

Situation Update



- The COVID-19 pandemic has reverted two decades of development gains in just two years. Poverty has sky-rocketed from 20.1% in 2019 to 33.3% in 2021, with an additional 10% being at risk of falling in poverty. Extreme poverty reached 6% in 2021 from 0.5% in 2019.¹



- According to the National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic, headline inflation in August 2022 was 15.6%², among the highest in the region. Food inflation for key staples is at 16.3% and CPI for fuel and lubricants at 43% in August 2022³



- Remittances has decreased by 2 percent in January-July 2022, compared to the same period in 2021.



- WFP has established a food security monitoring system, conducting bi-monthly household surveys to track food security trends⁴

¹ National Statistical Committee, <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/uroven-bednosti-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike/>

² NBKR: <https://www.nbkr.kg/index.jsp?lang=ENG>

³ National Statistical Committee: <http://www.stat.kg/en/statistics/ceny-i-tarify/>

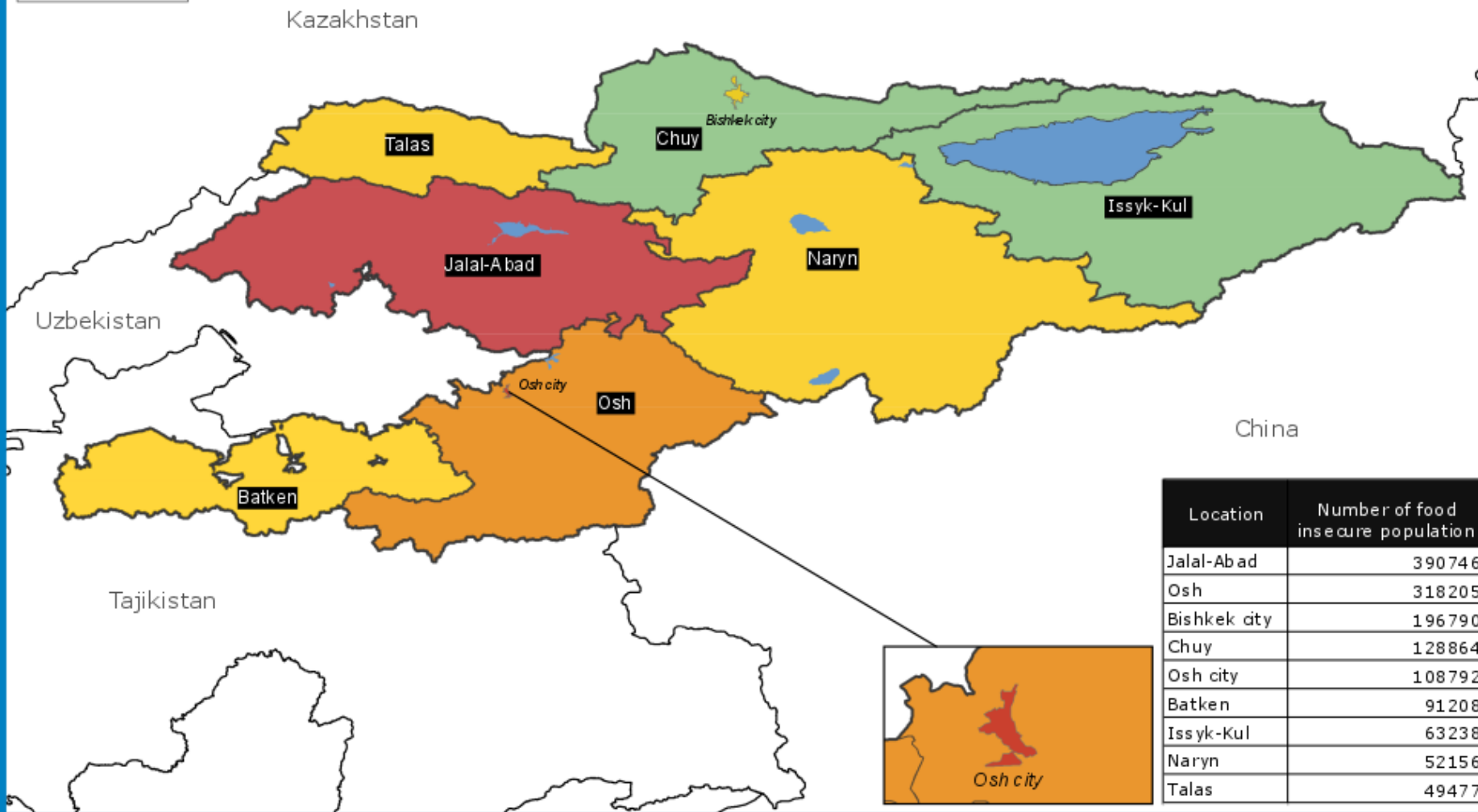
⁴ Phone-based interviews (CATI)

