



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Kyrgyz Republic Country Brief August 2023



'Food-for-Asset' project for the construction of veterinary facilities to reduce cattle mortality, Jeti-Oguz District of the Yssyk-Kol Province. © WFP/Photo Library

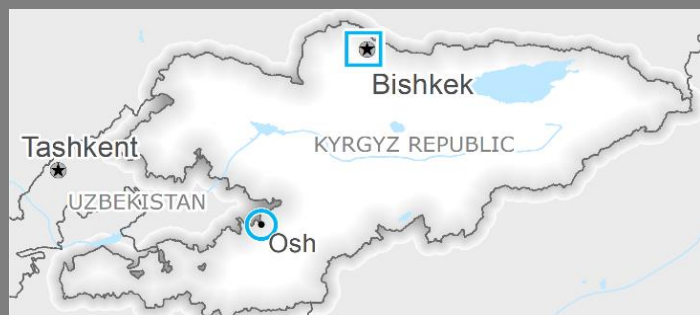
Operational Context

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. In recent years, the global food and cost of living crisis has been exacerbating existing stresses caused by COVID-19 pandemic, which had already eroded the resilience of the most vulnerable households. Poverty increased from 20 percent in 2019 to 33 percent in 2022, with additional 7 percent living close to the poverty line. This highlights the need for nutrition sensitive and shock-responsive social protection to the rising needs.

In August 2023, annual inflation reached 9.4 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-June 2023, compared to the same period in 2022, remittances decreased by 29 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 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, vitamin A etc.).



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

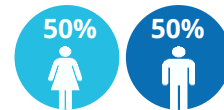
61 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$27,000 of cash assistance distributed

12,643 people assisted

US\$1.8 million six-month net funding requirements
(September 2023-February 2024)

Operational Updates



School meals and healthy diets

- WFP provided advisory support to the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) in developing a [unified Law on Education](#) that consolidates six education-related laws, including the Law on school meals. The Article 28 of the Law reconfirms the right of every primary school child in the country to receive diverse and nutritious school meals. The new law was signed by the President on 11 August. WFP and the MoES, together with other school meals programme (SMP) stakeholders, will continue to work on developing necessary by-laws and regulations to further develop sustainable SMP.

Social protection

- WFP continued supporting the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration in scaling up the Social Contract, a government programme aimed at empowering poor families to start income generating activities and get out of poverty. WFP organized 40 training sessions on the Social Contract to 1,836 district level stakeholders in 28 districts and 8 cities of the country. WFP also supported a media campaign to disseminate information about the Social Contract's best practices among the public. Furthermore, WFP assisted in integrating the Social Contract as an employment promotion measure into the relevant legal acts, including the Law "on the Promotion of Employment".

Enhanced access to employment and income opportunities

- WFP continued implementing projects to create/restore pivotal community assets (irrigational canals, veterinary facilities, reinforced riverbanks etc.) and train food-insecure people in income-generating skills. In exchange for participating in the projects, 10,184 food insecure people received 22 tons of food and USD 27,000 to address their food needs. Cash was distributed through e-wallets to increase financial inclusion and literacy of rural communities. Additionally, 2,459 residents of Social Inpatient Institutions (elderly, people with disabilities, orphans, etc.), the most marginalized and vulnerable members of society, received 39 tons of food unconditionally.

Strengthening emergency preparedness and response

- To strengthen national emergency preparedness and response systems, WFP and the Ministry of Emergency Situations have developed the composition of the emergency food basket that takes into account the nutritional needs of people during emergencies. In parallel, the partners started working on a roadmap to integrate international food safety standards into the national disaster risk management system. The roadmap activities will include infrastructure development and revision of the relevant legal framework. A suitably composed emergency food basket will help maintain the nutritional status of people during emergencies, when they are mostly dependent on food aid.

WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)

Total Requirements (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)
90.9 m	20.9 m
2023 Requirements (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (September 2023-February 2024)
23.7 m	1.8 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

Evidence-based analysis for national institutions

- WFP has assessed the functionality of food markets across 9 cities of the country. WFP's corporate Market Functionality Index was used as a tool to assess food availability, assortment, quality, prices, as well as other critical aspects such as market competitiveness, market infrastructure, and sustainability of supply chains. In total, over 90 retailers have been surveyed. The assessment results will help gain a better understanding of the market functionality, its limitations, and risks to the public in case of market failures. It will, in turn, inform WFP operations and composition of the food ration provided by WFP to food-insecure people.

Partnerships

- WFP signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Mercy Corps to jointly assess sustainability of the School Meals Programme supported by the two organizations and identify factors that enable/hinder its sustainability. The assessment will include data collection from (i) schools providing hot school meals, (ii) schools managing to diversify school meals with more nutritious dishes, (iii) and schools that have stopped or reduced the number of hot meals provided. The results of the assessment will contribute towards designing a national SMP implementation policy by the end of 2023.
- WFP participated in the second meeting of the inter-agency Cash Working Group (CWG), which aims to strengthen coordination of cash assistance projects among development and humanitarian partners. The meeting focused on the introduction of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) – the minimum amount of cash needed to meet basic food and non-food needs of people during emergencies. The meeting participants discussed approaches to calculating the MEB to further determine the amount of cash assistance required for the populations affected by the emergency.
- WFP hosted the first meeting of the United Nations (UN) Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Working Group, which was established to coordinate UN system-wide actions in support of national commitments reflected in the National Food Security and Nutrition Programme 2023-2027. The Group discussed its roles and agreed on the action plan that includes strengthening the capacities of parliamentarians in nutrition, updating the communication plan to promote nutrition among the public, and strengthening coordination with other nutrition actors in the country.
- WFP participated in the regular meeting of the Development Partners Coordination Council (DPCC) Working Group on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food Security and Nutrition, co-chaired by WFP together with the World Bank and Food and Agriculture Organization. The Group members prioritized joint actions to implement the national Food Security and Nutrition Programme 2023-2027, informed the Ministry of Agriculture about the piloting of the Weather Index based Livestock Insurance in Naryn Province, and discussed a new project on value chain development in Batken Province.