COVID-Sensitive Nutrition Marketing Messages for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in SUN Countries

Introduction

In early May 2020, a survey of food system small and medium enterprises (SME) in 17 countries was conducted by the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) through national Scaling Up Nutrition Business Networks (SBN), convened by GAIN, the World Food Programme, and other partners. The survey aimed to assess the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated control measures on businesses and their support needs[1]. GAIN and partners received 363 responses, with most being from micro- or small-sized firms; respondents were primarily firms in the processing and distribution sectors.

Sixty-four percent of firms reported urgently needing technical support to cope with the effects of the pandemic on their business. Main types of technical assistance sought were advice on sales or distribution (49 percent) or marketing (49 percent), business resilience planning (47 percent), development of online platforms (43 percent) and quality assurance and/or quality control (42 percent).

Marketing was the top technical assistance request in the following countries: Africa (Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania and Mozambique) and Asia (Bangladesh, Indonesia and Sri Lanka). Based on these results, it has been recommended that governments and other development partners take steps to support these crucial yet vulnerable food system SMEs during this period, to ensure they remain in a position to provide nutritious, safe foods in the future.[1]

Therefore, this brief outlines nutrition and health claims and COVID-sensitive nutrition marketing messages for national SUN Business Network SMEs that can be tailored to their local context to help promote products that can contribute to good nutrition and healthy diets during and post the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 Food System SME Survey Highlights

The main food categories represented across survey respondents included grains (36 percent), vegetables (33 percent), fruit (24 percent) and fish (19 percent), with 13–18 percent for each of roots/tubers, dairy, eggs, meat, legumes, and nuts/seeds.

Ninety-four percent reported being impacted by the pandemic, mainly via decreased sales (82 percent). Approximately 80 percent of firms reported taking actions to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on their business, respectively. Main actions included adapting the supply chain (48 percent) and increasing communication with clients and customers (48 percent) via social media (34 percent) and internally (34 percent).

About 43 percent of respondents noted wanting to explore new business areas as a result of the pandemic. Those commonly named included exploring various models for online sales and delivery, including use of smartphone apps and producing clean, safe, or immunity-boosting foods.

Target value chains and foods

Based on a detailed review of literature and consultations with country SBN coordinators, the following value chains and foods were shortlisted for the development of nutrition and health claims and nutrition marketing messages (Table 1).

Table 1. Target value chains and foods.

Value chains	Foods
Cereals and millets	Bread, corn/maize, couscous, millet (sorghum), rice, semolina, teff, wheat
Lentils/pulses (legumes)	Cowpeas, green grams, masoor, red kidney beans, soybeans
Fruits	Banana, orange, plantain, mango, pineapple, avocado, dates, guava, melons, passion fruit, figs, jackfruit, papaya, apple, coconut
Vegetables	Beetroot, cabbage, carrots, cassava, cucumber, eggplant, French beans, green peas, lemon, onions, okra, potato, pumpkin, spinach, sweet potato, tomatoes, yam
Dairy	Cheese, fermented milk, milk, yoghurt
Meat	Beef, goat, lamb, sheep (mutton)
Oils and nuts	Cashew nuts, corn oil, groundnut oil, peanuts, palm oil, sunflower
Poultry	Chicken, eggs
Seafood	Fish

Nutrition and health claims

A nutrition or health claim is any statement which suggests or implies that a food has a particular beneficial nutritional property or health impact. Marketing messages used by SMEs that include nutrition or health claims must comply with local and international guidelines. *Codex General Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling*[1], *Codex General Guidelines on claim*[2], *and Codex Guidelines for Nutrition and Health Claims* [3] have been used as references for the development of sample nutrition and health claims for the identified target foods (Table 2). Nutrition Claims Guidelines by the European Commission have been used for guiding the claims on fibre because Codex does not provide this guidance[4].

SMEs should be sure to also comply with any local laws or regulations regarding food labelling and nutrient or health claims such as the Kenya Food Composition Tables.

NRV = Nutrient Reference Value RDA = Recommended Dietary Allowance

Table 2. Proposed nutrition and health claims.

