network Centres through the shared spirit of cooperation addressed low health standards caused by indigenous tropical diseases. Fifty years on, the belief that “healthy economy needs healthy community” held by SEAMEO’s founding fathers has not only been fulfilled by the Network, but also reached greater heights in its mission. On behalf of SEAMEO Secretariat, we congratulate you for your continued inspirational leadership role across SEAMEO’s varied activities and areas of expertise. We look forward with excitement about what SEAMEO TROPMED’s next 50 years will bring to the Southeast Asian Region. Happy 50th Anniversary!

Dr. GatotHari Priowirjanto
Director
SEAMEO Secretariat
“After graduating from Hanoi Medical University, I have become a lecturer of Hanoi Medical University and the first trip I went abroad was the trip to College of Public Health, UP Manila (the Philippines) to study master course on Epidemiology from 1993 – 1995 under the support of SEAMEO TROPMED. After coming back from the course I was nominated to be coordinator of a Vietnam – the Netherland Project to strengthen teaching in eight national and regional medical schools in Vietnam from 1995 until 2006. During those years SEAMEO TROPMED headquarter in Thailand had helped our project to organize a lot of training courses for teaching staff in these eight medical schools and had accepted more than 30 teaching staff to study master courses in our regional countries. Those supports helped Vietnamese medical schools having good teaching staffs, researchers and experts and many of them have had big contributions for medical schools in Vietnam.

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the SEAMEO TROPMED, I would like to take this opportunity to thank SEAMEO TROPMED Network, especially Prof. Dr. Sornchai Looareesuwan, Prof. Dr. Pratap Singhhasivanon, Secretary-General/Coordinator of SEAMEO TROPMED Network, Prof. Dr. Ma Sandra B Tempongko, Deputy Coordinator SEAMEO TROPMED Network, Ms. Vimolsri Panichyanon, Asst. Coordinator for Programme, who have had big contribution for Vietnam medical education in general and for our project in particular. “

Prof. Luu Ngoc Hoat, MD. MSc. PhD,
Vice President, Hanoi Medical University, Hanoi, Vietnam
Vice Director, Hanoi Medical University Hospital
Allow me to extend my heartiest congratulations to the TROPMED Networks Family for completing 50 glorious years of success and development. As past Director of the Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Tropical Biology (SEAMEO BIOTROP), I have enjoyed our companionship, through a number of inter-Centre collaborations under the umbrella of SEAMEO program. I wish you all the great success for many more years to come. Congratulations for the golden anniversary and keep leading by learning. Lifelong SEAMEO, lifelong TROPMED Network!

Dr. Bambang Purwantara
It is with great pleasure that I congratulate the SEAMEO TROPMED Network for their Golden Anniversary. Your half a century of existence is a testament to your genuine desire to realize your mission of being a center of excellence for public health in education, translational research and community health development through an effective health systems approach.

As one of the recipients of the SEAMEO TROPMED Scholarship in the country, I am proud to say that I continually benefit from the quality education that I gained all those years. Indeed, you shape transformational health leaders to improve the health status of all Filipinos.

Kudos to the remarkable efforts of SEAMEO TROPMED for the past 50 years. May you continue to persevere for the service of others.

GERARDO V. BAYUGO, MD, MPH
Undersecretary of Health
Office for Technical Services - B
Office for Health Operations
Quality Management System Office
Department of Health, Philippines
My involvement in a collaborative work with the SEAMEO TROPMED Network, in the years 2001-2002, undertaking an implementation research project titled “Empowering communities with a research culture: a case study in a rurban (rural in transition to urban) area of Myanmar”, was one of my highly memorable professional efforts in my career life. The project was one of the series of capacity building efforts accorded to the Ministry of Health of Myanmar by the Network. The whole research process that took place at Ah-Phyauk in Yangon Region was more than an academic undertaking; and was quite nostalgic working with trained health volunteers in the midst poor communities of the study area. At a time when terms like “poverty”, “equity” and “community empowerment” were taboos in Myanmar’s political context of the time, the project facilitated Myanmar Public Health Professionals to move forward with skills relating to advocating applicable health policies that ensemble well with equitable and sustainable development; and to empowering communities with the necessary knowledge and skills for finding solutions to priority health problems of their area. For me, “SEAMEO TROPMED Network” is a “Change Agent for Health Development” in our South East Asia Region.