Survey Highlights

- The August 2022 food security assessment found that **21%** of households or more than 1.3 mln of population were food insecure.
- Prevalence of food insecurity in rural and urban areas was similar, which corresponds to national official statistics data on growing economic vulnerabilities in urban areas (increase in poverty levels).
- Food insecurity is higher in Osh city and Jalal-Abad region and more prevalent in female-headed households.
- Around a fifth of all households (**18%**) were not consuming an adequate diet and an additional **8%** had an acceptable diet but were using severe coping strategies.
- **82%** of households were using some asset depleting coping strategies (relying on savings and money borrowing), with **16%** of them using emergencies coping strategies (selling assets or asking for assistance).
- Only **11%** of households reported that their income had decreased since January 2022, with an average decrease of 37%.
- For both food and non-food items, the key hindering factor to their purchase was the economic accessibility (lack of money) and affordability (high food prices).



Figure 1. Map of food insecurity

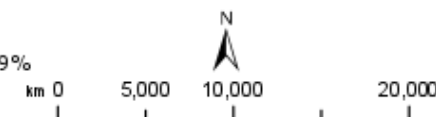


Due to higher population density, **Jalalabad and Osh provinces** account for **51% of all food insecure population**

Location	Number of food insecure population
Jalal-Abad	390746
Osh	318205
Bishkek city	196790
Chuy	128864
Osh city	108792
Batken	91208
Issyk-Kul	63238
Naryn	52156
Talas	49477

Legend

- Country boundaries
- Province



Data sources: Boundaries: WFP
Data: WFP, mVAM data collection

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this map do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of WFP concerning the legal or constitutional status of any country, territory, city or area, or concerning the delimitation of its borders or boundaries.

