

**MASO 15th Council**  
 2019-2021

**President**

- Emeritus Prof Dr Mohd. Ismail Noor, FASc, FIUNS, FNSM

**Vice President**

- Prof Dr Norimah A. Karim, FNSM

**Hon. Secretary**

- Assoc Prof Dr Geeta Appannah

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- Assoc Prof Dr Hazizi Abu Saad, FNSM

**Hon. Asst. Secretary**

- Assoc Prof Dr Mohd Razif Shahril

**Council Members**

- Assoc Prof Dr Mahenderan Appukutty, FNSM
- Assoc Prof Dr Chin Yit Siew
- Assoc Prof Dr Gan Wan Ying
- Ms Zaiton Daud
- Dr Denise Koh Choon Lian

**Affiliations**



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## MASO Council Report 2019 – 2020

This report is to document the activities of the Malaysian Association for the Study of Obesity (MASO) council members over the last year. Despite being a rather challenging year, MASO has continued its collaborations with the Ministry of Health (MOH), the Nutrition Society of Malaysia (NSM), the Malaysian Dietitians' Association (MDA), and the corporate sector. The key activities among others were:

- Continued with the 3SC project till end of 2019.
- Conducted MASO Scientific Conference on Obesity with the theme of "**Obesity: Addressing Multiple Drivers and Solutions**" on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Oct 2019 in conjunction with 25<sup>th</sup> years of MASO (silver jubilee celebration).
- Won the bid to host Asia-Oceania Conference on Obesity (AOCO) 2021 in Kuala Lumpur with India pulling out at the last hour.
- Initiated the revision of Strategies to Prevent Obesity in Malaysia (SPOM) 2020.
- Continued to be involved in numerous Technical Committees of the MOH, Malaysia.

This Council Report is for the period from 4<sup>th</sup> July 2019 until 6<sup>th</sup> November 2020. The highlights of the activities conducted for the year are detailed as below.

### 1. 26<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 26<sup>th</sup> AGM of the association was held as follows:

Date & Time : 4 July 2019 (Thursday) at 5.15 p.m.

Venue : Room Nilam & Delima, Hotel Istana  
 73, Jalan Raja Chulan, Bukit Bintang,  
 50200 Kuala Lumpur

Chairperson : Emeritus Prof. Dr. Mohd Ismail Noor, President MASO

A total of **31 voting members, 1 non-voting member and an observer** attended the 26<sup>th</sup> AGM. In conjunction with the AGM, a Scientific Update was held with Emeritus Prof. Dr. Mohd Ismail Noor speaking on "**25 Years of MASO: Achievements & Challenges**". The AGM concluded with MASO's AGM dinner at the restaurant Taman Sari Brasserie in the hotel.

### 2. MASO COUNCIL MEETINGS

The 15<sup>th</sup> MASO Council held a total of 15 meetings over the past year. **Table 1** shows the attendance list of all Council members at the 15 meetings held since July 2019. The AGM 2020 was scheduled for June 2020 but postponed due to the COVID-19 crisis.

**Table 1: 15<sup>th</sup> MASO council meetings attendance list 2019 – 2020**

Council meeting Date	1 <sup>st</sup> 25 July 2019	2 <sup>nd</sup> 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2019	3 <sup>rd</sup> 19 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2019	4 <sup>th</sup> 7 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2019	5 <sup>th</sup> 8 Nov 2019	6 <sup>th</sup> 13 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2019	7 <sup>th</sup> 17 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2020	8 <sup>th</sup> 18 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2020	9 <sup>th</sup> 10 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2020	10 <sup>th</sup> 29 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	11 <sup>th</sup> 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	12 <sup>th</sup> 6 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020	13 <sup>th</sup> 25 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2020	14 <sup>th</sup> 23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct 2020	15 <sup>th</sup> 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2020	Total
Emeritus Prof Dr Ismail Mohd Noor	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	15/15
Prof Dr Norimah A Karim	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	13/15
A/P Dr Geeta Appannah	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	13/15
A/P Dr Hazizi Abu Saad	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	13/15
A/P Dr Mohd Razif Shahril	P	A	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	12/15
A/P Dr Mahenderan Appukutty	P	P	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	12/15
A/P Dr Chin Yit Siew	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	14/15
A/P Dr Gan Wan Ying	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	13/15
Ms Zaiton Daud	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	P	11/15
Dr Denise Koh Choon Lian	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	12/15

P: Present

A: Absent with apology

### 3. MASO MEMBERSHIP

To date, MASO membership number at **198** members. **Table 2** shows the breakdown of MASO members.