Nutrition Claims: Nutrient Content Claims		
Claims on protein		
Claim wording	**Minimum requirements for claims**	**Claim qualifiers**
"Source of protein" Can be evaluated for: cereals (e.g. semolina, teff), millets (e.g. sorghum), lentils (e.g. red kidney beans, green gram, soybeans, masoor dal), dairy (e.g. milk, cheese, yoghurt, fermented	Not less than: • 10% of NRV per 100 g (solids) • 5% of NRV per 100 ml (liquids) • or 5% of NRV per 100 kcal (12% of NRV per 1 MJ) • or 10% of NRV per serving	The following explanation should be accompanied with each claim: Based on nutrient composition of (specify the source and type

Nutrition Claims: Nutrient Content Claims		
milk), meat (e.g. beef, goat, lamb, sheep/mutton), nuts (e.g. peanuts, cashews), poultry (e.g. chicken, eggs), seafood (e.g. fish). **"With good-quality protein"** Can be evaluated for: dairy (e.g. milk, cheese, yoghurt, fermented milk), meat (e.g. beef, goat, lamb, sheep/mutton), poultry (e.g. chicken, eggs), seafood (e.g. fish).		of food, e.g. cow milk yoghurt) as per (specify the reference, e.g. Kenyan Food Composition Tables 2018 or Laboratory Analysis) and Nutrient Reference Values as per Codex or as per Recommended Dietary Allowances for (specify the country and year).
"High protein" Can be evaluated for: dairy (e.g. milk, cheese, yoghurt, fermented milk), meat (e.g. beef, goat, lamb, sheep/mutton), poultry (e.g. chicken, eggs), seafood (e.g. fish).	Not less than: • 20% of NRV per 100 g (solids) • 10% of NRV per 100 ml (liquids) • or 10% of NRV per 100 kcal (24% of NRV per 1 MJ) • or 20% of NRV per serving	
Claims on fibre		
Claim wording	**Minimum requirements for claims**	**Claim qualifiers**
"Contains fibre" Can be evaluated for: cereals (e.g. couscous, teff), millets (e.g. sorghum, pearl millet, finger millet), lentils (e.g. red kidney beans, green grams, chickpeas), fruits (e.g. avocado, oranges, banana, mango, plantain, coconut), vegetables (e.g. carrots, beetroot, green peas, butternut squash, spinach, okra, sweet potatoes, eggplant, cabbage, yam, cucumber).	A claim that a food is a source of fibre, and any claim likely to have the same meaning for the consumer, may only be made where the product contains at least 3 g of fibre per 100 g or at least 1.5 g of fibre per 100 kcal.	The following explanation should be accompanied with each claim: As per nutrition claims guideline of the European Commission and based on fibre composition as per (specify the reference e.g. Kenyan Food Composition Tables 2018 or Laboratory Analysis).
Claims on vitamins and minerals		
Claim wording	**Minimum requirements for claims**	**Claim qualifiers**
"Source of/with vitamin A" Can be evaluated for: fruits (e.g. mangoes), vegetables (e.g. tomato, carrots, broccoli, spinach, dark green leafy vegetables), poultry (e.g. eggs).	Not less than: • 15% of NRV per 100 g (solids) • 7.5% of NRV per 100 ml (liquids) • or 5% of NRV per 100 kcal (12% of NRV per 1 MJ) • or 15% of NRV per serving	The following explanation should be accompanied with each claim: Based on nutrient composition of (specify the source and type of food, e.g. cow milk yoghurt) as per (specify the reference e.g. Kenyan Food Composition Tables 2018 or Laboratory Analysis) and Nutrient Reference Values as per Codex or as per Recommended Dietary Allowances for (specify the country and year).
"Source of/with vitamin C" Can be evaluated for: fruits (e.g. guava, lemons, lychees, papaya, strawberry, oranges, watermelon, pineapple, guava, passion fruit, jackfruit, apple, coconut), vegetables (e.g. broccoli, kale, brussels sprouts, cauliflower, green and red peppers, spinach, cabbage, turnip greens, and other leafy greens, sweet and white		