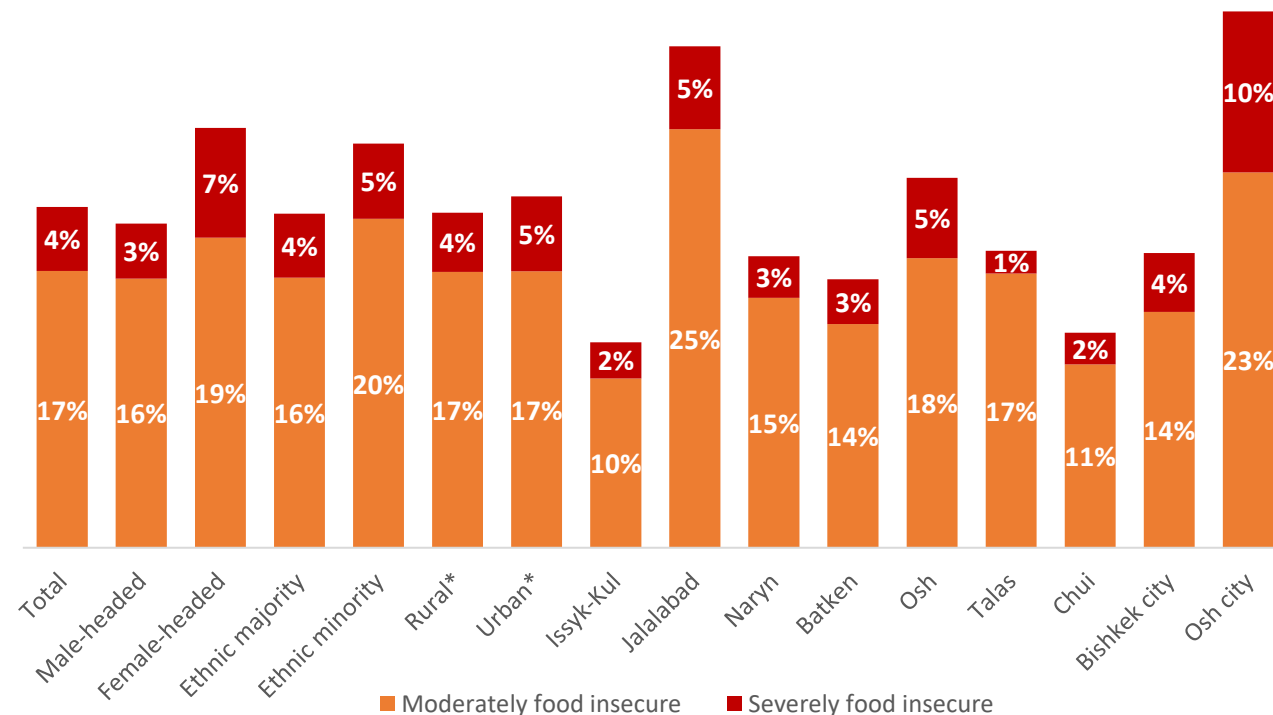


Food Insecurity

- According to the August 2022 survey, **21%** of households were food insecure (17% moderately and 4% severely food insecure)³.
- The highest levels of food insecurity were found in Osh City (**33%**) and in Jalal-Abad region (**30%**).
- Household characteristics strongly correlated with food insecurity include:
 - Female-headed (26%)
 - Having children under 5 & primary-school-aged children (6-11 years of age)
 - Having people with disabilities/ chronically ill members

Food insecure households were also much more likely to report using negative livelihood strategies, which further impacts their resilience to cope with shocks and their medium to long term capacity to generate income and food security.

Figure 2. Food insecurity (rCARI) in August 2022 by status and geography (%)



³ The CARI is a composite indicator which reflects both current status (food consumption) and coping capacity (economic vulnerability & livelihood coping). For more details, see: Technical Guidance for WFP Consolidated Approach For Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI), Third Edition, December 2021. A modified version of the CARI (rCARI) was calculated for this report. The calculation of rCARI does not require the collection of a lengthy expenditure module which is impractical for high frequency, phone-based surveys.

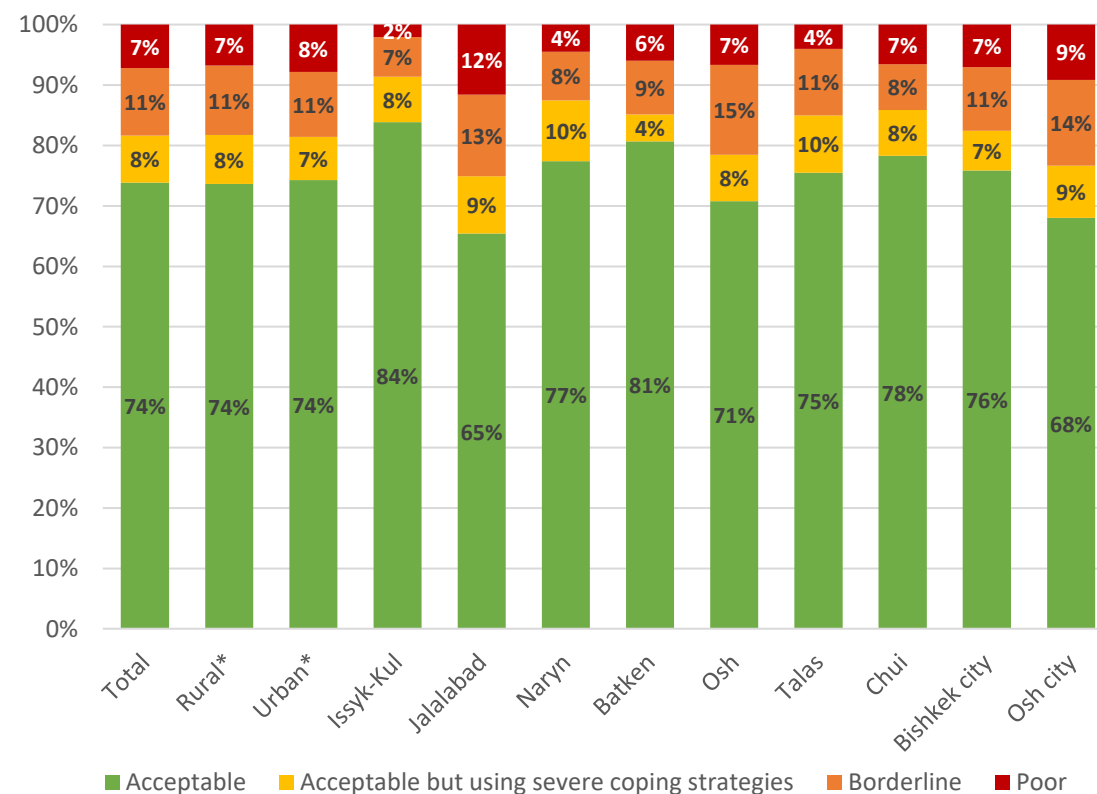
* The difference between Rural and Urban areas was found to be statistically insignificant (p-value 0.056)



