



PATH/Evelyn Hockstein

MODULE 2: Developing a Multisectoral Nutrition Plan

This module is structured around the defining characteristics of a multisectoral nutrition plan (MSNP) and the four steps detailed below, and is accompanied by featured tools and additional resources:

- 2.1 What is a Multisectoral Nutrition Plan?
- 2.2 Engaging Stakeholders to Decide on a Way Forward
- 2.3 Agreeing on Goals, Objectives and Key Actions for the MSNP
- 2.4 Agreeing on the Governance Support Structure for Implementing the MSNP
- 2.5 Finalising and Facilitating Official Endorsement of the MSNP

Overview

This module describes the process of developing an MSNP. This is a collaborative process whereby the various sectors involved contribute to developing a plan with a common goal of addressing nutrition. Some of the common sectors doing nutrition-related work are health; education; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); social protection; and agriculture.

Given the variation in country context and experience with multisectoral nutrition efforts, the best process for developing an MSNP will vary. For instance, in some countries, an MSNP is elaborated in

the context of an existing nutrition policy or national development strategy which has already established the country's desired goals for nutrition. It may also be written after a common results framework (CRF) has been developed, with the aim of providing a narrative to accompany already detailed and agreed plan components. *As such, it is recommended that this module be reviewed in conjunction with [Module 3](#), as there are overlapping considerations, processes and resources to keep in mind.* In other contexts, the MSNP may represent the first attempt to develop a multisectoral approach for nutrition.



Regardless of the approach taken, the planning process should seek to engage all relevant sectors and focus on a process of prioritisation of key objectives and strategies, as well as outline governance structures and monitoring, evaluation and accountability mechanisms and assign roles and responsibilities across organisations. The plan should also include at least an indicative budget, even if full costing of activities is not completed at this stage (refer to [Module 4](#)).



Module 1:
Setting the Stage
for Multisectoral
Nutrition
Planning



Module 2:
Developing a
Multisectoral
Nutrition Plan



Module 3:
Developing a
Common Results
Framework



Module 4:
Costing and
Financing for
Nutrition



Module 5:
Monitoring,
Evaluation and
Learning for
Nutrition



Module 6:
Preparing for
Inception and
Implementation

In the process of developing an MSNP, it is critically important to take account of four key crosscutting considerations: advocacy, gender, capacity building and the humanitarian response situation. Details on the relevance of these considerations for this step in the process are highlighted on the next page.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Emergency preparedness and response may form a strategic objective of a plan or be integrated into objectives of a plan, often in terms of capacity to deliver nutrition interventions and respond to anticipated or unexpected shocks. Whether or not a country is prone to shocks (such as climate-related, conflict-related or disease-outbreak shocks), during the planning process consideration should be given to resilience of the plan and risks that could derail implementation or exacerbate the existing nutrition situation. Refer to [MQSUN's Linking Humanitarian and Development Actions brief](#).

GENDER

To ensure [gender equity and rights are manifested in the MSNP](#), output and implementation outcomes require using gender-, equity- and rights-based approaches from the outset of the MSNP design and throughout implementation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Involving gender-experienced stakeholders in MSNP development from the start can help to ensure an adequate gender lens is applied to planning. An explicit commitment in the MSNP to addressing gender differences and inequity can be agreed by stakeholders, included in the guiding principles of the MSNP and incorporated throughout the plan narrative.

ADVOCACY

Continuous advocacy efforts throughout MSNP development are essential in maintaining and building multisectoral and multi-stakeholder engagement to make sure all necessary actors / groups of actors are engaged and committed. This may mean investing time and energy in particularly reticent sectors or organisations which cannot see their role clearly or perceive the importance of nutrition for their sectors or work.