Nutrition Claims: Nutrient Content Claims		
potatoes, tomatoes and tomato juice, winter squash, cucumber).		
"Source of/with folic acid" Can be evaluated for: cereals (e.g. rice), lentils (e.g. red kidney beans), fruits (e.g. orange, papaya, banana, avocado), vegetables (e.g. green leafy vegetables such as spinach, kale), poultry (e.g. eggs).		
Claims on vitamins and minerals		
Claim wording	**Minimum requirements for claims**	**Claim qualifiers**
"Source of/with calcium" Can be evaluated for: legumes (e.g. soybeans), fruits (e.g. banana, figs, dates), vegetables (e.g. cabbage, okra, kale, spinach), dairy (e.g. milk, cheese, yoghurt, fermented milk).	Not less than: • 15% of NRV per 100 g (solids) • 7.5% of NRV per100 ml (liquids) • or 5% of NRV per 100 kcal (12% of NRV per 1 MJ) • or 15% of NRV per serving	The following explanation should be accompanied with each claim: Based on nutrient composition of (specify the source and type of food, e.g. cow milk yoghurt) as per (specify the reference e.g. Kenyan Food Composition Tables 2018 or Laboratory Analysis) and Nutrient Reference Values as per Codex or as per Recommended Dietary Allowances for (specify the country and year).
"Source of/with iron" Can be evaluated for: cereals (e.g. teff), lentils (e.g. beans), fruits (e.g. dates), vegetables (e.g. green leafy vegetables such as spinach, mustard leaves), meat (e.g. dark beef), poultry (e.g. chicken).		
"Source of/with zinc" Can be evaluated for: cereals (e.g. wheat, rice), lentils (e.g. chickpeas, beans), fruits (e.g. dates), vegetables (e.g. potatoes), dairy (e.g. milk, cheese), meat (e.g. red meat), nuts (e.g. peanuts, cashews, almonds), poultry (e.g. eggs, chicken).		
"Contains/fortified with/enriched with vitamin A/D" Can be evaluated for: dairy (e.g. milk, yoghurt, fermented milk), edible oils.		
"Contains/fortified with/enriched with folic acid " Can be evaluated for: cereals (e.g. cassava flour), wheat and wheat products (e.g. wheat flour, bread), corn/maize and corn products (e.g. cornmeal).		
"Contains/fortified with/enriched with iron" Can be evaluated for: cereals (e.g. corn/maize), corn products (e.g. corn meal), lentils (red beans).		

Nutrition Claims: Nutrient Content Claims		
Claims on vitamins and minerals (rich claims)		
Claim wording	**Minimum requirements for claims**	**Claim qualifiers**
"Rich/high vitamin A/power of vitamin A" Can be evaluated for: fruits (e.g. mangoes), vegetables (e.g. carrots, broccoli, spinach, dark leafy greens), poultry (e.g. eggs).	Not less than: • 30% of NRV per 100 g (solids) • 15% of NRV per100 ml (liquids) • or 10% of NRV per 100 kcal (24% of NRV per 1 MJ) • or 30% of NRV per serving	The following explanation should be accompanied with each claim: Based on nutrient composition of (specify the source and type of food, e.g. cow milk yoghurt) as per (specify the reference e.g. Kenyan Food Composition Tables 2018 or Laboratory Analysis) and Nutrient Reference Values as per Codex or as per Recommended Dietary Allowances for (specify the country and year).
"Rich in folic acid" Can be evaluated for: cereals (e.g. rice), lentils (e.g. red kidney beans), fruits (e.g. orange, papaya, banana, avocado), vegetables (e.g. green leafy vegetables such as spinach, kale), poultry (e.g. eggs).		
"Rich/high calcium/power of calcium" Can be evaluated for: fruits (e.g. banana), vegetables (e.g. spinach), dairy (e.g. milk, cheese, yoghurt, fermented milk).		
"Rich in iron/iron-rich" Can be evaluated for: lentils (e.g. beans), vegetables (e.g. green leafy vegetables such as spinach), meat (e.g. dark beef), poultry (e.g. chicken).		
"Rich in zinc/zinc-rich" Can be evaluated for: cereals (e.g. wheat, rice), lentils (e.g. chickpeas, beans), vegetables (e.g. potatoes), dairy (e.g. milk, cheese), meat (e.g. red meat), nuts (e.g. peanuts, cashews, almonds), poultry (e.g. eggs, chicken).		
Claims on fat		
Claim wording	**Minimum requirements for claims**	**Claim qualifiers**
"Low-fat" Can be evaluated for: cereals (e.g. rice, bread), lentils (e.g. red beans), fruits (e.g. banana, plantain), vegetables (e.g. kale, spinach, sweet potato, cabbage), dairy (milk, cheese, yoghurt, fermented milk).	Not more than 3 g total fat per 100 g (solids) or 1.5 g total fat per 100 ml (liquids).	The following explanation should be accompanied with each claim: Based on nutrient composition of (specify the source and type of food, e.g. cow milk yoghurt) as per (specify the reference e.g. Kenyan Food Composition Tables 2018 or Laboratory Analysis).
"Fat-free" Can be evaluated for: dairy (e.g. milk, cheese, yoghurt, fermented milk).	Not more than 0.5 g total fat per 100 g (solids) or 100ml (liquids).	
"Low cholesterol" Can be evaluated for: cereals (e.g. wheat, rice), legumes (e.g. green	Not more than 0.02 g cholesterol per 100 g (solids) or 0.01 g cholesterol per 100 ml (liquids) and less than 1.5 g	