Food consumption

- **Around one fifth of all household had insufficient food consumption levels (18%)** and an additional 8% had an acceptable food consumption but was employing severe coping strategies⁷
- Jalal-Abad region (**25%**), Osh City (**23%**), and Osh region (**22%**) were the three areas with the worst food consumption results.
- In the past 7 days, **39%** of all households felt worried of not having enough food.
- Almost half of households (**48%**) had some difficulties eating enough food over the past 7 days: **34%** ate less expensive or less preferred food, **9%** skipped meals or ate less than usual and **5%** went at least one whole day and night without eating.

Figure 3. Levels of food consumption by geography (% of HHs)



⁷ This estimate is based on the Food Consumption Score (FCS) indicator which measures dietary diversity and food frequency. A household food consumption score is calculated according to the types of foods consumed during the previous seven days, the frequencies with which they are consumed, and the relative nutritional weight of the different food groups.

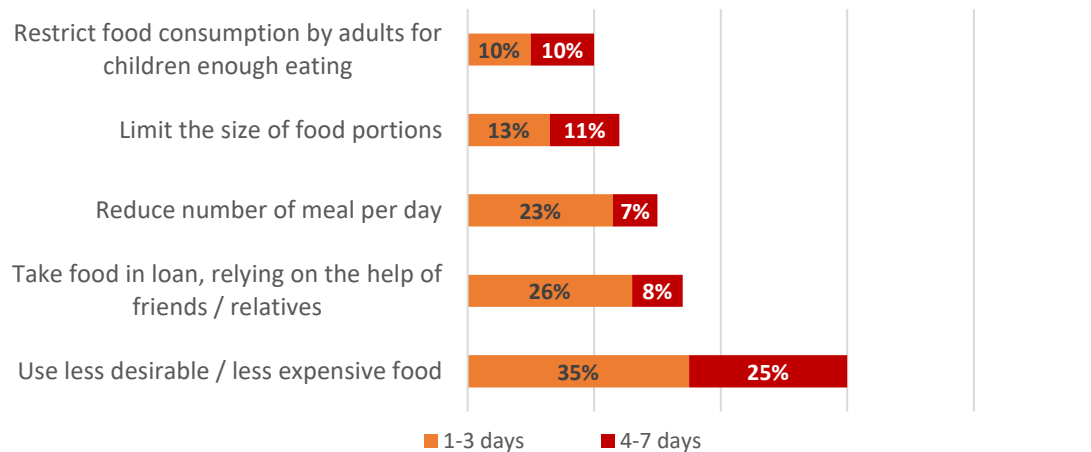
* The difference between Rural and Urban areas was found to be statistically insignificant (p-value 0.324)