Public advocacy efforts should be continued as much as possible throughout the process to ensure that momentum is maintained and that the importance of the MSNP remains at the top of the political agenda, ensuring official national endorsement, followed by investment. Development of an advocacy plan often follows MSNP finalisation to further facilitate investment and fundraising (see [Module 6](#)). The planning process itself can be used to draw greater government/media/ other attention to nutrition in general and to the development of an MSNP to benefit all citizens of the country.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity refers to 'capacity at the human, institutional, organisational and infrastructural levels to implement nutrition programmes and strengthen nutrition governance'.ⁱ When designing an MSNP, it is important to understand the capacity in-country for successfully implementing the plan. A 'light' [capacity assessment](#) could be carried out during this stage of MSNP development or might have been carried out already. It can assist with developing understanding of existing and required capacity. Its purpose is to:

- > Understand the level of capacity available and the outstanding needs at national, subnational and local levels to enable scaling up of nutrition activities.
- > Develop specific recommendations for action to build the nutrition capacity of nutrition service providers and institutions and create enabling environments at national, subnational and local levels for the successful implementation of the MSNP.

A situational analysis or a nutrition gaps assessment may already exist and can inform a broader capacity assessment, or sectors may have conducted their own assessments, in which case this existing information can be gathered. The methodology for a capacity assessment at this stage of the planning process will depend on time and resources available and the consideration of what information is already available to guide planning.

The assessment may consist of reviews of specialised academic programmes, curricula or training which provides a certificate, diploma or degree in nutrition, food science, food safety, agriculture or food security; review of pre-service and in-service nutrition training included in medical, nursing and agriculture schools; and review of nutrition curricula at primary, secondary and post-secondary levels.

It may also examine the relevant employed cadres within each sector with a nutrition role or knowledge to ascertain existing nutrition roles, responsibilities and gaps in service delivery capacity, implementation and operational capacity.

Finally, an assessment may also examine governance and coordination capacity for multisectoral nutrition planning and programming.

ⁱ UNICEF. *Approach to Nutrition Programming in the East Africa and Pacific Region 2014-2025*. Bangkok: UNICEF; 2014.

2.1 What is a Multisectoral Nutrition Plan?

A national MSNP—sometimes also referred to as an action plan, strategic plan or strategy—is a narrative document which typically outlines a clear goal, objectives and actions to facilitate a multi-stakeholder, multisectoral approach to address a country's national nutrition goals. The level of detail included in a plan may vary from country to country, but it typically includes a budget, integrated monitoring framework and clear roles, responsibilities and governance structures to facilitate implementation coordination. Whilst some countries define specific activities in their main national plan, others first develop a higher-level strategic plan which is then typically accompanied by a more detailed operational plan (refer to [Module 6](#)).

National MSNPs are more likely to be implemented effectively if they are developed in collaboration with a full range of partners who can significantly contribute to implementation, such as through multisectoral and [multi-stakeholder platforms \(MSPs\)](#). This includes state actors, as well as key non-state actors: communities, grassroots advocates, professionals, nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations, academia, the media and the private sector. The plan should be led by government, preferably by a high-level office responsible for coordinating nutrition, and seek to involve subnational government representatives.

Multisectoral planning should focus on:

- > Creating mechanisms to achieve whole-of-government action in order to address nutrition challenges, securing political commitment at the highest levels.
- > Integrating specific nutrition concerns and objectives into relevant sectors' policies, programmes and activities, where possible.
- > Reinforcing responsible stewardship, whilst safeguarding nutrition from any potential conflict of interest.
- > Establishing sustainable and predictable financing mechanisms.
- > Investing in an appropriate workforce.
- > Promoting access to safe, effective, good-quality nutrition commodities and technologies.
- > Promoting the development and use of impact-assessment methods to monitor and evaluate multisectoral action.¹

There is no set template for an MSNP. Plans of different countries might look different. However, in general and at the least, a plan should include sections that refer to:

- > Contextual analysis (see [Module 1](#)), which may include analysis of capacity gaps and opportunities and refer to previous plans and bottlenecks in achievement of nutrition goals.
- > An overall goal and a set of key high-level targets.
- > Strategic objectives/actions (includes major anticipated outcomes, output and interventions across sectors).
- > Governance and coordination structures/mechanisms.

¹ World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe. *Multisectoral and Intersectoral Action for Improved Health and Well-Being for All: Mapping of the WHO European Region*. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2018. Available at http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/371435/multisectoral-report-h1720-eng.pdf?ua=1.

- > Roles and responsibilities of all actors and sectors.
- > Risks and assumptions.
- > An indicative budget and financing plan ([Module 4](#)).
- > Resource mobilisation plan ([Module 6](#)).
- > *M&E approach* ([Module 5](#))
- > *Plan for implementation* ([Module 6](#)).
- > *Capacity-development strategy* ([Module 6](#)).
- > *Advocacy and communication strategy* ([Module 6](#)).