Nutrition Claims: Nutrient Content Claims		
gram), fruits (e.g. orange, banana), vegetables (e.g. green leafy vegetables), seafood (e.g. fish).	saturated fat per 100 g (solids) or 0.75 g saturated fat per 100 ml (liquids) and less than 10% of energy from saturated fat.	
Claims on sugar		
Claim wording	**Minimum requirements for claims**	**Claim qualifiers**
"Sugar-free" Can be evaluated for: dairy and dairy products (e.g. milk, yoghurt, fermented milk).	Not more than 0.5 g sugar per 100 g (solids) or 0.5 g per 100 ml (liquids) sugars means all monosaccharides and disaccharides present in food.	The following explanation should be accompanied with each claim: Based on nutrient composition of (specify the source and type of food, e.g. cow milk yoghurt) as per (specify the reference, e.g. Kenyan Food Composition Tables 2018 or Laboratory Analysis).
Claims on sodium		
Claim wording	**Minimum requirements for claims**	**Claim qualifiers**
"Low sodium" Can be evaluated for: dairy (e.g. cheese).	Not more than 0.12 g sodium per 100 g.	The following explanation should be accompanied with each claim: Based on nutrient composition of (specify the source and type of food as per (specify the reference, e.g. Kenyan Food Composition Tables 2018 or Laboratory Analysis).

Nutrition Claims: Nutrient Comparative Claims		
Claim wording	**Minimum requirements for claims**	**Claim qualifiers**
"Higher protein" Can be evaluated for: processed foods (e.g. cereals, flavoured milk).	The comparison should be based on a relative difference of at least 25% in the protein content between the compared foods and a minimum absolute difference in protein equivalent to: 10% of NRV per 100 g (solids) or 5% of NRV per 100 ml (liquids) or 5% of NRV per 100 kcal (12% of NRV per 1 MJ) or 10% of NRV per serving.	The following explanation should be accompanied with each claim: As specified in the Nutrient Reference Values or Recommended Dietary Allowances.
"Higher calcium/vitamin A/vitamin D/folic acid/iron/zinc" Can be evaluated for: processed foods (e.g. cereals, flavoured milk, yoghurt, fermented milk, edible oils).	The food on which the claim is intended should have at least 10% higher NRV vs. the compared foods; e.g. NRV of calcium is 800 mg per day. 10% of NRV is 80 mg calcium. So the food on which the claim is intended should have at least 80 mg more calcium per 100g/ml/serve vs. the comparison food.	
"Reduced/lower-fat/light"	The comparison should be based on a relative difference of at least 25% in the fat content	

