Operational Context

The Kyrgyz Republic is a landlocked, mountainous country with a territory of 199,000 sq.km. The country borders China, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Two-thirds of its multi-ethnic population live in rural areas. Over 30 percent of the population lives below the poverty line (2020) - the estimate is likely to reach 35 percent at the end of 2021. Together with rising unemployment, reduced purchasing power due to increased prices (+17 percent for staple food) and depreciation of the national currency (over -21 percent), the reduction or loss of income experienced by more than half of the population jeopardizes the food security of vulnerable households. The country’s high dependency on imported basic food items, particularly wheat, continues to negatively affect the most vulnerable food insecure households that spend 70 percent of their household income on food-related expenses. While the prevalence of stunting, wasting and undernutrition has fallen among children and adolescents, overweight and obesity have increased. Given this and the growing concerns around prevalence of overweight, obesity and diet-related non communicable diseases (NCDs) among adults, there is a need to take appropriate measures targeting school age children. These conditions are often a result of poor and non-diverse diets caused by the non-affordability of nutritious foods and limited knowledge around nutrition.

The WFP Kyrgyz Republic Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2018–2022 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).

In Numbers

96,702 people assisted in May 2021
563 mt of food assistance distributed

Operational Updates

- After the tensions at Kyrgyz-Tajik border in late April, the situation on the border has been stable in May, but remains fragile. On 6-8 May, the REACT (Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team, including WFP) conducted a field mission to provide updated data and analysis on the situation and its multi-sectoral needs. The report indicates 61,000 people affected and 52,000 internally displaced in Kyrgyzstan.

- In May, WFP completed the community-level consultations (CLCs) throughout the ten northern districts. The CLC exercise collects feedback and strengthens WFP’s community-based participatory planning approach for planning WFP interventions in support of vulnerable households through Food Assistance for Assets and Food Assistance for Training activities. The findings of these community discussions will inform the country’s inputs in terms of identified priorities and defined solutions, at the Global Food Systems Summit (GFSS) in September 2021.

- In addition to assisting more than 80,000 schoolchildren with food in May, WFP continued technical support for the rehabilitation of school canteens and the delivery of modern kitchen equipment to 60 schools. Also in May, the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) officially signed the protocol for the launch of the Optimising School Meals Programme for the ninth round of schools, which will take place in September 2021.

- WFP, jointly with the Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute (SIFI), successfully completed a nutrition campaign on healthy eating and lifestyle for schoolchildren in grades 3-4 for 10 schools and their parents. The campaign, coinciding with the celebration of the International Family Day, included nutritional education activities for children, webinars for parents and a sporting event. The campaign communication focus was that families have a major responsibility not only in providing food for their children, but also in developing their nutritional habits.

- In view of the epidemiological situation caused by COVID-19, 19 schools in Chui province, Bishkek, Karakol and Jalal-Abad cities have switched to an online mode of study. The remaining 20 mt of food provided by WFP to schools were distributed to vulnerable households through take-home rations by the Ministry of Education and Science.
WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Result</th>
<th>Total Requirements (in US$)</th>
<th>Allocated Contributions (in US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>61.87 m</td>
<td>40.93 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021 Requirements (in US$)</td>
<td>Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US$) (June- November 2021)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.69 m</td>
<td>3.95 m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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 Result 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

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**Monitoring**

- For Strategic Outcome 1 of the Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022), 190 monitoring visits were conducted by WFP field monitoring assistants and cooperating partners to schools included in the Optimising School Meals Programme for the 2020-2021 academic year. The aim of the visits was to review school menus, canteen conditions and to provide engineering assessments.

- To assess compliance with the targeting criteria under Strategic Outcomes 2 and 3, a sample of 190 pre-selected households from field project activities were visited before the start of implementation. This included the random verification of eligibility for households that were pre-selected by the project committees. Three households were found not eligible and were excluded from the project. In addition, 64 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.

- In total, 114 project proposals from the District Project Committees have been submitted for consideration. WFP reviewed the quality and potential impact of proposed field-level activities for the benefit of vulnerable communities across 40 rural areas.

**Partnerships**

- As part of systematic capacity building of government counterparts to ensure the long-term sustainability of the School Meals Programme, WFP jointly with implementing partner Insan Lilek organized seminars for the District/City Educational Departments (DED/CED) of Chui, Talas and Issyk-Kul provinces. The seminars covered various aspects of the school feeding management with a specific focus on the effective development of diverse school menus. It is expected that these programme schools will enhance the diversity, nutritional values of the school menus for the 2021-2022 school year. In addition to the seminars, the DEDs/CEDs participated in a survey to identify the areas where they would like to build more technical expertise – such as in improving their management of school feeding in schools. The results of the survey will feed into a comprehensive learning plan for the DEDs/CEDs. Next month, the seminars will continue in Naryn, Osh, Batken and Jalal-Abad provinces.

- On 21 May, the Facilitators of the country’s Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement, UNICEF and WFP, met with the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and the Acting Chief of the Food Security Division. The Deputy Minister, as the new SUN Coordinator in the country, was briefed on the ongoing SUN activities and the plans for 2021 were discussed. WFP also provided a briefing on the Food Security Summit and related future events at the international and local levels.

**Donors**

Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden and Switzerland.

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Photo page 1: Family has a major responsibility not only in providing food for their children, but also developing their in nutrition habits. © Photo/Aichurek Zhunusova