



WFP EVALUATION



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Evaluation of Kyrgyz Republic WFP Country Strategic Plan 2018-2022

Centralized Evaluation Report – Volume I

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Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

EVALUATION FEATURES

1. Country strategic plan (CSP) evaluations are the primary instrument for accountability and learning in accordance with the expectations of the WFP Executive Board and WFP management. They provide evidence of WFP's strategic positioning and results to inform the design of the next generation of CSPs and potentially the design of United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks.
2. The evaluation of the Kyrgyz Republic CSP for 2018–2022 covered the CSP design phase in 2017 and the implementation of all activities from January 2018 to October 2021.¹ Its main users are the WFP country office and internal and external stakeholders, including beneficiaries.
3. The evaluation adopted a theory-based, mixed-methods approach combining document review, quantitative data analysis, key informant interviews, project site visits including interviews, observations, focus group discussions and remote fixed-response telephone interviews with beneficiaries. WFP principles on the integration of gender into evaluations were applied throughout the process.
4. Because of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the evaluation followed a hybrid approach, with a remote inception phase and an in-country field mission over a three-week period in October 2021. Findings, conclusions and recommendations were discussed with stakeholders during two online workshops in February 2022.

CONTEXT

5. The Kyrgyz Republic is a land-locked, mountainous, lower-middle-income country with an ethnically diverse population of 6.7 million people that is young (average age 25),² predominantly rural (63 percent)³ and sparsely populated (34.9 people per square km).⁴ The country has the lowest gross national income in Central Asia and significant multidimensional poverty.
6. The Kyrgyz Republic is vulnerable to disasters because of its geography and its fragile agricultural systems, which among other things suffer from shortcomings in water management. Due to climate change, the country is threatened by increasingly frequent heat extremes and heightened incidence of aridity and drought.⁵ It has also recently experienced a complex socioeconomic and political transition.
7. The Kyrgyz Republic ranked 40 of 116 countries in the 2021 Global Hunger Index.⁶ Despite low levels of hunger, the country's mountainous landscape poses challenges; two out of three food-insecure people live in remote valleys. Food consumption in all provinces has worsened significantly due to the COVID-19 pandemic.⁷ Women face disproportionate nutrition and food security challenges.⁸
8. Smallholder farmers are responsible for 98 percent of Kyrgyz agricultural production.⁹ Their productivity is hampered by inadequate water management; a weak knowledge base; technological gaps; limited access to resources; difficulty complying with technical requirements and quality standards

¹ The scope of the evaluation was established in agreement with the country office based on the assumption that the evaluation report would be presented together with the new CSP at the 2022 second regular session of the Executive Board. The evaluation report therefore includes financial and programme data up to December 2021.

² National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2021. [Population](#).

³ World Bank. 2021. [Rural population\(% of total population\) – Kyrgyz Republic](#).

⁴ World Bank. 2021. [Population density\(people per sq. km of land area\) – Kyrgyz Republic](#).

⁵ Development Partners' Coordination Council. 2018. [Kyrgyzstan Ranks Third Most Vulnerable to Climate Change in Central Asia](#).

⁶ Global Hunger Index. 2021. [Kyrgyz Republic](#).

⁷ WFP. 2021. [HungerMap^{LIVE}](#).










⁸ Botreau, H. and Cohen, M. 2019. [Gender Inequalities and Food Insecurity](#).

⁹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2020. [Smallholders and family farms in Kyrgyzstan. Country study report 2019](#).

implicated in accessing and operating in markets; and growing vulnerability to environmental shocks and climate change.¹⁰

9. Gender inequality remains a challenge, in particular for women in rural areas, who have limited access to productive assets. Women’s right to sell property is subject to the consent of their spouses.

10. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected the Kyrgyz Republic. International travel restrictions reduced the vital inflow of remittances, and national restrictions affected rural populations dependent on seasonal agricultural labour. These two factors led to increased poverty and vulnerability, often in peri-urban areas, where there are relatively few alternatives to employment as a source of income.¹¹

TABLE 1: SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS			
	Indicator	Value	Year
	Population total (1)	6 724 300	2021
	Gross domestic product per capita (USD) (2)	1 276.2	2021
	Remittances as a percentage of gross domestic product (2)	31.1	2020
	Human Development Index (rank) (3)	120 of 189	2019
	Gini coefficient (3)	27.7	2019
	Percentage of households living in multidimensional poverty (3)	42.3	2019
	Percentage of households living below the national poverty line (USD 1.2 a day) (4)	33.3	2021
	Global Hunger Index (5)	Rank: 40 (of 116) Score: 8.6 (low)	2021
	Gender Inequality Index (rank) (3)	82 (of 162)	2019

Sources: (1) National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2021. [Population](#); (2) World Bank. 2020 and 2021. [World Bank Data: Kyrgyz Republic](#); (3) United Nations Development Programme. 2020. [Human Development Report 2020. The next frontier: Human development and the Anthropocene](#); (4) National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2021. [The level of poverty in the Kyrgyz Republic](#); (5) Global Hunger Index. 2021. [Kyrgyz Republic](#).

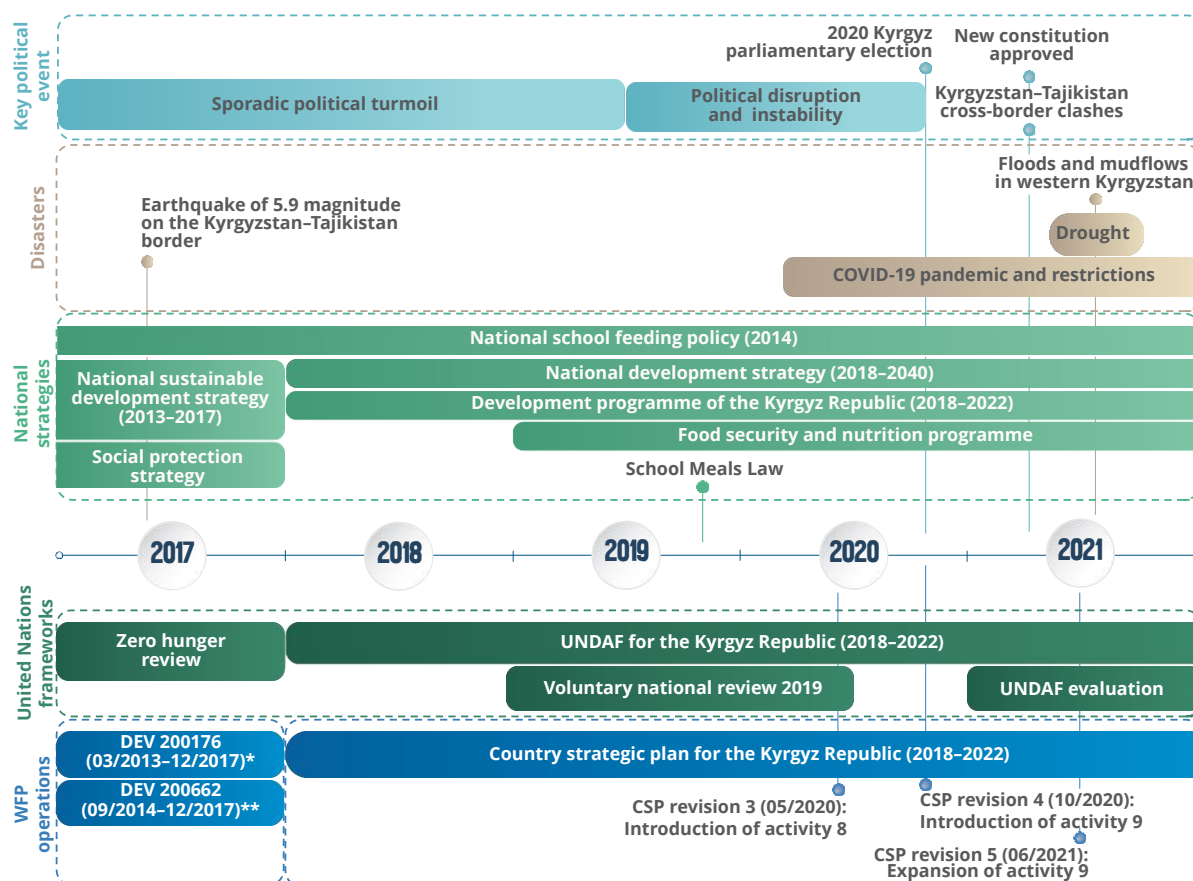
¹⁰ World Bank. 2021. [The World Bank in the Kyrgyz Republic](#).

¹¹ United Nations Development Programme. 2020. [Kyrgyz Republic could see GDP plunge 10 percent as a result of COVID-19, as domestic violence surges](#).

WFP COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN

11. The Kyrgyz Republic CSP for 2018–2022 was approved by the Executive Board in November 2017, and implementation started in January 2018. In line with the WFP strategic plan for 2017–2021, the CSP continued to move WFP away from implementation towards an enabling role by focusing on the provision of technical assistance and government capacity strengthening in food security and school feeding and a greater role for WFP in the coordination and exchange of experience and learning (figure 1).¹²

Figure 1: The Kyrgyz Republic country context and WFP interventions overview



* Development project 200176 – Optimizing the Primary School Meals Programme (March 2013–December 2017).

** Development project 200662 – Support for National Productive Safety Nets and Long-Term Community Resilience (September 2014–December 2017).

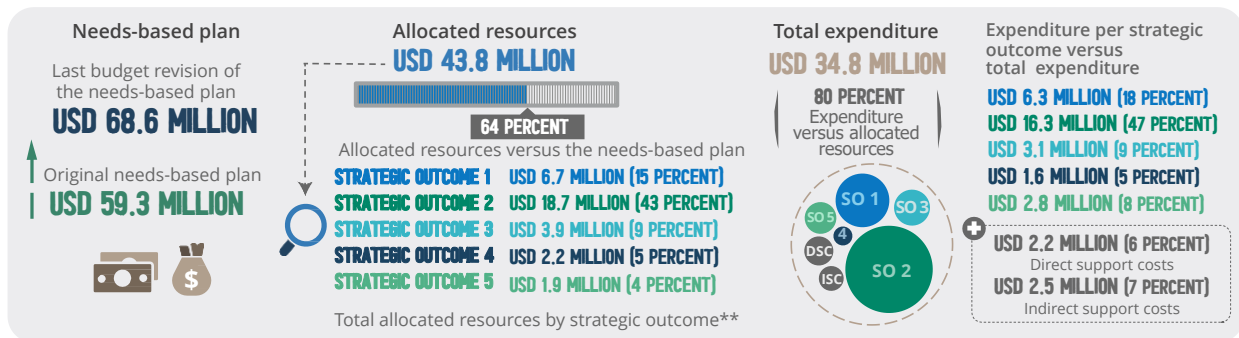
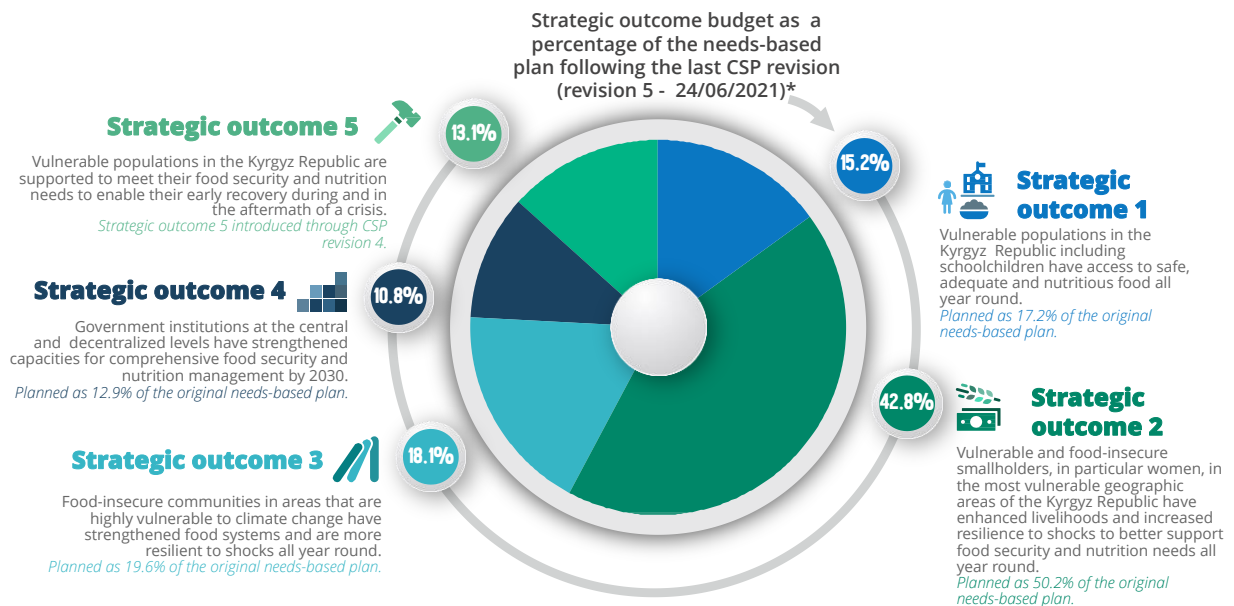
Source: Office of Evaluation, based on the full report on the evaluation of the Kyrgyz Republic CSP for 2018–2022.

12. The CSP was designed to support national social protection in order to address food insecurity among vulnerable populations; strengthen resilience; and support country capacity strengthening (CCS) for government institutions involved in food security and nutrition management. Cross-cutting priorities in the CSP included accountability to affected populations, gender, protection and the safeguarding of the environment. The planned intervention modalities were cash-based transfers, food transfers and capacity strengthening.

13. The original country portfolio budget was USD 59,254,332 (figure 2) and was intended to reach 631,503 beneficiaries (figure 3). The CSP was revised five times, however, primarily to address emerging needs (the motive behind three of the five revisions), resulting in a budget of USD 68,634,703 (figure 2) and a corresponding increase in planned beneficiaries to 932,936 (figure 3). The CSP was 64 percent funded as of December 2021 (figure 2) and has benefitted from a high percentage of flexible funding and multi-year commitments by its main donors: the Russian Federation (76.5 percent), the Republic of Korea (7.5 percent) and Switzerland (6.5 percent).

¹² WFP. 2017. *WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021)*.

Figure 2: Kyrgyz Republic CSP (2018–2022) strategic outcomes, budget, funding and expenditures

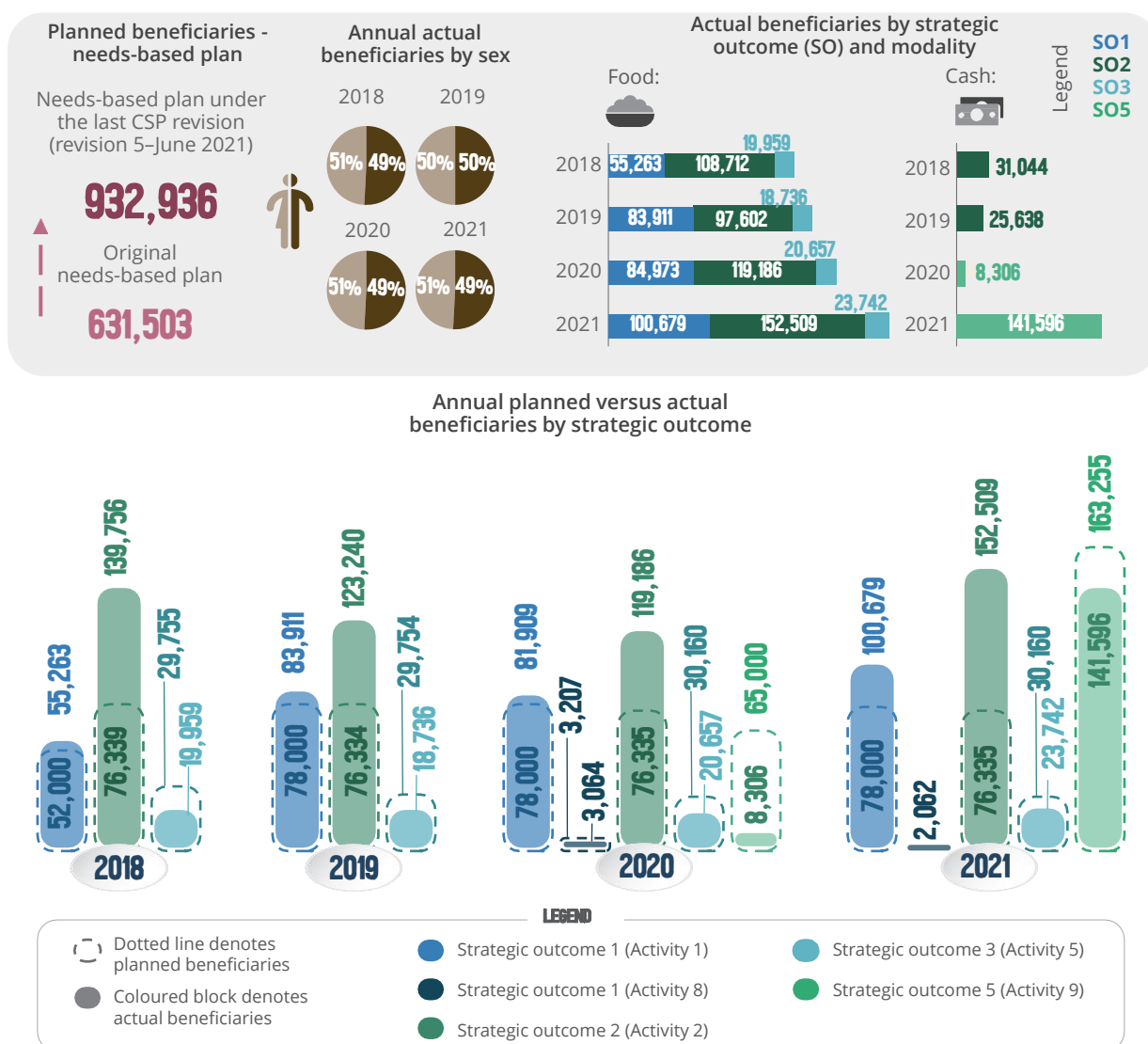


* The needs-based plan budget percentages by strategic outcome have been calculated at the transfer and implementation costs level (USD 60 million) excluding direct (USD 4.4 million) and indirect support costs (USD 4.2 million). This data refers to CSP revision 5, approved on 24 June 2021.

