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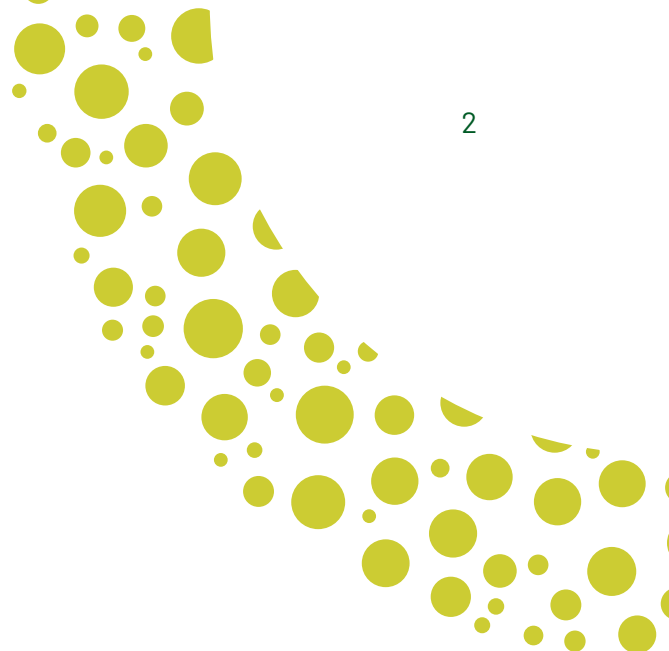
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Deliverable

D8.6 – MicroNutrientHelix Community

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MicroNutrientHelix Community

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Contributors

NAME	ORGANISATION
Iria Loucaidou	Crowdhelix
Magdalena Tyndyk	Crowdhelix
Siân Astley	EuroFir AISBL
Kevin Cashman	University College Cork
Anna Power	UCC Academy

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1. Executive Summary

The MicroNutrientHelix Community report (Deliverable 8.6) is part of Task 8.3 – Clustering and Collaborative Ecosystem, within Work Package 8 – Dissemination, Communication & Education, of the *Zero Hidden Hunger EU* (ZHHEU) project.

The *Micronutrient Nutrition Helix*, a virtual community ecosystem hosted on the Crowdhelix platform, will be utilized to boost and accelerate the dissemination, communication, exploitation of ZHH EU's results, and facilitate clustering strategies. It aims to bring together relevant stakeholders to facilitate the dissemination of the ZHH EU project's outcomes and Key Exploitable Results (KERs) to a wide audience, and to support the formation of future partnerships and projects. The *Micronutrient Nutrition Helix* serves as a key component of the project's overall dissemination and communication strategy, providing a targeted platform for engaging stakeholders and maximizing impact.

The *Micronutrient Nutrition Helix* was launched on 26 June 2024 (Milestone 15). A clear and measurable Key Performance Indicator (KPI) has been defined, which is to form a network of at least 150 organisations/individuals by Month 40 (April 2027), including new international, interdisciplinary, and strategic members. Progress will be monitored, to evaluate the activities and strategy for growing the community defined in this document, allowing the consortium to fine-tune actions.

Deliverable 8.6 provides background information about the Crowdhelix platform (Section 2), on which the *Micronutrient Nutrition Helix* is hosted. The *Micronutrient Nutrition Helix* and its main objectives are introduced in Section 3. The steps involved in the creation and launch of the Helix are described in Section 4, including the selection of an appropriate Helix name and the appointment of a Helix Leader. Finally, Section 5 of the Report outlines the strategy to expand the cluster and build a strong community of experts in nutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, micronutrient malnutrition and hidden hunger in Europe.

Progress on the development of the *Micronutrient Nutrition Helix* will be incorporated into two planned updates of the Dissemination, Communication and Engagement Plan (D8.3, D8.4), in M24 and M48 (December 2025 and December 2027), respectively.

2. The Crowdhelix Platform

Crowdhelix is an international Open Innovation Network that connects and enables research organizations, SMEs, and industry actors to collaborate, innovate, and grow. The network currently has more than 800 member organizations from 57 countries, including all EU Member States, as well as several Horizon Europe associated and third countries (see Figure 1).

