



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Kyrgyz Republic Country Brief December 2020

In Numbers



123,200 people assisted
in December 2020

1662.6 mt of food assistance distributed

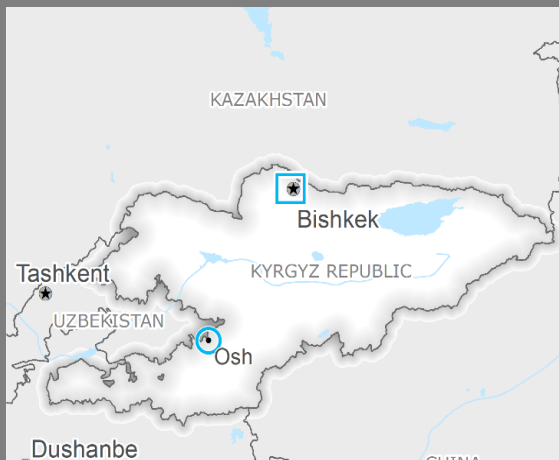
US\$ 160,600 cash-based transfers made

Operational Context

The Kyrgyz Republic is a land-locked, mountainous country located at the centre of the Eurasian continent with a territory of 199,000 sq. km. The country borders China, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Two-thirds of the country's multi-ethnic population live in rural areas. 22.4 percent of the population live below the poverty line and according to the "2020 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World" report, prevalence of moderate to severe food insecurity in the total population is 6.3 percent (2017-2019).

The country's high dependency on imported basic food items, particularly wheat, continues to negatively affect the most vulnerable food-insecure households who spend over half of their household income on food-related expenses. Poor food diversification can lead to malnutrition. This translates into 13 percent of children aged 2 to 5 years suffering from stunting. Anaemia prevalence is high, women – 38 percent, children – 43 percent.

The WFP Kyrgyz Republic Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2018–2022, approved in November 2017 by the Executive Board, focuses on five Strategic Outcomes (SO): providing hot school meals for primary school-aged children (SO1); supporting vulnerable and food-insecure smallholders to enhance their livelihoods (SO2); strengthening resilience to shocks and climate change for vulnerable communities (SO3); capacity-strengthening of government institutions for a comprehensive food security and nutrition management system (SO4); and emergency support and early recovery (SO5).



Population: **6.5 million**

2019 Human Development Index: **122 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

2020 Gender Inequality Index: **82 out of 189**

Operational Updates

- Due to the COVID-19 situation, in view of the online learning modality and at the request of the Ministry of Education and Science in December, WFP supported the Optimized School Meals Programme by reaching more than 61,500 schoolchildren through take-home rations.
- WFP jointly with local governmental authorities finalized the rehabilitation of the school canteens and the delivery of modern kitchen equipment to the 89 schools of the eighth round that are now fully equipped to launch school feeding in January 2021.
- In December, the pre-programme technical engineering assessment of the ninth round of schools was completed. The results of the assessment will be used to prepare the schools to launch school feeding in September 2021.
- In December, WFP delivered 555 mt of food to various rural and remote locations to support low-income families as a compensation for their participation in community development project activities and capacity strengthening training sessions. The food distribution will help more than 2,400 vulnerable families to survive the traditionally harsh winter and the upcoming lean season. This food, a generous contribution from the Russian Federation, is very important for the food security of the country in light of the overall COVID-19-related deterioration of the country's economic situation, including high inflation, unemployment (14 percent), a reduction in remittances, and the closure of businesses (-29 percent).
- In December, WFP successfully launched the disbursement of cash-based transfers (CBT) among vulnerable families under the Strategic Outcome 5 (Emergency support and early recovery), which was introduced as a response to the COVID-19 crisis and implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD) and the local authorities. Around 8,306 food insecure families (4,278 men and 4,028 women participants) received their cash entitlements to support their food security as compensation for their participation in WFP projects. This Programme targets the 'new poor' in urban and peri-urban locations who were mainly working in the informal economy highly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The constitutional referendum on choosing the form of governance and early elections of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic were held on 10 January 2021. The epidemiological situation in the country is slowly improving with less than 200 cases of COVID-19 registered every day.