Dr Than Tun Sein
Director for Socio-medical Research (Retired),
Department of Medical Research, Yangon, Myanmar
Part-time Professor, Anthropology Department, Yangon University, Myanmar
Honorary Professor, University of Public Health, Yangon, Myanmar
I would like to congratulate SEAMEO-TROPMED on its Golden Jubilee Celebration and I am very proud to have been part of the SEAMEO TROPMED success story both as recipient of its many human resource capacity building initiatives [DAP&E (KL) & MScPH (Singapore) scholars, various short courses] as well as its network officer (Dean, School of DAPE). In many ways, SEAMEO TROPMED has significantly influenced my career advancement.

TQVM SEAMEO-TROPMED

DATUK DR. LOKMAN HAKIM BIN SULAIMAN
MD, DAP&E, MScPH, PhD, FAMM, FAMS, FNSM, FAFPM, FASc
Pakar Perunding Kanan Perubatan Kesihatan Awam
Senior Consultant Public Health Physician
TIMBALAN KETUA PENGARAH KESIHATAN (PUBLIC HEALTH)
DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF HEALTH (PUBLIC HEALTH)
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH MALAYSIA
“TROPMED is recognized as a vital cog in SEAMEO’s machinery to serve the peoples of Southeast Asia. As a regional network, it has been able to draw on the expertise of its specialized units and the prominent academic institutions where such units are based.

Its varied expertise has proven to be a major source of institutional strength, being harnessed in carrying out its mandate of providing policy and technical advice to the governments of SEAMEO member-countries. Thus, TROPMED’s 50 years of commitment to the health welfare of the region is truly commendable and worth celebrating.

Dr. Ramon Bacani
Director
SEAMEO INNOTECH
I would like to, first of all, congratulate SEAMEO TROPMED on its 50th anniversary. Over the years, the TROPMED Network has witnessed a continuously changing global healths cape; constantly posing new and often complicated challenges. In response to these increasingly complex health threats, SEAMEO TROPMED has been continuously aligning itself to keep pace with the regional developmental momentum through enhanced education, training and research. Hence, TROPMED Network is a key initiative to nurture the capacities of both individuals and institutions, so as to encompass every community with quality healthcare, while creating a sustainable healthy living environment. These goals, I believe, are achievable with the collective resources, underpinned by a strong sense of cooperation, and driven by a mutual belief in a shared vision which are the greatest assets of SEAMEO TROPMED. I was privileged to be the Governing Board Member from Brunei Darussalam from 2009 to 2013, and during the period to chair the 51st SEAMEO TROPMED Network Meeting in Brunei Darussalam in 2012. I have confidence in SEAMEO TROPMED’s commitment towards realising the hopes for enhancing the quality of life for the peoples of Southeast Asia, and I would like to wish SEAMEO TROPMED success & all the best in all of its endeavors!

Dr. Anita B Z Abdul Aziz
Vice Chancellor (President)
Universiti Brunei Darussalam
Governing Board Member 2009-2013
Brunei Darussalam
THE SEAMEO REGIONAL TROPICAL MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMME was established in 1967 with the help of South East Asian Ministers of Education in order to improve the health and quality of life of people living in South East Asian countries.

This was done by pooling human resources of the participating SEAMEO member countries in a co-operative endeavor to develop and upgrade research and research training capabilities of existing medical and public health institutions in these countries.

The idea of such a network of institutions in South East Asia working together was initially mooted at a UNESCO organised Asia Pacific Tropical Parasitology meeting held at the faculty of medicine University of Singapore in November 1962 at which many eminent tropical medicine experts expressed the need for South East Asian countries to work together to combat tropical diseases affecting millions of people in the region.

Professor Chamlong Harinasuta, then Dean of the Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University, Bangkok, along with Professor A.A. Sandosham from the Institute for Medical Research, Kuala Lumpur, took the initiative to establish the SEAMEO TROPMED network which became a reality in mid-1967. Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam became the founder members of this network - which was later joined by other countries like Myanmar. A tropical medicine central office was established at the Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University, Bangkok, with Professor Chamlong Harinasuta as its first Secretary-General and Co-ordinator.