Nutrition Claims: Nutrient Comparative Claims		
Can be evaluated for: processed foods (e.g. cereals, flavoured milk, yoghurt, fermented milk).	between the compared foods and a minimum absolute difference in the fat content of 3 g per 100 g (solids) or 1.5 g per 100 ml (liquids).	
"Reduced sodium/light" Can be evaluated for: processed foods (e.g. cereals, cheese).	The comparison should be based on a relative difference of at least 25% in the sodium content between the compared foods and a minimum absolute difference in the sodium content of 0.12 g sodium per 100 g (solids).	
Nutrition Claims: Non-Addition Claims		
Claim wording	**Minimum requirements for claims**	**Claim qualifiers**
"No added sugar" Can be evaluated for: dairy (e.g. milk, yoghurt, fermented milk).	Claims regarding the non-addition of sugars to a food may be made provided the following conditions are met: (a) No sugars of any type have been added to the food (e.g. sucrose, glucose, honey, molasses, corn syrup, etc.); (b) The food contains no ingredients that contain sugars as an ingredient (e.g. jams, jellies, sweetened chocolate, sweetened fruit pieces, etc.); (c) The food contains no ingredients containing sugars that substitute for added sugars (e.g. nonreconstituted concentrated fruit juice, dried fruit paste, etc.); and (d) The sugars content of the food itself has not been increased above the amount contributed by the ingredients by some other means (e.g. the use of enzymes to hydrolyse starches to release sugars).	The following explanation should be accompanied with each claim: As per Codex requirements for Nutrition and Health Claims (CAC/GL 23-1997).
"No added salt" Can be evaluated for: cheese/fish.	Claims regarding the non-addition of sodium salts to a food, including "no added salt", may be made provided the following conditions are met: (a) The food contains no added sodium salts, including but not limited to sodium chloride, sodium tripolyphosphate; (b) The food contains no ingredients that contain added sodium salts, including but not limited to Worcestershire sauce, pickles, pepperoni, soya sauce, salted fish, fish sauce; and (c) The food contains no ingredients that contain sodium salts that are used to substitute for added salt, including but not limited to seaweed.	The following explanation should be accompanied with each claim: As per Codex requirements for Nutrition and Health Claims (CAC/GL 23-1997).

Health Claims: Nutrient Function Claims The health claim must consist of two parts: 1) Information on the physiological role of the nutrient or on an accepted diet-health relationship; followed by 2) Information on the composition of the product relevant to the physiological role of the nutrient or the accepted diet-health relationship unless the relationship is based on a whole food or foods whereby the research does not link to specific constituents of the food. Health claims should not be made for foods that contain nutrients or constituents in amounts that increase the risk of disease or an adverse health-related condition. The health claim should not be made if it encourages or condones excessive consumption of any food or disparages good dietary practice.		
Claims on protein		
Claim wording	**Minimum requirements for claims**	**Claim qualifiers**
Protein contributes to growth in muscle mass. Protein contributes to the maintenance of muscle mass. Protein contributes to the maintenance of normal bones.	The food in question should be at least a source of protein or high in protein (refer to minimum requirements specified in nutrient content claims for protein).	The following information should appear on the label or labelling of the food-bearing health claims: • A statement of the quantity of any nutrient or other constituent of the food that is the subject of the claim. • The target group, if appropriate. • How to use the food to obtain the claimed benefit and other lifestyle factors or other dietary sources, where appropriate. • If appropriate, advice to vulnerable groups on how to use the food and to groups, if any, who need to avoid the food. • Maximum safe intake of the food or constituent where necessary. • How the food or food constituent fits within the context of the total diet. • A statement on the importance of maintaining a healthy diet.
Claims on vitamins and minerals		
Claim wording	**Minimum requirements for claims**	**Claim qualifiers**
Vitamin C, E, A, D, B6, B12 folic acid, selenium, zinc, copper and iron are important for the immune system/natural defences/contribute to normal functioning of immune system.	The food in question should be at least a source of or high in the mentioned vitamins and minerals (refer to the minimum requirements specified in nutrient content claims for vitamins and minerals).	The following information should appear on the label or labelling of the food-bearing health claims: • A statement of the quantity of any nutrient or other constituent of the food that is the subject of the claim. • The target group, if appropriate. • How to use the food to obtain the claimed benefit and other lifestyle factors or other dietary sources, where appropriate. • If appropriate, advice to vulnerable groups on how to use the food and to groups, if any, who need to avoid the food.
Vitamin A contributes to maintenance of normal skin, vision and immune system.		
Vitamin C and iron contribute to the reduction of tiredness and fatigue.		
Vitamin C increases iron absorption.		