The level of detail to be included in these sections can be decided and agreed by the country stakeholders. The latter four (italicised) may only comprise brief references to these strategies/plans and headlines on how they will be taken forward as separate items. Although they may be comprehensively included in a plan, they may also form separate documents (refer to [Module 6](#)). A comprehensive MEL framework is also generally elaborated as a separate document beyond the outline that is included in the MSNP, further details of which are available in [Module 5](#).

The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement has developed a checklist for good nutrition plans, which describes recommended contents, characteristics and quality criteria of a plan.



SUN's Checklist for 'Good' Nutrition Plans aims to assist the systematic review of existing multisectoral nutrition plans and other nutrition-related sectoral planning documents, and in parallel, it serves as a complementary guiding tool in the development of new plans. The checklist intends to spur a set of documented recommendations for the improvement of a plan's content against a set of criteria and characteristics that may be adapted to a given country context.

The plan should be endorsed by the highest-ranking official in the ministry of each implicated sector.

The plan should draw on and align with any existing nutrition policy and nutrition sections of a National Development Plan/Strategy, as well as the Strategic or Action Plans or policies of the various sectors (agriculture, health, WASH, social protection and education, etc.), adopting for review and discussion existing activities and priorities relevant for achieving nutrition outcomes. A critical factor is to ensure that ongoing activities and strategies that work well to address nutrition challenges are prioritised in the MSNP. If these are already funded from existing sources, that is also a strong advantage to the plan and should be highlighted.

In planning, the aim is to bring together what is already being implemented across sectors for nutrition and assess what the ongoing relevance of the approach is and whether additional strategies/activities are needed. Any added activities will later need to seek finance, so it is important that the plan focuses on priority actions/strategies and does not become a wish list of desirable ones for which funding is unlikely to be forthcoming. At the same time, essential strategies/actions that are missing will need to be added to the plan and an advocacy plan included to gain funding.

2.2 Engaging Stakeholders to Decide on a Way Forward

As mentioned in the previous section, the development of a robust MSNP, which is adequately owned and supported by all, requires early engagement and consensus of stakeholders across sectors. An in-depth understanding of the nutrition context in a country ([contextual analysis](#)), including the current nutrition-related policies ([policy framework analysis](#)) and key stakeholders and actors ([stakeholder mapping and analysis](#)), provide the foundation for evidence-based joint planning and multi-stakeholder engagement (refer to [Module 1](#)). All stakeholders need to have a common understanding of nutrition, agree on the importance of attaining the stated nutrition goals and appreciate the relevance and roles of their sectors and more specifically, their organisations, in working to attain those goals.

EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE NUTRITION STAKEHOLDERS

Government/public sector

- > Overarching multisectoral nutrition entities: planning and development—including the SUN steering committee and the MSP for nutrition—finance, local development or administration, parliamentarians, etc.
- > Sectoral representatives: ministries of health, WASH, agriculture, irrigation, livestock, fisheries, education, social affairs/ protection, economic development, planning, local development, women's affairs, youth, labour, energy, information, culture, commerce and industry, disaster management, finance, statistics, etc.
- > Local, subnational or district government.

Partners

- > United Nations (UN) agencies: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WHO, World Food Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization, International Fund for Agricultural Development, UN Population Fund / UN Women, UN Development Programme, etc.
- > Donors: US Agency for International Development, UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, European Union, German Corporation for International Cooperation, World Bank, African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, etc.
- > International/national NGOs or civil society organisations: Save the Children International, FHI360, Helen Keller International, etc.
- > Private sector (business).
- > Academia and research.
- > Journalists and Nutrition Champions.

Factors that have been found to enable and facilitate multisectoral action include:

- > High-level political support and commitment for multisectoral action.
- > Focus on the long-term outcomes and policy changes.
- > Existence of a clear mandate.
- > High-quality evidence and information for policy planning and monitoring.
- > Adequate financial and human resources for implementation.
- > Relationships across sectors based on trust and shared understanding of the problem.