** The allocated resources by strategic outcome do not add up to USD 43.8 million because resources were also allocated to non-strategic outcome purposes (USD 5.1 million) and to direct (USD 2.8 million) and indirect support costs (USD 2.5 million).

Source: Office of Evaluation, based on the Kyrgyz Republic CSP for 2018–2022, CSP revision 5 and Integrated Road Map Analytics annual country report 1 (31 December 2021).

Figure 3: Beneficiary dashboard (2018–2021)



Source: Annual country reports for 2018–2021.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

To what extent are WFP’s strategic position, role and specific contributions based on country priorities, people’s needs and WFP’s strengths?

Relevance and strategic positioning

14. The CSP was developed through a consultative process with national ministries and other United Nations entities. Its design period coincided with the drafting of the government strategy for 2018–2040 and the mid-term development programme for 2018–2020.¹³

15. The CSP was aligned with national priorities, plans and strategies related to food security and nutrition, including the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets prioritized by the Government.¹⁴ It was also aligned with the national sustainable development strategy, which expired in 2017, and the subsequent 2018–2040 *Taza Koom – Zhany Door* (Transparent Society – New Epoch) plan. Furthermore, by

¹³ In 2021, as part of a legal review of all policies and strategies, the Government replaced the national development strategy with an interim mid-term development programme and action plan for 2021–2026 pending the elaboration of a new national development strategy.

¹⁴ Two national strategic reviews were conducted in 2017 by the National Institute for Strategic Studies, one focused on food security and nutrition and the other on poverty, to identify gaps and opportunities at the individual, institutional and policy levels.

supporting social protection the CSP contributed not just to SDGs 2 and 17 but also to SDGs 1 (on poverty), 6 (on water, sanitation and hygiene), 8 (on employment), 9 (on infrastructure), 13 (on climate change) and 16 (on peacebuilding), although these contributions were not formally monitored.

16. The CSP was broadly coherent with national priorities on social protection, capacity strengthening and school feeding and was intended to continue strengthening national capacity for institutionalizing and scaling up WFP interventions using complementary government resources and promoting comprehensive food security governance at all levels. However, activities under strategic outcomes 2 and 3 were not embedded in government programmes and the CSP included a conceptual framework that was limited in bringing together the array of potential CCS engagements (linked to strategic outcome 4) under a broader social protection approach. There is therefore scope to improve the alignment between WFP operations and the institutional social protection system.

Addressing the needs of the most vulnerable

17. Through the CSP, WFP appropriately addressed the needs of the most vulnerable by identifying and working in areas prone to food insecurity and climate disasters; a gender analysis was also integrated into the CSP design and targeting. Vulnerability criteria were used for targeting direct assistance activities and were part of the technical support and advocacy that WFP provided for national and United Nations systems.

18. During the COVID-19 pandemic WFP appropriately updated its target caseload to include newly affected households. Despite the lockdown, WFP was able to adapt field-level projects and continue to reach beneficiaries. The conditionality requirements (the work or training requirements accompanying food and cash transfers) can potentially lead to the exclusion of extremely vulnerable households.

Adaptation

19. CSP strategic positioning remained relevant throughout implementation. The focus on social protection was maintained through field-level resilience building activities and national-level vulnerability mapping support.

20. During the COVID-19 outbreak WFP demonstrated flexibility, and activities were adapted to address the consequences of the pandemic. WFP was perceived as an agile and important partner for the coordination of the COVID-19 response. WFP supported United Nations country team partners and the coordination with the government response to the pandemic.

Coherence and alignment

21. The CSP was coherent with United Nations strategies in the Kyrgyz Republic and its strategic objectives were aligned with priorities 1, 3 and 4 of the country's United Nations development assistance framework (UNDAF). WFP is a leader among United Nations entities in supporting the "Delivering as One" approach and supports UNDAF coherence and alignment by chairing result group 1 and co-chairing result group 3. WFP also co-chairs three working groups, connected to three of the four UNDAF priorities within the Development Partners Coordination Council and the Scaling Up Nutrition initiative with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

22. WFP's comparative advantages are seen in its ability to generate and use data and analysis; its coordination capabilities; its capacity to deliver; and its practical flexibility and responsiveness with regard to emerging issues. The implementation of the CSP provides examples of effective coordination with the other Rome-based agencies, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; and UNICEF through partnerships that leverage WFP's comparative advantages.



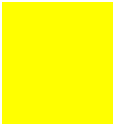

What are the extent and quality of WFP's contribution to country strategic plan outcomes in the Kyrgyz Republic?

Country strategic plan outcomes

23. The CSP met most output targets, but progress towards outcome targets was uneven. According to data from annual country reports, the most of the planned CSP output and beneficiary targets were met or exceeded. The outcome-level indicators do not show the same degree of progress, even when the challenges in measuring actual CSP contributions to development are taken into account.

24. Table 2 summarizes CSP progress against outputs and outcomes. The progress on outputs was gauged by combining the projected annual targets for beneficiaries and assets created. The progress towards outcomes is a qualitative assessment by the evaluation team based on CSP logical framework outcome indicators and a review of qualitative data and documentation.

TABLE 2: CSP PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES			
Strategic outcome	Output progress	Outcome progress	Likelihood of achieving end of CSP outcomes
1: Vulnerable populations in the Kyrgyz Republic including schoolchildren have access to safe, adequate and nutritious food all year round.	Significant progress	Significant progress	Close to achievement
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.	Significant progress	Limited progress	Progress to achievement
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.	Very limited progress	Very limited progress	Very limited progress
4: Government institutions at the central and decentralized levels have strengthened capacities for comprehensive food security and nutrition management by 2030.	Some progress	Limited progress	Limited progress to achievement
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 the crisis.	Limited progress	Limited progress	Initial delays but expected to achieve by end of CSP in 2022

Legend			
	= Achievement rate at 90 percent or above		= Achievement rate between 75 and 89 percent
	= Achievement rate between 50 and 75 percent		= Achievement rate below 50 percent

Source: Annual country reports, country office databases and assessments by the evaluation team.

25. Through activities under **strategic outcome 1** WFP successfully contributed to rolling out a school meals programme (SMP) to schools across the country, ensuring high national coverage. More than 80 percent of primary schools have been covered by the SMP, but the remaining schools are geographically the most challenging to reach. WFP also helped strengthen national capacity for the provision of school meals at the Ministry of Education and Science, although links between ministries were limited because of policy changes. WFP was successful in contributing to national legislative and management systems for the SMP and supporting individual schools with SMP rollout. Overall, CCS linked to the national rollout was extensive, but long-term gains from the SMP for children and vulnerable households are not visible within the current corporate results framework. The SMP continued during the COVID-19 pandemic, adapting to provide food directly to households when schools were closed as part of efforts to contain the disease.

26. **Strategic outcomes 2 and 3** were linked to livelihood and climate change adaptation. As both foresaw similar implementation modalities (food assistance for assets/food assistance for training), the country office created linkages between the two strategic outcomes, with activities under strategic outcome 2 supported by food assistance from traditional donors and those under strategic outcome 3 to be funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF). However, delays in GCF funding limited the implementation of the climate change adaptation activities under strategic outcome 3.¹⁵ Although the coverage of projects was national and consistent over the years, the activities selected were inclined towards the interests of the Government

¹⁵ The first disbursement of the GCF has been delayed by various complications including changes in the Government structure and in reaching legal agreement.

(and men) rather than women; infrastructure and capacity strengthening work was overrepresented and there was little focus on income generation projects. The programme of activities under strategic outcomes 2 and 3 continued during the COVID-19 pandemic with adaptations that enabled WFP to reach affected beneficiaries promptly such as the advance delivery of food rations to allow vulnerable households access to food stocks during lockdown or the halving of food rations to reach more people.

27. Through activities under **strategic outcome 4** the CSP contributed to national capacity strengthening, with interventions in policy development and institutional effectiveness. Government counterparts appreciated in particular WFP's evidence analysis and technical support related to the management of data collection, analysis and data visualization. These activities were embedded in a well-defined conceptual framework, which was not necessarily the case for other CCS areas of engagement. WFP was also active within the United Nations country team providing technical inputs related to United Nations priorities on CCS. CCS efforts were concentrated at the national level, with limited engagement at the district and local levels.

28. **Strategic outcome 5** focused on WFP's engagement in the COVID-19 crisis response. Under this strategic outcome, WFP provided conditional cash-based transfers as part of early recovery assistance for vulnerable households in peri-urban areas affected by the pandemic. Beneficiaries perceived positive household changes as a result of WFP support under strategic outcome 5; however, the prognosis for long-term food security outcomes is not clear given the nature of the activities chosen and the limited amounts transferred. Engagement under this strategic outcome was positively perceived by municipal stakeholders; participation conditions might have led to the exclusion of some vulnerable people, however (although this could not be determined by the evaluation team).

Humanitarian principles, accountability to affected populations, protection and the environment

29. CSP activities were implemented in alignment with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. However, conditional transfer requirements reduced access for those who could not work, possibly preventing vulnerable households from receiving timely support. WFP performed well on protection aspects, which included assessing protection, access, safety and dignity considerations.

30. Accountability to affected populations was evidenced through the establishment and use of beneficiary complaint and feedback mechanisms. However, beneficiaries were not fully aware of the mechanisms, which means that they were not systematically used across all WFP activities.

31. Environmental risk assessment was part of all activity selection processes. However, there is less evidence of environmental or climate change adaptation components in project selection, largely due to the absence of dedicated environmental and climate change adaptation expertise caused by GCF funding delays.

Gender

32. Although gender sensitivity is evident in beneficiary inclusion, gender disparities in decision making related to activities meant that women's preferences for projects (such as for childcare and income-generating activities) were underrepresented.

33. The CSP complied with WFP corporate gender requirements on reporting, indicators, beneficiary inclusion and financial tracking. After the design of the CSP, the country office continued to update its gender action plan annually. Moreover, the shift from focal points to a gender results network approach within the country office led to more gender-sensitive engagement throughout the CSP. There are, however, barriers to increasing gender-transformative programming, including a lack of senior gender expertise in the country office.

Sustainability

34. Progress towards the sustainability of CSP achievements varied by strategic outcome. Most progress was made on strategic outcomes 1 and 4 but sustainability in the institutionalization of capacity development remains a challenge. WFP has not developed transition strategies for its activities under most of the strategic outcomes.

TABLE 3: SUSTAINABILITY RATINGS BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE*				
Sustainability rating	Strategic outcome 1	Strategic outcomes 2 and 3	Strategic outcome 4	Strategic outcome 5
Strategic integration	Significant progress	Limited progress	Significant progress	Time-bound early recovery assistance initiated in 2020.
Resourcing	Limited progress	Very limited progress	Limited progress	
Technical capacity	Some progress	Some progress	Limited progress	
Transition and transformation strategy	Very limited progress	Very limited progress	Some progress	
Political will	Significant progress	Limited progress	Some progress	

Source: Evaluation team from document review and interviews.

* Sustainability encompasses the following five dimensions: the degree to which CSP activities are strategically integrated in government programmes; the degree to which the Government is likely to fund continuation of programmes; the technical capacity within the Government to manage and implement programmes; the existence of a WFP-government plan to move away from WFP support; and the degree of political will related to and government ownership of the programmes.

35. Good progress was made on the sustainability and transition of the SMP (strategic outcome 1), but potential barriers to further success include a need for ongoing capacity development and subsidies for the programme. After project support ends, schools continue to provide hot meals within the SMP but with varying frequency and not always to the level outlined in SMP materials and standards.

36. The strong government representation on the district project coordination committees that select field projects under strategic outcomes 2 and 3 could facilitate the sustainability of social protection gains, but the activities undertaken show limited integration with existing national social assistance programmes.

37. Activities under strategic outcome 4 contributed to national systems but their sustainability is threatened by challenges related to national capacity, mainly due to staff turnover and limited evidence that decision making is data-informed. Activities under strategic outcome 5 were designed to provide temporary early recovery assistance; sustainability is therefore not a key consideration for these activities.

Humanitarian, development and peace work

38. Although WFP has historically engaged in facilitating strategic links at the humanitarian-development-peace work nexus in the Kyrgyz Republic, strengthening these connections was limited by internal and external factors including the decision to build the CSP around focus areas that limited WFP's ability to pivot to emergent opportunities that were not clearly within their scope, as well as perceptions by external stakeholders that WFP's comparative advantages affected its messaging on strategic linkages across the nexus.

To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently in contributing to country strategic plan outputs and strategic outcomes?

Timeliness

39. The evaluation found no significant delays in output delivery. Overall, transfers were timely except for the initial cash-based transfers for the emergency response under strategic outcome 5; those were delayed due to the lack of a crisis-response focus area in the original CSP and the need to remedy that lack through a CSP revision. This in turn delayed the receipt of funding from donors and reduced capacity to deliver during the pandemic. The assets created and training provided through conditional in-kind transfers were timely.

Appropriateness of the coverage and targeting

40. The national coverage of the CSP is appropriate and planned beneficiary targets were mostly reached or exceeded. CSP targeting relied on evidence-based methodologies and was conducted using a two-step process of vulnerability analysis and follow-up assessment.

41. The CSP met beneficiary needs although it is possible that some vulnerable households were excluded unintentionally: selection criteria could have inadvertently excluded extremely vulnerable households whose members were unable to work (for health or childcare reasons) or schools whose infrastructure did not meet WFP requirements.

Cost efficiency

42. The CSP was reasonably cost efficient although efficiency varied across activities and strategic outcomes. The pandemic and consequent shift to activities supporting early recovery reduced efficiency in 2020, but efficiency was regained in 2021. Food transfers are more cost-effective for WFP than cash in the Kyrgyz Republic because the Government manages food distribution.

Alternative cost-effectiveness measures

43. Alternative cost-effectiveness measures have been explored within the CSP. The feasibility of such measures, however, is constrained by the almost total reliance on international in-kind food assistance and by the fact that the Government already manages all internal storage and distribution costs. While little adjustment can be made at the macro level, WFP took steps to increase programme cost effectiveness for activities under all strategic outcomes. There is still room for small operational inefficiencies to be improved but that is likely to result in only marginal gains.

What factors explain WFP's performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected under the country strategic plan?

Use of data and results-based management

44. The CSP design built on two previous development projects and was informed by an array of food security analyses, the zero hunger national strategic review¹⁶ and relevant evaluations, as well as by corporate sources and studies. It drew upon broad consultative processes and research with national counterparts and United Nations partners.

45. The COVID-19 pandemic led to updated and more frequent data collection exercises related to vulnerability mapping, food insecurity and food prices, some of which informed the development of activities under strategic outcome 5.

Predictability, adequacy and flexibility of resources

46. The CSP benefited from flexible and multi-year funding, but such funding is at risk due to reliance on a small group of donors. The number of donors per year fell from seven in 2018 to three in 2021, with 76.5 percent of the total allocated resources provided by one donor (the Russian Federation). Other donor-funded projects were implemented early in the CSP implementation period, including a rural women's empowerment project and a cross-border peacebuilding project.

47. For the next CSP WFP could, to the extent possible under the circumstances, harness new opportunities for resource mobilization by increasing its engagement in joint programming with other United Nations country team members and seeking support from other donors.

Strategic partnerships

48. While implementing the CSP, WFP maintained its partnership with the other United Nations country team members, the Government and non-governmental organizations and initiated new partnerships as part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a partner, WFP's strength is in coordination rather than collaboration, as shown by the relatively few examples of joint programming.

49. Partnerships with government ministries are strong but were often siloed because of the design of the CSP and governmental structure. Partnerships for climate change adaptation were limited during CSP

¹⁶ National Institute of Strategic Studies of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2017. [Food security governance review](#).

implementation because of funding shortfalls and ongoing government reforms. Civil society organizations perceive their relationship with WFP as having become more transactional during the CSP.