Health Claims: Nutrient Function Claims The health claim must consist of two parts: 1) Information on the physiological role of the nutrient or on an accepted diet-health relationship; followed by 2) Information on the composition of the product relevant to the physiological role of the nutrient or the accepted diet-health relationship unless the relationship is based on a whole food or foods whereby the research does not link to specific constituents of the food. Health claims should not be made for foods that contain nutrients or constituents in amounts that increase the risk of disease or an adverse health-related condition. The health claim should not be made if it encourages or condones excessive consumption of any food or disparages good dietary practice.		
Iron contributes to normal brain development of children. Iron contributes to normal formation of red blood cells and haemoglobin. Iron, zinc and iodine contribute to normal brain function. Calcium and vitamin D are needed for normal growth and development of bone in children and maintenance of normal bones in adults. Folate contributes to normal blood formation.		• Maximum safe intake of the food or constituent where necessary. • How the food or food constituent fits within the context of the total diet. • A statement on the importance of maintaining a healthy diet.

Nutrition facts during and post COVID-19[5,6,7]

To provide additional context for the nutrition and health claims and sample nutrition marketing messages, SMEs in various Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) countries can use the following nutrition facts for promoting their food products, both during and after the COVID-19 pandemic:

- People's ability to access safe, nutritious and diverse diets is at risk and health and resilience under threat [8].
- Disruption of health systems due to COVID-19 and decreased access to nutritious food could lead to an increase in maternal and child mortality[6].
- Undernutrition and overweight/obesity may worsen the impact of COVID-19[6].
- The secondary impact of COVID-19 control measures may contribute to increased overweight and obesity and related diseases like diabetes[6].
- Acute malnutrition in children under five years old could rise by 20 percent (or an extra 10 million malnourished children) due to COVID-19[6].
- The number of wasted children could increase each month by 50 percent, due to COVID-19[6].
- Nutrition is an essential pillar for COVID-19 defence and post-COVID-19 recovery to build immunity and resilience[6].
- Good nutrition is key to build immunity, protect against illness and infection and support recovery.

- Healthy, balanced diets are key for boosting immunity and preventing overweight and obesity risk factors for higher COVID-19 sickness and death.
- Consuming a healthy diet is an important way to maintain and boost immunity and long-term health.
- Consume enough fibre. Fibre contributes to a healthy digestive system and offers a prolonged feeling of fullness. To ensure an adequate fibre intake, aim to include vegetables, fruit, pulses and wholegrain foods in all meals.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends consuming a minimum of five portions of fruits and vegetables per day.
- Eat fruits, vegetables (at least five portions of fruit and vegetables per day), legumes (e.g. lentils, beans), nuts and whole grains (e.g. unprocessed maize, millet, oats, wheat, brown rice or starchy tubers or roots such as potato, yam, taro or cassava), foods from animal sources (e.g. meat, fish, eggs and milk) and avoiding foods high in fat, salt and sugar.
- Daily, eat: 2 cups of fruit (4 servings), 2.5 cups of vegetables (5 servings), 180 g of grains, and 160 g of meat and beans (red meat can be eaten 1–2 times per week, and poultry 2–3 times per week).
- Eat fresh and unprocessed foods every day.
- For snacks, choose raw vegetables and fresh fruit.
- Limit your salt intake: WHO recommends consuming less than 5 g of salt per day. Prioritise foods with reduced or no added salt.
- Limit your sugar intake: WHO recommends consuming less than 6 teaspoons of sugar every day. Select foods low in sugar. Watch out for low-fat options, as these are often high in added sugars.
- WHO recommends limiting total fat intake. Choose foods that contain healthy sources of unsaturated fats, such as fish and nuts. Avoid trans fats as much as possible.

Sample nutrition marketing messages

Table 3 provides some sample nutrition marketing messages that have been developed based on the Nutrition and Health Claims (Table 2). SMEs can customise these sample messages to promote products in their countries, **provided the products and claims meet the minimum requirements defined in Table 2 and comply with country-specific laws and regulations.** These examples can be adapted to the local context. It may be helpful to use familiar language, keep the messages simple and informal, and stick to the point by focusing on the target food.

Table 3. Sample nutrition marketing messages.

