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D8.1 - Dissemination, Communication & Engagement Plan

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Dissemination, Communication & Engagement Plan

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1. Executive summary

This Dissemination, Communication & Engagement Plan (DCEP) is a consortium-agreed strategic document that describes the activities that the Zero Hidden Hunger EU (ZHH EU) consortium will undertake to increase visibility and recognition of the project, disseminate results and engage with external stakeholders.

It addresses six basic questions:

WHO are the target audiences?

WHAT do we want them to know about the project?

WHY do we want to communicate with them? What are their needs and interests?

HOW will we reach them? E.g. the tools, channels and language we will use.

WHEN will each activity take place?

In the first project phase, the **communication** activities will focus on creating the Zero Hidden Hunger EU brand and raising awareness of its mission. In later stages, additional focus will be placed on **dissemination** of project results. **Engagement** of external stakeholders will take place throughout the entire duration of the project, will highlight project goals, progress, and results, and act as a feedback mechanism to ensure that project outputs will be tailored to the needs of the target groups.

Specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been identified to monitor and evaluate the activities and overall strategy, allowing the consortium to fine-tune the actions defined in this document. The plan also defines a management structure to guarantee the efficient implementation, tracking and assessment of the activities.

This report is a living document that will be revised on a yearly basis. The second release of this document, including an updated DCE strategy, is expected in Month (M) 24.

This plan has been conceived according to the Technical Annex of the project in compliance with the Ethics requirements and guidelines, and is based on the following recommendations:

- [Horizon Europe - Dissemination & Exploitation](#)
- [Communicating about your EU-funded project](#)

2. Objectives of the plan

The primary goal of this plan is to provide partners with a comprehensive framework encompassing guidelines, responsibilities, and timelines on how, when, what, and where to communicate about the project and to propose a first strategy for the communication, dissemination, and engagement activities. The plan presents a set of actions that, when implemented, will lead to the accomplishment of the following objectives:

OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN		MAIN ACTIONS
1	Coordinate, streamline, and support all DCE activities	Providing clear guidelines on how to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate and disseminate results • engage target audiences
2	Raise awareness of the project activities	Formulating project messages and identifying opportunities and channels to communicate about the project
3	Communicate and disseminate the findings and results among target stakeholders in an audience-adapted way	Developing relevant content based on specific DCE strategies for each target group
4	Identify and mobilize target stakeholders	Engaging in targeted outreach and networking, fostering collaboration, and addressing their specific needs and interests
5	Engage target audiences that will benefit from the project's results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking activities and linking with identified actors • Defining specific DCE strategies for each target group
6	Facilitate achieving the expected outcomes and creating impact	Revising the strategy periodically and setting Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

TABLE 1 – OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN AND MAIN ACTIONS.

3. Target audience

At the project kick-off meeting (M2), the project partners took part in a co-creation workshop led by EUFIC. Here, they defined the main target audiences of the project and agreed on segmenting them in two target levels (primary and secondary). This segmentation should be taken as a preliminary classification of target audiences and may be updated in the next release of the DCE Plan (M24) based on the project's progress.

Primary target audiences:

- Policy makers and advisory committees (in the field of diet and nutrition-related risk assessment)
- Public health authorities and advisory committees (in the field of diet and nutrition-related risk management and risk communication)
- Health professionals
- Food industry
- Scientific community & researchers working on food, nutrition, health.

Secondary target audiences:

- Citizens and consumers segments at increased risk of micronutrient deficiencies
 - Children and adolescents, women of reproductive age (including during pregnancy and lactation)
 - Older adults
 - Immigrant and ethnic minority groups
 - Those affected by social inequality or poverty.

A detailed analysis of each target audience, including information about their identities, the subgroups, the role they play in the project and their information needs is provided in Table 2.

4. Key messages

This section outlines the initial key messages about the project and a selection of messages tailored to address and ignite the interest of different stakeholders. As the project progresses, additional specific key messages will be defined based on preliminary results and feedback from stakeholders.

General messages

The main impacts of ZHH EU will be that all target groups will understand the importance of micronutrients to human health; that policymakers across Europe will hold credible data describing micronutrient deficiency prevalence, causes, health consequences, and costs in Europe, and that policymakers and food system actors will have the know-how to frame policy and implement effective multi-level programmes to eradicate micronutrient deficiencies in Europe.

ZHH EU will develop effective, evidence-based messages, tools, and interventions to target different policy makers, public health authorities, health care providers, academia, food producers, retailers, and consumers.

The project will promote an understanding of the prevalence of micronutrient deficiency and its impact for vulnerable groups in Europe.

Specific messages for each target audience

Table 2 presents specific key messages that have been developed for each target audience, during a co-creation workshop held with partners and the project kick-off meeting in M2.