Flexibility in dynamic operational contexts

50. The CSP enabled WFP to adapt programming to respond to evolving opportunities and to adapt project activities to emerging needs, although the CSP focus on development rather than crisis response hampered WFP's ability to introduce new activities outside the focus areas identified at the design stage. Nevertheless, external stakeholders commended WFP's flexibility and proactiveness in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

51. The CSP architecture is intended to promote internal coherence in WFP operations, supported by the CSP theory of change. However, as each strategic outcome is managed separately, in practice there are limited links among strategic outcomes.

Enabling environment and internal capacity

52. Consistently strong government interest in social protection and a strong United Nations country team framework for coordination provided a solid enabling environment for WFP operations. Nevertheless, the socioeconomic and political disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and social tensions related to the Tajikistan conflict significantly changed government structures and functioning and shifted priorities, and consequently the country office's ability to partner on activities that aimed at addressing root causes rather than respond to increasing immediate needs.

53. Country office capacity remained consistent during the CSP. However, internal capacity was stretched due to unfilled positions and gaps in organizational structure. This reduced coherence and expertise and increased staff workload throughout the CSP cycle. WFP staff were required to fill monitoring and administrative roles as well as function as "development facilitators" building relationships and providing technical expertise.

CONCLUSIONS

54. The CSP facilitated WFP's strategic positioning in CCS and its collaboration with the other members of the United Nations country team in supporting government efforts to achieve SDG targets. It also contributed somewhat to increased strategic engagement across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus – despite internal and external limiting factors – and improved operational flexibility and responsiveness.

55. The design and underlying social protection logic of the CSP supported internal coherence across strategic outcomes. In practice, however, the management of the CSP by strategic outcome did not facilitate synergies.

56. WFP successfully contributed to strengthened national capacity and it achieved most of its beneficiary and output targets. The organization played a major role in school meals programming, successfully contributing to the national legislative and management systems for the SMP as well as supporting SMP rollout for individual schools.

57. Clear targeting and beneficiary selection criteria guided participation in CSP activities and were updated during the pandemic to include households newly affected by food insecurity. Nonetheless, the conditionality of assistance may have excluded extremely vulnerable people or schools unable to meet WFP criteria.

58. WFP's social protection programming was well received by the Government. Even so, its support for national systems and structures and targeting of the most vulnerable were constrained by a lack of harmonization among the social protection initiatives managed by the United Nations country team. There is an opportunity for WFP to expand and consolidate its strategic positioning on social protection to support government efforts.

59. Progress was made towards gender sensitivity, with significant gains in WFP programming approaches and in meeting corporate gender requirements. However, gender transformative approaches were not fully embedded in activities, partly due to limited gender expertise in the country office.

60. As a partner WFP took a leading role in coordination with the United Nations country team, the Government, civil society organizations and funding partners. WFP has forged strong technical and service delivery partnerships with these actors, creating the potential for greater multisector, multi-actor

collaboration on joint decision making that leverages complementary expertise across the humanitarian–development–peace nexus.

61. Sustainability remains a challenge for the CSP activities, particularly with respect to the institutionalization of capacity development. Sustainability challenges also stem from the management of projects as standalone activities rather linked components of long-term, multi-stakeholder programmes.

62. The CSP benefited from flexible and multi-year funding, but that did not lead to expanded resource mobilization. On the contrary, the CSP remains underfunded and the donor base is shrinking.

63. While the CSP has potential to make broad contributions to the achievement of the SDGs, there is limited evidence that can be used to identify long-term contributions to development outcomes. In particular, there is a need for monitoring systems and capacity strengthening for the tracking of long-term outcomes of the SMP.

RECOMMENDATIONS

64. The evaluation led to four strategic recommendations and two operational recommendations relevant to the development of the next CSP for the Kyrgyz Republic.

#	Recommendation	Level/ nature	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	Priority	Action deadline
1	Internal integration, adaptation and coherence. When developing the next country strategic plan, WFP should strengthen the overarching and strategic outcome-specific conceptual frameworks, in particular for country capacity strengthening. WFP should also establish clearer links among strategic outcomes to enhance the internal coherence of the country strategic plan and foster greater contributions to long-term development outcomes.	Strategic	Country office			
	1.1 Develop an overarching conceptual framework for the entire country strategic plan drawing from theories of change specific to each strategic outcome and establish clearer links among strategic outcomes, connecting them conceptually through a pathway for contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals.			Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division (PRO); regional bureau	High	October 2022
	1.2 Update the country capacity strengthening strategy grounded in a documented capacity gap assessment and mainstream it across the whole country portfolio.			Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service (PROT) and its Country Capacity Strengthening Unit	High	October 2022
	1.3 Review the country office organizational structure and staffing capacity to identify gaps and develop approaches to enhance country office expertise in gender, climate change adaptation and country capacity strengthening to support country strategic plan implementation.			Regional bureau	High	June 2023
2	Social protection strategic positioning. For the next country strategic plan, WFP should continue to expand its social protection strategic positioning.	Strategic	Country office			

#	Recommendation	Level/ nature	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	Priority	Action deadline
	2.1 Draw on the findings from the joint Core Diagnostic Instrument assessment, co-funded by the World Bank, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the International Labour Organization and WFP, when defining WFP’s social protection positioning with regard to all strategic outcomes and in relation to other agencies with the aim of expanding access to national social protection systems that foster people’s ability to meet their food security, nutrition and other essential needs.			Regional bureau, Government representatives for social protection and climate change adaptation	High	October 2022
	2.2 Identify means whereby the country strategic plan can contribute to enhancing the management and delivery of existing government social protection mechanisms (such as public works, the social contract, capacity development centres and disaster risk reduction rehabilitation activities sponsored by the Ministry of Emergency Situation). This could include linking nutrition awareness activities to existing education curriculum reform, increasing wraparound support for vulnerable families through interconnected programming or linking activities to existing employment opportunities through state services.			Regional bureau, WFP headquarters (Social Protection Unit), Government representatives for social protection and climate change adaptation	Medium	May 2023
	2.3 Contribute to ongoing discussions on the development of a single United Nations social protection road map, setting out a joint United Nations country team multi-year long-term plan for providing support for national social protection with priority areas for policy development and technical support.			United Nations country team social protection representatives	Medium	May 2023
3	Partnerships and collaboration for impact and sustainability. In the next country strategic plan, WFP should build on existing good practices to continue strengthening its partnerships with the Government, other United Nations entities and civil society for enhanced complementary programming and sustainability.	Strategic	Country office			

#	Recommendation	Level/ nature	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	Priority	Action deadline
	3.1 <i>Government</i> : In order to strengthen the sustainability of country strategic plan outcomes, continue to support the Government and develop a transition strategy that articulates how the Government would continue country strategic plan activities beyond the life of the country strategic plan, including the maintenance of the school meals programme by schools, community development outcomes and country capacity strengthening engagements.			Government representatives involved in development and social protection	Medium	September 2023
	3.2 <i>United Nations country team</i> : Continue to strengthen partnerships with other United Nations entities that have complementary expertise and identify possible synergies across programmes that could be pursued even in the absence of funding for joint programmes. For example, collaborate with the United Nations Development Programme on improving the quality of community-based action plans under strategic outcomes 2 and 3; work with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on agricultural programmes aimed at reducing post-harvest losses; partner with the International Labour Organization to link income-generation training to long-term employment opportunities, especially in peri-urban contexts.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (Partnerships and Advocacy Department), United Nations country team representatives involved in development and social protection	Medium	September 2023
	3.3 <i>Civil society</i> : Work throughout the next country strategic plan to establish self-sustaining multi-stakeholder non-state actor platforms that can serve as mechanisms for information exchange, continuous socialization and community mobilization on emergent issues in collaboration with the Government. This could include building platforms of school meals programme service providers or expanding project coordination committee membership to include more civil society or women representatives.			Support from regional bureau, civil society groups and non-governmental organizations involved in development and social protection	Medium	May 2024

#	Recommendation	Level/ nature	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	Priority	Action deadline
4	Resource diversification. As part of the next country strategic plan, WFP should continue to seek to diversify its donor base.	Strategic	Country office			
	4.1 Maintain strong relationships with long-standing donors by reviewing donor directions and strategic plans.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (Private Partnerships and Fundraising Division, Public Partnerships and Resourcing Division)	Medium	December 2023
	4.2 Systematically review where and how WFP corporate terminology and concepts may inhibit donor willingness to support WFP and adapt materials accordingly before approaching new donors.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (Private Partnerships and Fundraising Division, Public Partnerships and Resourcing Division, Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction Programmes Unit)	Medium	December 2023
5	Coverage and targeting. For the next country strategic plan, WFP should continue to refine and reassess its coverage and targeting to better reach extremely vulnerable or potential new beneficiary groups covered by WFP direct assistance programmes and country capacity strengthening interventions.	Operational	Country office			
	5.1 <i>Extremely vulnerable groups</i> : Integrate unconditional transfer options into projects as part of the WFP support package in line with government social assistance cash transfers.			Regional bureau and WFP headquarters (Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction Programmes Unit; Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division [RAM])	High	October 2022
	5.2 <i>Extremely vulnerable groups</i> : Support the formulation of an inter-agency strategy for complementary holistic wraparound support through multiple interventions aimed at targeted vulnerable households.			United Nations country team agencies engaged in social protection	Medium	April 2023

#	Recommendation	Level/ nature	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	Priority	Action deadline
	5.3 <i>Peri-urban vulnerable groups</i> : Build on early recovery assistance to introduce a development strategic outcome for peri-urban populations and establish new partnerships to link interventions with municipal employment opportunities.			Regional bureau and WFP headquarters (PROT/Country Capacity Strengthening Unit; Social Protection Unit)	High	October 2022
6	Evidence base for development outcomes. In the next country strategic plan WFP should invest further in evidence generation either through WFP-led studies or by supporting government capacity to track long-term contributions to development outcomes, enhance project management and inform policy development.	Operational	Country office			
	6.1 Under school meals programme-related work, advocate, and support the Government in, the measurement of long-term education, health and food security outcomes derived from the school meals programme. Support the integration of WFP tools for assessing school performance into government systems and undertake an assessment of all schools implementing the school meals programme since 2013 to determine their ability to continue the school meals programme after their transition away from WFP support.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (RAM; School-Based Programmes; Corporate Planning and Performance Division [CPP]), government representatives with links to the school meals programme	Medium	September 2023
	6.2 Under livelihoods and resilience activities, support the Government in undertaking, or directly carry out, studies to track the long-term effects on beneficiaries of participating in food assistance for assets or food assistance for training projects, i.e. their effects beyond the duration of the projects.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (RAM, PRO, CPP), government representatives with links to food assistance for assets or food assistance for training projects	Medium	September 2023

#	Recommendation	Level/ nature	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	Priority	Action deadline
	6.3 Under livelihoods and resilience activities, consider reintroducing the community asset indicator in the next country strategic plan logical framework and support Government-led mechanisms for measuring the quality and robustness of community infrastructure over time and understanding the long-term contributions and sustainability of WFP-supported interventions and their long-term effects on communities.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (RAM, PRO)	High	December 2022
	6.4 Under livelihoods and resilience activities, support Government-led mechanisms for identifying the combination of project types to be implemented in a district that is best able to maximize community development outcomes.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (RAM)	Medium	September 2023
	6.5 For country capacity strengthening interventions, consider developing additional country capacity strengthening output and outcome indicators beyond the current corporate results framework indicators to capture the entirety of WFP country capacity strengthening interventions and measure progress in a more comprehensive and accurate manner.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (RAM, CPP, PROT/ Country Capacity Strengthening Unit)	High	December 2022

1. Introduction

1.1. EVALUATION FEATURES

1. The World Food Programme (WFP) Policy on Country Strategic Plans (CSP) outlines a new approach for strategic and programmatic planning at the country level.¹ This evaluation focuses on the Kyrgyz Republic² CSP for 2018-2022 and was commissioned by the WFP Office of Evaluation (OEV). The evaluation has the dual objectives of learning and accountability, ensuring: i) that evidence and lessons from WFP performance are collected and used to inform future engagement and programming; and ii) accountability for results to WFP stakeholders. The terms of reference (ToR) are provided in Annex 1.

2. The evaluation was conducted between August 2021 and March 2022 and timed to ensure that inputs inform the design of the new CSP (2023-2027), and the upcoming United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for the Kyrgyz Republic (2023-2027). The evaluation covered the CSP design phase in 2017 and the implementation of all CSP activities from January 2018 to October 2021 as well as the subsequent budget revisions (BRs). The full evaluation timeline is found in Annex 2.

3. The evaluation serves the interests of a range of internal and external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders include the WFP country office (CO) in the Kyrgyz Republic, the Office of Evaluation, WFP headquarters (HQ) and the WFP regional bureau for Asia and Pacific Region in Bangkok (RBB). External stakeholders include the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, particularly the ministries, departments and agencies engaged with and supported by the CSP implementation at central and decentralized levels, as well as cooperating partners, donors, other United Nations (UN) agencies and other stakeholders (academia, the private sector, etc.). The beneficiaries of CSP activities are key stakeholders of this evaluation and of future WFP actions in the Kyrgyz Republic. The primary users of the evaluation are the country office and RBB.

4. The evaluation was conducted by an independent team of four evaluators under the KonTerra Group and the report was quality assured by the firm and the Office of Evaluation. A mixed methods approach was used combining document review, quantitative data analysis, key informant interviews, project site visits including interviews, observations, focus group discussions (FGDs) and remote fixed-response telephone interviews with beneficiaries. The evaluation adhered to the WFP approach to accountability to affected populations (AAP) and gender equality and the empowerment of women (GEEW). The WFP principles for integration of gender in evaluation were applied across the evaluation process (Annex 3).

5. Parallel evaluations by other United Nations agencies (the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)) and the United Nations Development Assistant Framework (UNDAF) evaluation were conducted during 2021. The evaluation team participated in preliminary findings presentations for the UNDAF evaluation to triangulate emergent themes and inform the findings of this evaluation.

1.2. CONTEXT

General overview

6. The Kyrgyz Republic is 90 percent mountainous, bordered by Kazakhstan on the northwest and north, by China on the east and south, and by Tajikistan and Uzbekistan on the south and west. The country is divided into seven provinces or regions (*oblasttar*): Osh, Jalalabad, Chuy, Issy-Kul, Naryn, Talas, and Batken, with the capital (Bishkek) located in Chuy province.

¹WFP. 2016. "Policy on Country Strategic Plans" WFP/EB.2/2016/4-C/1/Rev.1.

² The term Kyrgyz Republic will be used to refer to the country throughout except in those cases where document citations use the simple form Kyrgyzstan in their titles.

7. As of 2020, the Kyrgyz Republic had a population of 6.7 million people³ with 50.5 percent women and girls.⁴ The majority of Kyrgyzstan's population is aged 15-64 (62.7 percent), followed by children under 14 years (32.6 percent) and people over 65 (4.7 percent).⁵ The largest ethnic groups are the Kyrgyz (73 percent), followed by Uzbeks (14.6 percent), Russians (6 percent), Dungans (1.1 percent), Uyghurs (0.9 percent), Tajiks (0.9 percent), Koreans (0.3 percent), Ukrainians (0.2 percent), and Germans (0.1 percent).⁶ The country has an annual population growth rate of 2.1 percent,⁷ and a low population density: 34.9 persons per km.^{2,8} The population is young (average age of 25),⁹ predominantly rural (63 percent)¹⁰ and is ethnically and religiously diverse.¹¹ Life expectancy at birth is 71.6 with an under-five mortality rate of 18.3¹² and maternal mortality ratio of 60 deaths per 100,000 live births. The fertility rate is of 2.9 children per woman,¹³ while the adolescent fertility rate is 37.7.¹⁴

8. Economically, the Kyrgyz Republic is a lower middle-income country, ranking 120 out of 189 countries in the Human Development Index (HDI).¹⁵ It has the lowest gross national income (GNI) in Central Asia (United States dollars (USD) 8 billion),¹⁶ and its gross domestic product (GDP) per capita reaches USD 1276.2.¹⁷ The Kyrgyz Republic's Gini coefficient is 27.7,¹⁸ with a poverty rate of 20.15 percent.¹⁹ A quarter of the population (33.3 percent) lives below the national poverty line (USD 1.2 a day)²⁰ and 42.3 percent live in multidimensional poverty.²¹ Relative to the rest of the country, the regions of Aksy, Ala-Buka (Jalalabad) and Ak-Talaa (Naryn) have the highest recurrence of poverty.²² The Kyrgyz Republic's economy is highly dependent on remittances (31.1 percent of GDP),²³ which have played a fundamental role in alleviating poverty.²⁴

9. Political instability during parliamentary elections in October 2020 led to changes in the government structure. In April 2021, a new Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic was approved.²⁵ The new constitution shifts more authority to the President and transfers several key former parliamentary competencies to the executive, creating new pathways for interpreting policy formation and decision making on programming.²⁶

National policies and the Sustainable Development Goals

10. The Kyrgyz Republic adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in 2015. Since then, the transformative SDGs have been reflected in the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) of the Kyrgyz Republic, which expired in 2017, and

³ The total population is 6,724,300. National Statistics Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic. December 2021. *Total Population*, (accessed on 14 January 2022).

⁴ World Bank. 2019. Data World Bank: Population, Female (% of Total Population) – Kyrgyzstan, (accessed on 14 January 2022).

⁵ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). 2020. *World Population Dashboard Kyrgyzstan* (accessed on July 2021).