Value chain	Food	Sample nutrition marketing messages	Associated nutrition and health claim
Cereal	Fortified cornflour or rice or wheat	Again and again, eat cornflour with iron for normal development of the brain. Just the right claim, contains iron/zinc important for normal development and function of the brain. Iron-fortified cereals conjunction, support normal brain function.	Nutrient content claims on vitamins and minerals.

Value chain	Food	Sample nutrition marketing messages	Associated nutrition and health claim
		Break the malnutrition chain—eat fortified foods to support the development and function of a normal brain. Nip it in the bud—eat fortified corn, rice, wheat with iron—important for healthy blood. No more blink—eat corn/rice/wheat with zinc.	
Millet	Sorghum	Be a sorghum subscriber, as it contains fibre. Sorghum suggestion, with fibre important for healthy digestion.	Nutrient content claims on fibre.
Lentils	Red kidney beans	Power of iron in beans—miss by no means.	Nutrient content claims on vitamins and minerals, power of iron.
		No more tussle with protein for healthy muscle.	Nutrient content claims on protein.
Lentils	Red kidney beans	Don't be intrigued, just eat beans with iron to fight fatigue.	Nutrient content claims on vitamins and minerals.
Fruits	Banana	Banana in homes, with goodness of calcium for healthy bones.	Nutrient content claims on Vitamins and Minerals.
	Orange/guava	With the power of vitamin C, important for immunity, for yourself and community.	Nutrient content claims on vitamins and minerals.
	Mango	Mango mission with vitamin A, for healthy vision.	Nutrient content claims on vitamins and minerals.
Vegetables	Cabbage	Be a cabbage provider, as it contains fibre.	Nutrient content claims on fibre.
	Tomato	Tomato opportunity, with vitamin C to support immunity.	Nutrient content claims on vitamins and minerals.
Dairy	Milk	Milk packed in a cone, rich in calcium, known for healthy bone.	Nutrient content on vitamins and minerals.
	Flavoured milk	With no added sugar, for a curious looker.	Non-addition claims on sugar.
		Vitamin D immense, for natural defence.	Nutrient content claims on vitamins and minerals.
	Yoghurt	Low-fat yoghurt, built for less guilt.	Nutrient content claims on fat.
Meat	Lamb	Lamb cut on stone, with protein important for healthy bones.	Nutrient content claims on protein.
Oils and nuts	Corn oil	Now the final decision, eat oil with vitamin A for healthy vision.	Nutrient content claims on vitamins and minerals.
		Revision in your kitchen, now oil with higher vitamin A for healthy vision.	Nutrient comparative claims for vitamins and minerals.
	Peanuts	Teen or not teen, eat peanuts as they contain protein.	Nutrient content claims on protein.

Value chain	Food	Sample nutrition marketing messages	Associated nutrition and health claim
		Today's menu theme, peanuts with protein.	
Poultry	Chicken	Chicken in your routine, with good-quality protein.	Nutrient content claims on protein.
	Eggs	Nutrition mission, egg every day with vitamin A for healthy vision. An egg a day, contains vitamin A. Egg with vitamin A important for glowing skin. What a lovely grin.	Nutrient content claims on vitamins and minerals.
Seafood	Fish	High protein fish, in your dish. Everyday routine, eat fish with good-quality protein. Now not your fault, fish with no added salt.	Nutrient content claims on protein.

Target audience and recommended marketing channels

SMEs can use the nutrition and health claims and sample nutrition marketing messages to create marketing communication for each product. Messages can be targeted to the appropriate audience or consumer, such as adult women. Research has shown that in most SUN countries, adult women are the primary food and grocery shoppers. These messages can also be used to promote products to other target audiences, such as adult men, grandparents, etc., depending on the customer base for the particular product.

Additionally, SMEs can use these claims and marketing messages for business-to-business (B2B) marketing and market products to other large businesses, such as retail shops.

The proposed claims and marketing messages can be used in various marketing channels:

- Below the line marketing includes direct advertising to target a specific group of potential consumers. For example: direct mail or email, trade shows, sponsorship, catalogues, targeted search engine marketing, text messages, etc.
- Above the line (ATL) marketing is advertising deployed to a wider target audience, or often untargeted, and has a wide reach. For example: television, radio, print advertisements (magazine and newspaper), posters, billboards, film formats, websites, social media, word of mouth, etc.