TARGET AUDIENCE	ANALYSIS	MESSAGES
Primary audiences		
<p>Policy makers and expert advisory committees – risk assessors</p>	<p>Actors under this subgroup are heterogeneous (e.g., differing at the governance level), however, they are associated by a common feature: the power to influence and/or change policies related to food and health. As core targets for the long-term exploitation of the project, ZHH EU will address policy makers and government organisations at European, national, and local levels. Among these, ZHH EU will focus on European institutions (European Commission, European Parliament, European Council), National Ministries of Food, Finance, and Health.</p> <p>To enable more action, policy makers need data to develop evidence-based recommendations with a clear timeline to address the complex issue of micronutrient deficiency. These will be presented through meetings with stakeholders, training modules, and white papers. They also require cooperation and engagement among stakeholders and a common strategy that considers policy actions in a systemic context, as well as opportunities to get involved in the project (e.g., through the Policy Lab). Organisations like European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN UK) World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) will be addressed by involving them in Policy Labs or directly through interview, which will explore determinants and barriers (e.g. availability, affordability, accessibility) of current nutrition policies, and dietary practices and potential data gaps in preventing micronutrient deficiencies across European regions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZHH EU will deliver better data on prevalence and root dietary causes of micronutrient deficiencies, across Europe. These data will underpin informed risk assessments for formulation of Dietary Reference Values and dietary recommendations and formulation of evidence-based guidance for specific population groups. • ZHH EU will provide specific data describing populations at risk, including the prevalence of micronutrient deficiencies. • ZHH EU will provide data on the health impacts and economic costs of those health impacts to inform decision making about prevention and eradication programmes for micronutrient deficiencies.
<p>Public health authorities – risk managers and risk communicators</p>	<p>Public health authorities involved in risk management and communication are key in informing and executing food and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micronutrient deficiency is under-studied in the European region.

	<p>health policies. ZHH EU will address public health authorities at European, national, and local levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micronutrient malnutrition is not the same as starvation – people can look healthy but hidden deficiencies have a health impact. • ZHH EU will inform concrete and context-specific policy recommendations and actions at different governmental levels (European, national, and perhaps also local), and an integrated food systems agenda (as well as across governance levels). • ZHH EU will foster collaboration with stakeholders across sectors to address micronutrient deficiencies.
<p>Health professionals</p>	<p>Actors in this group include general practitioners, midwives, nutritionists/dieticians, nurses, doctors, hospitals, health visitors, and professional associations of these (such as ESPEN, FENS, EPHNA, WONCA Europe, ESPGHAN, European Midwife Association etc and their national counterparts). They play a crucial role in promotion of and educating about nutritious, sustainable, and healthy diets as they are often the first point of contact for individuals seeking advice about nutrition and health, despite a paucity of practical and specific knowledge about nutrition and health amongst these professions.</p> <p>One objective is to increase awareness in these groups on the extent of micronutrient deficiency in Europe and support identification of at-risk individuals. For that purpose, channels and tools such as webinars, social media, professional assistance channels, and stakeholder meetings will be employed. From M6, the Micronutrient & Nutrition Helix, will also provide a community-driven effect to raise awareness.</p> <p>The interest of health professionals can be stimulated by delivering information about addressing micronutrient deficiencies, practical guidelines, and tools for their integration into clinical practice (including collective and personalised dietary guidelines), and educational resources for both clinicians and citizens.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZHH EU will support the development of evidence-based clinical guidelines to support healthcare providers in delivering SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely) messages to large audiences about prevention of micronutrient deficiencies. • ZHH EU will provide updated information and resources to enhance citizen education, screening, and intervention strategies tailored to address specific nutrient gaps.

<p>Food industry</p>	<p>Stakeholders in this group are food manufacturers and retailers, including small and large supermarkets, speciality food stores, farmers, food producers, processors, and food business and trade associations. These stakeholders have the power to influence and shape food environments and therefore represent a core target group of ZHH EU. The objective is to inform them about nutrition targets in the context of healthy and sustainable diets. However, these actors might not have a clear idea of their role in dietary behaviour change. By providing easy access to food products, food retailers play a critical role in meeting the needs of consumers and, at the same time, can influence their choices, for instance through advertising, design of the shopping environment, and nudging strategies. Food manufacturers can address needs through product reformulation and food fortification.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZHH EU will provide concrete information about micronutrient deficiencies and how they can be overcome. • Knowledge delivered by ZHH EU will help companies, food retailers, and trade associations to understand consumer needs. • By developing dietary strategies to prevent micronutrient deficiencies, ZHH EU will connect actors in the food sector from manufacturers to retailers supporting innovation, R&D and product development, and a better understanding of dietary needs and strategies to improve nutrient intakes across vulnerable populations.
<p>Scientific community & researchers</p>	<p>This target group refers to representatives of universities, scientific institutes, and research centres as well as non-profit and commercial research organisations at national and European levels (e.g., ESPEN, JRC at ISPRA, Micronutrient Forum).</p> <p>ZHH EU also aims to create synergies and build partnerships with other EU-funded projects working on related topics. This group overall will be of low(er) priority at the beginning of the project but become more important as the project progresses. Indeed, since important research already exists on micronutrient deficiencies, one of the objectives is to build on existing evidence and encourage continuous research around micronutrient deficiency.</p> <p>Research communities around nutrition and healthy diets likely have a strong interest in obtaining data-driven insights, best practices, and policy recommendations, as well as in collaboration and networking opportunities with other stakeholders. Existing and future European Living Labs will also be targeted, including tools to identify and engage the best stakeholders in project activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZHH EU will disseminate methodologies and results of the project. • ZHH EU will exploit opportunities available using secondary data analysis and bio-bank mining, conveying the message that existing data and supporting information can be leveraged to create new knowledge and ensure cost-effective, collaborative research, thereby minimising redundancy and waste. • ZHH EU will design an innovative framework to develop dietary guidelines adapted to different vulnerable groups in respect of cultures, needs, sex and gender, age, health and socio-economic status.

