



Preface

I consider it unique that Royal FrieslandCampina, a multinational Dutch dairy company, initiated a nutrition survey in four South East Asian countries. From the very beginning, it was clear that the findings of such a survey would be of considerable interest internationally. External nutrition and public health scientists were invited to advise on relevant research questions for these countries and take responsibility for the study design. FrieslandCampina partnered with leading nutrition institutions in the four countries to help optimise the study design and to include, where necessary, additional nutrition questions relevant for the participating countries.

Multi-centre studies require maximum attention in the standardisation of methodology and measurements, and to be successful, there had to be confidence in a strong cooperative attitude between the participating countries. The coordination of SEANUTS (South East Asian Nutrition Survey) was in the hands of Dr Anne Schaafsma, Dr Ilse Tan-Khouw and Dr Panam Parikh from FrieslandCampina and Dr Paul

Deurenberg, an external advisor. In addition to the teams in the participating countries and FrieslandCampina, they can be congratulated on the successful completion of the survey.

The data reported in this supplement provide a description of the methodology used in the survey, including the demographic and anthropometric parameters measured and basic nutritional data on urban and rural children aged 0–5–12 years in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. The relationship between anthropometric nutritional status parameters and cognition is also described, confirming that undernutrition and malnutrition are associated with poorer cognitive development of children. Further analysis of the available data will show whether and to what extent new data are needed to initiate successful nutrition intervention strategies for the improved nutritional health of the most vulnerable population groups. Nutritional science has the responsibility to serve and shape the future direction of nutritional health in society.

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doi:10.1017/S0007114513002122