⁶ UNFPA. 2020. *World Population Dashboard Kyrgyzstan* (accessed on July 2021).

⁷ National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic (Stat KG). 2020. *5.01.00.01 Total Population by Sex, Age Group, Population, Dynamic Tables*, (accessed on July 2020).

⁸ World Bank. 2021. *World Bank Data: Population Density (People per sq. km. of Land Area) – Kyrgyz Republic*, (accessed on August, 2022).

⁹ National Statistics Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic. December 2021. *Total Population*.

¹⁰ World Bank. 2021. 'Rural Population (% of Total Population) – Kyrgyz Republic' (accessed July 2020).

¹¹ National Statistics Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic. December 2021. *Total Population*.

¹² UNICEF, 'Kyrgyzstan: Key Demographic Indicators,' *UNICEF Data: Monitoring the Situation of Children and Women* (accessed July 2021).

¹³ UNFPA. 2020. *World Population Dashboard Kyrgyzstan* (accessed on July 2021).

¹⁴ World Health Organization (WHO). 2021. 'Adolescent Birth Rate: Data By Country', *Global Health Observatory Data Repository* (accessed July 2020).

¹⁵ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2020. 'Latest Human Development Index (HDI) Ranking', *Human Development Reports* (accessed July 2021).

¹⁶ World Bank. 2020. 'GNI Per Capita, Atlas Method,' *World Bank Open Data* (2020) (accessed July 2021).

¹⁷ World Bank. 2021. 'GDP Per Capita (Current US\$) – Kyrgyz Republic', *World Bank Open Data* (accessed December, 2021).

¹⁸ UNDP. 2020. 'Kyrgyzstan: Human Development Indicators,' *Human Development Reports* (accessed July 2021).

¹⁹ World Bank. 2020. 'Poverty Headcount Ratio at National Poverty Lines (Percent of Population) – Kyrgyz Republic', *World Bank Open Data* (accessed July 2021).

²⁰ National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2021. '[Poverty Rate in the Kyrgyz Republic](#)' (accessed August 2022).

²¹ UNDP. 2020. 'Kyrgyzstan: Human Development Indicators' (2020), accessed July 2021.

²² WFP, 'Integrated Context Analysis Map,' June 2021.

²³ World Bank. 2020. 'Personal remittances, received (% of the GDP) - Kyrgyz Republic', *World Bank Open Data* (accessed August 2022).

²⁴ WFP. March 2021. 'Food Security Situation - Kyrgyz Republic', *World Food Programme* (accessed July 2021).

²⁵ World Bank. 2020. 'The World Bank in the Kyrgyz Republic' (accessed April 2021).

²⁶ Blackwood, M. 21 April 2021. 'Kyrgyz Voters Approve Strong Presidential System in Constitutional Referendum', *Congressional Research Service*.

in the subsequent 2018-2040 “Taza Koom – Zhany Door” (“Transparent Society – New Epoch”).²⁷ The National Development Programme for 2018-2020, “Unity, Trust, Creation”²⁸ served as a medium-term implementation programme for the National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic 2018-2040 (2040 Strategy). The subsequent constitutional reforms elaborated a mid-term development strategy until 2026 with an associated action plan. These collections of strategies emphasize the need for economic and income growth while acknowledging the importance of preserving ecosystems and increasing the quality of public services, including social welfare (healthcare, education and social protection).^{29,30}

11. Multiple SDGs and targets have been incorporated into the national frameworks. The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Report in 2019 identified areas of prioritization to accelerate SDG achievements including sectoral reforms, transformative governance, new public management approaches and building long-term resilience of people. In 2020, the first voluntary national review (VNR) cited significant progress.³¹ The review concluded that the Kyrgyz Republic significantly reduced extreme poverty and child mortality, increased life expectancy, expanded access to basic health care, and ensured sustainable access to primary and secondary education. However, a variety of challenges were also identified, including a lack of sufficiently disaggregated statistical data, persistent urban-rural discrepancies, continued social and gender inequalities, insufficient capacities among central and local authorities, and limited financial and human resources to work on multiple priorities simultaneously.

Food and nutrition security

12. The Kyrgyz Republic ranks 40th out of 116 qualifying countries in the 2021 Global Hunger Index (GHI). With a Global Hunger Index score of 8.6, the Kyrgyz Republic is classified as having a low level of hunger. The situation has considerably improved since 2000, when it scored 18.4 (moderate).³² Nonetheless, the country's mountainous nature poses challenges to food security, with two out of three food-insecure people living in remote valleys.³³ Food consumption in all provinces worsened due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the pandemic, there was greater homogeneity with six of the seven provinces rated as moderately low food insecure and Jalalabad as moderately high.³⁴ By December 2021, food insecurity in five of the moderately low provinces had deteriorated to moderately insufficient food consumption (Figure 1). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 76 percent of households reported not being able to afford a nutrient-adequate diet.³⁵

²⁷ Development Partners Coordination Council, Government of Kyrgyzstan. November 2018. *National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040*.

²⁸ Government of Kyrgyzstan. April 2018. The Development Programme of the Kyrgyz Republic for the period 2018-2022.

²⁹ Development Partners Coordination Council, Government of Kyrgyzstan. November 2018. *National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040*.

³⁰ As part of the constitutional reforms, the country is currently undergoing a comprehensive legal review including these development strategies.

³¹ Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2020. Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic.

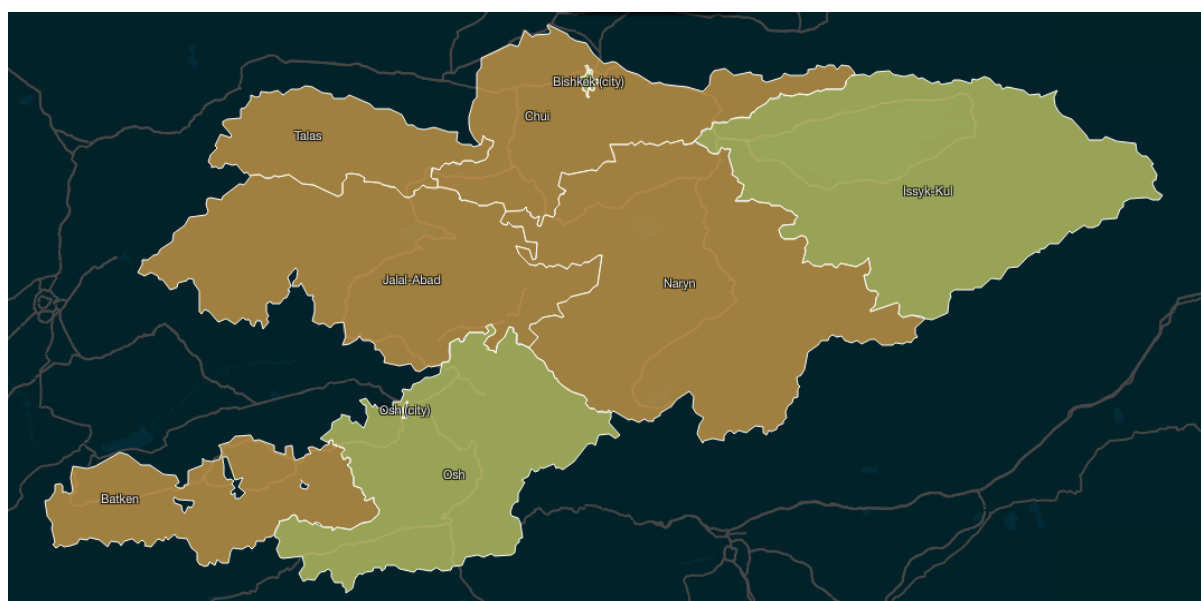
³² Global Hunger Index. 2021. ‘Kyrgyz Republic,’ *Global Hunger Index (GHI)* (accessed December 2021).

³³ WFP. 2020. Kyrgyzstan Country Profile.

³⁴ WFP. 2021. ‘HungerMap Live (accessed December 2021).

³⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). 2019. *Food Security and Nutrition Profile of the Kyrgyz Republic*.

Figure 1: Insufficient food consumption prevalence (December 2021)



Source: WFP, *HungerMap Live*. December 2021. Yellow denotes moderately low insufficient food consumption (10 percent-20 percent), while orange represents moderately high insufficient food consumption (20 percent-30 percent).

13. According to the 2020 Global Nutrition Report, the prevalence of anaemia is 36.2 percent among women of reproductive age and 38.3 percent among children under 5,³⁶ which indicates a moderate public health problem according to World Health Organization (WHO) classification.³⁷ The 2018 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey reports an under-5 stunting prevalence of 11.8 percent (medium), with the highest rates recorded for children 18-23 months of age (17.2 percent), children of poor households (14 percent) and rural children (13.1 percent).³⁸ Latest data indicates an under-5 wasting prevalence of 3 percent (low), including 1 percent severe wasting. The prevalence of overweight among children under 5 is 7 percent (medium),³⁹ while rates are significantly higher among men (34.4 percent) and women (30.9 percent). Obesity affects 19.5 percent of women and 14.6 percent of men.⁴⁰ Women face disproportionate challenges in terms of nutrition and food security.⁴¹

Social protection assistance

14. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD)⁴² implements a social protection programme primarily comprised of social assistance and social insurance with a large proportion of the national budget going to state pensions. Although the Social Protection Strategy expired in 2017 and has not been renewed, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development continues to provide social protection assistance through several mechanisms. The main non-contributory social assistance mechanism is the *Uy-Bulogo Komok* (UBK – monthly assistance stipend). The UBK provides a monthly benefit of USD 10 to the poorest households with children under the age of 16;⁴³ given the targeting criteria, its scale is limited. The national public works programme provides cash payments for able-bodied individuals to undertake government infrastructure projects. Public works programmes are decided by local authorities and are connected to district development plans or disaster risk reduction (DRR) rehabilitation plans. Government

³⁶ WFP. November 2021. *WFP Kyrgyz Republic Country Brief*.

³⁷ De Onis, M. et al. October 2018. Prevalence Thresholds For Wasting, Overweight and Stunting in Children Under 5 Years. *Public Health Nutrition* (accessed July 2020).

³⁸ National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic and UNICEF. May 2019. *Kyrgyzstan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Snapshots of Key Findings*.

³⁹ UNICEF. 2019. *The State of the World's Children. Children, Food, and Nutrition: Growing Well in a Changing World*, New York: UNICEF.

⁴⁰ Scaling Up Nutrition. 2020. *SUN Countries: Kyrgyzstan* (accessed July 2021).

⁴¹ Botreau, H. & Cohen, M. July 2019. *Gender Inequalities and Food Insecurity*, Oxford: Oxfam International.

⁴² Throughout the period of the CSP, the government ministries, including the government agency responsible for social protection, have undergone various title revisions. For this report, the ministries (and departments) will be referred to as they were within the CSP document at the time of design. These are: The Ministry of Education and Sciences, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry and Melioration (MAFIM), the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Development.

⁴³ OECD Social Protection Coverage in Kyrgyzstan (2018).

priorities in social protection involve elaborating new social protection policies, reducing expenditures in social protection and making cash benefits sufficiently effective to achieve self-reliance and get out of poverty, and subsequently transition away from social protection assistance. In recent years, the Government has pushed to reduce expenditure in social assistance, driven by concerns about “dependency” and the desire to support the “productive poor”.⁴⁴ Thus, the number of social assistance beneficiaries is relatively static, despite rising poverty and vulnerability levels because of shocks including the COVID-19 pandemic.

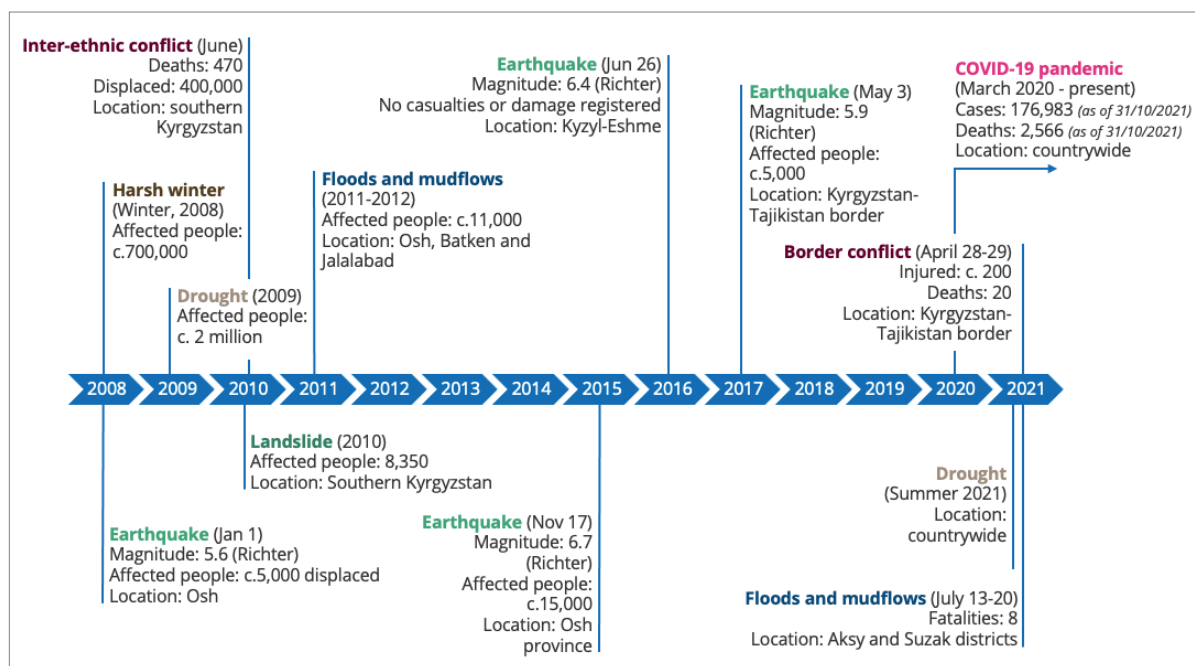
Agriculture

15. Agriculture, dominated by smallholder production (98 percent), represents a significant component of the Kyrgyz Republic’s economy, employing about 20 percent of the national labour force and representing up to one-third of the Kyrgyz Republic’s GDP.⁴⁵ The total arable land owned by smallholders constitutes around 98.1 percent of rural holdings. The majority of smallholders are peasant farmers (87.4 percent) and rural households (8.3 percent).⁴⁶ Productivity challenges for smallholders persist including inadequate management of water, a weak knowledge base and technological gaps; limited access to resources; difficulties complying with technical requirements and quality standards to access and operate in markets; and increased vulnerability to environmental shocks and climate change.⁴⁷

Disasters, climate change and vulnerability

16. The Kyrgyz Republic is vulnerable to disasters due to its geography, its fragile agricultural systems, and general development of human society including shortcomings in water management.⁴⁸ Due to climate change, the country is further threatened by increasingly frequent heat extremes and heightened incidence of aridity and drought.⁴⁹ Climate change now contributes to 39 percent of all disasters in the country, causing major destruction and leading to the loss of lives and livelihoods (Figure 2).⁵⁰

Figure 2: Timeline of the Kyrgyz Republic disasters (2008-2021)



Source: Compiled by the evaluation team (ET) from various sources.

⁴⁴ Fine-tuning coverage and targeting of social assistance programming is a complementary priority under the aspiration of reducing headcount in social protection schemes.

⁴⁵ FAO. 2020. Smallholders and Family Farms in Kyrgyzstan: Country Study Report.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ World Bank. 2021. ‘The World Bank in the Kyrgyz Republic.’

⁴⁸ Development Partner’s Coordination Council. 2020. *Kyrgyzstan Ranks Third Most Vulnerable to Climate Change in Central Asia* (accessed July 2021).

⁴⁹ Development Partner’s Coordination Council. 2019. *Kyrgyzstan Ranks Third Most Vulnerable to Climate Change in Central Asia*.

⁵⁰ Park, S. et al. 2021. *Assessing Climate Change Impact on Cropland Suitability in Kyrgyzstan*, *Agronomy* 11/8 (2021), 1490-1507.

Education and school-based programming

17. The Kyrgyz Republic maintains a high net attendance for primary-aged children, with 99 percent of primary-aged boys and girls attending school.⁵¹ However, these rates decrease at lower secondary school to 85 percent for boys and 84 percent for girls,⁵² then to 59 percent for boys and 56 percent for girls by upper secondary.⁵³ According to national statistics, 2,574 primary school-aged children are out of school (59.8 percent girls), due mainly to lack of financial resources, domestic reasons, work and disabilities.⁵⁴ In 2019, the percentage of the population with at least some secondary education (ages 25 and older) was 99.1 percent for women and 98.3 percent for men, and the adult literacy rate (ages 15 and older) was 99.6 percent (99.5 percent for women and 99.7 percent for men).⁵⁵

18. Since independence in 1991, the Ministry of Education and Sciences (MOES) has provided a stipend to primary schools (grade 1-4) for children to receive a school meal each school day. Initially the meal was a bun and tea, but in 2014, the National School Feeding Act led to the introduction of the National School Meals Programme (NSMP) under which children received a nutritious, hot meal four out of five days per week during the school year (paragraph 79). The MOES aspires for universal roll-out of hot meals in all primary schools. Current coverage is 61 percent nationally (details in EQ2.1: To what extent did WFP deliver expected outputs and contribute to the expected country strategic plan strategic outcomes?).

