Operational Context
The Kyrgyz Republic is a landlocked, mountainous country with a population of 7 million people. Two-thirds of its multi-ethnic population live in rural areas. Poverty increased from 20 percent in 2019 to 33 percent in 2021, with an additional 10 percent at risk of poverty. This highlights the need for nutrition sensitive and shock-responsive social protection to the rising needs.

The global food and cost of living crisis is also exacerbating existing stresses following the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, which had already eroded the resilience of the most vulnerable households. In April 2023, inflation reached 10.7 percent compared to April 2022, second highest in the Eurasian Economic Union region. According to the latest WFPs mobile food security monitoring conducted in March 2023, 12 percent of households, or more than 800 thousand people were acutely food insecure, while 53 percent of the population remain only marginally food secure.

In January-March 2023, compared to the same period in 2022, remittances decreased by 22 percent. Considering that remittances make up over 30 percent of the GDP and contributes greatly to poverty reduction, this fall in remittances may negatively affect household incomes and overall economic performance and contribute to further increase in poverty. The country’s high dependency on imported basic foods, mainly from the Russian Federation, continues to negatively affect the most vulnerable households for which food makes up 70 percent of their expenses.

According to the National Integrated Micronutrient and Anthropometric Survey (2022), micronutrient deficiencies continue to have long term consequences for children and women in the country. Only 2 percent of households consume adequately fortified flour. Only 26 percent of children from 6-59 months achieve minimal dietary diversity. Anaemia is considered a severe public health problem with high prevalence among pregnant women (49 percent) and children from 6-59 months (30 percent). A large proportion of children and adolescent girls have multiple micronutrient deficiencies (folic acid, iron, vitamin D, vitamin A etc.).

In Numbers
- 31.2 mt of food assistance distributed
- 24,199 people assisted
- US$3.5 million six-month net funding requirements (June-November 2023)

Operational Updates
School meals and healthy diets

- WFP, in partnership with World Share and local authorities, supported two schools in Yssyk-Kol Province in replicating the Optimized School Meals Programme (OSMP). Canteens and kitchens at the schools were renovated and modern kitchen equipment was provided. As a result, the schools replaced a menu consisting of buns and tea with hot nutritious meals for 250 primary schoolchildren. Now, school meals satisfy children’s energy and nutrient needs as per the national standards.

- As part of the OSMP, which currently covers more than 60 percent of schools in the country, WFP, jointly with the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) and the Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute (SIFI), conducted a “Month of Healthy Eating” campaign to promote healthy eating and diversified diets among communities. The campaign was timed to celebrate the International Family Day (15 May) and the International Day of Healthy Digestion (May 29). More than 1,100 primary schoolchildren and their parents from 21 schools in Osh City and Chui Province took part in various interactive activities centred on nutritious meals and healthy lifestyle.

- WFP, together with SIFI, conducted an assessment to explore the feasibility of establishing Urban School Meals Central Kitchens as a sustainable school feeding model for urban areas. The assessment also investigated ways to support the financial sustainability of the national school meals programme. The solutions included installation of solar panels and establishment of school gardens, farms, greenhouses, municipal bakeries, and other income-generating initiatives. WFP and SIFI held a series of bilateral meetings with national partners to discuss the assessment recommendations and develop action plans.

- WFP, in cooperation with the key national OSMP partners, the MoES and the Ministry of Health (MoH), conducted seminars for the administration of 33 schools as part of the preparatory activities to upgrade the school menu to hot and nutritious meals for primary schoolchildren from September 2023. The seminars were also attended by district departments of the MoES and the MoH, heads of local authorities and representatives of province and district administrations. Participants developed roadmaps for transition to hot meals by September 2023.

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**WFP Country Strategy**

**Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Requirements (in US$)</th>
<th>Allocated Contributions (in US$)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90.9 m</td>
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<tr>
<td>2023 Requirements (in US$)</td>
<td>Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US$) (June-November 2023)</td>
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<td>23.7 m</td>
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**SDG target 2.1: Access to food**

**Strategic outcome 2: People have better nutrition, health and education outcomes**

**CSP Outcome 1:** By 2027, food-insecure and vulnerable populations in the Kyrgyz Republic have enhanced access to diversified employment, income opportunities and human capital development

**Focus area:** Resilience building

**Activities:**
- Provide resource transfers, knowledge and technical assistance to the most vulnerable and the Government through more inclusive social protection systems and active labour market programmes

**SDG target 2.4: Sustainable food system**

**Strategic outcome 3: People have improved and sustainable livelihoods**

**CSP outcome 2:** Vulnerable populations in crisis-affected areas in the Kyrgyz Republic can meet their food and nutrition needs, enabling their early recovery during and in the aftermath of crises

**Focus area:** Crisis response

**Activities:**
- Provide emergency food assistance to shock-affected vulnerable populations

**SDG target 17.9: Capacity building**

**Strategic outcome 4: National programmes and systems are strengthened**

**CSP outcome 4:** By 2027, schools in the Kyrgyz Republic have strengthened capacity to provide healthy meals to children and create sustainable school feeding solutions for improved health, nutrition, education and food security outcomes

**Focus area:** Root causes, Nutrition-sensitive

**Activities:**
- Provide technical assistance to national partners to institutionalize national school-based programmes and improve their sustainability

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**Social protection**

- WFP hosted a mission of an international social protection consultant to improve social protection programming and enhance technical assistance to strengthen national Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP) within the national social protection system. WFP met with the national and international counterparts to discuss the most recent developments in social protection and the results of the social protection assessment conducted using the Core Diagnostic Instrument in 2022. As an outcome, the mission concluded that (i) WFP’s conditional food and cash assistance programmes will continue to be relevant to support the ALMP, (ii) advised to adopt a more strategic and transformational approach in programme design, and (iii) developed recommendations to improve the coherence and synergies of WFP programmes and ALMP, as well as other national social protection schemes.

**Climate change adaptation and disaster risk management (CCA and DRM)**

- WFP, in cooperation with the University of Reading, conducted a training on the Participatory Integrated Climate Services for Agriculture (PICS) methodology for project stakeholders in Batken, Naryn and Osh provinces. Agronomists, agricultural specialists, extension agents and farmer trainers from private consulting companies participated in the training. The participants gained knowledge on PICS methodology, which will enable them to help smallholder farmers make informed decisions by using and interpreting accurate information about the local climate, weather, appropriate crops, and livelihood options.

- WFP hosted a mission of international experts to design a roadmap for the introduction of weather index-based insurance product developed by WFP to assist smallholders in mitigating climate-related shocks. The experts examined the roles and capacities of public and private sector organizations in introducing insurance products and provided recommendations for the development of the Law on Climate risk insurance and regulations.

- WFP and the Public Foundation “Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Development” commenced their work on collecting and analysing spatial data to assess the vulnerability of 13 communities of Jalal-Abad Province to extreme weather events. This data will be used to create district-specific vulnerability and hazard maps, allowing local authorities to better plan DRM activities in their communities.

- WFP and Agency for Development Initiatives held an information session on WFP’s CCA and DRM projects for partners from Osh Province and Osh city. The session was attended by the district departments of the Ministry of Emergency Situations and the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration. The participants discussed the project types, beneficiary selection procedures and responsibilities of parties. The session will help partners in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the projects. WFP intends to arrange similar sessions in other targeted areas to keep key stakeholders informed.

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**WFP Kyrgyz Republic Country Brief**

May 2023

**Donors**

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