**Table 2 : Number of members**

Membership Type	No. of members
Life	94
Ordinary	101
Associate	1
Corporate	2
Total	198

### 4. MASO WEBSITE

The subcommittee for the MASO website comprised of the following members:

- Dr. Denise Koh Choon Lian
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd Razif Shahril

The website has been updated with information and photographs of MASO activities, including Suku Suku Separuh dan Cergas (3SC), MASO Scientific Conference on Obesity 2019, Nutrition Month Malaysia 2020 and upcoming Asia-Oceania Conference on Obesity (AOCO) in 2021. Besides that, the announcement of seminar and conferences related to obesity were also included in our website.

Members should visit MASO website [www.maso.org.my](http://www.maso.org.my) for updates on MASO activities and other events. Members are also encouraged to provide information related to obesity to be disseminated to other members and the public at large.

MASO expressed our thanks to Mr Lim Kooi Fong (webmaster) for his continued services.

### 5. ACTIVITIES OF THE YEAR

#### 5.1 Suku Suku Separuh dan Cergas (3SC)

MASO, working together with NSM, MDA and Nutrition Division, have received RM200k from MOH under MySihat for implementing two projects, under the Enhanced Primary Health Care. Project One is on TOT: Program Suku Suku Separuh & Cergas held among 200 volunteers for 2 sessions in Johor and Selangor. Project Two, is the Suku Suku Separuh & Cergas” Intervention Programme that target 1000 participants (50 participants/location) with BMI at least 27.0 kgm<sup>2</sup> and aged within 20-59 years old in Johor and Selangor.

A sub-committee, that comprised of 10 representatives, was formed to take charge of this project. They are:

- Emeritus Prof. Dr. Mohd Ismail Noor– MASO/Taylors University (Project Leader)
- Prof. Dr. Norimah A. Karim – NSM/UKM (Co-Project Leader)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hazizi Abu Saad– MASO/UPM

- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mahenderan Appukutty – NSM/UiTM
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nik Shanita Safii – MDA/UKM
- En Nazli Suhardi– MOH
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chin Yit Siew– MASO/UPM
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Geeta Appannah– MASO /UPM
- Mr. Lee Zheng Yii - MDA
- Mr. Hasyami bin Saihun - MOH

The first TOT workshop for volunteers was conducted on 24th and 25th November 2017, in Batu Pahat, Johor. The second TOT workshop for volunteers was conducted on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> February 2018, in Morib, Selangor. The intervention activities for Selangor and data collection in Tanjung Karang, Olak Lempit, Batu Arang, Beranang and Ulu Yam were successfully completed in the first quarter of 2019. While data collection for Johor comprised of 5 locations including Ayer Baloi in Pontian, Sri Gading and Parit Sulong in Batu Pahat, Bukit Pasir in Muar and Batu Anam in Segamat. The intervention project in Johor ended in November 2019. A full report is currently being prepared by Prof. Dr. Norimah A. Karim. Overall, a greater weight, waist circumference and body fat were observed particularly in those who followed up the program consistently, over the period of 6 months.

## 5.2 MASO Seminar Update

In conjunction of 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of MASO, Emeritus Prof. Dr. Mohd Ismail Noor gave a talk entitled “**25 Years of MASO: Achievements & Challenges**” as a Scientific Update on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2019 (Thursday) at 5.15 pm at Hotel Istana, Kuala Lumpur.

## 5.3 MASO Camp

Following the first MASO Camp in UPM on 4 April 2019 among 98 overweight and obese staff, the 2<sup>nd</sup> MASO Camp was conducted in Kolej Tun Syed Nasir, UKM Kuala Lumpur on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2019 among 20 new students whose BMI were greater than 27kg/m<sup>2</sup>. The weight loss modules used in this MASO Camp were based on those applied in the Suku-Suku Separuh dan Cergas (3SC) project. These recruited participants were supposedly followed up 3 and 6 months post the first session, however, due to COVID-19 pandemic, all activities related to MASO Camp were put on hold.