Gender, equity and inclusion

19. The Kyrgyz Republic ranks 82 out of 162 countries on the Gender Inequality Index.⁵⁶ Since 2013, the country has made significant progress in gender equality by developing its legislative base,⁵⁷ including ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). There is an established legislative base related to gender equality including civil, penal, labour and family codes ensuring equal rights for men and women. The country developed its first long-term gender equality strategy in 2012 (2012-2020) along with a 2012 national action plan to accompany the strategy.⁵⁸ Although the country was the first in the region to have a woman president (2010-2011), only 19.2 percent of the parliamentary seats are held by women.⁵⁹ In the labour market, the participation gap is 39 percent, and the income gap is 27 percent against women.⁶⁰

20. Existing gender inequality challenges are still present, especially in rural contexts, where women have less access to productive assets⁶¹ and women's right to sell property is limited by the need to obtain the consent of the spouse in any transaction.⁶²

21. Within the country, about 178,000 persons (43 percent women), are estimated to have mental or physical disabilities representing approximately 3 percent of the population.⁶³ There is a limited legal framework for supporting persons with disabilities although the Government ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disability in 2019.⁶⁴

⁵¹ UNICEF. 2017 and 2000. State of the World's Children. In post-independence years (1990-1996), the country had similar net enrolment rates for boys (99%) and slightly lower rates for girls (95%).

⁵² UNFPA. 2020. *World Population Kyrgyzstan*.

⁵³ UNICEF. 2020. Education, *UNICEF in Kyrgyzstan* (accessed July 2020).

⁵⁴ Stat KG. 2020. *Education and Culture Statistics (2020)*, accessed July 2020.

⁵⁵ World Bank. 2019. Education Statistics: Country at a Glance – Kyrgyz Republic (accessed July 2021).

⁵⁶ UNDP. 2020. Human Development Report.

⁵⁷ UN Women. 2020. 'UN Women in Kyrgyzstan,' *UN Women: Europe and Central Asia* (accessed June 2020). In February 2013, Kyrgyzstan adopted a National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which together with six supporting UN Security Council resolutions is part of a series of UN commitments to women's rights.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ UNDP. 2020. Human Development Report.

⁶⁰ UNEC. 2020. *Kyrgyzstan Country Data*.

⁶¹ Only 29 percent of houses, 20 percent of land, and 39 percent of commercial real estate are registered in women's names (Botreau & Cohen, *Gender Inequalities and Food Insecurity*).

⁶² Botreau, H & Cohen, M. 2019. *Gender Inequalities and Food Insecurity*.

⁶³ Kazakunova, G. 2018. *Kyrgyzstan's Social Protection Measures and Programmes*.

⁶⁴ Turusbek, A., 19 April 2021. 'Kyrgyzstan: Socialisation of Persons with Disabilities Depends on Political Will', *Central Asian Bureau for Analytical Reporting* (accessed July 2021).

Migration

22. External migration has been observed since independence in 1991. More than 860,000 people live and work outside the country, of which an estimated 720,000 are in the Russian Federation.⁶⁵ Migration in the Kyrgyz Republic remains mostly economically motivated, yet environment and climate-related events are increasingly important push factors.⁶⁶ Ethnic tensions occur across the south of the Kyrgyz Republic among Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Kyrgyz. In April 2021, tens of thousands of people were displaced after conflict between the Kyrgyz and Tajiks.⁶⁷

COVID-19

23. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been 200,993 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 2,991 related deaths.⁶⁸ The COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions have significantly affected the country. By the end of 2020, the GDP had declined by 8.6 percentage points from 2019.⁶⁹ Much of this was due to the reduction in vital remittance inflows due to international travel restrictions (expected to have further decreased in 2021).⁷⁰ The restrictions also affected rural populations dependent on seasonal agricultural labour. The two factors led to increasing poverty and vulnerability, often in peri-urban centres, where there are relatively few alternatives to employment as a source of income. A recent assessment reported that in 22 percent of households at least one family member lost their job, contributing to an estimated unemployment rate of 18.8 percent.⁷¹ The Government developed assistance measures including: established price controls on “socially significant” goods, distribution of flour and cash and social payments transfers benefitting vulnerable groups.⁷²

United Nations Development Assistance Framework

24. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)⁷³ covers the period 2018-2022 and serves as a mutual accountability framework between the Government and United Nations agencies. The UNDAF includes four priorities and corresponding outcomes aligned with government development priorities focusing on economic growth, good governance, social protection and the environment (including climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR)). Over the first two years of implementation, the UNDAF raised USD 97,728,653 and delivered USD 89,081,895.⁷⁴ In 2020, the United Nations in the Kyrgyz Republic assisted the Government in developing a Socio-Economic Response Plan to the pandemic.⁷⁵ The UNDAF was evaluated in 2021 and a United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) was being developed for the period 2023-2027 at the time of writing the report.

1.3. THE WFP COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

25. The WFP CSP (2018-2022) in the Kyrgyz Republic was approved by the Executive Board in November 2017 and started in January 2018. In line with the WFP Strategic Plan (2017-2021), the CSP continued transitioning WFP from an implementation role to an enabling role, providing technical assistance and strengthening government capacities in food security and school feeding and increasing the role of WFP in coordinating and exchanging experiences and learnings.⁷⁶

26. The overall logic of the CSP is to support national social protection through three directions: i) supporting the MOES in the universal roll-out of hot meals to primary school-aged children (SO1); ii) providing direct assistance to vulnerable populations through food assistance for assets (FFA) and food assistance for training (FFT) in collaboration with local authorities and representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and supporting the elaboration of community and individual assets for

⁶⁵ Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2020. *Voluntary National Review*.

⁶⁶ Chandonnet, et. al., 2016. *Environment, Climate Change and Migration in the Kyrgyz Republic*, IOM.

⁶⁷ UNHCR. 2021. Planning Summary, Operation: Kyrgyzstan.

⁶⁸ WHO. 2022. 'Kyrgyzstan,' *WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard: Kyrgyzstan* (accessed 16 April 2022).

⁶⁹ National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2020. *Annual Report 2020*.

⁷⁰ WFP and IOM. 2021. *Migration, Food Security, and Nutrition in the Kyrgyz Republic*.

⁷¹ UNDP. 2020. 'Kyrgyz Republic Could See GDP Plunge.'

⁷² KPMG. 2021. Kyrgyzstan: Government and institution measures in response to COVID-19.

⁷³ UNDAF. 2018. UNDAF Framework for the Kyrgyz Republic 2018-2022.

⁷⁴ UNDAF. 2019. Annual Report 2019.

⁷⁵ UNDP. 2021. COVID-19 in the Kyrgyz Republic.

⁷⁶ WFP. 2017. *WFP Strategic Plan (2017-2021)*.

social protection (SO2 and SO3);⁷⁷ and iii) supporting government institutions to strengthen their capacities for social protection programming (SO4) (Table 1). A fifth strategic outcome (SO) was added in 2020, to provide support for early recovery assistance to affected populations.

Table 1: Summary of the Kyrgyz Republic CSP (2018-2022)

Focus area	SO	Activities	Modality	Target group
Root causes	SO1 (School Meals Programme (SMP)): Vulnerable populations in the Kyrgyz Republic including schoolchildren have access to safe, adequate, and nutritious food all year round	Activity 1: Provide school meals to primary school-aged children and strengthen the capacity of government institutions and schools to implement school meals	Food Capacity strengthening	Primary-aged schoolchildren, grades 1-4
		Activity 8: 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 <i>[new activity included through BR03]</i>	Food Capacity strengthening	Beneficiaries in social institutions
Root causes	SO2 (Livelihoods): 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	Activity 2: Provide support in productive assets creation to vulnerable communities and food insecure smallholders	Food Cash	Food insecure smallholders, particularly women
		Activity 3: Provide capacity strengthening to food insecure smallholders	Capacity strengthening	Food insecure smallholders, particularly women
Resilience	SO3 (Climate change/DRR): 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	Activity 4: Provide capacity strengthening to local community members and authorities	Capacity strengthening	Food insecure community members and authorities
		Activity 5: Provide support for protective and risk reduction assets creation and rehabilitation to communities vulnerable to climate-change and natural disasters	Food	Food insecure communities
Root causes	SO4 (country capacity strengthening): Government institutions at central and decentralized levels have strengthened capacities for comprehensive food security and nutrition management by 2030	Activity 6: Provide capacity strengthening to national institution	Capacity strengthening	Government institutions
		Activity 7: Provide evidence-based analysis to relevant national institution	Capacity strengthening	Government institutions
Crisis response	SO5 (emergency response): 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 <i>[new SO included through BR04]</i>	Activity 9: Provide emergency food assistance to shock-affected vulnerable population <i>[new activity included through BR04]</i>	Cash Food Capacity strengthening	Peri-urban persons affected by COVID-19 and other crisis

⁷⁷ Due to delays in the funding for SO3, SO2 and SO3 were merged under a single programme manager with any FFA/FFT project selected that had DRR implications ascribed to SO3 accomplishments. This was initially structured as an interim measure, but the SO3 funding delays have lasted until early 2022, leading to SO2 and SO3 functionally acting as a single SO even if reported separately in ACRs.

Source: CSP document and line of sight.

27. The CSP addresses four cross-cutting priorities: i) accountability to affected populations (AAP), ii) protection, iii) environment and iv) gender equality and the empowerment of women. These are covered in more detail in section EQ2.2 To what extent did WFP contribute to achievement of cross-cutting priorities (protection, accountability to affected populations, gender and other equity considerations, as well as the environment)? In addition, did the response to COVID-19 change the degree of contribution in any of these areas?.

28. The CSP puts a strong emphasis on country capacity strengthening (CCS). Interventions focus on technical advice, evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy to enhance the individual, institutional and enabling environment of the Kyrgyz Republic.

29. Basic assumptions embedded in the CSP⁷⁸ include: that the country context would remain stable with continued government commitment to school meals and social protection; that donor priorities and mandates among agencies would remain stable over the CSP cycle; and that climactic events and shocks would be within acceptable parameters. Implementation was predicated on assumptions that there would be voluntary active participation of beneficiaries, communities and organizations and that social protection systems would function without disruption. Changes in government priorities were assumed to be present, but not disruptive to ongoing operations. Internally, the CSP assumptions included the assumption that a development orientation would remain relevant for the context and that there would be sufficient financial and human resources (including technical expertise) required for CSP implementation.⁷⁹

30. A country portfolio evaluation in 2012 indicated that the next step should be to better align the WFP portfolio with the national social protection system for greater impact at the national level.⁸⁰ From 2013 onwards, WFP shifted its focus towards social protection through the implementation of two development projects (DEV) - DEV 200176 on optimizing school meals and DEV 200662 for rural development, social protection, disaster risk management and climate adaptation. This direction of travel continued with the design of the WFP CSP (2018-2022), consolidating the role of WFP as a key government partner by complementing its food security and nutrition programmes and facilitating the generation and transfer of knowledge. Figure 3 shows the evolution of WFP interventions in the Kyrgyz Republic and key contextual changes.

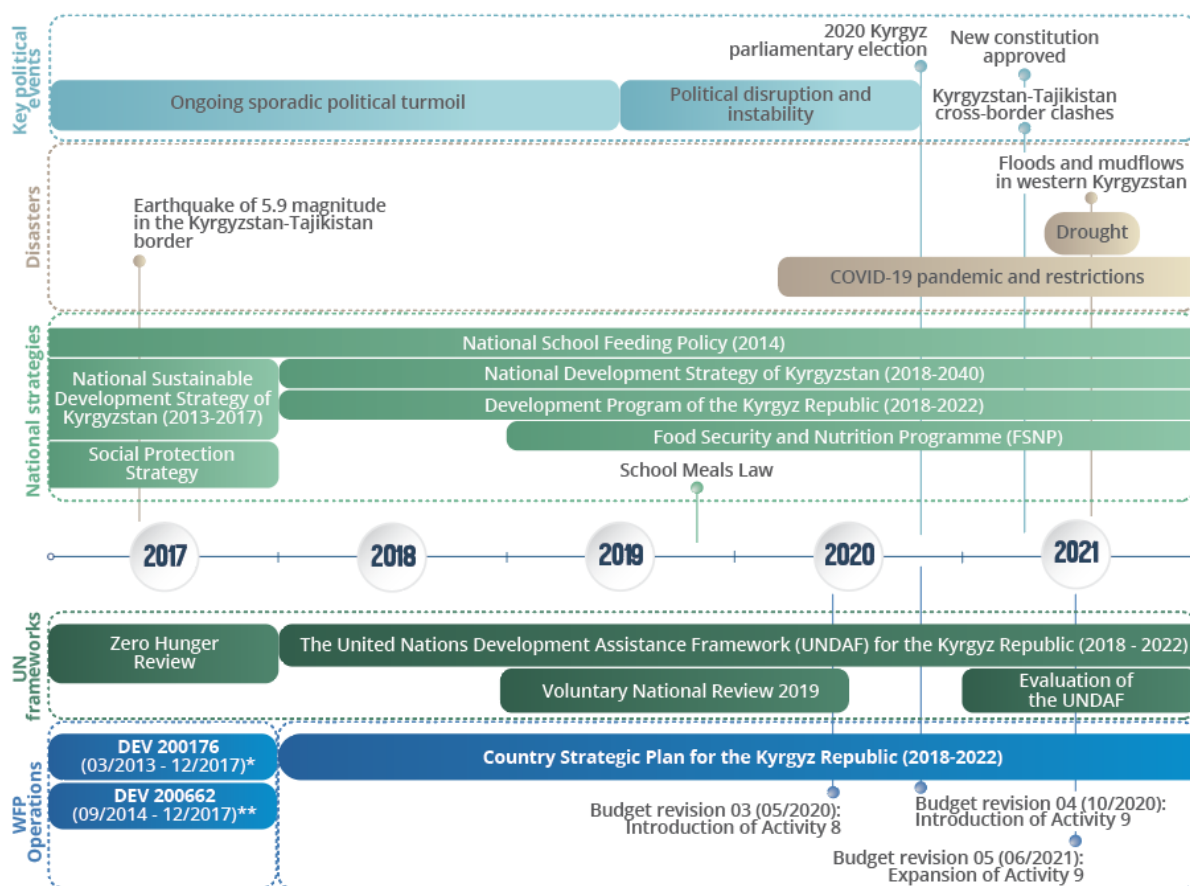
31. Based on the recommendations of the 2016 decentralized evaluations, the country office sought to increase gender equality and gender-sensitive programming in the design of the CSP. In 2018 the country office participated in the WFP gender transformation programme to increase organizational and programming capacities and commitment to advancing GEEW in relation to food and nutrition security.

⁷⁸ In addition to the specific assumptions within the CSP document, the ToC validation workshop with the country office in August 2021 further identified additional assumptions behind the CSP, which are listed here throughout.

⁷⁹ See Annex 3 for more details on the reconstructed theory of change and underpinning assumptions.

⁸⁰ WFP. 2013. The Kyrgyz Republic Country Portfolio (2008-2012).

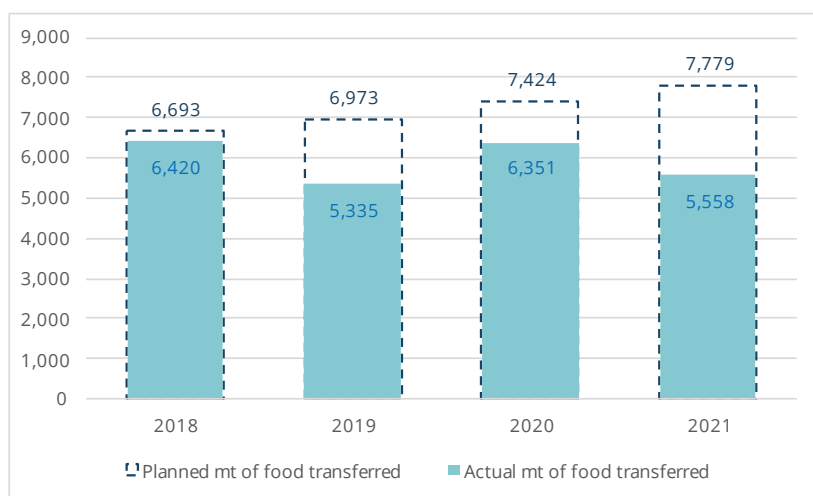
Figure 3: Timeline – WFP interventions and the Kyrgyz Republic country context (2017-2021)



Source: Elaborated by the evaluation team and the Office of Evaluation.

