

**Table 5.4: Common challenges and points to consider in strategy development**

Common challenges	Points to consider
Coordinating the development of a response strategy that involves many agencies with potentially <b>differing mandates and capacities</b> can be challenging.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important to aim for a broad consensus that is clearly documented and linked to implementation plans.</li> <li>• Encourage development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for activity-level strategies that involve more than one agency.</li> <li>• Agencies that do not participate in the Nutrition Cluster should be encouraged to share information and to be part of the coordination process in order to avoid duplication and gaps.</li> </ul>
Plans become <b>driven by Nutrition Cluster partner projects</b> , or are <b>seen as biased</b> in favour of the CLA or more powerful Nutrition Cluster partners, rather than reflecting Nutrition Cluster objectives as a whole.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage a smaller working group (e.g. SAG or TWG) with a broad representation of Nutrition Cluster partners to develop the overarching framework that reflects the direction of the cluster. Define response strategies that are relevant to the context and are developed through consultation.</li> <li>• Develop Nutrition Cluster response strategy plans based on shared analysis and clear criteria.</li> </ul>
Plans are <b>unrealistic</b> , with too many activities, which cannot be achieved within the timeframe or in the local context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep it simple: keep priorities and objectives to a minimum.</li> <li>• Plan around available and confirmed capacities and resources.</li> <li>• Adopt a phased or incremental plan in the immediate response.</li> </ul>
Plans are <b>inaccurate</b> owing to inadequate or ineffective investigation, verification or analysis of data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt a thorough and systematic approach to regularly review planning assumptions and assessment data.</li> </ul>
Plans become <b>outdated</b> and are of limited use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routinely review and update the Nutrition Cluster response strategy to take into account changes to context and progress.</li> <li>• Ensure that a longer-term perspective is incorporated into the strategy, and engage additional expertise from early recovery colleagues and focal points when needed.</li> </ul>
Response strategies do not address the needs of all vulnerable groups since there are currently <b>limitations in global guidance for nutrition</b> in terms of assessment and programming. <sup>106</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that assessments, to the best extent possible, consider the needs of all age groups.</li> <li>• Liaise with focal points on cross-cutting issues (e.g. age, gender) to see how gaps in guidance may be addressed.</li> <li>• Identify critical gaps in guidance in relation to other age groups, and develop a plan to put in place the relevant technical resources to address these gaps. This may include consultation with in-country or out-of-country expertise (section 6.3).</li> </ul>
There are <b>philosophical differences between agencies</b> that prevent a reaching of consensus around technical interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the Nutrition Cluster mechanism as a forum for evidence-based discussion, prioritisation and programming that respects the Principles of Partnership (section 10.1.6). The NCC's role is not to regulate the activities of individual agencies, but to ensure that actions can be understood in terms of how they do or do not contribute to achieving a common goal.</li> <li>• Hold bilateral discussions with concerned agencies to understand their points of view and driving factors, and try to find and build on</li> </ul>

<sup>106</sup> Available technical guidelines for nutrition in emergencies are fairly well defined for children aged 6–59 months, but less well defined for other age groups, such as adolescents and older people.

	areas of commonality.
The <b>national authority is not supportive</b> of the objectives, response strategies or activities of a specific agency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with the national authority will depend on the position it has taken in terms of engaging with the cluster mechanism. Negotiation and advocacy with the national authority may be necessary in order to understand the underlying reasons and to break an impasse (section 2.3).</li> </ul>