## 5.4 MASO World Obesity Day Celebration

World Obesity Day is now observed on 4<sup>th</sup> March as of March 2020 (previously been observed on the 11<sup>th</sup> October). However, all activities related to World Obesity Day 2020 were put on hold for this year due to COVID-19 pandemic. This includes those agreed public educational activities with Novo Nordisk.

## 5.5 MASO Education Fund

5.5.1 A total of 12 MASO education applications was approved for attending the 2019 International Congress on Obesity and Metabolic Syndrome & Asia-Oceania Conference on Obesity (ICOMES & AOCO 2019) in Seoul, Korea. The list of the 12 MASO education fund receivers is as the following:

- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mahenderan Appukutty (UiTM)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hamid Jan Jan Mohammad (USM)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chin Yit Siew (UPM)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gan Wan Ying (UPM)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hazizi Abu Saad (UPM)

- Asst. Prof. Dr. Satvinder Kaur (UCSI)
- Dr. Mohd Razif Shahril (UniSZA)
- Dr. Wee Bee Suan (UniSZA)
- Dr. Sharifah Wajihah Wafa (UniSZA)
- Ms Lim Sim Yee (UKM)
- Mr Wilfred Mok (UKM)
- Mr Wan Nurussabah (UPM)

5.5.2. In preparation for AOCO-MASO 2021 Scientific Programme, all council members as well as 2 past council members namely Prof. Dr. Poh Bee Koon and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nik Shanita attended a virtual European and International Congress on Obesity (ECOICO 2020) from 1<sup>st</sup> till 4<sup>th</sup> September 2020. A total of Euro 50/participant was paid by MASO.

### **5.6 MASO Scientific Conference on Obesity 2019**

MASO Scientific Conference on Obesity 2019 was held successfully on 15-16 October 2019 (Tuesday – Wednesday) at Hotel Istana, with the theme of “**Obesity: Addressing Multiple Drivers and Solutions**”. MASO Scientific Conference 2019 was being held in conjunction with the 25th Anniversary (Silver Jubilee Year) of MASO.

The conference was officiated by the Deputy Minister of Health, YB Dr. Lee Boon Chye. A total of 160 participants attended the two-day conference which includes two Plenary Lectures by Assoc Prof Dr Michael Vallis, Dalhousie University, Canada and Prof Dr Maithe Tauber, Toulouse University Hospital-Children’s Hospital, 47 oral and 32 poster presentations. The conference also attracted many ‘new’ researchers from several local universities. Seven and three winners, respectively, were announced for best poster and Young Investigator Symposium categories. Sponsorships totalled up to RM51,250.00 and these were supported by Novo Nordisk (Platinum), Yakult and InBody (both Gold), Nestle (Silver), MPOB and UNO Nutrition (exhibition table), Fonterra and Herbalife (advertisement).

For further updates on MASO Scientific Conference on Obesity in 2019, please visit [www.maso.org.my](http://www.maso.org.my).

### **5.7 Revision of Strategies of Obesity Prevention in Malaysia (SPOM)**

The MASO council agreed that the balance of the fund from the Suku Suku Separuh and Cergas (3SC) activity to be used to finance an update of SPOM 2005. Emeritus Prof. Dr. Mohd Ismail Noor is the Chairperson for this revision while Assoc. Prof. Dr. Geeta Appannah and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd Razif Shahril are the Secretary and Assistant Secretary, respectively. All the other council members agreed to be lead writers and writers, accordingly, for a total of 6 chapters in this revision. This revision will be also comprised of psychology (behavioral modifications), health economics, genetic and social sciences aspects, on top of the usual dietary, physical activity and policy components. Twenty-five writers from various universities as well as MOH were identified and approached for their contributions on this revision.

The major tasks that the majority of the writers are currently focused on systematic/scoping reviews. The writers were asked to be more thorough so that the evidence is relevant to the current time. Two virtual meetings have been conducted and the progress of each chapter was rather encouraging, to date. With this pace, it is anticipated that this revision document to be completed by the middle of 2021.

## **6. MASO affiliation with other Professional bodies**

### **i. World Obesity Federation (WO)**

MASO has been affiliated to the World Obesity Federation (WO), previously known as International Association for the Study of Obesity (IASO) since 1998. Emeritus Prof Dr Mohd Ismail Noor is currently a committee member on Membership for WO. Members are also encouraged to go into WO website at [www.worldobesity.org](http://www.worldobesity.org) for updated information on WO activities. Various webinars were conducted throughout the year specifically related to Obesity and COVID-19.