Creating a marketing communication

To develop a marketing communication, first confirm the availability of the desired nutrition and health claim by following the steps in Table 4. Note that any country-specific laws and regulations on claims must also be followed. Once claim availability is confirmed, select a relevant nutrition fact (Table 2) to be included in the marketing communication (if desired), followed by selecting an appropriate marketing message (Table 3), and then creating a marketing communication.

Table 4. Steps for creating a marketing communication.

No.	Steps for creating a marketing communication	Example
1	Define the purpose of the claim.	To promote nutritious food during and after COVID-19.
2	Identify the target food product for which the claim is intended.	Egg.
3	Shortlist the desired claim (from Table 2).	With good-quality protein.
4	Define the target audience of the food product and claim.	Adult women.
5	Evaluate the protein content of your food product (this can be obtained if a nutrient composition of the food exists in your country, or by having it analysed at a laboratory).	12 g protein/100 g.
6	Identify NRV for protein as per Codex or as per your country RDA.	50 g/day (As per Codex).
7	Calculate percentage of protein NRV delivered per 100 ml.	12/50*100 = 24%
8	Identify the minimum requirement for the desired claim (from Table 2).	Not less than 10% of NRV per 100 g (solids).
9	Does the product comply with the minimum requirements?	Yes.
10	Is the claim “Eggs with good-quality protein” available for use?	Yes.
11	Set the context by including nutrition facts from the list above (optional).	Good nutrition is key to build immunity and protect against illness and infection.
12	Select a relevant “nutrition marketing message” for use in the communication (e.g. from Table 3).	An everyday routine, eat egg with good-quality protein.
13	Identify the marketing channel.	Poster.
14	Design an attractive and captivating marketing communication.	See examples below.

Note: Compliance with country-specific laws and regulations should be ensured before any of the nutrition messages or claims are used.

Sample marketing communications

Good nutrition is key to build immunity and protect against illness and infection

An *everyday* routine, eat *Eggs* with good quality *protein^!*

In stock daily at **Lavington Market**

1234 Kenda Drive

^ As per CODEX guidelines, Protein content of egg as per US FDA and Nutrient Reference Value for protein

Photo source: https://pixabay.com/

Eat fresh and unprocessed foods every day

Your Nutrition Mission, ***EGG*** everyday with ***Vitamin A^*** for healthy ***vision!***

^ As per Codex Guidelines, Vitamin A content of egg as per National Institute of Health (US) and Nutrient Reference Value

Photo source: https://www.eggnutritioncenter.org/

Overweight and obesity may worsen the impact of COVID-19

Low fat^ yoghurt is ***built*** for ***less guilt***

Prana Lassi low fat yoghurt now available at **Sylhet Family Market**

^ As per CODEX guidelines, based on nutrient composition of yoghurt from cow's milk as per USFDA Food Composition

Photo source: https://unsplash.com/ (Tiard Schulz)

[1] CODEX Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling, CAC/GL 2-1985 (Rev. 1 – 1993) available at http://www.fao.org/ag/humannutrition/33309-01d4d1dd1abc825f0582d9e5a2eda4a74.pdf
[2] CODEX General Guidelines on claims CAC/GL 1-1979 (Rev. 1-1991) available at http://www.fao.org/3/y2770e/y2770e05.htm
[3] CODEX Guidelines for nutrition and health claims. (CAC/GL 23-1997) available at http://www.fao.org/ag/humannutrition/32444-09f5545b8abe9a0c3baf01a4502ac36e4.pdf
[4] European Commission. Nutrition Claims available at https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/labelling_nutrition/claims/nutrition_claims_en
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[7] World Health Organization Nutrition advice for adults during the COVID-19 outbreak available at http://www.emro.who.int/nutrition/nutrition-infocus/nutrition-advice-for-adults-during-the-covid-19-outbreak.html
[8] COVID 19 & Scaling Up Nutrition, Fact Sheet, June 2020 available at https://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/200612_COVID-19-and-SUN-factsheet_EN.pdf

About MQSUN+
MQSUN+ provides technical assistance and knowledge services to the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) and the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement Secretariat (SMS) in support of pro-poor programmes in nutrition. MQSUN+ services are resourced by a consortium of five nonstate organisations leading in the field of nutrition.

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