- > Clear objectives and identified co-benefits amongst partners.
- > Engagement of the civil society.
- > Public pressure.
- > Media support and involvement.²

In contexts where nutrition knowledge is weak or underdeveloped in some sectors, it may be helpful to conduct an awareness-raising/advocacy workshop – to improve understanding of nutrition concepts and the SUN mechanism – and work with each sector to advance its appreciation of its role (see [Module 1](#), particularly the Tajikistan country case study).



MQSUN+'s Stakeholder Consultation tool provides guidance for the purpose of consulting with stakeholders in preparation for the development of a MSNP/CRF. It offers the methodology for holding consultations, in addition to a sample workshop agenda and examples of potential nutrition stakeholders.

In almost all contexts, it is useful to bring stakeholders together early on in the planning process to discuss, and update all stakeholders on, the current nutrition context in the country, including regional/subnational disparities, agree overall nutrition goals and targets for the plan and discuss priority areas for action. A focus on creating good relationships based on trust and open communication is vital, though that often takes a substantive period of time and requires determined action to overcome potential divisions.

At the end of the drafting process, a validation workshop with all stakeholders should be held to endorse the plan (see **country case study from Guinea** on page 2-14 as well as examples from [Uganda](#) and [Burkina Faso](#)).

In the interim stages of plan development, it may be opportune to bring stakeholders together in facilitated working sessions if this is required to achieve consensus on content.

SUBNATIONAL PLANNING & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Depending on country structures and level of decentralisation, subnational plans may be developed from an MSNP, or they may be developed first and feed into an MSNP. Alternatively, a process of identifying priority actions at the subnational level may be undertaken to feed into national-level planning.

Whichever route is best suited to the country context, subnational actors remain essential stakeholders to engage at every step of planning. This means engaging subnational government representatives, civil society organisations, relevant private sector representatives and others in consultation and contribution at each opportunity in the planning process.

[Read more about key lessons and challenges from subnational multisectoral planning](#)

² Ibid.

2.3 Agreeing on Goals, Objectives and Key Actions for the MSNP

This step will include discussing and agreeing on the goals, strategic objectives, a theory of change and sectoral contributions to develop the plan narrative. The process to develop the plan narrative can take various forms and include workshops, facilitated meetings with sectors, individual interviews/discussions with organisations and drafting and reviewing of sections. One approach that is commonly employed is for a designated writer to prepare a draft outline using input from across sectors to kick-start the process—enabling stakeholders to then review/comment and complete details independently or through participation in facilitated workshops.

Setting goals and objectives: If an existing multisectoral nutrition policy, strategy or national development plan already specifies an overall goal for nutrition and/or targets, these can be adopted in the MSNP. If these are not already agreed, then stakeholders need to review the contextual analysis and key nutrition challenges in the country and agree on nutrition goals and objectives.

To guide this process, the [UN Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\) targets](#) and [World Health Assembly Global Nutrition Targets 2025](#) can be used or adapted to context. Using the latest available data from national surveys, baseline indicators can be derived and appropriate national **targets** defined. These can be set at national level, as well as extrapolated to the subnational level as required (refer to Section 3.4 in [Module 3](#) for more details).

*The development of a **theory of change or conceptual model** can provide an initial framework for the plan and can be used to illustrate (a) how the key actions of each sector and various actors will combine to achieve individual strategic objectives and (b) how those objectives together attain a common goal. This is an important first step to forming both the MSNP narrative and the CRF (see [Module 3](#))—depending on which document is initially developed. Examples of these models can be found in [Annex 3](#).*

It is a common approach for each sector to lead on or work primarily towards one of the strategic objectives—for example, through assigning one strategic objective around food security, another around sanitation and hygiene, another around nutrition-specific interventions/services etc. However, there are a variety of ways that strategic objectives can be organised, which also include arranging them around common objectives involving all sectors, such as ‘enhance evidence-based programming’, ‘prevent undernutrition’, and ‘reduce gender inequity’ (see **country case studies for Afghanistan and Malawi** below).



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COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

Selecting a national nutrition goal and strategic objectives in
Afghanistan and Malawi

Afghanistan developed its [Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda Strategic Plan 2019 to 2023](#), with its strategic objectives highlighting primarily sector-specific objectives – the first noted approach above. The goal and strategic objectives were selected to be consistent with Afghanistan's commitments to meet SDGs 2 (Zero Hunger) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) and support the achievement of other relevant SDGs – in line with other key sectoral strategies and policies.