World Obesity's Strategic Centre for Obesity Professional Education (SCOPE) programme was conducted virtually for the second time from 22<sup>nd</sup> till 24<sup>th</sup> October in 2020. Further to the success of the first virtual SCOPE School with the World Heart Federation (WHF), the acclaimed course on obesity management coincided with the 2nd UAE Obesity Conference (UOC). The programme was chaired by Dr Sara Suliman, Dr Mohgah El-Sheikh and Dr Mohamed Al-Haddad and introduced advance knowledge on the epidemiology and cost of obesity, both globally and locally in the Gulf region. Both Assoc. Prof. Dr Mohd Razif Shahril and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mahenderan Appukutty represented MASO in this programme.

### **ii. Asia-Oceania Association for the Study of Obesity (AOASO)**

MASO is a pioneer member of the Asia-Oceania Association for the Study of Obesity (AOASO) since its inception during the ICO 1998 in Paris. Countries linked to AOASO bid and take the turn to host conferences at Asia-Oceania region, biennially.

The last ICOMES & AOCO conference was held in Conrad Hotel, Seoul, Korea from 29<sup>th</sup> till 31<sup>st</sup> Aug 2019. The ICOMES & AOCO was attended by 28 Malaysians (third largest country to send participants after Korea and China). Out of this, 19 Malaysians (under 45 years) have received a travel grant of USD 500/each and a waived registration fee for the conference.

With the support of MyCEB, MASO was granted the bid to host AOCO in 2021. The bidding was presented by Assoc Prof Dr Geeta Appannah with Emeritus Prof Dr Ismail as the Advisor. However, in lieu of the current pandemic situation and that the national border is still closed, MASO has recently decided that AOCO 2021 will be conducted virtually. This decision was made after several internal discussions as well as with AOASO representatives, namely Prof. Dr. Brian Oldfield (the current President) and Dr. Kwang Wei Tham (Secretary). Having said that, MyCEB will no longer fund the initially agreed sum of RM50,000.00 as international attendance is not feasible at the current time.

For updates on AOASO activities, members are encouraged to click on their website [www.aoso.org](http://www.aoso.org)

### **iii. Confederation of Scientific and Technological Associations in Malaysia (COSTAM)**

MASO has been a member organisation of the Confederation of Scientific and Technological Associations in Malaysia (COSTAM) since 13<sup>th</sup> February 2000. At present, the COSTAM office is located at the Pusat Sains Negara, Mount Kiara, Kuala Lumpur. COSTAM continues publishing the Journal of Science and Technology in the Tropics (JOSTT) with support from Academic Science Malaysia (ASM). Members from academia are encouraged to publish their findings in JOSTT. COSTAM also continues to organise the Malaysian Science and Technology Congress (MSTC), public lectures and workshop in relation to science and technology matters. Members are encouraged to take part in COSTAM activities. For further details, please visit COSTAM website at [www.costam.org.my](http://www.costam.org.my)

## **7. Other Activities**

### **7.1 Ministry of Health (MOH) – National Plan of Action on Nutrition Malaysia (NPANM)**

MASO works closely with MOH in NPANM. Emeritus Prof. Dr. Mohd Ismail Noor is a member of the National Coordinating Committee on Food and Nutrition (NCCFN). He also chairs the Technical Working Group on Nutritional Guidelines while Prof. Dr. Norimah A. Karim chairs the Technical Working Group on Nutrition Research.

### **7.2 MOH – Technical Working Group in Nutrition Promotion**

MASO has been working together with the TWG Nutrition Promotion for many years. and MASO's task is to assist the committee in promoting healthy eating and obesity prevention strategies among the public through multi-sectoral approaches from private to government agencies.

This TWG is one of the many working groups under the main body of NCCFN and chaired by En Nazli Suhardi from MOH. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gan Wan Ying and Dr Denise Koh Choon Lian are the MASO representatives for this committee. Although MASO's involvement is merely to disseminate all the planned activities for the year to various organisations that are involved in this TWG Group and subsequently to initiate any potential collaborations, there were no updates from MOH on any meetings or platforms for sharing of activities information for this year.