32. For the beneficiary direct assistance, the CSP adopted a combination of transfer modalities (cash, food and capacity strengthening). Planned food assistance included only wheat and oil. Cash assistance was originally planned only under a single project under SO2 before the addition of SO5 with BR04 in June 2021 (Figure 4 and Figure 5).⁸¹

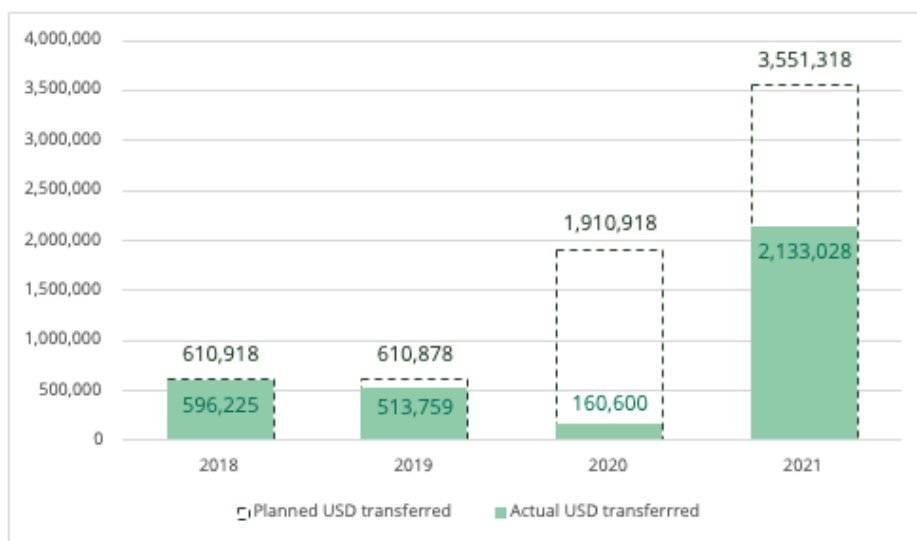
Figure 4: Planned versus actual food transfers (metric ton - mt) by year



Source: ACR 2018-2021.

⁸¹ See Annex 10 for more details.

Figure 5: Planned versus actual cash transfers (USD) by year



Source: ACR 2018-2021.

33. The CSP's geographical coverage is nationwide but with a concentration in the southern provinces of Osh, Jalalabad, and Batken (Figure 6).

Figure 6: WFP Project Locations 2014-2020



Source: WFP KGZ CO, GIS map created April 2021.

34. **Analytical work:** The country office has conducted analytical research throughout the CSP cycle. In addition to the analytical studies cited earlier, other formative analytical work includes: the 2019 scoping study on social protection and safety nets; a 2017 decentralized evaluation of the joint programme on rural women's empowerment; and a 2017 review of the Peacebuilding Fund-funded cross-border cooperation for sustainable peace and development project (of which WFP Kyrgyz Republic was a participant). WFP participated in the 2020 multi-country study on the potential contribution of food assistance for training in women's empowerment. Most recently, the country office developed an analytical paper describing the

impact of COVID-19 on poverty, food security and nutrition, and social protection.⁸² Finally, throughout the CSP, the country office has also sponsored multiple pieces of technical research including comprehensive food security and vulnerability assessments, assessments of the recipients of monthly benefits for poor families, crop-related food security assessments with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and rapid needs assessments for the pandemic response. Annex 4 summarizes the analytical works conducted.

35. **Funding:** The CSP began with a projected total budget of USD 59,254,332. Five budget revisions have occurred during the CSP. The first two were corporate technical revisions that did not affect the CSP programme strategy.⁸³ The final three were developed since 2020 to increase beneficiary reach across the CSP and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, with the last one approved on 24 June 2021.

36. SO2 comprises the biggest share of the needs-based plan (NBP) (42.8 percent) with the other strategic outcomes sharing between 10-20 percent of the total resourcing. Table 2 describes the cumulative financial overview of the CSP. The primary donor is the Russian Federation (76.5 percent of donor contributions). Resourcing details are discussed further in EQ3.2 To what extent was coverage and targeting of interventions appropriate? Were there any changes in coverage and targeting of interventions due to changing needs and WFP adaptations accordingly (as a result of the pandemic)?

Table 2: Cumulative financial overview

Focus area	SO	Activity	NBP as per original CSP (2018-2022)	NBP as per last BR (BR05 - June 24, 2021)	Allocated contributions and funding against NBP BR05 (as of 31 December 2021)	Expenditures and expenditures against allocated contributions (as of 31 December 2021)
Root causes	SO 1	01 School meals	8,815,348	8,944,735	6,505,094 (73%)	6,119,274 (94%)
		08 Social institutions	n.a.	173,662	176,914 (102%)	176,914 (100%)
		Sub-total SO1	8,815,348	9,118,397	6,682,008 (73%)	6,296,188 (94%)
	SO 2	02 Smallholders assets	22,103,543	22,152,074	16,696,422 (75%)	14,822,061 (89%)
		03 Smallholders training	3,598,681	3,557,188	1,762,984 (50%)	1,510,985 (86%)
		Non-activity specific	-	-	277,249	-
Sub-total SO2	25,702,224	25,709,262	18,736,655 (73%)	16,333,046 (87%)		
Resilience	SO 3	04 Resilience training	4,713,227	4,763,959	152,803 (3%)	151,548 (99%)
		05 Resilience assets	5,309,434	6,084,195	3,018,571 (50%)	2,907,055 (96%)
		Non-activity specific	-	-	750,000	-
		Sub-total SO3	10,022,661	10,848,154	3,921,374 (36%)	3,058,603 (78%)
	SO 4	06 Tools and systems	3,842,534	3,721,029	1,544,886 (42%)	1,105,916 (72%)
		07 Evidence policy dialogue	2,776,602	2,752,742	626,949 (23%)	468,338 (75%)
		Sub-total SO4	6,619,136	6,473,771	2,171,834 (34%)	1,574,254 (72%)
Crisis response	SO 5	09 Emergency assistance	n.a.	7,863,961	1,866,714 (24%)	2,833,843 (152%)
		Sub-total SO5	n.a.	7,863,961	1,866,714 (24%)	2,833,843 (152%)
Non-SO specific			-	-	5,099,587	-
Total operational costs			51,159,369	60,013,545	38,478,172 (64%)	30,095,934 (78%)
<i>Direct support costs</i>			4,218,512	4,432,186	2,768,191 (62%)	2,184,381 (79%)
Total direct costs			55,377,881	64,445,731	41,246,363 (64%)	32,280,315 (78%)
<i>Indirect support costs</i>			3,876,452	4,188,972	2,540,215 (61%)	2,540,215 (100%)
Grand total			59,254,332	68,634,703	43,786,578 (64%)	34,820,530 (80%)

⁸² WFP. October 2021. Poverty, Food Security and Nutrition in the context of the COVID-19 and the role of Social Protection in the Kyrgyz Republic.

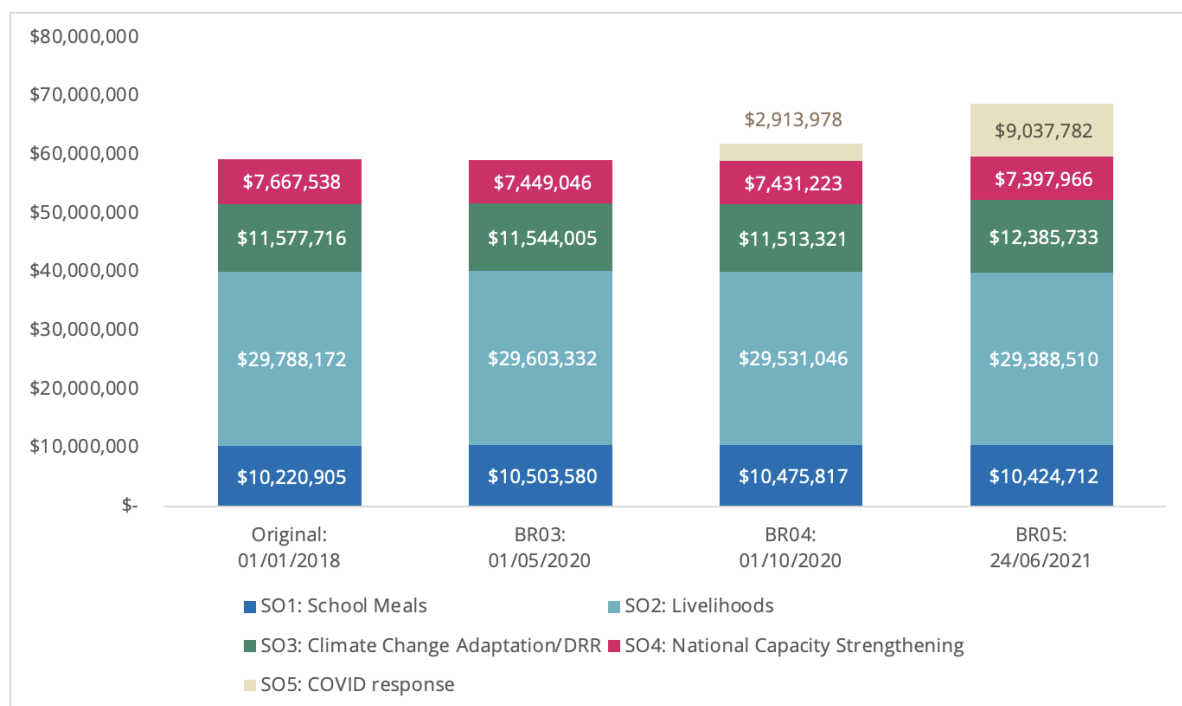
⁸³ BR01 and BR02 were non-fundamental revisions that affected the total budget and budget categories of the CSP.



Source: CPB budget; BR05; IRM Analytics. 31 December 2021. ACR-1 Report.

37. BR03 (14 May 2020) introduced a new project funded by the Swiss Embassy, providing a one-time allocation of food assistance to 17 Swiss-supported elder care hostels and orphanages affected by the pandemic (Activity 8). Subsequently, the Swiss Embassy provided additional emergency funding to support a new project involving cash-based transfers (CBT) to shock-affected populations in peri-urban centres (BR04 – 26 October 2020) and the elaboration of a new strategic outcome 5 with a single activity (9) for cash-based transfers to peri-urban populations. BR05 (24 June 2021) increased activities 5 and 9 budget requirements with the needs-based plan increased to USD 68,634,703. Figure 7 profiles the relative budget share by strategic outcome by revision. Figure 8 profiles the needs-based plan against implementation plans and expenditures by year.

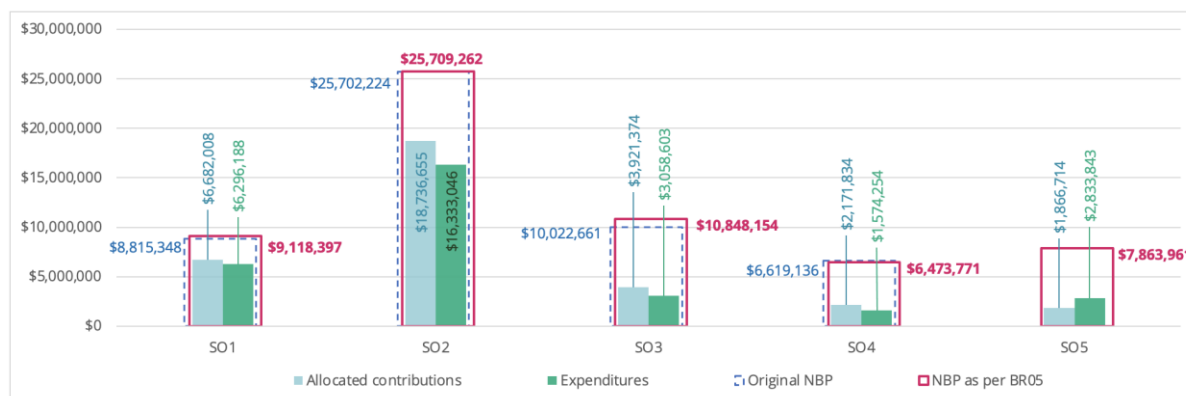
Figure 7: CSP strategic outcome share by budget revisions (in USD) 2018-2022⁸⁴



Source: Kyrgyzstan CSP budget revisions: KG01 BR01, BR02, BR03, BR04, BR05.

⁸⁴Based on needs-based plan and excludes DSC and ISC.

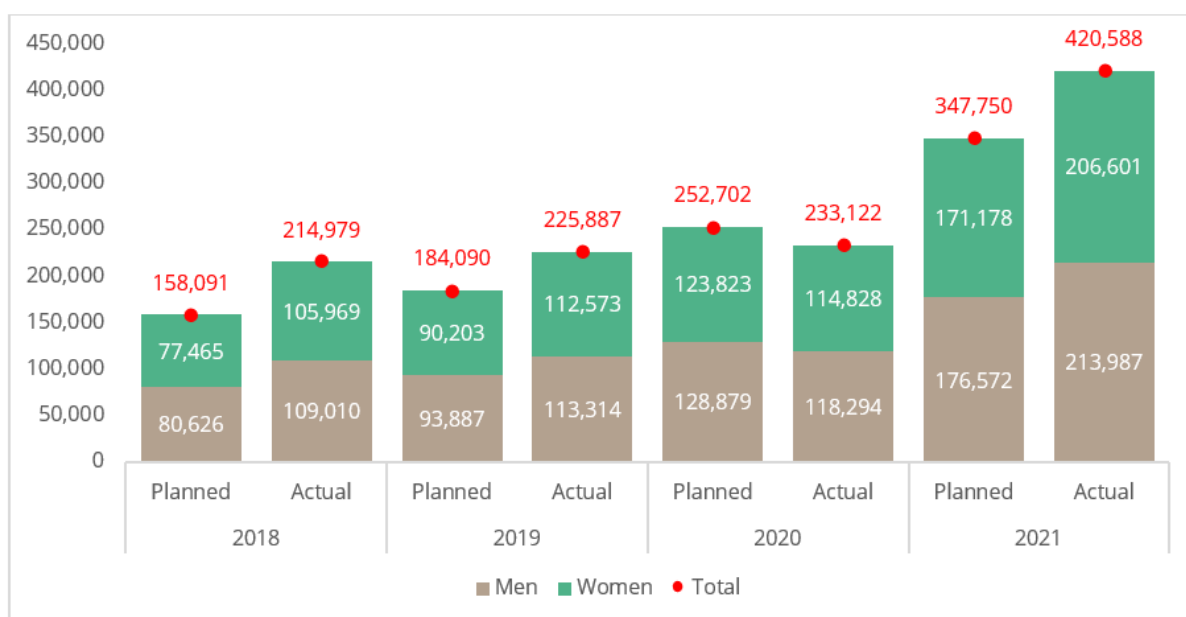
Figure 8: Original needs-based plan, BR05 NBP, allocated resources and expenditures (in USD) by strategic outcome (cumulative figures for the 2018-2021 period)



Source: CPB Budget; BR05; IRM Analytics. 31 December 2021. ACR-1 Report. Expenditures under SO5 are higher than the allocated contributions possibly due to the reallocation of flexible funding and the emergency nature of this strategic outcome.

38. **Beneficiaries:** The CSP reached between 200,000 and 286,000 beneficiaries per year during the 2018-2021 period. Across all activities and years, men and women represent an equal share of beneficiaries, reflecting intentional gender sensitivity in inclusion (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Planned and actual annual CSP beneficiaries by sex (2018-2021)



Source: ACRs 2018-2021.

1.4. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY, LIMITATIONS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

39. The evaluation is oriented around four principal evaluation questions (EQ) (Annex 1):
- EQ1: To what extent is the WFP strategic position, role, and specific contribution based on country priorities and people's needs as well as WFP strengths?
 - EQ2: What is the extent and quality of the specific contribution of WFP to CSP strategic outcomes in the Kyrgyz Republic?
 - EQ3: To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently in contributing to CSP outputs and strategic outcomes?

- d. EQ4: What are the factors that explain WFP performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected by the CSP?

40. The evaluation employed a theory-based, mixed methodology. The following criteria of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) were applied to the evaluation design: relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and coverage. Details are available in Annex 3. The inception phase was conducted entirely remotely and included an in-depth review of documents, interviews with selected stakeholders, a comprehensive stakeholder analysis, and the reconstruction of a theory of change (ToC) for the CSP that was validated by the country office. This allowed the evaluation team (ET) to fine-tune the evaluation scope in consultation with the country office and the evaluation manager (EM).

41. An evaluation matrix was prepared (Annex 5) around the four evaluation questions, including subquestions, lines of inquiry, indicators, data sources, and data collection techniques. GEEW considerations are mainstreamed into the evaluation criteria through the inclusion of subquestions and indicators (Annex 5). A set of interview guides were developed to address the lines of inquiry drawing on multiple approaches.

42. The data collection phase included an in-country field mission over a three-week period in October 2021 including project site visits, key informant interviews (KII) and focus group discussions with a range of stakeholders at country, regional and headquarters levels (Annex 8) including 291 beneficiaries. The team visited the provinces of Naryn, Osh and Batken (Annex 6). This was complemented by phone interviews with 1,029 beneficiaries and project coordination committees (PCCs) or COVID-19 committee members using a fixed-response questionnaire (Annex 3).⁸⁵ Data collection tools are described in Annex 7. The detailed analysis of WFP and country office supplied data on resourcing, expenditures, transfers, indicators, and implementation (and the CSP line of sight) is found in Annex 10. Documentation, including previous evaluations and reviews, was also shared with the evaluation team (Annex 12).

43. The evaluation team engaged with the country office and regional bureaux of Cairo and Bangkok. An initial exit debriefing was conducted with the country office on 2 November, 2021, followed by a preliminary findings workshop on 19 November, 2021. Both exercises were intended to inform the design of the new UNSDCF and new CSP by presenting the preliminary findings, conclusions, and recommendations. A stakeholder workshop took place in February 2022 to discuss and validate the draft recommendations with both external and internal stakeholders and ensure that key issues raised were considered in the final report.