Secondary audiences		
<p>Citizens and consumers segments at risk of micronutrient deficiencies Group 1: children, adolescents, women of reproductive age including during pregnancy and lactation, and older adults.</p>	<p>ZHH EU’s activities are designed to indirectly benefit consumers and citizens and increase awareness of the extent of micronutrient deficiency in Europe. At the core of this target group are vulnerable groups including pregnant and lactating women, children, older adults, people with non-communicable diseases, people with a low income, and people with restrictive diets.</p> <p>With regard to their needs and interests, an average citizen might want to know how the project will impact or benefit their daily lives. Citizens might lack understanding of the topic (notably of what is a micronutrient) and therefore need easy-to-understand information and recommendations to help them make better food-related decisions. To improve citizens’ decision-making and awareness, communicating relevant policies through social media messages, articles, and guidelines, but also indirectly through healthcare professionals and consumer associations, will be important.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZHH EU will guide consumers through the importance of micronutrients (essential to proper functioning of the body), minimal requirements, and food sources. • ZHH EU will provide tools to detect potential micronutrient deficiencies. • ZHH EU will spread information about the importance of adopting a whole diet approach to tackle micronutrient deficiencies. • ZHH EU will provide easy-to-understand strategies that empower citizens to make informed choices to safeguard against micronutrient deficiencies. Micronutrient malnutrition is not the same as starvation – people can look healthy but hidden deficiencies have health impacts throughout life.
<p>Citizens and consumers segments at risk of micronutrient deficiencies Group 2: immigrant and ethnic minority groups and those affected by social inequality or poverty.</p>	<p>Within the citizens and consumers subgroup, immigrant and ethnic minority groups, and those affected by social inequality or poverty, are at a high risk of micronutrient deficiency due to socio-economic factors and food resources.</p> <p>ZHH EU seeks to provide tailored actionable tools for policy makers and public health authorities to tackle micronutrient deficiencies for these three sub-groups as well as engaging representatives directly via focus groups and surveys. This includes refugees, food bank users, and Roma people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZHH EU will guide potentially vulnerable consumers through the importance of micronutrients (essential to proper functioning of the body), minimal requirements, and food sources considering barriers specific to these sub-groups. • ZHH EU will design easy-to-understand dietary strategies in several languages, tailored to the specific contexts in which individuals live.

TABLE 2 – KEY MESSAGES AND TARGET AUDIENCE ANALYSIS.

5.Channels and tools

The objectives outlined in this DCEP will be achieved using a diverse set of tools and channels, each of which is tailored to meet the needs and expectations of the target audiences. This section provides a thorough presentation of the specific tools and channels the project plans to use.

Each has been produced in accordance with Horizon Europe guidelines.

A subheading briefly describes target audiences for each tool or channel and defines the partner responsible for overseeing implementation as well as the involvement of others.

Brand identity & communication toolkit

Target audiences: all. Partner responsible: EUFIC with input from all

A brand identity is built upon unique elements that define it, including colour, logo, name, and symbol. These elements enable intended audiences to recognize and associate with the brand. Consequently, the logo holds significant importance as a fundamental aspect of the ZHH EU project identity. Its primary objective is to effectively embody the vision, mission, and core objectives of the project. As the project adopts a co-creative and multi-stakeholder approach in all its endeavours, development of the logo and its essential elements was undertaken collaboratively by the consortium, under the coordination of EUFIC.

Logo & tagline

The final ZHH EU project logo is shown below:



FIGURE 1. ZERO HIDDEN HUNGER EU PROJECT LOGO

The graphic symbol evoking the shape of a target represents the ambitious project objective of eradicating micronutrient deficiencies in Europe. The outer circle of the target represents vitamins, the middle circle trace elements, and the inner circle represents the target minerals. The circles evoke data collection and echo the typographic character «0» (zero).

The decision to include the tagline was taken to ensure the goal of the project is clear to audiences who may be unfamiliar with the term ‘hidden hunger’.

This logo development process is described in [Annex 1](#).

Brand guidelines

After finalizing the logo, EUFIC created a **brand manual** to guide partners and external users (e.g., web developers) in the correct use of the logo and its elements. The brand guidelines are available to all partners via the project’s shared platform. The manual contains different versions of the logo and explanations on how to (not) use it. It also outlines the primary and secondary colour palettes, typography, and proper use of images.



Communication and dissemination toolkit

EUFC will create a **communication and dissemination toolkit** that will support partners in presenting the project to target audiences and in engaging relevant stakeholders. The toolkit will consist of a general presentation of the project, branded PowerPoint and Word templates, and a leaflet introducing the project's aims. Later in the project, and after the first results become available, the toolkit will be updated with other materials (e.g. press kit, common social media assets), as needed.

Website

Target audiences: all. Partner responsible: EUFC with input from all

The project website serves as the main gateway and essential source of information for all audiences. It provides comprehensive details about the project's objectives, activities, partners, news, events, and results. The website links to other channels and platforms, e.g., Micronutrient Nutrition Helix, and SciFoodHealth LinkedIn and X (formerly known as Twitter) channels and Zenodo Community.

The project website will be launched by 30 April 2024 and will be accessible at the domain www.zerohiddenhunger.eu.

The website will be built in a stakeholder-oriented manner to raise the interest of the target audience in ZHH EU's activities.

