Outline the process

Why is this important for MSPs?

An MSP has a structure (see Decide on structure), but it also has a set of processes that are as much the MSP as the structure itself. In order to effectively manage the MSP, it is important to **be clear about the overall processes that the MSP will follow**, for instance in how stakeholders will meet, how decisions are taken, and different timeframes for actions and accountability for responsibilities. This clarity is needed in order to make sure everyone understands how the MSP works, what the different roles are, and when things are happening.

Thinking about the institutional arrangements will you use to communicate about the MSP process is important. You need to make sure you can communicate with all stakeholders, work together, and hold each other accountable.

Planning the MSP process can be done in a number of ways: you could ask advice from specific experts; put together a small steering group of interested parties and stakeholders; or you could use a participatory process and invite all potential stakeholders to contribute. The context within you are working may make one of these options more appropriate. When deciding what will work best, you should consider that the more involved stakeholders are within the setting up process, the more 'buy-in' you will get from them further down the line. However, including many voices within the process will require high levels of administrative organisation, and more time.

There are several aspects of process that should be considered, to make it more successful:

- **Sustainability and durability** – are processes designed

to withstand changes in MSP membership, leadership, and political upheaval? Can processes withstand changes in funding levels?

- **Equity and participation** – are processes designed to be inclusive of different groups, in particular those most marginalized in the country context?
- **Accountability** – are processes designed to provide clear roles and responsibilities, and with clear sanctions for agreed actions not taken?
- **Effectiveness** – are processes designed so that the capacity of the MSP members matches the intent of the MSP design?
- **Efficiency** – are processes designed to maximise cost-benefits and minimise duplication?

Once you have an outline of the planned processes for the MSP, this should be **shared openly with all stakeholders**. Everyone who is involved will need to know what their responsibilities are, which meetings they should attend, what committees they should become involved in, and what (if any) implementation work they should be carrying out. It should also be clear who is responsible for calling those meetings, or allocating responsibilities, or defining committees.

How does this work in practice?

In **Nepal**, the MSP process was developed through a series of consultative meetings led by the National Planning Commission, with participation of key sector ministries, donors, UN groups, academia and civil society organisations. Between 2011 and 2013 sector-wide reviews were conducted to develop an integrated sectoral strategy to address undernutrition, and to develop the institutional framework needed to implement the strategy (the MSP). The MSP was designed with a comprehensive action plan with clear roles and responsibilities, to facilitate the process of running the MSP.