44. All findings were developed based on triangulation from multiple sources including cross-referenced document review, interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and primary or secondary quantitative data. An internal database of interview notes and additional evidence was used to identify answers to each of the evaluation questions. No single source findings are presented. However, in some instances, a specific source is cited to reinforce a pattern. The evaluation followed the WFP Centralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System (CEQAS). Gender considerations, and principles of inclusion, participation and non-discrimination were included in the design, questioning, data collection and reporting in line with United Nations Evaluation Group's (UNEG) Guidance on Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation. The evaluation was conducted according to the 2020 United Nations Evaluation Group Ethical Guidelines. Having signed the Pledge of Ethical Conduct, the evaluation team ensured ethical standards were adhered to throughout the evaluation through detailed protocols for interviews and field visits (Annex 3).

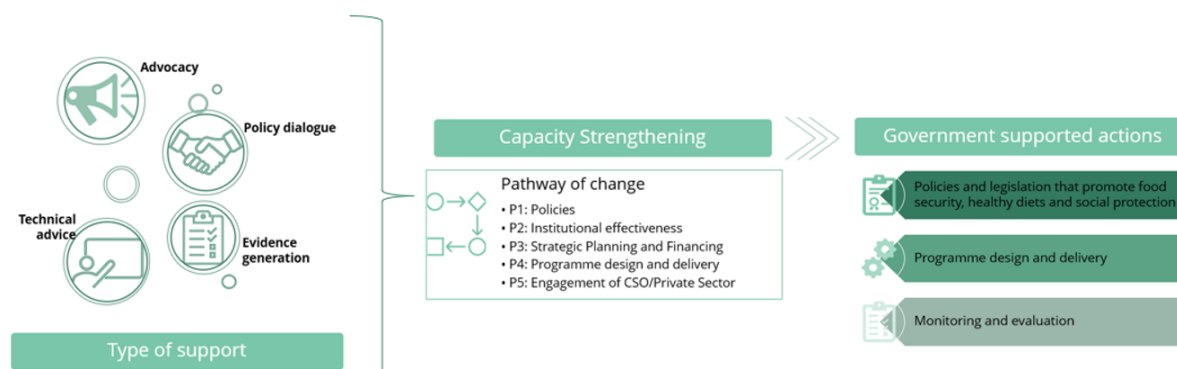
45. The data collected was sufficient to assess the CSP performance despite some limitations. Parallel evaluations by other United Nations agencies and the UNDAF evaluation impacted the availability of senior-level government representatives, and COVID-19 restrictions reduced the access to others either by limiting in-person interviews or through the number of individuals that could be interviewed at any one time.

46. **Assessing country capacity strengthening (CCS) contributions and how to read the country capacity strengthening framework:** The WFP corporate country capacity strengthening framework describes five pathways of change (Figure 10) to enhance stakeholder capacities in policies and legislation,

⁸⁵ A team member was unable to travel due to COVID-19 restrictions and worked remotely in collaboration with a national researcher who conducted the field visits on her behalf. See Annex 3.

institutional effectiveness and accountability, strategic planning and financing, programme design, delivery and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and engagement of communities, civil society and private sector.

Figure 10: Country capacity strengthening framework⁸⁶



Sources: Evaluation team elaboration based on Kyrgyzstan CSP document and WFP corporate capacity strengthening framework.

47. Although the WFP corporate country capacity strengthening framework was still under development at the time of the CSP design,⁸⁷ the evaluation found it to be a useful reference to assess the CSP country capacity strengthening contributions to retrospectively describe where the CSP engaged in country capacity strengthening work according to the pathways of change. In addition, the evaluation used the tools developed by the country office including a country capacity strengthening tracking sheet that compiles the CSP's country capacity strengthening interventions. This tracking sheet was used to categorize all listed activities according to the respective pathways. The number of activities were then aggregated across the entire CSP implementation period to identify the relative concentration of activities across pathways. This exercise only identifies the areas that the CSP has naturalistically prioritized and presents opportunities for future consideration of new country capacity strengthening activities in the next CSP. Distributions are not to be assessed against targets nor are they indicative of country capacity strengthening achievements. The country office complies with most corporate requirements on data availability including the reporting of outcome, output and cross-cutting indicators as described in the Corporate Results Framework (CRF). However, there are limitations in the Corporate Results Framework itself for tracking long-term development outcomes for beneficiaries participating in WFP-supported projects and for assessing the results of country capacity strengthening. A more detailed description of the country capacity strengthening framework and the evaluation approach for country capacity strengthening can be found in Annex 3.

⁸⁶ The CCS framework cites the three fields of individual, organizational and enabling environment. These are subsequently operationalized through five pathways of change.

⁸⁷ Instead, the country office performed its own CS needs assessment to inform the CSP design.

2. Evaluation findings

2.1. EQ1: TO WHAT EXTENT IS WFP STRATEGIC POSITION, ROLE AND SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTION BASED ON COUNTRY PRIORITIES AND PEOPLE'S NEEDS AS WELL AS WFP STRENGTHS?

EQ1.1: To what extent is the country strategic plan relevant to national policies, plans, strategies and goals, including the achievement of the national Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

Summary

The WFP CSP is aligned with the Kyrgyz Republic national priorities, plans and strategies and was developed through a consultative process with national ministries and United Nations agencies. A more explicit alignment to the institutional social protection system could be further

48. **The CSP design considered the national policies and strategies in place at the time.** The CSP design was predicated on the national agendas and strategies in place in 2017 including, among others, the Kyrgyz Republic adaptation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in 2015 and their subsequent integration into the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) (2013-2017). The design of the CSP coincided with the elaboration of the National Development Strategy (2018-2040) and the Mid-Term Development Programme (2018-2020).¹⁰⁴ As part of this transition, two 2017 national strategic reviews were conducted by the National Institute for Strategic Studies – one on food security and nutrition and the second on poverty to identify gaps and opportunities at individual, institutional and policy levels (Table 3).

49. The CSP focus on SDG 2 (zero hunger) and SDG 17 (partnerships) is aligned with national priorities and relevant for addressing the food security and nutrition challenges outlined in the 2017 review. CSP targets under SDG 2 match the SDG targets prioritized by the Government. For SDG 17, within the UNDAF in the Kyrgyz Republic, WFP supports the SDG through increasing mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development. The CSP has supported this through the policy development related to the School Meals Law (2019) and the Food Security and Nutrition Programme (2019), as well as the nutrition assessment and pilot social contract legislation under SO4.

50. The use of social protection as an overarching framework within the CSP provides potential contributions to other SDGs (beyond SDGs 2 and 17) including SDG 1 (poverty), SDG 6 (water, sanitation and hygiene - WASH), SDG 8 (employment), SDG 9 (infrastructure), SDG 13 (climate change), and SDG 16 (peacebuilding).¹⁰⁵ However, WFP contributions to these other SDGs are not reported internally nor tracked formally within the United Nations SDG monitoring framework, which limits articulating WFP contributions beyond SDGs 2 and 17.

¹⁰⁴ In 2021, as part of an overall legal review of all policies, and strategies, the Government replaced the National Development Strategy with an interim Mid-Term Development Programme (2021-2026) and action plan pending the elaboration of a new National Development Strategy.

¹⁰⁵ See Reconstructed theory of change, Annex 3.

Table 3: Zero Hunger Review gaps and challenges

Level	Challenges
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited economic access to basic food • Lack of nutrition awareness • Limited access to nutritious foods • Import dependence on basic foods • Limited agricultural land • Gender inequalities in access to productive resources
Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food security monitoring is regular but limited influence on control, decision making and follow up • Little inter-sector coordination on food insecurity response
Policies and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffective use of public resources for tracking expenditures related to food insecurity • Food security policies lack focus on addressing root causes • Limited evidence that social protection programmes improve food security and nutrition • Underutilization of productive and preventative social protection measures • Insufficient action on adapting to climate change effects on agriculture.

Source: 2017. Food Security Governance Review. National Institute of Strategic Studies.

51. **The CSP is generally aligned with social protection as per WFP corporate Strategy for Support to Social Protection.** However, social protection is not understood the same way by all actors in the country. The WFP global vision is that by 2030 people will have substantially increased access to national social protection systems that safeguard and foster their ability to meet their food security, nutrition and associated essential needs, and to manage the risks and shocks that they face.¹⁰⁶ Within this vision, social protection is interpreted broadly and can include increasing household livelihoods, building resilience, disaster risk reduction or other forms of production to increase safety nets as well as school meals, all of which are integrated into the CSP programming approach and government and UNCT documents. However, other actors interpret social protection more narrowly with a focus on the policy standards regarding the provision of specific social services.

52. **The CSP is broadly coherent with national priorities on social protection, capacity strengthening and school feeding.** The CSP document noted that WFP had already laid the foundations of a programme supporting social protection, rural development, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation through the pilot productive safety nets and school feeding modalities. The CSP aspired to continue strengthening national capacities for institutionalizing and scaling up WFP interventions with complementary government resources and promoting comprehensive food security governance at all levels. SO2 and SO3 activities were aligned at the time of design with the National Development Strategy (2018-2040) and continued to be aligned with its subsequent replacement, the Mid-Term Development Programme (2021-2026) and action plan. There are also linkages to the Family Support and Child Protection Programme (2018-2028) and the Employment Promotion Programme (2021-2025).

53. The CSP is aligned with the Kyrgyz Republic National School Feeding Policy elaborated in 2014 and the subsequent Kyrgyz Republic School Meals Law in 2019. The CSP aligns with the Government's intention to improve the existing national school meals programme (NSMP) and support universal roll-out of NSMP in all primary schools.¹⁰⁷

54. WFP corporately conceptualizes the school meal programme as part of social safety nets. The WFP school feeding programme (SO1) directly supports the MOES' goal to increase the number of schools with standardized school feeding programmes, including supporting the development of a legal and regulatory framework for school feeding. School meals programming is a national programme under the MOES but has limited explicit linkages to the rest of the social protection legislation, systems or ministries. Consequently, SO1 activities have limited formal linkages to the social protection system itself or to the other social protection-oriented strategic outcomes within the CSP. This limits the degree to which the design can intentionally link targeted schools with other wrap-around services for social protection of vulnerable households.

¹⁰⁶ WFP. July 2021. *Social Protection Strategy*.

¹⁰⁷ The Government's comprehensive legal review of all policies currently being undertaken may influence future alignment considerations in the next CSP.

55. The CSP's emphasis on social protection, in particular through SO4 activities, gives WFP leverage for national-level engagement on social protection policies and programming; even although SO2, SO3, and SO5 project activities are conceptually aligned with the national social protection system, they occur alongside similar government social protection activities. WFP has provided technical support to strengthening the social protection system through SO4 activities including the digitalization of the national social passport, the upcoming implementation of a social contract pilot with the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and supporting studies and reviews of UBK coverage and efficiency, among others. In SO2/SO3, activities are conceptually aligned with government priorities in social protection (described in paragraph 14). The Ministry of Labour and Social Development provides logistical support to the SO2/SO3 activities (and SO1) through the management and distribution of food assistance to targeted areas. WFP closely consults with the local Ministry of Labour and Social Development Department-level representatives to identify vulnerable households for inclusion. However, though the SO2/SO3 activities mimic three pre-existing government social protection support mechanisms (public works rehabilitation, capacity development through Ministry of Labour and Social Development, and infrastructure rehabilitation through the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES)), these activities are implemented through different mechanisms. The 2016 evaluation of the WFP productive safety nets project recommended that the next phase should include merging these activities within these existing government programmes. Due to government transitions and potential instability, during the CSP design, SO2/SO3 activities continued in parallel with the government programmes. The logic had been to provide WFP pilots that could be nurtured to scale and ultimately transitioned into the national systems. The pandemic and subsequent disruptions affected the speed of this integration up to the end of 2021.

56. SO4 activities were developed based on the findings of the Zero Hunger Review, which, alongside other contemporary studies on social protection, identified many capacity strengthening needs. These activities partnered with multiple ministries, including the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry, and Melioration (MAFIM), the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, the Ministry of Education and Sciences and the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES).¹⁰⁸ There are challenges in tracking these country capacity strengthening activities within the CSP and there is a limited conceptual framework linking the potential array of country capacity strengthening engagements under a broader social protection lens. These implications are described in further detail in 2.3. EQ3: To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently in contributing to country strategic plan outputs and strategic outcomes?.

EQ1.2: To what extent did the country strategic plan address the needs of the most vulnerable people in the country to ensure that no one is left behind? To what extent were changes in beneficiary or caseload profiles identified in response to COVID-19?

Summary

The CSP appropriately addresses the needs of the most vulnerable through identifying and working in food insecure and climate disaster-prone areas and integrating a gender analysis into its design and targeting. The CSP uses vulnerability criteria in targeting within direct assistance activities, and through providing technical support and advocacy to national and United Nations systems. During the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP appropriately updated its beneficiary selection to consider newly affected households. The conditionality requirements (the work or training requirements accompanying food and cash transfers) can potentially lead to the exclusion of extremely vulnerable households. These households are assumed to be covered by other government support programmes, but coverage of these programmes is not confirmed.

57. **The WFP CSP addresses the needs of the most vulnerable through a multi-level and multi-stakeholder approach.** The needs of the most vulnerable are addressed through direct assistance projects at the local levels; at the district and departmental levels, the country office collaborates with authorities for capacity strengthening and project management. The CSP seeks to strengthen government systems for supporting the most vulnerable through technical support, evidence development and advocacy. It also engages with multiple stakeholders including the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, Ministry of

¹⁰⁸ Ministry titles listed as they were at the time of the CSP document. Titles have been revised in the ensuing years.

Education and Sciences, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry, and Melioration, as noted earlier and the corresponding departmental representatives at district and sub-district levels. CSP coverage and targeting for meeting household needs are described in EQ2.1: To what extent did WFP deliver expected outputs and contribute to the expected country strategic plan strategic outcomes? and EQ3.2 To what extent was coverage and targeting of interventions appropriate? Were there any changes in coverage and targeting of interventions due to changing needs and WFP adaptations accordingly (as a result of the pandemic)?

58. **WFP is seen as a leader in “leaving no one behind.(LNOB).”** At the national level, WFP is perceived within the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) as a champion of the United Nations aspirations to leave no one behind. Government stakeholders refer to WFP technical support for mapping vulnerability for food security (the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry and Melioration), disaster risk reduction (the Ministry of Emergency Situations) and poverty (the Ministry of Labour and Social Development) as important contributions for shaping national programming. Government and United Nations stakeholders deem the focus of WFP to be on rural households susceptible to poverty and climate change and supporting primary schoolchildren as appropriate.

59. **During the pandemic, WFP updated its beneficiary targeting to account for economic effects of the pandemic.** SO5 activities required adapting activities to a newly vulnerable group: the population in peri-urban centres most affected by the economic effects of reduced remittances and reduced employment opportunities in the country. (More details on this can be found in EQ2.1: To what extent did WFP deliver expected outputs and contribute to the expected country strategic plan strategic outcomes?.)

60. **An integrated gender-sensitive analysis informed the CSP design and targeting approach for the CSP activities.** In 2017, the country office became the first WFP office in the RBC region and second globally to complete the corporate gender transformation programme. After the 2017 gender analysis, a gender action plan was developed to inform the design of the CSP for increased gender sensitization. Subsequent studies, such as the “Fill the Nutrient Gap Analysis”¹⁰⁹ brought a gender lens to nutrient needs within households. These analytical exercises were aligned with the WFP gender policy extant at the time of design.¹¹⁰

61. The Zero Hunger Review formed the basis for identifying issues for WFP to address, using an integrated context analysis to target the geographic locations and population groups. Targeted districts have been maintained since the beginning of the CSP for continuity in development. Periodic reviews do adjust which sub-districts participate in project support in given years, in consultation with district authorities, with an intent to prioritize those that have not received prior support, and which are the most food insecure.

62. **The CSP conditionality requirements can potentially lead to the exclusion of extremely vulnerable people (or schools).** To participate in the school meal programme support from WFP (SO1), schools must meet certain criteria including interest, electricity, water, space and district authorities providing cost-share. Unfortunately, the most vulnerable schools are those that cannot meet these criteria and therefore may not be able to receive school meal programme support from WFP.¹¹¹

63. For beneficiaries in SO2, SO3, and SO5, the transfers are conditional: beneficiaries, who represent households, must perform work or attend trainings to receive the benefit, in alignment with government priorities on active measures within social protection. In 2019, WFP and the National Institute for Strategic Studies conducted a review of the potential costs of an improved active labour market design and confirmed the conditionality requirements for active labour market participation. District authorities and partners did not question the conditional requirements. However, conditional transfers within WFP activities could mean that households, especially households headed by single women who were unable to work or attend trainings for personal, health or childcare reasons were not as likely to obtain project support. Ad hoc examples were found of vulnerable households who were not able to work being supported by other project participants in the community, but there was no systematic approach built in

¹⁰⁹ WFP. November 2019. *Fill the Nutrient Gap: Analysis for Decision Making Towards Sustainable Food Systems for Healthy Diets and Improved Human Capital.*

¹¹⁰ “WFP Gender Policy (2015-2020)” (WFP/EB.1/2015/1-A).

