



World Food Programme

SAVING  
LIVES  
CHANGING  
LIVES

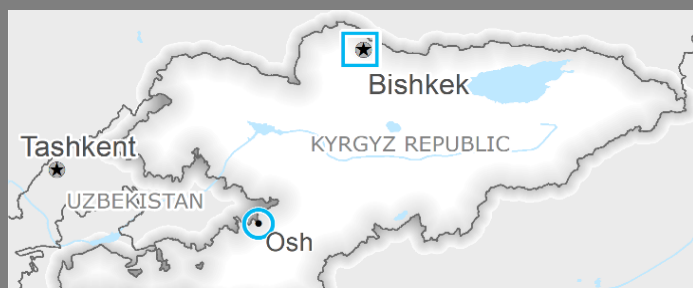
# WFP Kyrgyz Republic Country Brief October 2021



## Operational Context

The Kyrgyz Republic is a landlocked, mountainous country with a territory of 199,000 square kilometres. The country borders China, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Two-thirds of its multi-ethnic population live in rural areas. Over 25 percent of the population lives below the poverty line with an additional 8 percent being at risk of poverty (2020), the estimate likely to reach 35 percent by end of 2021.

Together with rising unemployment, reduced purchasing power due to increased prices (19 percent for staple food) and the depreciation of the national currency (21 percent compared to pre-COVID), the reduction or loss of income experienced by more than half of the population is jeopardizing 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 for which food make up 65 percent of their expenses. While the prevalence of stunting, wasting and underweight has fallen among children and adolescents, overweight and obesity have increased. These conditions are often a result of poor and non-diverse diets caused by the unaffordability of nutritious foods and the limited knowledge around nutrition and healthy diet. Given this and the growing concerns around prevalence of overweight, obesity and diet-related non-communicable diseases among adults, there is the need to take appropriate measures targeting children and adolescents.



Population: **6.6 million**

2020 Human Development Index:  
**120 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower-middle**

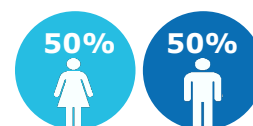
2020 Gender Inequality Index:  
**82 out of 189**

## In Numbers

**830 mt** of food assistance distributed

**US\$ 180,437** cash-based transfers made

**286,004 people assisted**  
in October 2021



## Operational Updates

### Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit

- As part of the commitment making process ahead of the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit (7-8 December 2021), WFP in partnership with UNICEF and other UN agencies, held another consultation together with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Health, and other important stakeholders in Bishkek. The country's commitments are being finalised within various ministries ahead of the summit and are expected to include: the integration of nutrition into the health system; food safety; and combatting iron deficiency.

### Partnerships

- On 26 October, WFP management had a meeting with the newly appointed Minister of Labour, Social Welfare and Migration (MLSWM). The Minister presented their vision of the partnership with WFP, highlighting the importance of scaling up the assistance due to the socio-economic situation in the country and requested assistance to reform the Social Protection system. The parties also discussed ongoing activities, as well as ideas for the next Country Strategic Plan and the need for joint fundraising. WFP restated its readiness to provide assistance to the people of the Kyrgyz Republic, provided availability of funds from donors.

### Social Protection

- WFP and MLSWM have started piloting an integrated poverty graduation programme called a Social Contract. The multi-pronged initiative, the first in the Kyrgyz Republic, provides an array of support including training and coaching on business development and management, start-up grants for entrepreneurial concepts among vulnerable people, social services, medical benefits, and employment opportunities to assist a family to graduate out of poverty. The pilot will be conducted in two districts with the participation of 100 poor families. MLSWM signed the agreement to officially launch the pilot. Upon pilot completion in June 2022, WFP and MLSWM will develop policy recommendations and amendments to legislation to integrate the Social Contract into the National Social Protection System.

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## WFP Country Strategy

### Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total Requirements (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)
<b>68.63 m</b>	<b>40.93 m</b>
2021 Requirements (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (November 2021 – April 2022)
<b>16.12 m</b>	<b>1.73 m</b>

#### 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 the Kyrgyz Republic 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

## World Food Day

- WFP together with Russia's Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute (SIFI) and other partners have successfully completed a "World Food Day" campaign in six schools throughout the country. School children participated in nutrition education events to raise awareness of healthy eating and lifestyle habits. Within the campaign, a Pumpkin Menu Week was organized in more than 40 schools in Talas province using pumpkins donated by local farmers. The event successfully demonstrated the nutritional benefits of pumpkin, its value for children's health, and the benefit of utilizing it to diversify school menus. Additionally, to celebrate the World Food Day, WFP and FAO organized an agriculture fair together with other UN agencies, the Government and donors, on October 16 in the southern City of Osh. During the fair local farmers presented their organic products to the public, and city residents took the opportunity to speak to qualified experts about nutritious and healthy diets.

## School meals

- With WFP support, the Optimized School Meals Programme was launched in 61 new schools in October and included the delivery of more than 22 types of modern kitchen equipment to each school. These schools provide hot and appetising nutritious meals to school children, as per the standards of the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic.

## Smallholder support and cash transfers

- In October, WFP successfully launched a digital e-wallet solution for cash payments to vulnerable households in urban and peri-urban areas. The e-wallet transfers are part of WFP's on-going nationwide response to socio-economic shocks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic which was initiated in 2020 with the generous support of the Government of Switzerland. E-wallets enable cash recipients to potentially access a range of digital services (savings, loans and credit) and provide people with flexible choices on how they spend their assistance as well as contributing to market development, employment, and women's empowerment. Vulnerable families impacted by COVID-19 receive about USD 100 for participating in community development projects, such as rehabilitation of local infrastructure or capacity strengthening trainings to learn new skills and improve employability.

## Donors

Japan, Russian Federation, and Switzerland.

*Photo page 1: Women in Batken province have started their sewing business with WFP provided equipment under the "Rural Women Economic Empowerment" project. © WFP/Photo gallery.*