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Photo Caption: Beneficiary of WFP drinking water project - **WFP Photo/Aichurek Zhunusova.**

WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total Requirements (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)
59 m	38 m
2021 Requirements (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (February - July 2021)
12 m	0 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: All primary school-aged children in the Kyrgyz Republic have access to safe, adequate and nutritious food all year round

Focus area: *Optimizing School Meals*

Activities:

- Provide school meals to primary school-aged children and strengthen the capacity of government institutions and schools to implement school meals
- Provide short-term food assistance to vulnerable populations, including schoolchildren and people in social institutions, to meet their basic food needs during and in the aftermath of emergencies

Strategic Outcome 5: Vulnerable populations in Kyrgyzstan are supported to meet their food security and nutrition needs to enable their early recovery during and in the aftermath of crisis

Focus area: *Emergency Support and Early Recovery*

Activities:

- Provide emergency food assistance to shock-affected vulnerable populations

Strategic Result 3: Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition through improved productivity and incomes

Strategic Outcome 2: Vulnerable and food insecure smallholders, in particular women, in the most vulnerable geographic areas of the Kyrgyz Republic, have enhanced livelihoods and increased resilience to shocks to better support food security and nutrition needs all year round

Focus area: *Supporting smallholders*

Activities:

- Provide support in productive assets creation to vulnerable communities and food insecure smallholders
- Provide capacity strengthening to food insecure smallholders

Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

Strategic Outcome 3: Food-insecure communities in areas that are highly vulnerable to climate change have strengthened food systems and are more resilient to shocks all year round

Focus area: *Resilience building*

Activities:

- Provide capacity strengthening to local community members and authorities
- Provide support for protective and risk reduction assets creation and rehabilitation to communities vulnerable to climate-change and natural disasters

Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 4: Government institutions at central and decentralized levels have strengthened capacities for comprehensive food security and nutrition management by 2030

Focus area: *Capacity building*

Activities:

- Provide capacity strengthening to national institutions
- Provide evidence-based analysis to relevant national institutions

Monitoring

- For Strategic Outcome 1 of the Country Strategic Plan (CSP), 373 monitoring visits to the new programme schools were carried out in December to assess their capacity to launch the Optimized School Feeding Programme in the 2021-2022 academic year and to discuss future plans with the local authorities. Also 153 monitoring visits were conducted by WFP field monitoring assistants and cooperating partners to schools included into the School Meals Programme in the 2020-2021 academic year in order to check the menus and canteen conditions, among other criteria. In total, 286 visits were conducted by district specialists of the Ministry of Education and Science to schools of the first five rounds of programme schools.
- To assess compliance with targeting criteria under Strategic Outcomes 2, 3 and 5 of the CSP, the 465 pre-selected households from field project activities were visited before the start of implementation. This included random verification of eligibility for households that were pre-selected by the project committees. All households were confirmed to be eligible for participation in WFP projects. In addition, 331 monitoring visits were conducted in order to check the usefulness and necessity of starting the project, the implementation status of ongoing infrastructure projects, and the completed works. All required recommendations were provided at each step of monitoring.
- Four calls were received by the WFP hotline in December. The main reason for the calls were due to a delay in the distribution of cash under the CBTs. WFP Field Monitors contacted the individuals and explained to them the situation.

Partnerships

- In December, the WFP Representative met with newly appointed Minister of Labor and Social Development (MLSD) Ms. Aliza Soltonbekova. The high-level official meeting confirmed mutual support and cooperation between the MLSD and WFP in the implementation of the Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2018-2022 with the aim of improving the food security and nutrition of vulnerable populations in the country. The Minister expressed her appreciation of WFP for its timely food and cash interventions amid the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting deterioration of the socioeconomic situation of many low-income families in the country. The new Minister was invited to visit WFP-supported schools under the School Feeding Programme and any field project sites supported by WFP.
- On 15 December, an official presentation of the main results of the Information Analysis and Management System (IAMS) for the Crisis Management Centre of the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES), implemented by the MES with the support from WFP, took place in Bishkek. The presentation was co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of the MES Mr. Ahmatov and the WFP Representative. The achievements of the project and its important role in improving the National Civil Protection Services and Disaster Risk Management were noted during the event.

Donors

Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden and Switzerland.