Coping strategies and Support

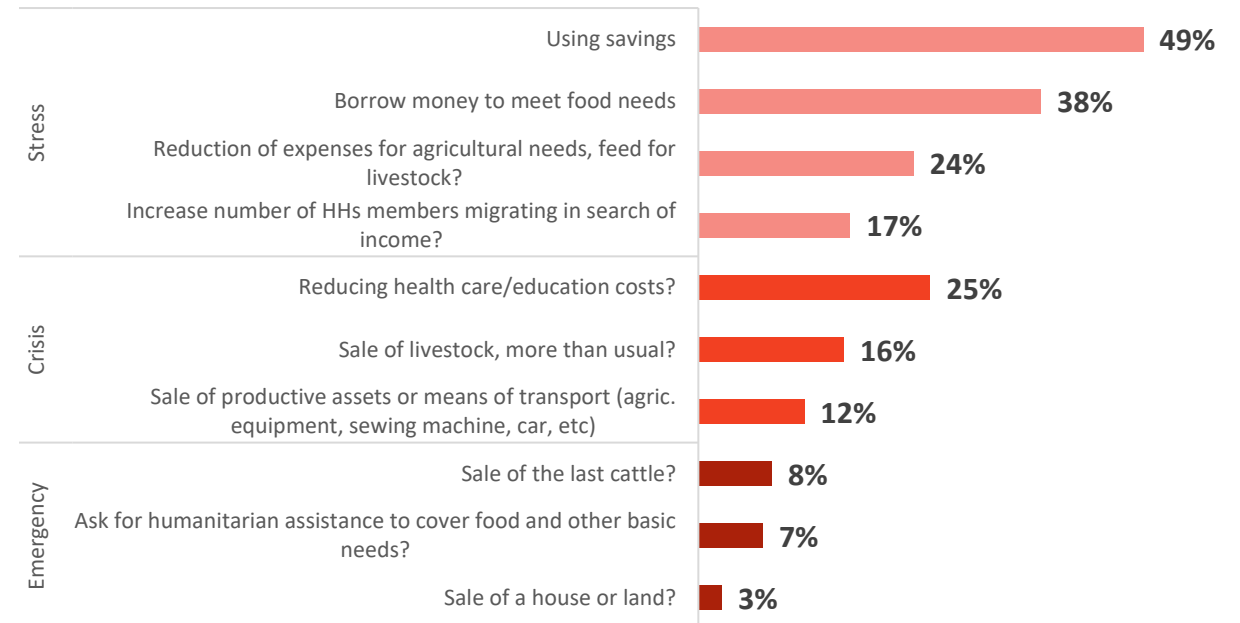
- Households were using negative food-based coping strategies in the past 7 days, such as less desirable/less expensive food (60%), including 25% doing so regularly⁹ or other strategies as shown in Figure 4.
- 82%** of households were using some asset depleting coping strategies: 37% of households used 'stress' coping strategies, 28% of them used 'crisis' coping strategies and 16% used 'emergency' coping strategies (Figure 5).

Figure 4. Food-based coping strategies



The use of negative coping strategies have direct negative consequences to the nutritional, health and productivity status, which are difficult to reverse in the future, perpetuating the cycle of poverty and vulnerability.

Figure 5. Livelihood-based coping strategy use (% HHs)