The navigation bar at the top of the website leads visitors to the following pages:

- **Homepage:** The entry point to the website, which contains the project's mission statement and a brief explanation on what the project is about. It also shows a preview of the latest project news, contains a newsletter sign up field, and links to social media channels, the Micronutrients Helix, and Zenodo Community.
- **About:** Visitors can learn more details about the project, its ambitions, and the partners involved. A scrollable banner with partner logos leads visitors directly to the "Partners" page.
 - **Zero Hidden Hunger in action (subpage):** Will provide a more comprehensive overview of ZHH EU's scientific activities.
 - **Micronutrients (subpage):** Contains clear and accessible info on what micronutrients are, why they are important, and where to find them.
- **Partners:** Contains a graphical index with all partner logos that, when clicked, lead to a dedicated page about the partner and their role.
- **News & Events:** Shows all the project news, upcoming events related to the project's topic, and press articles in which the project has been mentioned. A minimum of 4 blogposts will be published on the website every year.
- **Resources:** Any type of public resources that ZHH EU will create will be uploaded here (infographics, videos, publications, info sheets, etc.) and made available for download.
- **Glossary:** Contains an alphabetically sorted list with project-related terms and their definitions. The aim of the glossary is to make content-specific words easily understandable, especially people who might not be familiar with the topics.
- **Contact:** Displays a contact form that visitors can use to reach out to the ZHH EU partners for any questions they may have on the project. The form requires users to insert their name, surname, e-mail address and message, as well as accept the privacy and cookie policy.

In addition to the project website, project partners are encouraged to post project content on their organisations' websites and to share project news in their existing newsletters and social media, linking to the project website where possible to increase traffic.

Social networks

Target audiences: all (platform dependent). Partner responsible: EUFC with input from all

A range of social media networks will be used to:



- increase visibility of the project
- raise awareness about the issues the project is trying to solve (e.g., extent of micronutrient deficiencies in Europe)
- share updates on project activities
- disseminate results
- promote participation in events organised by the project.

With the project's objectives, target audiences, and desired messages in mind, EUFIC, in agreement with WP8 partners, has identified **X and LinkedIn** as the most suitable social networks for regularly sharing updates and achievements of the project. A decision was made not to create new social media accounts specifically for ZHH EU, but instead to benefit from the existing follower base of the @SciFoodHealth X and LinkedIn channels. These channels have a combined following of over 28,000 followers, composed of a wide community of experts and non-experts with interest in research in the areas of nutrition and health, food science and technology etc. The @SciFoodHealth accounts post daily news about EU projects dealing with related topics and have been designed to outlast all projects, representing a long-term tool to disseminate results, and updates on the projects even after their end. These accounts also address the European Commission's recommendations of promoting collaborations between projects to maximize their impact.

EUFIC will also promote project activities and results on the **Sustainable Food Systems Network (SFSN)** and its associated newsletter. The SFSN is a fast-growing online platform designed to connect and inform food system stakeholders to promote knowledge, news and opportunity sharing and facilitate partnership building. The online community currently counts >2,000 members representing researchers, industry professionals, policy makers, citizens, students, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) representatives, and others actively engaged in Sustainable Food Systems (SFS). The network's platform allows for both breaking silos between SFS fields through the general feed and providing space for more specialized discussions through topical groups, including one focused on the microbiome.

Finally, the general public will also be targeted via co-branded informational campaigns that will be carried out via EUFIC's Instagram account (23,300 followers).

EUFIC will be responsible for regularly posting on the identified social networks and tagging relevant partners. Project partners guarantee strong support in providing content for development of posts, and resharing and engaging with the content. It is also their responsibility to promote the project through their organisational social networks, choosing the most appropriate one according to the message and the target audience to be reached.

In total, EUFIC will aim for at least 96 posts (e.g. 2 posts per month) on any of the identified channels with three types of content:

- Central communication (project updates, press releases, conferences & events, videos, infographics, publications, etc.)
- Activities resulting from collaborations with other projects
- Contextual news (topical scientific news).

Every social media post will consistently incorporate the project's hashtag (#ZeroHiddenHungerEU) to simplify the process of searching for project-related information and reporting on the collective impact of all partners social media activities. Additionally, whenever feasible, posts will include a link to the project website where more information on the featured topic can be found.

Media engagement

Target audiences: media as a multiplier to reach all audiences. Partner responsible: EUFIC

Where possible, ZHH EU will aim to generate coverage of the project in traditional media outlets such as (online) newspapers, television, and radio to extend its reach and enhance the promotion of the project's

societal benefits. EUFIC will take primary responsibility of identifying suitable opportunities on an EU-wide level, with support from partners to identify opportunities in national or local media.

In the first year of the project, EUFIC will generate a preliminary media list of outlets that might be useful to reach the different target audiences.

With the assistance of all partners, EUFIC will proactively reach out to journalists and other communication experts specializing in relevant fields (e.g., public health, sustainable food systems) at both national and European levels. Press releases will be created and distributed with the aim of increasing awareness about the ZHH EU project and providing the media with information regarding the primary activities and outcomes of the project. Press releases will be targeted both at general and specialized media (e.g. trade magazines, publications aimed at specific professionals), depending on the specific message we are sharing. This approach is anticipated to increase the reach to stakeholders at both the national and European levels.

When targeting the general public and generic media, the press release will be formulated without the use of technical language, in contrast to the press releases intended for specialized media where the approach might differ.

EUFIC will be responsible for writing the first draft of each press release in English. This draft will then be shared with the Joint Coordinators, other relevant partners (e.g., WP8 Leader), and the WP responsible for activities described. Once finalized, EUFIC will distribute the press release to journalists who have been selected based on their relevance to the subject matter. Additionally, the document will be shared with all partners via email, encouraging them to disseminate it, either through – for example their press office – or other means (e.g., local journalist contacts). Each press release will be accessible for download from the project website and will be actively promoted via social networks.

