



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Kyrgyz Republic Country Brief July 2023



Training of school cooks in the Republican Competence Centre, Bishkek City. © WFP/Photo Library

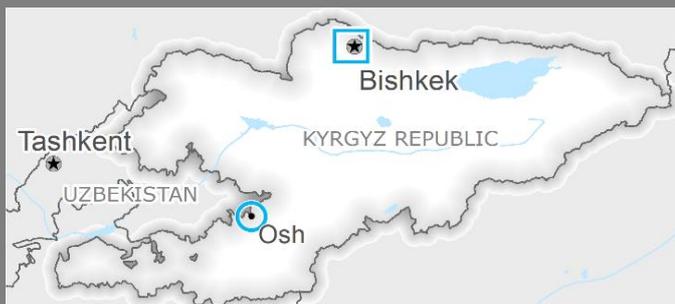
Operational Context

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 meet the rising needs.

The global food and cost of living crisis exacerbated existing stresses following the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, which had already eroded the resilience of the most vulnerable households. In June 2023, annual inflation reached 10.5 percent, second highest in the Eurasian Economic Union region. According to the latest WFP's mobile food security monitoring conducted in June 2023, 10 percent of households were acutely food insecure, while 51 percent of the population remain only marginally food secure.

In January-May 2023, compared to the same period in 2022, remittances decreased by 24 percent. Considering that remittances make up over 30 percent of the GDP and contribute greatly to poverty reduction, this decline in remittances could 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 lifelong 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, and vitamin A).



Population: **7 million**

2021/2022 Human Development Index: **118 out of 191 countries**

Income Level: **Lower-middle**

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

In Numbers

71 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 26,080 of cash assistance distributed

4,086 people assisted

US\$ 2.6 million six-month net funding requirements (August 2023-January 2024)



Operational Updates

School meals and healthy diets

- WFP has organized four-day training sessions for 50 newly recruited school cooks from 33 schools that plan to start providing hot school meals in September 2023. The training was held at the recently established Republican Competence Centre. The training aimed to improve knowledge and skills on cooking techniques, safety rules, sanitary norms, and nutrition standards. On-the-job coaching of school staff will continue throughout the 2023-2024 school year.
- WFP and the Ministry of Education and Science organized a meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Working Committee on the Optimized School Meals Programme to provide updates on the programme implementation and discuss preparation for the International School Meals Forum, to be held in the Kyrgyz Republic in November. The Forum will serve as a platform for countries to exchange ideas and best practices to further develop school meals programmes.

Enhanced access to employment and income opportunities

- WFP has completed 55 community development projects to create or rehabilitate community assets and improve the food security and resilience of low-income families. The projects enabled rural communities to (i) construct drinking water pipelines, providing access to clean drinking water, (ii) restore/construct irrigational canals, improving irrigation and agricultural productivity, and (iii) reinforce riverbanks with gabion nets, mitigating the risks of natural hazards. Additionally, 16 projects were implemented to strengthen community livelihood skills. As a result, 1,627 beneficiaries received 44 mt of food and US\$26,080 to address their immediate food needs. Cash was distributed through e-wallets to ensure cost-effective transfer of cash assistance and contribute to increased financial inclusion of rural communities. Additionally, 2,459 residents of Social Inpatient Institutions benefited from unconditional transfer of 27 mt of food.

Evidence-based analysis to national institutions

- WFP carried out another round of quarterly telephone-based surveys to monitor the prevalence of food insecurity. It revealed that, 10 percent of the population are food insecure, while 51 percent are marginally food secure. Moreover, 76 percent of people are applying coping strategies (e.g., spending savings, borrowing money) to meet their food needs. These surveys inform programmes and policy decisions and help the government and partners understand how various global and country-specific factors impact food security in the country.

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WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)

Total Requirements (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)
90.9 m	18.4 m
2023 Requirements (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (August 2023-January 2024)
23.7 m	2.6 m

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

Strategic outcome 1: People are better able to meet their urgent food and nutrition needs

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 2.4: Sustainable food system

Strategic outcome 3: People have improved and sustainable livelihoods

CSP outcome 3: By 2027, vulnerable communities in the Kyrgyz Republic exposed to the impacts of climate variability and change are better able to cope with shocks and benefit from more resilient food systems

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

- Provide resource transfers, knowledge and technical assistance to the most vulnerable and the Government in order to enhance climate change adaptation and disaster risk management capacity at the central and local levels

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

Donors

Green Climate Fund, Japan, Kyrgyz Republic, Private Sector, Russian Federation, Switzerland, and UN

Climate change adaptation and disaster risk management

- As part of the initiative on piloting Weather Index-Based Livestock Insurance product, WFP has delivered training sessions on good agricultural practices for 2,985 farmers in Naryn Province. The sessions covered prevention of cattle diseases, artificial insemination for cattle breeding, fodder cultivation, soil protection, and resource-saving technologies. The sessions, in combination with the insurance product, aim to enhance the resilience of livestock farmers against climate shocks.
- WFP and the Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Climate Risk Insurance advised on the draft Law on Agri-Insurance that sets out the roles and responsibilities of national and private sector partners and defined government subsidies for strategic crops.

Partnerships

- Under its Country Strategic Plan for 2023-2027, WFP, together with the Department of Social Protection (DSP) under the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration, have signed trilateral technical agreements with 409 local authorities, 54 city/district education departments and 17 social inpatient institutions on cooperation. The DSP provides WFP with food storage facilities and allocates funds to cover handling and in-land transportation of food from WFP warehouses to project sites across the country. The agreements also define the responsibilities of the parties in implementing joint community development projects on active labour market measures for low-income families, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and school meals programme optimization.
- WFP signed an agreement with the Agency for Hydrometeorology under the Ministry of Emergency Situations, its national partner for implementation of the Green Climate Fund project. The project aims to establish an agrometeorological observation network consisting of eight Automatic Weather Stations (AWS). WFP will strengthen the capacity of the Agency in the procurement of AWS, ensuring tailored climate information is provided to farmers in disaster-prone areas to reduce risks associated with climate change and increasingly extreme weather.
- WFP participated in the inter-agency Cash Working Group (CWG) meeting, which aims to strengthen coordination of cash assistance projects among development and humanitarian partners. WFP presented the latest CWG coordination model and draft Terms of Reference (ToR) outlining the CWG's roles and responsibilities. The meeting participants also discussed and approved the CWG work plan for the rest of 2023. The next CWG meeting is scheduled for August to finalise the ToR and identify joint actions relating to humanitarian cash and emergency preparedness.
- WFP, jointly with the Food and Agriculture Organization, supported the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) in holding a national dialogue on the development of the national Food Security and Nutrition Programme for 2023-2027. The MoA presented the new Programme and collected recommendations from key stakeholders, including the representatives of the private sector and the Scaling-up Nutrition (SUN) multi-sectoral food security and nutrition platform, to prepare the national report on the progress and priorities in food systems in the Kyrgyz Republic. The Programme and the report were presented by the Deputy Minister during the UN Food Systems Summit held in Rome on 24-26 July.