Overall goal: 'To improve the food security and nutrition situation of Afghan people' (p. 24)ⁱⁱ

The strategic objectives of the plan are the following:

1. Ensure adequate economic and physical access to food, especially by vulnerable and food-insecure population groups.
2. Ensure food and nutrition supplies over time and in emergency situations.
3. Improve the quality of nutritious diets, particularly among women, children and vulnerable groups.
4. Increase access to nutrition-related quality healthcare services.
5. Improve water, sanitation and hygiene as well as education for better nutrition.
6. Improve rural infrastructure and strengthen nutritional value chains while protecting natural resources.
7. Increase availability of nutrient-rich foods through domestic (local) food production.
8. Increase nutritional and market value of foods (wheat, other...products).
9. Strengthen food security and nutrition governance.' (p. 116)ⁱⁱ

ⁱⁱ *Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda (AFSeN-A) Strategic Plan*. Kabul: Government of Afghanistan; 2018.



Malawi developed the country's [National Multi-sector Nutrition Strategic Plan 2018–2022](#), with its strategic objectives highlighting common objectives across sectors – the second noted approach above. The goals and strategic objectives were selected to respond to and operationalise the National Multi-sector Nutrition Policy 2018–2022 and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III and provide a framework within which sectors should be coordinated, implemented and monitored.

Overall goal: 'To attain optimal nutrition for all Malawians by 2021 with emphasis on children under the age of five, pregnant and lactating women, and other vulnerable groups' (p. 14).ⁱⁱⁱ

The specific objectives of the strategic plan are to:

1. Prevent undernutrition with emphasis on children under five, adolescent girls, school-going children, pregnant and lactating women, [people living w/ HIV], and other vulnerable groups.
2. Enhance gender equality, equity, protection, participation, and empowerment of adolescent[s], women, and children for improved nutrition.
3. Treat and control acute malnutrition among children under five, adolescents, pregnant and lactating women, [people living with HIV], and other vulnerable groups.
4. Prevent and manage overweight and nutrition related [noncommunicable disease]s.
5. Enhance nutrition education, social mobilisation, and positive behaviour change.
6. Improve delivery of nutrition interventions during emergencies.
7. Create an enabling environment for effective implementation of nutrition interventions.
8. Enhance evidence-based programming through nutrition monitoring, evaluation research, and surveillance.' (p. 15)ⁱⁱⁱ

ⁱⁱⁱ *National Multi-sector Nutrition Strategic Plan 2018–2022*. Lilongwe: Gov. of Malawi Dept. of Nutrition, HIV, AIDS; 2018.

As mentioned above, the plan should seek to align activities with sector plans and policies around nutrition wherever possible so as to capitalise on effective interventions that are already being undertaken, as well as to avoid developing a completely new area of work for sectors, which is overly ambitious and underresourced. Planning should also seek to identify opportune moments in ministry planning cycles to advocate for ensuring development policies and programmes include nutrition and align with the MSNP design by integrating nutrition objectives and outcomes across multiple sectors' plans and strategies (e.g. health, agriculture, WASH, education and social protection).



MQSUN+'s Review of SUN Country National Nutrition Plans provides a summary of the examination of select SUN country national nutrition plans according to the [SUN checklist for quality plans](#). It presents key results by checklist area, as well as an assessment of gender considerations. This review can help to contextualise for stakeholders the components of good plans to increase understanding.



MQSUN+'s brief on Gender in Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plans presents a preliminary step in the process of considering gender during nutrition planning by providing details on how gender can be considered and integrated within an MSNP. Specifically, it offers a gender assessment tool that outlines criteria for considering gender within nutrition plans.



Nutrition International's Integrating Gender Equality into Technical Assistance guidance provides a checklist of different areas for experts to consider gender, if appropriate, when providing technical assistance to SUN countries in relation to nutrition planning and implementation.

Prioritisation starts from the [contextual analysis](#) (refer to [Module 1](#)), which can help to identify:

- > Priority nutrition challenges (e.g. wasting, stunting, specific micronutrient deficiencies, overnutrition/obesity).
- > Vulnerable groups.
- > High-burden geographic regions in the country.
- > Priority actions to address the identified challenges.
- > Key stakeholders and their respective roles.