Various programmes in teaching, research and research training were established in member countries which attracted students, researchers, public health managers and others to work together for a common cause of reducing the morbidity and mortality due to tropical diseases. Courses in medical parasitology and entomology, on clinical tropical medicine, on public health, on tropical nutrition, on medical microbiology, epidemiology and other related fields were run by many of the medical institutions in each of the countries in the network to which students were enrolled, most of them with SEAMEO TROPMED fellowships.
Research training of young graduates by these institutions filled the gap for the much needed human resource expertise as well as for capacity strengthening of tropical medicine in the region. Frequent seminars and expert committee meetings on tropical diseases were held regularly and brought together various experts in the region for consultation. SEAMEO-TROPMED network became the flagship for research and control for tropical diseases in the region, often assisted by the W.H.O. and institutions in Japan, Korea, Australia, United Kingdom, Europe and U.S.A. For 50yrs today SEAMEO-TROPMED has carried out these teaching, research and public health activities in the region very aggressively which has resulted in the improvement of health and quality of life for millions of poor and under-privileged people in South East Asia. A remarkable achievement indeed.

In addition to all this, SEAMEO-TROPMED founded “The South East Asian Journal of Tropical Medicine and Public Health” in 1970 which is today in its 46th year of publication - a referred journal in tropical medicine globally.

I will fail in my duty if I do not mention the names of the pioneers who helped to establish SEAMEO-TROPMED on a firm footing. In each country in the region and beyond has had its pioneers steering the network to achieve its goals for the past 50 yrs.

From Thailand, besides the founder member, Professor Chamlong Harinasuta, we had other eminent experts like Professor Tranakchit Harinasuta, Professor Tan Chongsuphajaisiddi, Professor Santasiri Sornani, Professor Pratap Singhasivanon, Ms Vimolsri Panichyanon, Ms Suvanee Supavej and many others.

From Malaysia, pioneers like Professor A.A. Sandosham, Professor Ungku Omar, Professor C.P. Ramachandran, Professor M. Jegathesan, Dr. George Dewitt, DR. Lim Tiong Wah, Dr. Cheong Weng Ooi, Dr. Lye Munn San, Dr. Shahanaz Murad, Dr. Lim Boo Liat, Dr. Lee Han Lim, and many others.

From Philippines, founder members like Professor Ben Cabrera, Professor Edito Garcia, Professor Nina Gloriani, Professor Jane Baltazar, Professor Viscente Belizario, and others.

From Indonesia, Professor Sri Oemiati, Professor Bintari, Rukmono, Professor Felix Partono, and others.
From outside the region we received total support from Professor Manabu Sasa, Japan, Professor Chin Tack Soh, South Korea, Professor Brian Maegraith, Professor W.W. MacDonald, Professor Herbert Gilles and Professor David Molyneux, all from The Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. In addition we received support from Professor Walther Wernsdorfer from Austria, Dr. John Cross & Professor R.S. Desowitz from USA and Professor A.O. Lucas & Professor Tore Godal from TDR/WHO. Others include Professor V. Zaman from Singapore and Professor Vijayama Thomas from Malaysia.

The first regional seminar on parasitology and tropical medicine under the auspices of SEAMEO-TROPMED, and the Malaysian Society of Parasitology, was held in Kuala Lumpur at the I.M.R. on the 11th and 12th of November 1967 and which was officially opened by then Prime Minister of Malaysia, Honourable Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj.

Yes, we have come a long way since SEAMEO-TROPMED was established in 1967. We have had 5 decades of unprecedented scientific progress in tropical medicine and there is great promise of more. However we cannot rest on our laurels. Infectious tropical diseases are in danger of being forgotten by a rich world that has forgotten its poor and they will be forever forgotten unless we take an aggressive entrepreneurial approach to grasp the scientific, political and economic opportunities that arise and set in place good defenses against the evolution of our biological enemies. It is the task of all present here today to make sure that infectious tropical disease control will not fall back into the past darkness of the middle ages.