### **7.3 MOH – Technical Working Group on Nutritional Guidelines**

Emeritus Prof. Dr. Mohd Ismail Noor represents MASO as a Chairman for Technical Working Group (TWG) on Nutrition Guidelines. Other MASO Council members who are also involved in the activities under TWG Nutritional Guidelines are Prof. Dr. Norimah A. Karim, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hazizi Abu Saad, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mahenderan Appukutty, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chin Yit Siew, and Pn. Zaiton Daud representing various institutions/universities.

Another Technical Committee to review the Malaysian Dietary Guidelines (MDG) 2010 comprised of Emeritus Prof. Dr. Mohd Ismail Noor as the Chairman. All the council members are writers for different chapters of MDG. Assoc. Prof. Dr Mahenderan Appukutty chairs the Technical Committee Malaysian Dietary Guidelines for Vegetarian.

### **7.4 MOH – Technical Working Group on Nutrition Research**

The Technical Working Group for Nutrition Research has published "Nutrition Research Priority in Malaysia: Selected Bibliography of Published Journal Articles from 2015-2017, Volume III". Prof. Dr. Norimah A. Karim (representing UKM) is the Chairperson of this TWG. Emeritus Prof. Dr. Mohd Ismail Noor was representing Taylor's University while other MASO Council members who are involved in the activities under TWG Nutrition Research is Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mahenderan Appukutty, representing UiTM.

Another Technical Committee to review the 11<sup>th</sup> Nutrition Research Priorities comprised of Prof. Dr. Norimah A. Karim as an Advisor while all other MASO council members are writers for different chapters of NRP.

### **7.5 Nutrition Month Malaysia 2020**

Nutrition Month Malaysia (NMM), a community nutrition education programme organized by three professional bodies (NSM, MDA and MASO), with support from MOH (Nutrition Division). Prof. Dr. Norimah A. Karim and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chin Yit Siew are the MASO



representatives involved in the technical committee of NMM. A series of virtual activities on promoting healthy eating and physical activity will be carried out from 1<sup>st</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020. The theme for NMM 2020 is “Invest in Healthy Nutrition: Eat Right, Get Moving!” A much delay in organizing NMM for this year was due to uncertainties attributed by the current COVID-19 pandemic.

The virtual carnival will be conducted via social media platforms, namely Facebook and Instagram. A series of live session, virtual events, sharing of photos and videos as well as the distribution of goodies will be organized during NMM 2020. The objectives are to promote healthy eating and active living as part of daily habits, including all family members, especially children, as well as empower consumers with appropriate messages through a variety of format and platform and target groups.

For more information or to obtain educational materials produced by the Nutrition Month Malaysia 2020, visit Nutrition Month Malaysia’s Facebook Page or visit <https://virtualfair.nutritionmonthmalaysia.org.my/>

## **7.6 KESATRIA MALAYSIA**

Emeritus Prof. Dr. Mohd Ismail Noor has been re-appointed as a Kesatria Malaysia for 2020-2022. Prof Ismail’s role as a Kesatria is to assist in identifying and encouraging other potential local hosts to bid for and stage international conventions in Malaysia. It also includes promoting the benefits of hosting and inaugurating international conventions in Malaysia to their industry peers and colleagues. Through this platform, MASO was granted a bid to host AOCO 2021 in Kuala Lumpur.

## **7.7 Updates of Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPG 2004) on Obesity Management**

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Geeta Appannah represented MASO in the Committee that is revising the CPG 2004, and she has attended a total of 5 out of 7 meetings (last 3 were conducted virtually) since April 2019 up to October 2020. The major tasks of the revision are mainly on updating evidence for obesity management and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Geeta Appannah specifically, is involved in lifestyle intervention topic for obese children. Currently, the appointed writers for this revision are writing up their parts and the revised CPG is expected to be published by the middle of 2021.

## **7.8 FIT AND FUN 2020**

MASO will sponsor RM1000 for FIT AND FUN 2020 activity which will be organized by students from UKM. The event will be held from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 till 31<sup>st</sup> Jan 2021 using virtual platforms.

Prepared by:



**Associate Prof Dr. Geeta Appannah**  
*Hon. Secretary, MASO*

Checked by:



**Emeritus Prof. Dr. Mohd Ismail Noor**  
*President, MASO*