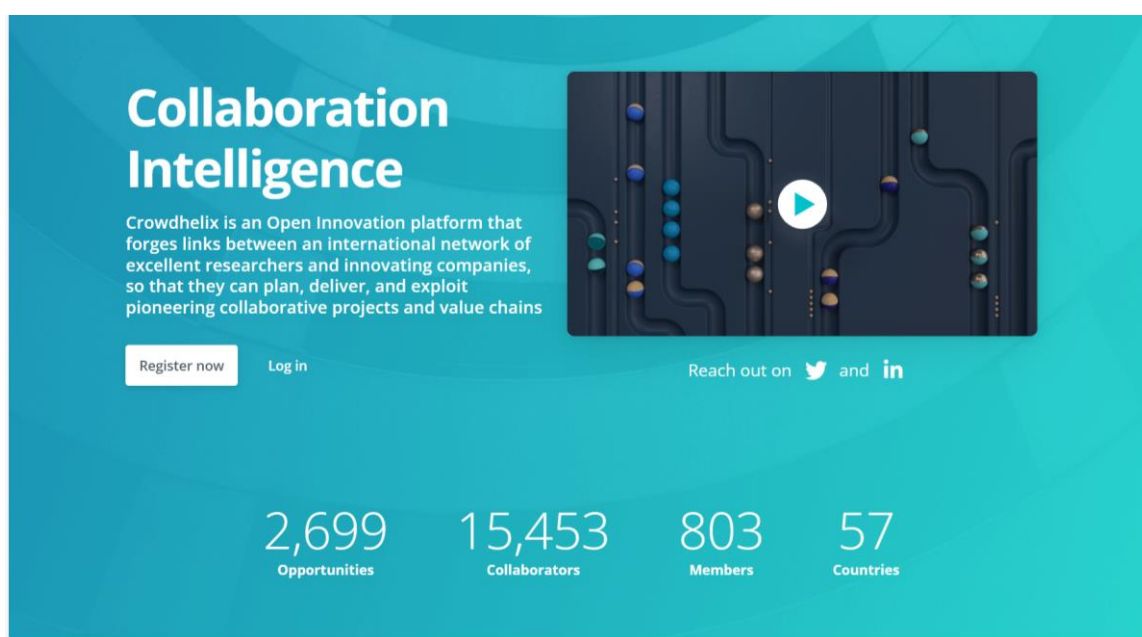


FIGURE 1: CURRENT NUMBER OF CROWDHELIX MEMBERS

The network is set up around thematic areas, called "Helixes" (e.g. *Health Helix*, *Vascular Helix*, and *Digital Helix* etc), and is supported by a technology platform (www.crowdhelix.com), where these virtual communities are hosted. A Helix is a specialized community/cluster comprising experts and research and innovation professionals across academia and industry. The Crowdhelix platform currently consists of over 50 virtual thematic Helixes (see Figure 2) covering most research and innovation fields, that reach over 15,000+ research and innovation collaborators (registered users). The main functionalities provided by the platform include:

- Announcements and publication of project updates and activities
- Participation in Training, Matchmaking and Knowledge Sharing Events
- Collaboration opportunity posting
- Expertise offering
- Search engine for identifying suitable collaborators
- Interaction with experts/organisations
- Tailored feed of posts and opportunities, dynamically adjusted by the platform's algorithm based on user's research interests.

Opportunities posted on the platform can address cross-cutting topics and may include up to three theme-related helixes.



FIGURE 2: CURRENT HELIXES ON THE CROWDHELIX PLATFORM

The platform acts as a matchmaking and profiling tool, thanks to an intelligent recommender system with built-in machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms designed to optimize the matchmaking process for collaborative partnerships and to contribute to market uptake, IP creation, dissemination, and exploitation.

A Micronutrient Nutrition Helix (www.crowdhelix.com/helixes/micronutrient-nutrition/info) has been created within the framework of the ZHH EU project. It will accelerate the project's dissemination, communication, exploitation, and clustering strategies to build a strong, self-sustaining community of like-minded stakeholders that will have access to project developments, and who can collaborate with experts in their field of interest.

3. Micronutrient Nutrition Helix

Within the CrowdHelix Open Innovation platform, a new virtual community/ecosystem, project-specific Helix has been created for engagement and outreach throughout the project.

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

The *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix was launched on 26 June 2024 in M6 and aims to form a network of at least 150 organizations/individuals globally (M40, April 2027). As part of our phased strategy, we aim to onboard 50 users in the initial phase (M6-18, or the period June 2024 to June 2025), another 50 in the second phase (M18-30, June 2025 to June 2026), and an additional 50 by the end of M40 (April 2027).

The *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix will include relevant experts and organisations from the Target Audience Groups identified in D8.1 - Dissemination, Communication & Engagement Plan, to cover all aspects of the project, and guarantee continued interest from key actors, both during and after the project lifetime.