Conferences, workshops, events

Target audiences: project primary target audiences via media. Partner responsible: all

To foster collaboration and engagement, all ZHH EU partners are encouraged to showcase their project activities and outcomes through a diverse range of events such as stakeholder meetings, conferences, workshops and other relevant gatherings. The primary goals behind these presentations are to inform audiences, generate interest and involvement, highlight the project activities and potential applications, and foster formation of fruitful collaborations.

A list of events will be collated, with the collaboration of all ZHH EU partners, and shared on the project's SharePoint. A communication and events toolkit (see section 5) will be supplied by EUFIC to all partners to promote the project at events and will include a standard branded presentation template. EUFIC will be responsible for promoting the partners' participation at events on the website and social media. For their part, partners commit to recording each event they have participated in (including details about the event, such as the type of audience, an estimate of the audience size, etc.) in the publication guidelines prepared by EuroFIR (see section 8).

There will be one MicroNutrient Helix (online) event annually organised by the project as well as support for those organised by the partners.

Scientific publications

Target audiences: scientific community, health professionals, food industry. Partner responsible: research partners

ZHH EU partners will co-author scientific publications in peer-reviewed journals to disseminate research outputs and maximize impact. ZHH EU will provide early and immediate open access (OA) to peer-reviewed scientific publications, including articles, books and book chapters, monographs, and PhD theses. Authors are also encouraged to provide OA to non-peer-reviewed publications. Results will be published in OA venues,

avoiding predatory platforms with questionable ethics. If possible, and in line with the policy of the targeted journal, partners should provide early access to results by posting preprints of articles on bioRxiv. In addition, each final accepted manuscript will be deposited in a trusted repository (institutional, domain-specific or general-purpose) and published on the project website.

Accessible articles

Target audiences: general public. Partner responsible: EUFIC

Every year at least one article about ZHH EU's topics will be published on EUFIC's website (www.eufic.org) to introduce citizens and consumers to the importance of micronutrients and explain complex scientific concepts of the project in an easy language.

Digital training modules/webinars

Target audiences: policy makers, food industry, retailers, consumer groups, health practitioners and students. Partner responsible: EUFIC with input from all

Digital training modules will be created combining different resources with the aim of:

- disseminating the prevalence of micronutrient deficiencies and associated health costs
- explaining strategies for the eradication of micronutrients deficiencies and reduction of nutritional inequalities at the general population level and among vulnerable groups.

Development of the training modules will start at M13.

Micronutrient Nutrition Helix

Target audiences: primary target audiences. Partner responsible: CrowdHelix

Within the Crowdhelix Open Innovation platform, a new virtual community/ecosystem, project-specific Helix will be created and managed for engagement and outreach throughout the project. The new Micronutrient Nutrition Helix will provide robust support for the dissemination and communication activities of the ZHH EU project and will be an engine for impact, exploitation, clustering, and dissemination activities. The Micronutrient Nutrition helix will benefit from the existing wider Crowdhelix network (770+ member organisations from 57 countries incl. all EU Member States). The Helix has the potential to reach 14,000+ research and innovation collaborators in more than 50 virtual thematic areas/clusters, which cover most research and innovation fields.

This new Micronutrient Nutrition Helix will be launched by M6. It aims to form a network of at least 150 organisations/individuals globally (M40), including new international, interdisciplinary, and strategic members. The members will encompass not only ZHH EU partners but also members from pertinent existing helixes such as Aquaculture, Food, Health, Mission soil, Water, Society, as well as target groups including government and policymakers (e.g., EU Commission, Parliament, Council), industry actors (food business operators especially those making foods for vulnerable groups, trade representatives), EU authorities (e.g., EFSA), civil society (end users) and actors/associations across Europe and Internationally (e.g., European partnership on sustainable food systems for people, planet and climate, EU-Africa Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture), Micronutrient Forum, EIT Food, EIT-Health, WHO, etc.), as well as scientists (e.g., agrifood science, nutrition and dietetics, biotechnology, projects past and present), and positive interest groups (e.g., Food and Agriculture Organisation, National Diet & Nutrition Surveys, EC Knowledge Centre for Global Food and Nutrition Security). The stakeholders will be kept informed about the research outputs of the project through collaborative opportunities and the inclusion of events, project results and key announcements on the Helix platform.

To ensure project sustainability, the new Micronutrient Nutrition Helix will be maintained free-of-charge after the project ends and at least until 2030. The new Helix will persist as a self-sustaining community, committed

to facilitating collaborative partnerships. Acting as a vital communication and dissemination channel, it will be used by consortium members to share their events, relevant resources, find potential partners, and form consortia to access funding opportunities. Moreover, the platform will empower ZHH EU to publish its results and reach niche stakeholders thereby maximizing the visibility of the project outputs, accelerating impact and enhancing collaboration.

CrowdHelix's recommender engine, which is embedded within all Helixes, will hold significant value for ZHH EU. This AI-powered matchmaking algorithm seamlessly connects posted opportunities with organizations and individuals possessing the required expertise. When an organization or platform user registers on the new Helix and highlights their areas of expertise, the platform's recommender engine assists in identifying suitable opportunities within the Helix. This matchmaking algorithm can also facilitate connections with various stakeholders and aid in finding specific collaborators to meet the project's needs.

The Micronutrient Nutrition Helix will be moderated proactively to build trust leading to collaboration and the formation of partnerships to pursue future opportunities arising from the outcomes of this project. Responsibility for onboarding new members and maintaining an active community lies with the Micronutrient Nutrition Helix Manager. Direct feedback from partners regarding functionalities and improvement points for the Helix is highly encouraged. Deliverable 8.6 "MicroNutrientHelix Community Report" will be associated with the launch of the community (M6).