Let us continue to work together.

Dato Dr C.P. Ramachandran
Academician Professor Emeritus
Its activities through the years...
Human resource development ...
19 Academic Degree Programmes in the three TROPMED Regional Centres offered to health professionals of SEAMEO Member countries and of other regions

Scholarships for health professionals from the SEAMEO Member countries are provided by the Network in collaboration with development partners every year.

Figure 1: Distribution of scholarships to Postgraduate Degree Programmes by country, 1967-2016
### Distribution of scholarships by degree programme, 1967-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Programme</th>
<th>No. of scholars</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,006</strong></td>
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</table>
Different modes of delivery of the academic programmes are utilized to reach more health and health professionals in the region and beyond to include:

- Modular Offering
- Distance Education
- Off-campus Offering
- Consortium of several academic institutions
Training Courses

- Complement academic degree programmes
- Focus on specific regional and global health challenges and concerns
- 50 – 75 courses per year offered by the three Regional Centres and Network Office
- 2,000-2500 participants per year
- A number of fellowships provided by the Network Office

Figure 2: Distribution of fellowships to short courses by country, 1967-2016
Other Approaches in HRD

- Study visits
- Attachment Programmes
- Student/Faculty Exchange
- Utilizing other medium of communication and learning
Research ...
Basic and applied research is a major function of SEAMEO TROPMED Regional Centres. Topics are well within the specialization of each Centre while addressing current and emerging issues in clinical practice, disease prevention and control.

- More than 300 research projects per year implemented by the three Regional Centres
- Research outputs serve as inputs to development of health and health-related policies, restructuring of programmes and approaches to address health issues at national, regional and international levels
- Research activities also serve as an approach for its own human resource development and for enhancement of academic degree programmes of the Centres
One of the objectives of research and development activities is “Innovation, patent & commercialization.”

National and international awards received by researchers validate the relevance of the research activities of TROPMED network.
Include the biomedical, clinical, epidemiological, molecular, programmatic, social and behavioral dimensions of health

Vaccine development and anti-microbial resistance have been the focused of majority of research efforts on the following infectious diseases prevalent in the region:

- HIV
- Malaria
- Dengue
- Leptospirosis

The burden of disease and the behavioral determinants of lifestyle/non-communicable/chronic diseases as well as its behavioral determinants are the ones that receive attention

Neglected Tropical Diseases is another area of research addressed by the efforts of the TROPMED Centres

New areas for control purposes are investigated

- Allergy and Immunology
- Stem cell research
- Traditional and Complementary Medicine (Natural products discovery and development)
The research efforts on emerging issues related to Climate Change, Urbanization, One Health indicate efforts of TROPMED Regional Centres in being proactive.

Programmatic and policy issues receive equal importance in terms of amount of research efforts allocated.
The researchers of TROMPED Regional Centres has consistently published scientific articles

- More than 300 publications per year in peer reviewed journals
Response to emerging and re-emerging health and health–related issues and concerns...
The increasing prevalence of dengue in the region underscores the public health importance of this disease. SEAMEO TROPMED Network’s response to this health issue is operationalized through its:

- Research activities undertaken in the epidemiology, vector control, pathophysiology, clinical management and vaccine development
- Training activities
- Conduct of consultative meetings, symposia and fora
- Participation in high level discussions of issues relevant to the disease;
- Implementation of prevention and control programmes in different settings
- Collaboration with partners
The extent and nature of SEAMEO TROPMED Network’s response to address the malaria problem in the region have been wide and varied since its establishment in 1966.

In the early years, efforts were focused on prevention, management and control measures to decrease morbidity and mortality.

To date, efforts are focused on the critical challenges which include:

- remaining hotspots in the region
- growing evidence of artemisin- resistance
SEAMEO TROPMED Network responded to the emerging epidemic of HIV in the region as early as the 1980s.

Seminars, fora and workshops were organized with partners to understand the dynamics of the starting epidemic in the region and develop measures to stem the tide of the epidemic.