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. The strategy to be implemented to grow and maintain the community is detailed in Section 5 (Community Expansion and Next Steps).

Responsibility for onboarding new members and maintaining an active community lies with the *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix Manager, Iria Loucaidou, who is part of the Crowdhelix team. The Helix Manager will proactively track and assess participation and engagement to optimize the community growth strategy and ensure that interactions within the Helix are both productive and collaborative.

Crowdhelix's recommender engine, which is embedded within all Helixes, will hold significant value for ZHHEU, seamlessly connecting posted opportunities with organizations and individuals possessing the requisite expertise.

To ensure project sustainability, the new *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix will be maintained free-of-charge after the project ends and at least until 2030.

4. Creation of the *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix

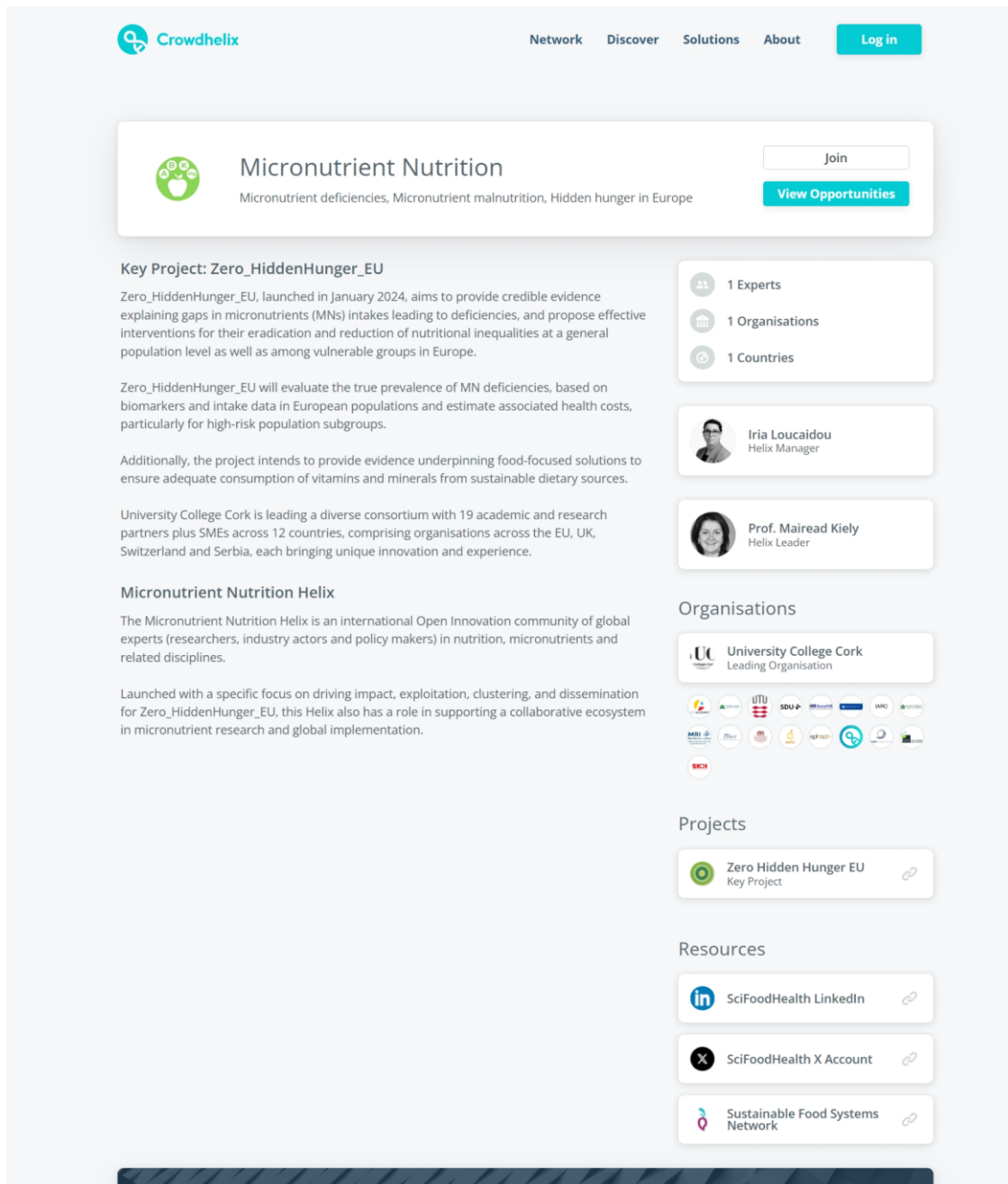
Figure 3 shows the initial look and layout of the Helix page. The steps involved in the creation and launch of the Helix are outlined next.

