

Situation analysis

Why is this important for MSPs?

Understanding the situation within which the MSP will be operating is essential to **making the MSP relevant** to the needs of the context, and **ensuring buy-in from all stakeholders**. It is also important to understand **what is already being done** in terms of nutrition coordination, so as not to re-invent the wheel, and to understand the **human and financial resources** available for undertaking an MSP.

In order to understand the context, a number of key questions need to be considered:

1. Where does nutrition fit nationally in terms of:
 1. development priorities (both external organisations and Government), (see Clarify reasons for an MSP)
 2. high-level leadership buy-in, (see Champions and high-level leadership)
 3. urgency (how bad are nutrition indicators, and how does it compare politically to other urgent issues?) (see Advocating for resources)
2. What is already happening in terms of coordination for MSPs (see Nutrition MSP analysis)?
3. Who are the important stakeholders working on, or interested in, nutrition and where do their interests lie (see Stakeholder mapping)?
4. Who will lead the MSP, where do they fit into the nutrition work, and how do they incentivise participation? (see Champions and high-level leadership)
5. How does politics play a role in the context (see Accounting for context)?
6. Who has the power to drive or undermine the MSP (see Power in MSPs)?

7. Who does not have power but should be included and empowered (see Gender and equity)?

The context that the MSP operates within will change throughout the lifetime of the platform. Carrying out a situation analysis in order to ensure the set-up or reinvigoration of the nutrition MSP is appropriate and responsive to the specific context is advised, but this is also an **on-going process**, and context assessment should be reviewed at regular intervals with all stakeholders.

How does this work in practice?

In **Senegal**, the reinvigoration of the MSP built significantly on the previous MSP that existed, but it also took into account the situation within which it was working. The previous MSP had helped to create a shared conceptualisation of malnutrition, and crucially highlighted the challenges that the new MSP would face, allowing those working on it to address them and strengthen coordination mechanisms and community involvement. These included: The World Bank (which was functioning as an 'internal player') ensured that nutrition was a national priority and maintained investment in the issue. Top leaders bought-in to the issue and created a policy space. Key actors including the president and the donor community believed that nutrition was central to development. Advocates worked to create a common view about the causes of malnutrition in Senegal.