- National and regional projects focusing on the most vulnerable populations in different settings were implemented with partners.
- Research efforts on the different dimensions of the epidemic were conducted and continue to be undertaken.
- Capacity building for different groups were organized both at the national and regional levels.
- Communication materials were developed, disseminated and utilized.
- Advocacy efforts towards policy makers were implemented.
Partnerships with Ministries of Education of the member countries have been a long standing presence in the four regional centres of the network. The Network’s efforts can be grouped under the following categories:

✧ Training of teachers on health topics and concerns
✧ Provision of technical expertise
✧ Implementation of projects on school health with development partners
✧ Development and packaging of teaching/learning materials on health topics
✧ Provision of services
Disasters and Emergencies

In collaboration with partners organized the following:

• Asia Pacific Meeting on Health Emergencies and Human Resource Development.

• International Workshop on Approaches to Psycho-Social Care after Disaster and Lessons Learnt from Selected Projects in South and South East Asia,

• Regional Consultation on Ensuring Safe Hospitals and Health Facilities in Disasters,

• International Conference on Safe Hospitals: Culminating Activity for the UN Global Campaign on Safe Hospitals. With WHO WPRO.

• Bi-regional Consultation on Strategic Directions for Urban Health Emergency Management. With WHO WPRO

• A Review of Snake Bites in Emergencies in Cambodia.

Developed and implemented the following Regional Training Courses, with WHO WPRO:

• Health Emergency Response Operations

• Mass Casualty Management and Hospital Preparedness

• Safe Hospital: Emergencies and Disasters

• Risk Communication in Health Emergencies

• Training Course on disasters for School Heads/Officials
Conducts the following courses:

- Public Health Emergency Managers for Asia and the Pacific Course twice a year
- Climate Change and Health: Leadership Program

Developed advocacy manual for Hospital Safe from Disaster, with WHO WPRO.

Participated in the following:

- Revision of the Inter-Regional Training Course- Public Health Emergency Management in Asia and the Pacific (PHEMAP Generation 3) Course
Climate change and the environment have important health implications. As such, SEAMEO TROPMED Network considers climate change and the environment as one of its legitimate areas of concern. Thus, the Network embarked on several activities related to these issues such as:

- Research on the health and health-related implications
- Capacity Building activities
- Development of training materials
- Policy fora and symposia
Traditional and Complementary Medicine

In the region, the integration of traditional medicine into the national health care system and the integrated training of health practitioners is officially promoted. TROPMED Network Centres have been involved in the several activities related to traditional and complementary medicine, most notably of which are in the area of:

- Research
- Product development
- Capacity building
- Participation in related fora
- Collaboration with Partners
SEAMEO TROPMED Network as a regional development organization in Southeast Asia recognizes the increasing relevance and importance of evaluation. TROPMED Network covers a wide range of development programmes with development and government agencies. It has been in a pivotal position to undertake development evaluation efforts in different roles and capacities to include:

- Organizer of training/capacity building activities
- Proposal development consultant
- Monitoring and Evaluation consultant
- Implementer of M&E efforts of development programmes
Conferences, Seminars, Fora and Workshops...
Organizing international conferences, seminars, fora, and workshops has always been an activity of TROPED Network for the past 50 years that addressed the needs and challenges in the area of tropical diseases, public health and health development.

- The topics of these seminars and conferences have expanded as the landscape of public in the region changes.
- The first regional seminar was organized in 1967 on parasitology and tropical medicine in Kuala Lumpur.
- These conferences and fora organized at different levels not only serve as platforms for information sharing but also for capacity building.
- The Governing Board Meetings’ Symposia provides a platform for discussion on what directions the Network needs to pursue in relation to emerging health development issues.
Collaboration with Development Partners...
Collaborative efforts with development partners that share the same vision and mission with TROPMED Network has always been a practice in the Network. Throughout its existence, the collaborative efforts are implemented in various approaches such as:

- Scholarship Programme
- Special Projects
- Short Training Programmes
- Staff Exchange Programmes
- Research Projects
- International/Regional Conferences, Seminars, Fora
- Establishment of Network and Consortia

![Regional Cooperation](image1)

*Cholera Vaccine Gift from Malaysia to Indonesia*
*24th July 1970*

![Regional Training Course](image2)