The objectives and strategies of the MSNP should be selected to respond to the issues identified in the contextual analysis. They should be relevant to the priority gaps identified in the [policy framework analysis](#), locally appropriate and identified in consultation with subnational authorities with—as much as possible—involvement from communities. In addition, policy and programmatic actions should be informed by scientific and field evidence.

2.4 Agreeing on the Governance and Support Structure for Implementing the MSNP

Consultations to agree on critical parts and governance structures of the MSNP may take shape in a number of ways: meetings with individual stakeholders, working groups within ministries, cross-departmental working groups within larger ministries and multi-stakeholder workshops. The selection of approach will depend somewhat on the information already available, the systems already established for use and consultations that may have happened previously related to nutrition policy, governance mechanisms and allocation of responsibilities. However, it is always preferable to bring a broad group together in at least one meeting to discuss, debate and agree on these aspects of the plan. Such a meeting requires attendance of high-level representatives from across sectors and stakeholders to ensure commitment and accountability, along with technical or management staff who have a good understanding of how things can be operationalised in practice.

In establishing the priorities and systems for the MSNP, it is important to build on existing systems that work well (e.g. information/MEL systems or coordination mechanisms) rather than seeking to invent new ones that might add another level of work or round of meetings for all concerned. The MSNP can be conceived of as bringing the sectors together to work collaboratively for nutrition, but it is likely that each sector is already engaged in several activities or systems that work towards this aim, even if it is not yet explicit.

The **guiding principles** of an MSNP refer to the commitment by all stakeholders to a set of values that guide its implementation. These would normally include human rights (the right to food and access to health services, for example); equity and inclusivity (including gender considerations); a commitment to targeting support and services to where they are most needed; and a commitment to transparency, accountability and partnership.

COUNTRY EXAMPLE OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES: YEMEN

Yemen selected a set of guiding principles for its [Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plan \(2020–2023\)](#) that demonstrated the vitality of multisectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration to address the drivers of malnutrition in the country, especially amongst the most vulnerable and neediest populations, which is at the core of the government's wider vision for nutrition.

'The following set of guiding principles reflect [Government of Yemen's] vision towards this end...[:]

- > Enhancing coordination and cooperation amongst stakeholders [...]
- > Ensuring services converge on the neediest and most vulnerable [...]
- > Bridging the divide across humanitarian and nonhumanitarian programming [...]
- > Ensuring accountability for the measurement and achievement of results [...]
- > Mobilising communities for improving nutrition outcomes [...]
- > Considering and addressing differing gender needs and inequalities [...].^{iv}

^{iv} Yemen Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plan 2020–2023. Sanaa: Government of Yemen: 2020: 27–28.

Good governance, clear communication and the building of strong partnerships across sectors are necessary for multisectoral action to be successful.

Governance mechanisms need to be established and agreed to define working methods and roles and responsibilities. High-level ministerial support that transcends the sectors is the optimal position for establishing leadership. High-level participation influences and mobilises other levels of governance.



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[MSPs](#) should involve a range of members and actors, including ministers, deputy ministers or other ministerial representatives, such as senior officials or technical experts. The framework should define the membership of each platform and committee, including the specific organisations to be involved as well as the appropriate cadre.

Coherence between different levels of governance is just as important as coherence across different sectors of government. In addition to promoting horizontal collaborations and partnerships across sectors, multisectoral action for nutrition also takes place vertically between the

national, subnational/regional and local levels. Ensuring that coherence extends down to the local level and is able to report back up is vitally important, as much of the implementation occurs at the local level.

The framework should also provide clear details of how the platforms and committees will operate and how they will interact together, as well as elaborate the accountability mechanisms that will support the system.

The functionality of these committees and structures is a key element to their success. A strong coordination structure is required which has an adequately staffed, empowered and government-led secretariat, steering committees, coordination groups and working groups. Refer to [Annex 4](#) for example coordination structures from Yemen and Tanzania.

The **M&E and learning (MEL)** framework for monitoring and evaluating progress of the plan itself should be outlined in the MSNP and might include commitment and support to annual or midterm independent reviews/evaluations, as well as periodic joint monitoring by key stakeholder agencies.

