

Develop detailed action plans

Why is this important for MSPs?

An action plan provides a detailed outline of the tasks required to accomplish a goal, such as designing and setting up an MSP. Once you know what needs to be done to create or renovate the MSP (see Outline the process), action plans break down the process into **actionable steps based on a given timeline**, providing a **clear roadmap** for how to achieve the goal, and making it easy to track progress and make revisions to the process.

During the planning process, responsibility for each action should be assigned to specific actors (see actions and responsibilities). This helps to **ensure accountability for actions** within the MSP structure. It is also helpful to **assess potential barriers to achieving each step**, such as lack of stakeholder time or funds to achieve each step.

A detailed plan which sets out the necessary **actions, roles, timeline and potential barriers to action** will help to ensure that you achieve your goals for the MSP. Even in a highly adaptive planning process, where the overall strategy is constantly being improved, plans are needed for **who is going to do what, when, and how**. This is especially important in an MSP, where there are many different stakeholders involved. Sometimes stakeholders may only realise there are problems with the overall strategy when they get down to detailed action planning, and can then make changes to the strategy as needed.

Some **key steps** in the process when developing detailed action plans are:

- Identify your overall goal

- Set SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time bound)
- Identify the individual tasks needed to achieve the goal, and order them by priority
- Assign responsibility for each task to a specific stakeholder, and make sure they are on board
- Identify any challenges, barriers, and self-defeating tendencies
- Determine what resources you will need
- Decide on a realistic timescale to achieve your overall goal and the component steps
- Review your progress (see Define success criteria and indicators)

Plans should be created in collaboration with key stakeholders, allowing all to input into the process. This can be especially beneficial for actors who do not have nutrition as a core mandate to feel a sense of ownership over the tasks assigned and overall strategic goal.