Clustering activities

Target audiences: primary target audiences. Partner responsible: CrowdHelix

Clustering activities are crucial to accelerate the impact of the project by harnessing the collective efforts and capabilities of diverse individuals and organizations engaged in related research, development, and innovation.

The Micronutrient Nutrition Helix can be used as a cluster engine, acting as a platform that fosters positive relationships among its members, facilitating collaboration and open innovation. However, it is important to note that the nature of this collaboration and its outcomes can take various forms.

Within the framework of Horizon Europe, clustering activities are understood as the strategic alignment between related projects and initiatives, which results in collaborative groups that can be geographically arranged either as consolidated or dispersed. In practice, this strategic alignment can result in the development of clusters or networks. Clusters are classically defined as innovation environments characterized by geographic proximity, facilitating activities such as knowledge spillovers, face-to-face interactions, and resource sharing. Knowledge and Innovation Networks, in turn, can rapidly disseminate specialised knowledge regardless of the geographic location of its members. Both terms serve to describe the collaborative network that is being conceptualised for ZHH EU.

For the successful development of this network, it is essential to implement strategic actions that establish its stable growth and dynamic development, taking into consideration the need to encourage knowledge mobility, protect the appropriability of innovation, and ensure clear identification of common objectives among its members.

To guide ZHH EU's clustering activities, it is crucial that all members involved embrace the principles of horizontality, co-responsibility, and co-creation, which are needed for fair participation, shared responsibilities, and the collaborative creation of knowledge and solutions. By aligning the specific objectives of the ZHH EU project with the feasible common objectives of the future collaborative network, it is possible to define the following common ambitions:

- Maximise cross-project communication, exchange knowledge and experiences and facilitate synergies and strategic partnering with other European organisations
- Encourage partners to create interdisciplinary consortiums and develop new ideas for future funding opportunities and enable the development of new types of businesses

- Deliver credible evidence enabling policymakers and food system actors to deliver food-focused strategies and policies to eradicate micronutrient deficiencies from Europe.

Coordination of the strategy to facilitate identification of potential synergies and opportunities within this network will be supported by Task 8.3 - Clustering and Collaborative Ecosystem: MicroNutrient Helix.

This facilitation process of collaborative relationships among projects and initiatives is a continuous and cyclical activity that, although strategically guided, can yield diverse outcomes and possibilities. Therefore, it is important to emphasize the organic nature of this process, which requires management through iterations of planning, action, analysis, and continuous improvement.

Consequently, the ZHH EU cross-project collaboration plan is divided into collaboration (S1), joint activities (S2), and future collaboration (S3), (Figure 1, below).



FIGURE 2. ZERO HIDDEN HUNGER EU CROSS-PROJECT COLLABORATION PLAN

During Collaboration (S1), projects with similar aims and synergies will be identified (1.1) including: a) those funded under similar calls, b) EU initiatives and c) national and regional projects. ZHH EU will collaborate with EU- and otherwise-funded projects, current (e.g. HORIZON-CL6-2023-FARM2FORK-01-9, FAIRFISH, AGRF0026, TOMACOP, SMILING, SUNRAY, Data4Food2030, ALLIANCE, FISHEUTRUST, WATSON) and past (e.g. FNS-Cloud, SWEET) as well as actors/associations connected with micronutrients (i.e. EIT Food, EIT-Health, World Health Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organisation, European Association for the Study of Obesity, Welthungerhilfe, The Micronutrient Forum, European Federation of Associations of Dietitians). External parties that confirmed their interest in collaborating will appoint representatives to join and form the Collaboration Board (1.2).

The Collaboration Board aims to guide the activities to be carried out among the projects and initiatives within the collaborative network. The Collaboration Board will also define the KPIs to monitor and review engagement and impacts (1.3) and routes for fluent and frequent communication (1.4). A common identity (logo, templates etc.) will be designed and disseminated (1.5). Joint working groups may be organised within the consortium involving stakeholders (1.6).

In Joint Activities (S2), the Collaboration Board will promote and encourage collaborative activities, including regular meetings to identify collaborative initiatives (2.1), joint participation in outreach (e.g. webinars, local info days, media briefing) (2.2), social media, (2.3), joint scientific publications (2.4), support for development of future policies (2.5) and joint participation in scientific and business events (2.6).

Finally, the final stage of the collaboration plan, Future Collaboration (S3), aims to ensure its long-term sustainability through the definition of models for ongoing collaboration. To facilitate this process, a virtual workshop will be organised towards the end of the project, to promote development of interdisciplinary research and innovation ideas, develop new consortia and identify target calls.

Policy labs and toolkit

Target audiences: policymakers, hard-to-reach groups. Partner responsible: EPHA, with support of EUFIC

To maximise the impact of ZHH EU outcomes at EU policy level, EPHA will organise Policy Labs to spread awareness and foster dialogue with policymakers. The Policy Lab will comprise up to 20 stakeholders, including EU and national policymakers, healthcare practitioners, manufacturers, retail representatives, civil society, and NGOs. The Policy Lab will be organised in Brussels to aim to bridge the gap between research and policy by bringing the stakeholders together to discuss the project topic and results and by co-designing effective recommendations and tools, that address identified needs while coinciding with policymakers' mandates. The policy interventions will be obtained across governance levels (i.e., European, national, and/or regional). In addition, EPHA will conduct interviews with opinion leaders and key experts (such as The European Food Safety Authority, national or regional government authorities, Joint Research Centre, and DG SANTE) to assess the determinants and barriers of current nutrition policies and dietary practices impacting micronutrient deficiencies.