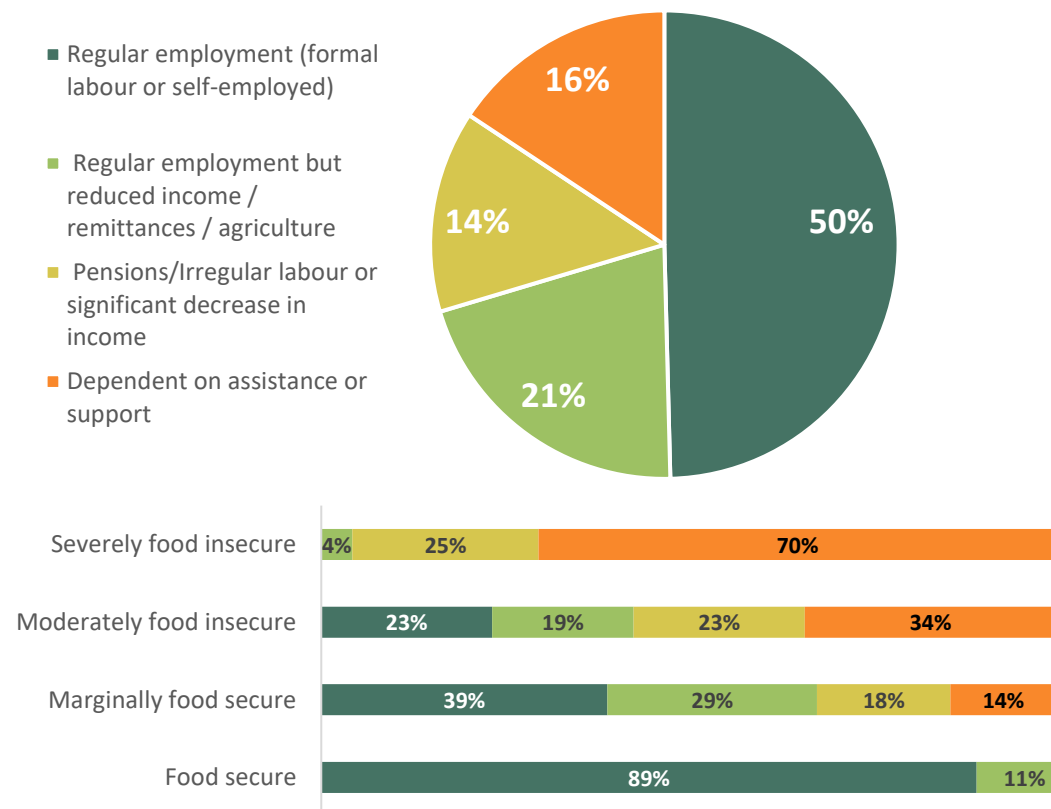
⁹ "Regularly" defined as using the food-based coping strategy at least 4 times in the past 7 days.



Income Sources and Economic Situation

- Only **11%** of households reported that their income had decreased since January 2022, with an average decrease of 37%.
- Income losses were particularly concentrated within households living in Jalal-Abad (13%) and in the cities of Bishkek (13%) and Osh (12%).
- Food insecure households heavily rely on assistance or support. This can imply that assistance is rightly channeled, reaching the most vulnerable, which might be sufficient to protect from severe food insecurity but not enough to enable graduation from food insecurity.
- Yet, more needs to be done to promote active labour market policies to facilitate access of the most vulnerable to regular employment.

Figure 6. Sources of income (% HHs) and in relation to food security





Access to Market

Households who could access all food items with no problems
59%

Households who could not access any food item that are usually part of their diet by this time of the year
41%

Reasons:
Prices of food items significantly increased (50%)
Lack of money (43%)

More than half of all households reported experiencing difficulties in buying **flour (51%)**, **vegetable oil (57%)** and **sugar (62%)**.

Households who could access all essential non-food items with no problems
56%

Households who could not access any essential non-food item that are usually buying during this time of the year
44%

Reasons:
Prices of food items significantly increased (44%)
Lack of money (53%)

These are three commodities for which the country heavily relies on import to satisfy the internal demand. The main reason was the **high price** of the commodity (**89%**).

- For both food and non-food items, physical access to the market and availability in stores were not an issue.



Methodology



- The August 2022 food security survey was conducted between 20-30 August and covered 9 stratas: all 7 provinces and 2 large cities (Bishkek and Osh).
- A two-stage cluster sampling was applied to select 1) communities/data collection sites in each strata and 2) households in each data collection site.
 - Confidence interval = 95%
 - Margin of Error = 7%
 - Estimated prevalence = 50%
- A minimum sample of 200 households were interviewed in each strata, resulting in a total sample of 1,800 households.
- The survey used a phone-based (CATI) methodology. Response rate: 19% (9,443 calls) mainly due refuse to participate (21%), no answer (20%) or out of service phones (18%), which may have affected impartiality to some extent.
- The results were weighted to account for population size and share of rural/urban population.



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