

Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society 2004 Award



Geok Lin Khor

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Dr Geok Lin Khor is professor of community nutrition at Universiti Putra Malaysia. She received her B.Sc. Agric. from McGill University, Montreal on a Colombo Plan Scholarship, followed by M.Sc. in human nutrition from University of Guelph, Ontario as an IDRC scholar. The pursuit of her doctorate (University of Malaya, 1985) on the nutritional ecology of the indigenous population in peninsular Malaysia gave her an indelible empathy for marginalized communities. A post-doctoral stint at Harvard School of Public Health in 1988-89, on a Fulbright Scholarship and Takemi Fellowship reinforced her sensitivity to pragmatic and policy issues in community health and nutrition. In recent decades, she has led multi-disciplinary teams that assessed and intervened in the nutritional well-being of low-income communities, including families of fishermen, rice growers, rubber and coconut smallholders, and urban squatters.

Prof Khor has been actively involved in capacity development in nutrition in Malaysia and internationally. She chairs a multi-sectoral Technical Working Group that spearheads nutrition training for a diversity of agencies, as part of the country's National Plan of Action for Nutrition (NPAN). Nurses, teachers, agriculture extension and family development workers are among those who have benefited from the training since its inception in 1998. She has also contributed in a major way to the development of Malaysia's National Nutrition Policy. At the university level, she has been a supervisor and examiner of numerous Malaysian and international graduate students, including those from Australia, Indonesia and Japan.

She is a member of the United Nations/Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN) Working Group for Capacity Development in Asia (CASNA). Since 1996, she has been a faculty member of SEAMEO-TROPED Regional Centre for Community Nutrition in Jakarta, providing support for its academic and nutrition leadership programs. Through ILSI South-East Asia, she has made key contributions, including the effort to harmonize the recommended dietary allowances for the region. She is also active in IUNS (International Union of Nutritional Sciences), having served on its Task Force on Nutrition and Urbanization in the past, and currently on the School Children's Nutrition and Health Task Force.

Her publications and presentations focus on nutritional epidemiology, community and public health nutrition issues. She is the chief editor of the Malaysian Journal of Nutrition, the official publication of the Nutrition Society of Malaysia of which, she is a founding member and trustee. She is a member of other editorial boards of scientific journals including those in the United Kingdom, Korea and Nepal.

In addition to the present APCNS Award, Prof Khor has received other honors including the Association of Commonwealth Universities Development Fellowship (1994/95), the Association of Southeast Asian Institutions for Higher Learning Fellowship (2001), and the Award for Excellent Service by Universiti Putra Malaysia three times in the past decade.

Her overall contribution to the nutritional health and well-being of peoples in the Asia Pacific region, the criterion for the APCNS award, is exceptional.