EPHA will use feedback loops to co-design solutions to overcome micronutrient deficiencies and will produce a discussion paper and a policy toolkit aimed at promoting discussions at governmental and parliamentary levels and catalyse change. The output of the Policy Lab and interviews will also feed into WP8 (Dissemination, Communication & Education) to raise awareness among the target stakeholder groups.

Additionally, national consumer surveys and interviews with hard-to-reach groups (i.e., refugee, food bank users, Roma) will further explore social, economic, and environmental factors.

6. Timeline

A timeline for the DCE activities that are planned for the first 2 years of the project is presented below. This timeline will be revised and extended during the annual review of the DCE plan.

2024						
M	Month	Communication, Dissemination and Engagement Activities			Meetings	
YEAR 1	M1	January	Creation of Zero Hidden Hunger EU landing page on EUFIC's website; Definition of the website requirements and selection of the website developer	Development of project logo and visual identity	Zero Hidden Hunger EU Dissemination, Communication & Engagement Plan (D8.1); Delivery of brand guidelines, including logo and templates	Kick-off meeting; Co-creation workshop on target audiences, channels and messages; Vote on project logo
	M2	February	Website content preparation			
	M3	March				
	M4	April	Website launch			
	M5	May	Preparation of roll-up, digital leaflet and promotional video interviews about the project	Set-up of collective list with relevant events (with help of all partners)		
	M6	June			Launch of a Micronutrients Helix on the Crowdfunder Open Innovation platform; Micronutrient Nutrition Helix Community Report (D8.6)	
	M7	July				
	M8	August	Preparation of the first social media campaign			
	M9	September				
	M10	October	Launch of the first social media campaign	First article published on EUFIC's website		
	M11	November				
	M12	December			Micronutrient Nutrition Helix Annual Event	

2025						
YEAR 2	M13	January		Update DCE plan		First annual meeting
	M14	February				
	M15	March				
	M16	April		Second article published on EUFIC's website	Creation of the training module part 1	
	M17	May				
	M18	June				
	M19	July				
	M20	August	Preparation of the second social media campaign			
	M21	September		Review of DCE Plan and preparation of update		
	M22	October	Launch of the second social media campaign			
	M23	November				
	M24	December		Publication of D8.3	Publication of D8.2, Micronutrient Nutrition Helix Annual Event	

TABLE 3 – TIMELINE FOR CDE ACTIVITIES IN YEAR 1 AND YEAR 2.

7. Key performance indicators

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for evaluating the success of activities described in this plan were developed based on those specified in the Grant Agreement, as well as new indicators introduced during the initial stages of the project.

Unless otherwise indicated, KPIs are calculated for the entire project duration.

ACTIVITY	METRICS	KPI
ZHH EU Website	Number of visitors and page views	Number of page views > 30,000 by project end (M48) Number of blogposts/news items = at least 4 per year
Articles on eufic.org	Number of articles and page views	At least 1 article per year At least 5,000 page views
Newsletter	Number of newsletters & subscribers	At least 1 newsletter per year At least 200 subscribers
Media engagement and press releases	Number of media mentions	At least 50 media mentions in European media
Conferences and other events	Number of events attended, and number of events organised by partners	At least 20 events attended At least 5 events organised by partners
Micronutrient Nutrition Helix	Number of members of the community	>150 organisations/individuals in the Helix (M40)
Clustering activities	Number of workshops organised	1 virtual workshop per year with clustering projects and initiatives
Policy Lab	Number of stakeholders joining the Policy Lab	At least 10 stakeholders
Social network	Number of posts and impressions	@SciFoodHealth posts: min. 96 posts with a total reach of >2M impressions
Sustainable Food System Network (SFSN)	Number of posts	At least 1 post/month
Scientific publications	Number of scientific publications submitted or published by one or several partners	At least 5 scientific publications
Digital training modules/webinars	Number of attendees per training	4 training webinars At least 30 attendees per webinar
Final Conference	Number of attendees	100 attendees

TABLE 4 – OVERVIEW OF KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS PER CDE ACTIVITY.

8. Dissemination, communication and engagement management: Structure and procedures

All ZHH EU partners will be actively involved in the implementation of the communication, dissemination and engagement activities, as defined by this plan.

EuroFIR, as the leader of WP8, will oversee activities and partners' effort.

The expected contributions from partners within their capacities (e.g., people months according to the agreement) are the following:

- Implementing communication, dissemination, and exploitation activities within the networks they manage or belong to, in their countries and at the European level
- Participating or organising, in a coordinated way, conferences, workshops, events, etc. to promote the project and its outcomes
- Publishing scientific articles and providing content for articles and social media activities targeting the large public, or social media posts via their accounts
- Supplying events, news, and updates for the website, as well as for other tools specifically identified
- Requesting support for communication and dissemination materials (flyers, save the date for events, factsheets, etc.) proactively and on time
- Keeping track of all activities implemented, aimed to show the consortium outreach and address the expected outcomes and impacts planned.

To guarantee involvement of all beneficiaries, associated partners, and affiliated entities, a protocol will be created, as well as reporting procedures and tools, presented in this section.