The consortium decided to change the Name included in the project's Grant Agreement from "Micronutrient Helix" to "Micronutrient Nutrition Helix". The revised name ensures a comprehensive and inclusive approach to addressing micronutrient deficiencies within the broader context of nutrition, enhancing its relevance and appeal to potential stakeholders in the field.

The Short Description "Micronutrient deficiencies, Micronutrient malnutrition, Hidden hunger in Europe", serves as an initial overview, defining the broad scope of the Helix.

The Long Description of the Helix is dedicated to ZHH EU and provides detailed information about the project, its objectives, the consortium, and the specific role of the *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix in supporting the project's impact, exploitation, clustering, and dissemination activities. The Long Description can be found in the "Key Project" and "Helix Ecosystem" section in Figure 3.

Both of the Joint Coordinators, Prof. Kevin Cashman and Prof. Máiréad Kiely, from University College Cork, will act in the role of the Helix Leader and be responsible for driving the scientific trajectory of the project within the Helix. Only one Helix Leader can be represented at a time on the Helix, and this will be alternated between the Joint Coordinators, as appropriate. The Helix Leaders will serve as the primary point of contact for interested Helix stakeholders. Additionally, as mentioned in Section 3 of this report, the Helix Manager, appointed by Crowdhelix, will be responsible for onboarding new members, for tracking the Helix member metrics, and maintaining an active community.



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Micronutrient Nutrition

Micronutrient deficiencies, Micronutrient malnutrition, Hidden hunger in Europe

[Join](#) [View Opportunities](#)

Key Project: Zero_HiddenHunger_EU

Zero_HiddenHunger_EU, launched in January 2024, aims to provide credible evidence explaining gaps in micronutrients (MNs) intakes leading to deficiencies, and propose effective interventions for their eradication and reduction of nutritional inequalities at a general population level as well as among vulnerable groups in Europe.

Zero_HiddenHunger_EU will evaluate the true prevalence of MN deficiencies, based on biomarkers and intake data in European populations and estimate associated health costs, particularly for high-risk population subgroups.

Additionally, the project intends to provide evidence underpinning food-focused solutions to ensure adequate consumption of vitamins and minerals from sustainable dietary sources.

University College Cork is leading a diverse consortium with 19 academic and research partners plus SMEs across 12 countries, comprising organisations across the EU, UK, Switzerland and Serbia, each bringing unique innovation and experience.

Micronutrient Nutrition Helix

The Micronutrient Nutrition Helix is an international Open Innovation community of global experts (researchers, industry actors and policy makers) in nutrition, micronutrients and related disciplines.

Launched with a specific focus on driving impact, exploitation, clustering, and dissemination for Zero_HiddenHunger_EU, this Helix also has a role in supporting a collaborative ecosystem in micronutrient research and global implementation.

1 Experts

1 Organisations

1 Countries

Iria Loucaidou
Helix Manager

Prof. Mairead Kiely
Helix Leader

Organisations

University College Cork
Leading Organisation

Projects

Zero Hidden Hunger EU
Key Project

Resources

SciFoodHealth LinkedIn

SciFoodHealth X Account

Sustainable Food Systems Network

FIGURE 3: INITIAL LOOK OF THE *MICRONUTRIENT NUTRITION* HELIX

The next step involved the design of the Helix Icon, that will represent the *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix's identity on the platform (Figure 4). Option A was selected.