*Regional Training Course in Malaria with Special Reference to Border Malaria*

![Conferences](image3)

*THAILAND-UNITED STATES-SEAMEO-TROPMEDE CONFERENCE: APPLICATIONS OF BIOTECHNOLOGY ON THE STUDY OF ANIMAL PARASITES AND THEIR VECTORS NOVEMBER 23-25,1981*

*Regional Cooperation*

*Establishment of Network and Consortia*
Linkages...
SEAMEO TROPMED Network since its inception establishes and maintains linkages with international agencies and institutions in pursuit of its role as a forum for education for sustainable development and health human resource development. Linkages established are with:

- Academic institutions
- Research Institutions
- UN Agencies
- Development Agencies
- Government Agencies
- Non-government Agencies
- Industries
- Civil Societies
Provision of technical assistance...
Provision of technical assistance is one of the functions of SEAMEO TROPMED Network. Officials and staff of the Network either serve as:

- Consultants to projects and programmes;
- Resource persons in training;
- Speakers in conferences and seminars
- Facilitators in meetings and conferences
- Members of Technical Working Groups/Steering Committees
- Editors of publication materials/journals
- Task Force chairpersons/members
Community Involvement...
Social responsibility is one of the core values of SEAMEO TROPMED Network. This core value is mainstreamed in all activities undertaken by the Network. Community activities of the Centres vary according to the needs, facilities and the events.
SEAMEO TROPMED Network’s mandate includes providing opportunities for staff development and institution strengthening. This is done through:

- Post-graduate degree programmes
- Short-term skills training
- Participation in international conferences and scientific meetings
- Personnel exchanges and extramural visits among Centres,
- Attachment programmes
- Research grants
- Conduct of periodic in-house management meetings
Official publication of SEAMEO TROPMED Network

✦ First appeared March 1970 with Prof. A. A. Sandosham as the first Editor
✦ The Network’s lasting proof of relevance in an information-driven world.

Prof. Maegraith of Liverpool, UK

“The growth of the SEAMEC scheme in the last few years has been remarkable. This is a tribute to the vivid guidance of the Secretary-General Professor Chamlong Harinasuta, and to the vision of the representatives of the member countries. They have given the Centre real substance. Now this journal can give it a mouthpiece to speak not only locally but to the world.”

✦ Started with 4 issues per year
✦ At present publishes six (6) issues per year
✦ Publishes research papers, original articles, reviews, case reports and abstracts of interest on tropical medicine and public health
− Received the “International Journal Award” by Elsevier Publication group in collaboration with the Thai–Journal Citation Index Centre (TCI) and Thailand research Fund (TRF) for 2011

− Publishes supplements re: topics of special concerns and proceedings of scientific conferences and meetings in the region
TROP MED Regional Centres’ Publications...
SEAMEO TROPMED Regional Centres as Centres of Excellence maintain its accessibility to partners and peers through its publications. Through the years journals, annual reports, newsletters are published to provide partners and clients with research findings, new programmes, technical guidelines, and updated information about the Centres.
The last five decades showed SEAMEO TROPMED Network grow and mature into what it is today. An organization dedicated to pursue its mission of improving the lives of the people of Southeast Asia. Its commitment to continue to be relevant, efficient and effective amidst the changing landscape of public health in the region and beyond as well as the challenges brought about by these changes can be seen in what it has achieved for the last 50 years.

For the next 50 years, SEAMEO TROPMED Network commits to continue to strategically position itself, be proactive and innovative in its approaches, build on what it has achieved, continue to work with partners and forged new partnerships to create a greater impact on sustainable health development.

It is in this note that SEAMEO TROPMED Network officials and staff would like to humbly acknowledge the support provided by everyone though its journey of 50 years.
Governing Board Meetings through the years...
Past Officials of SEAMEO TROPMED Network...
Prof. Emeritus Chamlong Harinsuta
Prof. Emeritus Santasiri Sornmani
Prof. Emeritus Tan Chongsuphajasiddhi
Prof. Dr. Sornchai Looareesuwan
Assoc. Prof. Pratap Singhasivanon