Any plans to develop or strengthen surveillance systems for the collection of information on selected input, output/outcome and impact indicators ([Global Nutrition Targets 2025 Policy Brief Series](#)) may also be referenced in the MSNP. In some cases, multisectoral collaboration has led to the development of new indicators, but often indicators already collected through existing systems can be used and streamlined into a data-collection system.

Mechanisms—and partners support to these—to enhance learning throughout the MSNP implementation should also be considered. These might include engagement of academia to pursue a specific research agenda related to gaps in the knowledge base for nutrition and specific learnings generated through operation of the MSNP or activities within it, as well as learnings more specifically generated through the MEL systems established or proposed, accompanied by a clear plan for dissemination of these findings.

MEL frameworks are covered in more detail in [Module 5](#). They should be outlined in the MSNP and can be included in full or developed as a more detailed separate document or addendum.

In dealing with **funding arrangements**, as far as possible the MSNP should include an [assessment of the resources available](#) to achieve progress towards its goal and strategic objectives, including financial resources to achieve coverage and human resources to adequately implement interventions. This assessment should examine existing funds that are assigned to nutrition activities through the various sector budgets, as well as current and anticipated donor funds supporting activities beyond government budgets. From this assessment, an estimate can be made of funding already available and that which remains to be found. The MSNP should include at least the outline of a plan to mobilise the necessary resources, with an indication of how such funds would be managed in support of the MSNP. The MSNP may be accompanied by a communication and advocacy strategy (see [Module 6](#)) to assist in mobilising resources from government, the private sector and/or international donor agencies. Refer to [Module 4](#) of this toolkit for further financing-related guidance.

2.5 Finalising and Facilitating Official Endorsement of the MSNP

Once all sections of the MSNP are complete, the initial steps may be technical reviews, endorsement and agreement and then preparation for submission (including documentation, protocol and processes and a review by the endorsing authority, followed by wider dissemination and launch of the plan.

During this process, it is common practice to gather all stakeholders in a validation workshop to ensure all are agreed on the plan, allowing an opportunity to iron out any final concerns (see **country case study from Guinea** below, as well as examples from [Uganda](#) and [Burkina Faso](#)). It is usual to invite high-level representatives from each organisation, who are in a position to commit their organisations to the plan's implementation and ensure accountability and ownership. In such a workshop, it is useful to (a) allow time for participants to read sections of the document itself and (b) make use of the services of an experienced facilitator to walk participants through each section of the MSNP. The aim is to ensure that all stakeholders (government ministries, UN agencies, civil society, private sector, academia, international donors) are familiar with the MSNP and have a last chance to debate any issues of concern before agreeing to endorse the plan in acceptance of their roles and responsibilities in implementing it. In many countries such a workshop or meeting may close with a vote or similar display/headcount so that it is clear and witnessed by all that the MSNP has been approved. See the [MQSUN+ Stakeholder Consultation tool](#) for more details on conducting a workshop.

Formal endorsement by government ministries across the engaged sectors should then be achieved through signing of the MSNP, preferably by the minister of each sector, followed by final sign-off by the SUN Focal Point or senior country representative leading the process to ensure sustainability of the MSNP moving forward.

For a full description of the development or update to an MSNP, refer to [Annex 2](#) for examples in the country case studies for Afghanistan, Guinea and Yemen.

COUNTRY CASE STUDY

Guinea validates their MSNP with key nutrition stakeholders



With the purpose of improving the enabling environment to implement and scale up key nutrition actions, Guinea's National Multisectoral Nutrition Strategy Plan [Plan Stratégique National Multisectoriel de Nutrition (PSNMN)] 2018-2022 was reviewed, updated and finalised in 2018.

In September 2018, a workshop was held with the purpose of validating the updated policy and strategic plan and developing the Advocacy Strategy and Nutrition Communication Plan for Resource Mobilization. The meeting brought together 70 participants from various ministries (Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Social Action, Women's and Children's Promotion, Livestock, Fisheries and Maritime Economy, Environment, Trade, Industry and Small and Medium Enterprises, Budget, Planning and Economic Development, Cooperation, Economy and Finance and Youth), the National Assembly, universities, UN system agencies, embassies, NGOs and civil society. By the end of the workshop, the updated plan had been agreed and validated by attendees.