Micronutrient Nutrition Helix Icon Suggestions

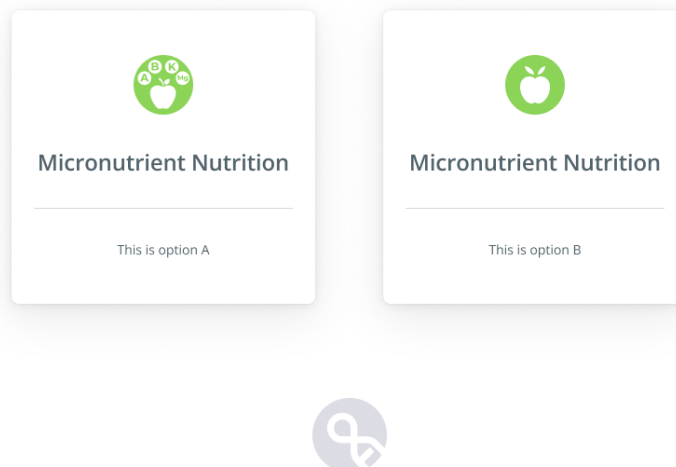


FIGURE 4: MICRONUTRIENT NUTRITION HELIX ICON CONCEPT OPTIONS

As seen in the “Projects” and “Resources” section in Figure 3, the *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix page provides a link to the project website and social media profiles. It showcases profiles for all ZHHEU consortium partners, featuring University College Cork (coordinating organization of ZHHEU) as the Leading Organisation of the Helix.

Finally, the *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix page, provides an overview of the number of experts/ organizations/countries that have joined the Helix.

5. Community Expansion and Next Steps

Crowdhelix holds the primary responsibility for expanding the *Micronutrient Nutrition* Community. This diverse community will include not only ZHHEU partners but also members from relevant existing helixes on the platform, along with stakeholders from pertinent projects and expert groups.

To facilitate engagement, the project website will feature a link to the *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix, guiding visitors to this virtual community and encouraging their active participation.

Outlined below is the strategy for expanding this cluster to cultivate a robust community of field experts. Under the overarching KPI of establishing a network with at least 150 organizations and individuals by M40 (April 2027), a short-term goal to onboard 50 users by M18 (June 2025), is set*. This milestone will enable the evaluation and, if necessary, the refinement of the community building approach described below.

*Note: Arising from a query during the Reporting Period 1 review, the screen shot below provides evidence of 50 onboarded user organisation by M18, as planned.

Organisation Name	Host Country	Organisation Category
EFFoST - European Federation of Food Science and Technology	Netherlands	Association
EIT Food	Belgium	Government
FAO	Italy	Government
SAFE - Safe Food Advocacy Europe	Belgium	Not-for-profit / NGO
Food Standards Agency	United Kingdom	Government
IFST - Institute of Food Science and Technology	United Kingdom	Association
The Nutrition Society	United Kingdom	Association
The Good Food Institute Europe	Belgium	Not-for-profit / NGO
The Food Foundation	United Kingdom	Not-for-profit / NGO
The European Federation of the Associations of Dietitians (EFAD)	Netherlands	Association
ESPEN - European Society for Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism	Luxembourg	Not-for-profit / NGO
FOODGUARD	Greece	Project
UP-RISE	Belgium	Project
FutureFoods	France	Project
CATALYSE	Italy	Project
Federation of European Nutrition Societies	United Kingdom	Association
Iodine Global Network	Canada	Not-for-profit / NGO
Sight and Life	Switzerland	Not-for-profit / NGO
Micronutrient Forum	United States	Not-for-profit / NGO
Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research (NIBIO)	Norway	Academic RTO
BioValue Project	Greece	Project
Ecozept	France	Commercial RTO
Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania CIHEAM Chania	Greece	Academic RTO
Agritrack	Greece	Commercial RTO
Department of Microbiome Dynamics Leibniz HKI	Germany	Academic RTO
CREDA - Research Center for Agrofood Economics and Development	Spain	Academic RTO
Smart Agro Hub	Greece	Association
CIRAD - French agricultural research and cooperation organization	France	Government
L'Institut Agro Montpellier	France	Academic RTO
ILVO Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	Belgium	Academic RTO
Teagasc – the Agriculture and Food Development Authority	Ireland	Government
Flanders' FOOD	Belgium	Association
Agricultural University - Plovdiv	Bulgaria	Academic RTO
ILSI Europe	Belgium	Association
Nofima AS - Norwegian Institute of Food, Fisheries and Aquaculture Research	Norway	Academic RTO
Syreon Research Institute	Hungary	Academic RTO
The Slovak University of Agriculture	Slovakia	Academic RTO
FoodDrink Europe	Belgium	Association
UK Food Safety Research Network (FSRN)	United Kingdom	Association
EMSA- European Medical Students' Association	Belgium	Association
Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)	Switzerland	Not-for-profit / NGO
Food Fortification Initiative	United States	Not-for-profit / NGO
EuroHealthNet	Belgium	Not-for-profit / NGO
Centre of Research Excellence in Nutrition and Metabolism (CENM)	Serbia	Academic RTO
Louis Bonduelle Foundation	France	Not-for-profit / NGO
NUTRI-KNOW	Spain	Project
EPHNA - European Public Health Nutrition Alliance	Netherlands	Association
European Federation of the Associations of Dietitians (EFAD)	Netherlands	Association
European Nutrition Leadership Platform (ENLP)	Belgium	Not-for-profit / NGO

5.1 Onboarding and Utilization

Project Partners: Profiles for all partner organizations (who are not already members of the platform) were created in the back-end by CrowdHelix, so that project partners can utilize the platform as full members (free of charge) for networking, collaboration, and dissemination throughout the project.