Reporting activities

All ZHH EU partners are required to keep track of their communication, dissemination, and engagement activities, with a twofold aim:

- Monitoring the activities implemented through the KPIs (and provide a timely assessment of the provisions contained in this plan)
- Tracking the outreach and assessing the achievement of the expected outcomes and impacts.

EuroFIR has prepared publication guidelines, available to everyone on ZHH EU's SharePoint (M3). These will allow all partners to continuously report on the performed activities and the results reached (e.g., type and size of audience). The structure and the instructions on how to use it will be presented during a meeting with all partners.

In principle, ZHH EU partners should enter data in the reporting scheme as soon as they implement an activity. EUFIC and EuroFIR will monitor inputs and regularly contact all partners reminding them of their duties:

- Every 4 months, to have a general overview and up-to-date information ready for the Executive Board meetings
- Before every annual consortium meeting, to discuss a possible fine-tuning of the strategy in a dedicated session
- For the reporting period fixed by the European Commission, to update data that is necessary for the preparation of the technical report
- By M24 and M48, when the mid-term and final report on ZHH EU communication and dissemination is due, a description of the generated impact and a reviewed versions of this plan must be delivered.

Revision of the plan

According to the Grant Agreement with the European Commission, this document (Dissemination, Communication and Exploitation Plan) will be officially revised twice during the lifetime of the project:

- **D8.3:** By M24, when the overall strategy will be reviewed, considering the achieved results and the feedback from the European Commission reviewers, and will be prepared for the last part of the project
- **D8.4:** By M48, a final version of the exploitation strategy will be presented, identifying a detailed trajectory to achieve the expected outcomes and impacts.

In addition to this, EUFIC, together with the other WP8 partners, will assess the strategy every year (before the project annual meeting) to ensure that issues and barriers for the achievement of the planned objectives and activities are spotted and managed properly in time. EUFIC will ask partners to ensure that they have updated reporting with their activities to present and discuss achieved results (as well as the lessons learned, and the challenges met) during a dedicated session in the annual meeting. This meeting will also provide an opportunity to identify possible actions to fine-tune the plan. In addition, the ZHH EU Communication Team, with the contribution of all partners, will define the actions for the following year and update the timeline included in this plan.

9. Summary and next steps

This document presents the dissemination, communication and engagement strategy, and the activities designed by the ZHH EU project to reach project objectives, having in mind the target audiences' needs and expectations, gathered with the involvement of partners in the beginning of the project. It includes a strategy and the tools and channels that have been identified to launch communication and dissemination processes as well as partners' responsible for the different activities. Finally, the plan defines a management structure to guarantee efficient implementation, tracking and assessment of the activities.

The first four months are dedicated to the analysis of needs and expectations, definition of the plan and procedures to draft and manage it. Considering the urgency to start communicating about the project and its activities, partners – and in particular EUFIC– started to implement some actions during these first three months (project website and content, brand identity, social media, partners brochure).

The coming months will test the strategy described in this document. Based on achievements and impact monitoring between now and December 2026, the DCEP will be evaluated and fine-tuned to ensure cost-effectiveness and the achievement of the project objectives. The second and following releases of the DCEP will likely include new actions.

ANNEX I: Zero Hidden Hunger EU's visual identity and development process

Based on a survey that gathered input from the project partners during December 2023, EUFIC created four logo proposals. These options were presented to the partners at the project kick-off meeting on 1-2 February 2024, together with an explanation of the concept behind each logo. A voting process was held to identify the preferred option, and additional comments on the concept, shape, colours and functionality of the logo options were gathered through a discussion.

Following the kick-off meeting, the logo concept was further refined in collaboration with partners from WP8 and the project's Joint Coordinators. The final logo concept and colour palette is presented below.

LOGO

1. Concept

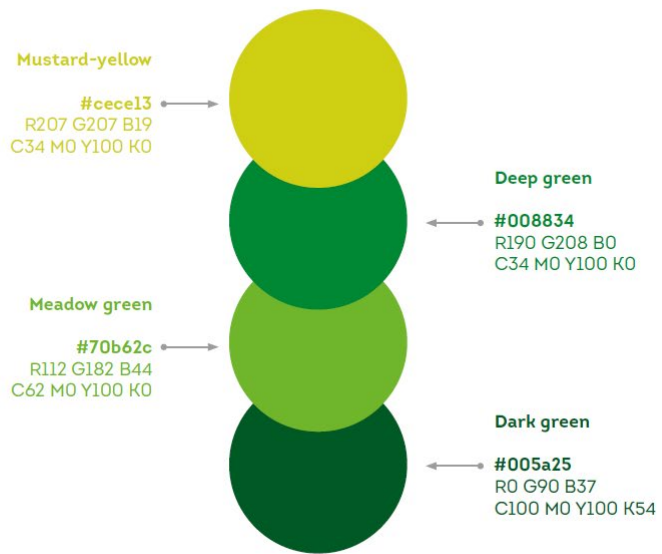
A clearly stated objective: to put an end to Hidden Hunger in the EU. The graphic symbol represents this explicitly targeted objective. The outer circle of the target evokes vitamins, the central circle, trace elements and the heart of the target, minerals. The circles evoke data collection and echo to the typographic character «O».



COLOURS

1. Primary

The primary palette consists of colours used to represent Zero Hidden Hunger as an ambitious project that uses science and data to reduce Hidden Hunger in the EU. The primary palette represented by the colors of the logo is to be preferred.



COLOURS

2. Secondary

The supporting palette is derived from the primary one. These colours are to be used as supporting ones, e.g., for backgrounds in both digital and print outcomes. They can be used if an extended palette is required.