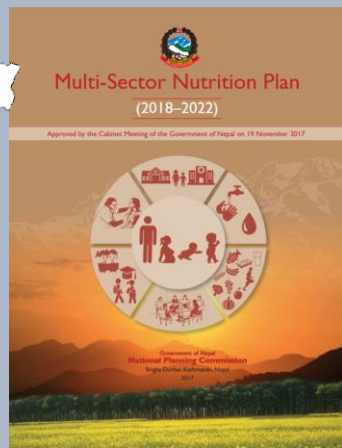
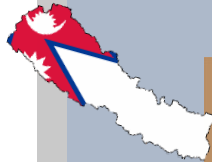
Following this, a high-level meeting was held 07 November 2018 in Conakry with the objective of repositioning nutrition on the agenda of the Republic of Guinea and launching the updated MSNP. The meeting strengthened political dialogue, social mobilisation, and multisectoral and inclusive partnership for nutrition in Guinea. On the basis of presenting the priorities of the updated PSNMN, stakeholders were asked to mobilise, gather their commitments to support its implementation and strengthen the partnership between the government, technical partners, private sector and civil society.

Success was cemented by the high-level participation from the prime minister, Dr Ibrahima Kassory Fofana; the ministers of Economy and Finance, State, Industry and Small and Medium Enterprises, Health and African Cooperation and Integration; the First Lady of the Republic, Hadja Djènè Kaba Condé ([Nutrition Champion for the country since 2016](#)); the acting UN resident coordinator and UNICEF representative; and under-secretary-general of the UN and SUN Movement coordinator, Ms Gerda Verburg. There was also extraordinarily strong presence from parliamentarians, ambassadors, donors, agencies of the UN system and civil society groups.

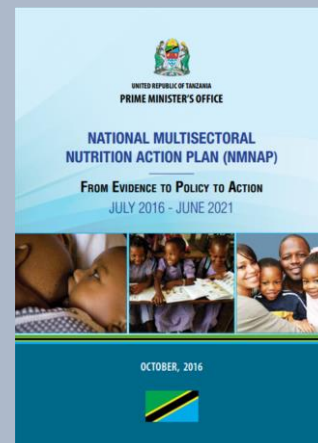
Through this series of workshops and meetings, the Guinean government showed its commitment at the highest level to making nutritional security an important lever for the development of the country.

COUNTRY EXAMPLES OF MULTISECTORAL NUTRITION PLANS

Of the 62 SUN member countries, 42 of them have developed a national MSNP. The most updated plans can be found on the [individual country pages](#) on the SUN website. Below are a few examples:



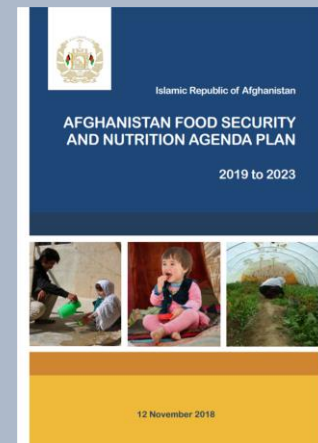
[Nepal's Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan 2018-2022](#)



[Tanzania's National Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plan 2016-2021](#)

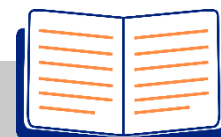


[Mauritania's Plan Strategique Multisectoriel de Nutrition 2016-2025](#)



[Afghanistan Food Security And Nutrition Agenda Plan 2019-2023](#)

Additional Guidance to Develop an MSNP



Resource

World Health Organization (WHO). *Landscape Analysis on Countries' Readiness to Accelerate Actions for Nutrition*. Geneva: WHO; 2012. Available at https://apps.who.int/nutrition/landscape_analysis/publications_and_information/en/index.html.

About MQSUN+

MQSUN+ provides technical assistance (TA) and knowledge services to the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement Secretariat (SMS) in support of pro-poor programmes in nutrition. MQSUN+ services are resourced by a consortium of five non-state organisations leading in the field of nutrition.

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MQSUN+ cannot be held responsible for errors or any consequences arising from the use of information contained in this brief. This document was produced by MQSUN+ through support provided by UK aid and the UK Government; however, the views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the UK Government's official policies.