At the project kick-off meeting (M2, February 2024), project partners were invited to join the CrowdHelix platform and create both organizational and individual profiles. Following the launch of the

Micronutrient Nutrition Helix, Crowdhelix will re-invite all project partners to join the Helix, including the ones who have not joined the platform yet.

An online onboarding webinar will be organized to provide a guide on using the platform and setting up organizational and personal profiles.

Members will receive regular updates on the Helix's metrics, including participation details from project partners. During project meetings, the definition of roles and responsibilities will be assessed and discussed to ensure vested interest and commitment. Additionally, the Helix Leader and consortium partners will be encouraged to leverage their networks to promote the Helix to potential stakeholders, thereby facilitating the community's growth.

Members of the Platform: The platform's existing user base will be notified of the *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix's creation via different communication channels, ensuring broad visibility and engagement. Special attention will be given to stakeholders within relevant existing Helixes (*Aquaculture, Food, Health, Mission soil, Water, and Society*) as well as experts with relevant expertise.

External Organizations/Experts: With the onboarding of project partners, Crowdhelix together with the rest of the ZHH EU consortium, will start work on reaching relevant experts beyond Crowdhelix members, to build a strong community around the Helix. These experts will be from the Target Audience Groups identified in D8.1 - Dissemination, Communication & Engagement Plan. Crowdhelix in close collaboration with EUFIC, will also leverage the Sustainable Food Systems Network (SFSN) network of actors. Individuals from outside the Crowdhelix Network interested in joining the community will be granted access to the platform free of charge. This access includes use of all platform features (except posting collaboration opportunities directly and attending Crowdhelix-exclusive member events).

Clustering: 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. ZHH EU will reach out to projects with similar aims and synergies including: a) those funded under the same or similar EU-calls; b) EU initiatives, and c) national and regional projects.

These projects will be invited to join the Helix as a way to learn more about ZHH EU's results and build a virtual community of like-minded stakeholders/end-users, which will support accelerating the exploitation of ZHH EU. An analysis of the strategy for Clustering Activities is provided in D8.1 - Dissemination, Communication & Engagement Plan.

Events: To foster a vibrant and engaged community, the *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix will host four (4) online events. These events will serve as platforms for knowledge sharing, networking, and collaboration among stakeholders.

The first Helix event, scheduled to be held by the end of Year 1 following the Helix launch date, will reflect a dual goal: i) to present the Helix and attract more potential community members, and ii) to showcase project activities. Details of the event will be coordinated with consortium partners and communicated via appropriate project channels, including the website and social media.

6. Summary

This document presents the creation and launch of the *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix on the Crowdhelix platform, as well as the strategy for expanding the cluster and building a strong community of experts in micronutrient deficiencies, micronutrient malnutrition, and hidden hunger in Europe.

The initial months of the project were dedicated to the back-end development of the Helix, which was launched on 26 June 2024 in M6 (Milestone 15), with the goal of forming a network of at least 150 organizations and individuals by M40 (April 2027).

The Crowdhelix team, in collaboration with the ZHH EU consortium partners, will implement a phased strategy to grow and maintain the community. This includes onboarding project partners, engaging existing platform members, reaching out to external organizations and experts, and facilitating clustering activities with related projects and initiatives.

To foster a vibrant and engaged community, the *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix will host four online events throughout the project. The first Helix event, scheduled by the end of M18 (June 2025), will focus on attracting potential community members, and showcasing project activities.

The Crowdhelix Helix Manager will continuously track metrics such as the number of profiled organizations and active experts, to gauge community interest and participation. A short-term goal of onboarding 50 members by M18 (June 2025) has been set. Based on the progress towards this goal, the community expansion strategy will be continuously evaluated and fine-tuned to ensure the *Micronutrient Nutrition* Helix remains a dynamic, collaborative, and impactful community throughout the project and beyond.

The two planned updates of the Dissemination, Communication and Engagement Plan (D8.3, D8.4), in M24 and M48 (December 2025 and December 2027) respectively, will capture the development and implementation of any new actions for the Helix.