Stakeholder mapping

Why is this important for MSPs?

Stakeholder mapping is an exercise to **identify stakeholders relevant to a particular process or organisation**. It can also help to understand the relationship between various stakeholders, their relative strengths, capacities and level of engagement. This is an essential exercise that needs to be carried out right at the start of an MSP design process, to understand who should be involved in the MSP. It can also be subsequently used when planning to expand or change the MSP platform.

The value of an MSP lies in engaging with multiple stakeholders within and outside of the government, but first it is necessary to find out who these stakeholders are. Through a **participatory process** (workshops or meetings) bringing together a core group who know the national nutrition landscape well, it helps in identifying who are the actors and what are they doing in the nutrition sphere. This should be done **keeping gender and equity principles in mind**, to ensure marginalised groups are included in the process and the maps (see Gender and equity). **Stakeholders may differ across different scales and contexts** as well, for instance if the aim of the MSP is to improve nutrition service delivery, then the local level staff (government departments, civil society, and community organisations) may be crucial to engage with.

Stakeholder mapping at the inception phase can aid in identifying and understanding the stakeholder landscape and reaching out to actors involved in nutrition programming and delivery (including some you may not have thought of). In a forward-looking way, stakeholder mapping can also help to determine how the strengths of various actors can complement each other to build synergies across various stakeholders, and

help in **co-creating a shared vision and aims for the MSP**. Repeated stakeholder mapping may be used as an **effective tool to adapt and sustain the MSP** as new actors emerge as the MSP evolves.

Stakeholder inclusion on an MSP should generally be broad and take in multiple ideas and interests, but note also that potential conflict of interest is an important issue to address: See SUN's conflict of interest tools and statement here: https://scalingupnutrition.org/share-learn/multistakeholder-engagement/preventing-and-managing-conflicts-of-interest/

How does this work in practice?

Identifying pre-existing networks: In most countries, there is usually a history of some form of collaborative action. Stakeholder mapping can help identify such pre-existing mechanisms and also individuals and actors that can help mobilise such partnerships. For example, in **Kyrgyzstan** when preliminary analysis was conducted during the MSP inception phase, it came to light that previous institutions such as the Development Partners Coordination Council (DPCC) which brought together actors from development partners, donors and the UN around nutrition could be leveraged rather than re-invent a new parallel structure and risk fragmentation.

Working through various SUN networks: The SUN-MSP framework also works through various technical networks and alliances that differ from country to country. It has helped in bringing people together in shared space. For example, **in Sri Lanka,** an initial stakeholder mapping exercise was conducted when the country joined the SUN Movement in 2011. This helped in the formation of various SUN networks in the country. The National Secretariat for Nutrition in Sri Lanka (NNSSL) also conducts stakeholder mapping exercises when developing new interventions programmes, especially at the local level.