Status of FOPs in the Region

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Outline

- Background
  - Introduction to Front-of-Pack (FOP) Labeling
  - Types of FOP Formats
- Status of FOPs in Southeast Asia Region
- Conclusion

Background

Nutrition Label is an important source of nutrition information - A tool for consumer education
- Nutrient Information Panel (NIP): commonly known as back-of-pack (BOP)
  - Provides information on the nutritional content of pre-packaged food
  - Assist consumers in making better food choices
- NIPs may not always be most effective in helping consumers choose foods wisely
  - Lack of time to read NIPs during shopping
  - Question accuracy of information
  - Do not understand the nutrient information
    - Small fonts
    - Language barrier

Background

- Suggest to include other “more friendly” tools to complement the BOP NIPs
  - To provide nutrition information in different formats
  - To improve understanding of nutritional properties of food among consumers → making better food choices
  - Front-of-Pack (FOP) Labeling as a More User-Friendly Solution
- Many different types of Front-of-pack (FOP) labels available in the markets
  - Ranging from simple icons/symbols to more complicated systems
Types of FOP Systems

Fact-based Information
- Each 250 ml bowl contains:
  - Calories: 140
  - Total Fat: 3.0g
  - Sodium: 1.6g
- Simplified presentation of energy and key nutrients
- Another way of representing nutrition information from NIP
- Usually include % contribution of daily energy and nutrient allowances—assists in meal planning
- Just present the fact
- Do not introduce “better” food concept

Criteria-based (Better for you)
- Varieties of symbols
- Different criteria or guidelines used for products
  - Qualifying or disqualifying criteria
- Qualitative grading but no quantitative information

Evaluative / Interpretative
- May combine fact-based system with prior judgment
  - Green: “good food”
  - Red: “bad food”
- Complicated system
  - can be confusing and difficult to understand

Types of FOPs – Fact-based System (Guideline Daily Amounts GDA)
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FOP in Singapore

**Healthier Choice Symbol (HCS)**

- Voluntary criteria-based FOP logo scheme which provides only qualitative and not quantitative nutrition information
- Consists of 12 main product categories with a total of more than 70 sub-categories
  - About 2500 products as of July 2015
- The nutrition guidelines were developed according to each product category
  - Products are generally lower in total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sodium and sugar.
  - Some are higher in dietary fibre, wholegrain, and calcium compared to similar products within the same food category.

Symbols What do they mean?
- At least 25% less sodium compared to similar food products from the same food category
- Sauces, recipe mixes and paste, canned meats, nuts, etc.
- At least 25% less saturated fat compared to similar food products from the same food category
- Dairy products, edible oils, fat spreads, convenience meals and 3-in-1 beverages
- Contain no or negligible amounts of trans-fat i.e. less than 0.5g per 100g of the product
- Margarines, edible oils, biscuits and cookies, cakes, breads and rolls.

- At least 20% more whole-grains compared to similar food products from the same food category
- Brown or unpolished rice, Brown Rice vermicelli (bee hoon), Whole meal Breads, etc.
- At least 25% more calcium compared to similar food products from the same food category
- Calcium-fortified soy products, Milk and Milk Products
- At least 25% less sugar compared to regular sweetened beverages or products from the same food category
- Asian drinks, sweetened drinks, cultured milk products, juice drinks and dried fruits

FOP in Singapore

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**“Healthier Choice Symbol”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbols</th>
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FOP in Singapore

Healthier Choice Symbol - Examples

FOP in Brunei Darussalam

Healthy Choice Logo
- “Criteria-based” type of FOP logo
- Voluntary FOP scheme in all imported cooking oils only
- Launched in 2004 by Ministry of Health Brunei Darussalam
- Application to be made to Director General of Health Services (NO charges) with product samples

FOP in Indonesia

GDA-type FOP Label
- Voluntary scheme of labeling
  ✓ No official implementation yet
- Label description to include ALL four nutrients including Energy, Fat, Saturated Fat and Sodium, together with their respective GDAs (% Daily Value per serving)
- GDAs are calculated based on the current Indonesian RDIs
- Label to be in neutral colour (non-traffic light colours)

FOP in Malaysia

Voluntary fact-based FOP scheme with icon on ENERGY only
- Launched in April 2, 2012
- Label presents only the amount of Energy (in kcal) a particular food contains
- Expressed as % NRV (percentage of the Nutrient Reference Value)
- Based on recommended daily requirements of 2000 kcal
FOP in Malaysia

Fact-based FOP Scheme
- Based on voluntary scheme for all food products except for special purpose foods and formulated milk powder for children
- Currently, more than 704 products bearing the FOP logo with Energy button

The Philippines

GDA type FOP Labeling for Energy is being implemented on a voluntary basis
- Based on calorie content of the food computed as % Energy based on Recommended Energy and Nutrient Intake (RENI) / the equivalent Philippine RDA

FOP in The Philippines

- Previous “Wise Eat” symbol (“criteria-based” FOP type) had challenges in implementation → No consensus on the scheme
- GDA type FOP introduced in 2012 by the Philippines Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
  - A standardized label format for use in pre-packaged food products

Modified GDA type for Energy Value

The Philippines

GDA type FOP Labeling for Energy is being implemented on a voluntary basis since 2012
- FDA encourages all food manufacturers and traders to revise their labels / labeling materials to reflect the GDA type FOP for energy or calories
- There are plans for adding FOP on sodium and sugar following 2015 PDRI
**FOP in Thailand**

GDA type Labeling Scheme was implemented in 2011 by Thai FDA

- Mandatory for selected food categories (5 priority snack food groups)
- Label description includes **Energy**, **Sugar**, **Fat** and **Sodium** content based on 2000 kcal/day
- The percentage of RDI (Thai RDI) per packaging unit, such as per sachet or carton is also shown

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**FOP in Thailand**

GDA type Labeling Scheme - Examples

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**FOP in Thailand**

GDA type Labeling Scheme - Education

- Collaboration efforts by Thai FDA, Federation of Thai Industry and Thai Dietitians Association in conducting campaigns such as **Road shows and workshops** to educate the public as well as **training** for food manufacturers
FOP in Thailand

Plan for “Healthier” logo

• The National Food Committee is exploring a new “Better-for-you” or “healthier” type of FOP
  ✓ Simpler tool (easier to understand)
• The symbol is to be displayed together with the GDA type FOP
• Pioneer category of food to be implemented may include
  – “Ready to eat meal”, snacks, milk and milk products, beverage, rice, cooking oil and salty condiments

Summary and Conclusion

• FOP labeling is viewed as a user-friendly tool to complement BOP NIPs to help consumers make healthier food decision
  – Implemented voluntarily in the SEA region except mandatory GDA labeling for 5 categories of snack foods in Thailand
  – 3 types of FOP labels/formats: Fact-based, criteria-based and evaluative/interpretative

FOP in Thailand

Plan for “Healthier” logo

• The logo design to be finalized and scheme expected to be implemented in late 2015 or early 2016 on voluntary basis
  – Nutrition criteria for each food category to qualify for bearing the new symbol to be finalized

Summary and Conclusion

• Many factors to consider when developing an effective FOP format that will be acceptable to most stakeholders in SEA
  – What is the key objective(s)/message?
  – Too simple vs too complicated vs too many
  – Level of nutrition knowledge of the consumers
  – Development of criteria/guidelines
    • Which nutrients to focus on?
    • Level of nutrient references/criteria
    • How to categorize foods?
    • Across all food categories or comparison within same food category?
  – Effects of FOP on consumer purchasing behaviour
Thank You !