¹¹¹ While WFP currently supports the Government for fundraising to reach these schools, there is currently no specific MOES budget allocation for this support.

the design of SO2/SO3 activities to include the most vulnerable. The conditionality assumes that other government programmes provide unconditional support (such as the UBK) to the extremely vulnerable. However, the degree of support to, and coverage of, the extremely vulnerable in these unconditional support mechanisms is not confirmed.

EQ1.3: To what extent has the strategic positioning of WFP remained relevant throughout the implementation of the country strategic plan in light of changing context, national capacities and needs – in particular in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Summary

The CSP's strategic positioning remained relevant throughout the CSP albeit not fully oriented to social protection. The strategic positioning of WFP was not required to evolve until the emergence of the pandemic. The CSP successfully adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic. WFP is proactive and responsive to emergent opportunities and is perceived to be a crucial coordination

64. **The strategic positioning of WFP was not required to evolve until the emergence of the pandemic.** The CSP's strategic positioning emphasizes food security and nutrition under the rubric of social protection. No substantive shifts in government policies or context changes occurred that required the CSP to reposition itself. The CSP maintained its social protection orientation through field-level resilience building activities and national-level vulnerability mapping support. Relationships with social protection ministries were primarily at the district level through supporting the implementation of WFP project activities and using the vulnerability registers to identify project beneficiaries. In SO1, the CSP's emphasis on universal school meal programme roll-out remained relevant with government commitments in this regard.

65. During the pandemic, WFP was perceived to be practical, proactive and flexible in programming and responding to the changing context during the COVID-19 response. WFP showed flexibility in shifting activities and locations towards emerging needs identified through consultation with district authorities. WFP responded to several emergent opportunities for engagement including ad hoc requests from the Government to provide technical support or collaboration. For example, during the pandemic, WFP provided significant technical support to increase the frequency of the price bulletin analysis from quarterly to weekly to enable informed government decisions on the economic impact of the COVID-19 restrictions. This also included identifying newly vulnerable persons due to employment restrictions and reduced remittances.

66. The pandemic caused a significant decline in the previously programmed donor and government activities. Schools were closed and government technical support persons faced travel restrictions, project agreements under development were postponed while attention shifted to addressing the consequences of the pandemic. Amid these challenges, WFP field-level projects were able to adapt and continue to reach beneficiaries despite the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown (described in EQ2.1: To what extent did WFP deliver expected outputs and contribute to the expected country strategic plan strategic outcomes?). WFP responded to the ad hoc requests from donors to provide COVID-19 support. The country office's development of evidence-based vulnerability analysis for the Government on the economic effects of COVID-19 pandemic helped shape government and development partners' responses.¹¹²

67. **Within the national context and the UNCT, WFP was perceived as a crucial partner for COVID-19 response coordination.** At the beginning of the crisis, the Government did not activate the standard civil defence mechanism, which is primarily for localized response, instead creating a new mechanism for pandemic response. The UNCT partners, familiar with their roles within the civil defence mechanism, initially faced considerable ambiguity regarding coordination roles within the government-developed pandemic response – including on the part of government ministries. This presented challenges for identifying which agencies and ministries were responsible for which actions. Stakeholders cited WFP coordination effort as important for overcoming this challenge. This included convening multiple state and UNCT actors, clarifying roles and responsibilities.

¹¹² Including the Rapid Household Food Security Assessment (April 2020).





EQ1.4: To what extent is the country strategic plan coherent and aligned with the wider United Nations and international community and to what extent does it include appropriate strategic partnerships based on the comparative advantage of WFP in the country? Were there any changes in wider United Nations frameworks in the context and WFP engagement in these?¹¹³

Summary

The CSP is coherent and aligned with wider United Nations frameworks and WFP is seen as being among the lead agencies in supporting the “Delivering as One” reforms and UNDAF coherence and alignment. The comparative advantages of WFP are seen in the organization’s capacity to generate and use data and analysis, its coordination and its ability to deliver as well as its practical flexibility and responsiveness to emerging issues. There are examples of WFP strategic partnerships within joint programming.

68. The CSP is aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in the Kyrgyz Republic in terms of both priorities and cycle. The UNDAF (2018-2022), designed at the same time as the CSP, identifies four priority outcomes to be achieved by 2022 (Table 4). The UNDAF and CSP cycles have remained aligned. As there were no changes in the wider United Nations frameworks, there was no need for WFP to reposition itself within it.

Table 4: Key priorities and outcomes of the UNDAF (2018-2022) for the Kyrgyz Republic

	Priority	Outcome
	Priority I: Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, industrial, rural, and agricultural development, food security, and nutrition	By 2022, inclusive and sustainable economic growth is increased through agricultural, industrial, and rural development, decent work, improved livelihoods, food security, and nutrition
	Priority II: Good governance, rule of law, human rights, and gender equality	By 2022, institutions at all levels are more accountable and inclusive ensuring justice, human rights, gender equality, and sustainable peace for all
	Priority III: Environment, climate change, and disaster risk management	By 2022, communities are more resilience to climate and disaster risks and are engaged in sustainable and inclusive natural resource management and risk-informed development
	Priority IV: Social protection, health, and education	By 2022, social protection, health, and education systems are more effective, inclusive and provide quality services

Source: UNDAF. 2017. UNDAF Framework for the Kyrgyz Republic (2018-2022).

69. The UNCT consultations conducted in 2017 to inform the UNDAF (2018-2022) culminated in the recommendations that WFP focus its support on national efforts to achieve SDG 2 (and SDG 17) through five priorities:¹¹⁴

- a. Ensure that social safety nets cover children to increase their access to more nutritious and fortified products
- b. Improve livelihoods and access to income-generating activities
- c. Establish resilience of communities and ecosystems as core objectives
- d. Establish integrated planning and monitoring systems for food security and nutrition
- e. Integrate gender equality and women’s empowerment into all activities.

70. The CSP is aligned with three of the four priorities in the Kyrgyz Republic UNDAF framework.¹¹⁵ WFP takes a leadership position in the implementation of the UNDAF through chairing Priority Area 1, co-

¹¹³ This question includes alignment to UNDAF, WFP comparative advantages, and synergies with other actors across the nexus, including RBAs.

¹¹⁴ WFP. 2017. CSP Kyrgyzstan (2018-2022).

¹¹⁵ Priority Areas 1, 3 and 4 with the COVID-19 response integrated as an additional activity under Priority 1.

chairing Priority Area 3, and participating in Priority Area 4. WFP also co-chairs three working groups within the Development Partners Coordination Council connected to three out of the four UNDAF priorities (Area 1, Area 3 and Area 4). WFP also co-chairs the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) with UNICEF. Table 5 depicts the linkages between the CSP strategic outcomes, the UNDAF and the national development frameworks for the Kyrgyz Republic.

Table 5: Linkages between CSP strategic outcomes with national and United Nations frameworks¹¹⁶

CSP Strategic outcome	National Development Strategy (2018-2040)	UNDAF (2018-2022)
SO1: School meals programme	Social development (quality system of education)	Priority Area 1 Priority Area 4
SO2: Livelihoods	Formation of sustainable environment for development (quality infrastructure)	Priority Area 1
SO3: Climate change adaptation/DRR	Formation of sustainable environment for development (environment, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction)	Priority Area 3
SO4: National capacity strengthening	Public administration (efficient and fair state for every citizen & digital transformation of the country)	Priority Area 1 Priority Area 4
SO5: COVID-19 pandemic response	Emergency response	Emergency response and as an additional activity in Priority 1

Source: CSP Kyrgyzstan (2018-2022), National Development Strategy (2018-2040), UNDAF (2018-2022) for the Kyrgyz Republic.

71. The CSP is aligned with the other United Nations agencies operating in the Kyrgyz Republic and includes strategic partnerships based on its comparative advantages. Within the Kyrgyz Republic context, the UNCT is the primary vehicle for organizing international engagement. WFP has sought to increase coordination and alignment with the Rome-based agencies (RBA) through annual joint work-planning retreats. The strategic partnerships WFP developed with FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and other agencies, rely on each agency contributing their respective comparative advantages. An important illustrative example is the joint women's rural empowerment project implemented in collaboration with FAO and UN Women. Additionally, in 2022, the country office has co-led with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNICEF the application of a Core Diagnostic Instrument (CODI) to assess the social protection sector in the Kyrgyz Republic. These strategic partnerships and WFP comparative advantages are described in EQs 2.4 and 4.5.

¹¹⁶ The UNDAF for 2018-2022 did not originally envision a priority for emergency response. The Strategic Emergency Response Framework (SERF) was developed in a parallel exercise in 2020 as part of the COVID-19 pandemic response and integrated into UNCT responsibilities.

2.2. EQ2: WHAT IS THE EXTENT AND QUALITY OF THE SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTION OF WFP TO COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN STRATEGIC OUTCOMES IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC?

EQ2.1: To what extent did WFP deliver expected outputs and contribute to the expected country strategic plan strategic outcomes?

Summary

SO1 - WFP successfully contributed to rolling out sustained school meal programmes to individual schools across the country and in creating a strong national capacity (the Ministry of Education and Sciences) for the provision of school meals, albeit with limited inter-ministerial linkages. SO1 activities continued during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the schools not yet implementing a school meal programme are among the most difficult to reach. The long-term impacts of the school meal programme on children or vulnerable households are not tracked.

SO2/SO3 - WFP successfully reached beneficiary households in the targeted districts although the CSP contributions to climate change adaptation have been more limited due to funding delays. WFP created a strong project support infrastructure connected to local authorities; there is room for expanding the range of projects selected. The SO2/SO3 programmes continued activities during the COVID-19 pandemic with adaptations to reach affected beneficiaries promptly.

SO4 - The CSP contributed to national capacity strengthening although the logical framework indicators for SO4 cannot capture the entirety of WFP contributions to country capacity strengthening. WFP interventions for country capacity strengthening are most common in the policy development and institutional effectiveness pathways of change. The CSP country capacity strengthening conceptual framework for reporting on contributions is best defined for the vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) and school meal programme roll-out.

SO5 - Under SO5, WFP has provided conditional cash-based transfers as early recovery assistance to vulnerable households in peri-urban areas affected by the pandemic. Beneficiaries perceived positive household changes as a result of WFP support under SO5; however, the prognosis for long-term food security outcomes is not clear given the nature of the activities chosen and the limited amounts transferred. The SO5 engagement is positively perceived by municipal stakeholders even though conditional requirements might have led to some exclusion effect, although this could not be determined.

72. This section profiles outputs achievements and outcome contributions of the CSP by strategic outcome, combining quantitative data generated from WFP corporate monitoring systems and country office-managed databases with primary qualitative data from evaluation interviews and document review. Additional data for all strategic outcomes are found in Annexes 10.3-10.6. Country capacity strengthening achievements for SO1 and SO4 are assessed against the five pathways of change found in WFP corporate country capacity strengthening framework (Figure 10).

Country strategic plan summary

73. The CSP logframe indicators are compliant with the WFP Corporate Results Framework (CRF), but there are gaps across the CSP in terms of measuring actual WFP contributions to long-term development. WFP corporate indicators are not sufficient to capture the entirety of WFP contributions to development and may inhibit the perception of WFP as a viable development partner by other United Nations agencies or other development actors. In summary:

- a. For SO1, there are no household (or child) nutrition, food security or educational attainment outcome indicators measured related to vulnerable families supported by the school meal programme.
- b. For SO2/SO3, there are limitations linking project activities with longer term development progress. There are no: i) internally coherent frameworks linking geographically dispersed projects; ii) summative measures to track community-level development changes (such as a community assets index (CAI); or iii) tracking records of beneficiary households participating in WFP projects after project completion to monitor longer-term changes.
- c. For SO4, the outcome indicators are insufficient to capture the breadth of WFP activities for country capacity strengthening.
- d. Monitoring for some indicators was discontinued or not done systematically every year (as demonstrated by the “no data” (n.d.) cells in the tables below in this section). These were primarily due to year-to-year project plan changes shifting project activities from one activity to another and to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, resulting in reduced monitoring exercises in 2020.





74. Consequently, the following discussions on output and outcome target achievements should be considered with the above limitations to tracking the long-term development contributions to which the CSP aspires.

75. **The CSP has met most output targets, but progress towards outcome targets has been uneven.** According to annual country report (ACR) data, the CSP has met or exceeded most of the planned outputs and beneficiary targets. The outcome-level indicators do not show the same degree of progress, even considering the above-mentioned limitations in measuring actual CSP contributions to development in the Kyrgyz Republic. Factors influencing these patterns are explored in the subsequent individual strategic outcome analyses.

76. Table 6 summarizes CSP progress against outputs and outcomes. The output progress is based on a combination of projected annual targets of both beneficiaries and assets created. The outcome assessments are a qualitative assessment by the evaluation team based on CSP logframe outcome indicators and a review of qualitative data and documentation.

Table 6: CSP progress towards outputs and outcomes

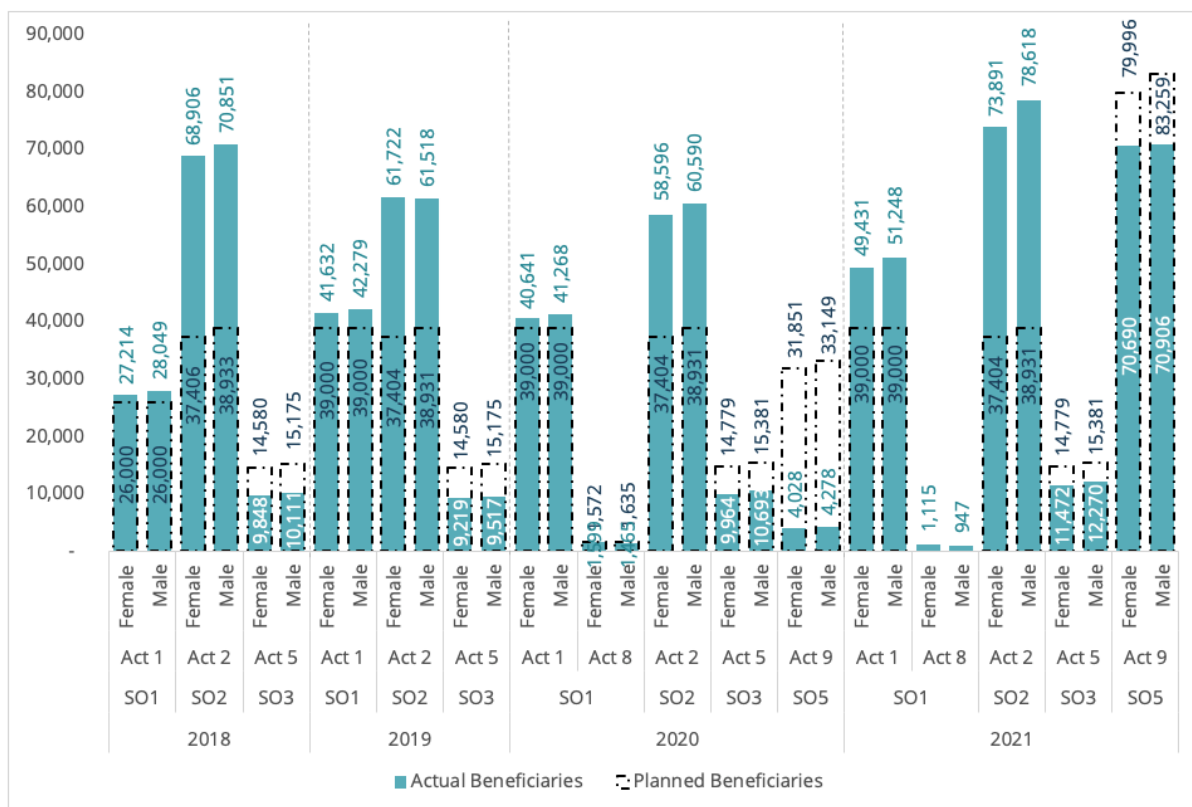
Strategic outcome	Output Progress	Outcome Progress	Likelihood of achieving end of CSP outcomes – ET assessment
SO1: Vulnerable populations in the Kyrgyz Republic including schoolchildren have access to safe, adequate, and nutritious food all year round	Significant progress	Significant progress	Close to achievement.
SO2: Vulnerable and food insecure smallholders 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	Significant progress	Limited Progress	Progress to achievement
SO3: Food-insecure communities in areas that are vulnerable to climate change have strengthened food systems and are more resilience to shocks all year round.	Very limited progress	Very limited progress	Very limited progress.
SO4: Government institutions at central and decentralized levels have strengthened capacities for comprehensive food security and nutrition management.	Some progress	Limited progress	Limited progress to achievement
SO5: Vulnerable populations are supported to meet their food security and nutrition needs to enable their early recovery during and in the aftermath of the crisis.	Some progress	Some progress	Initial delays but expected to achieve by end of CSP in 2022.

Legend			
	= Achievement rate at 90 percent above		= Achievement rate between 75 and 89 percent
	= Achievement rate between 50 and 75 percent		= Achievement rate below 50 percent

Source: ACRs, country office databases, and evaluation team assessments.

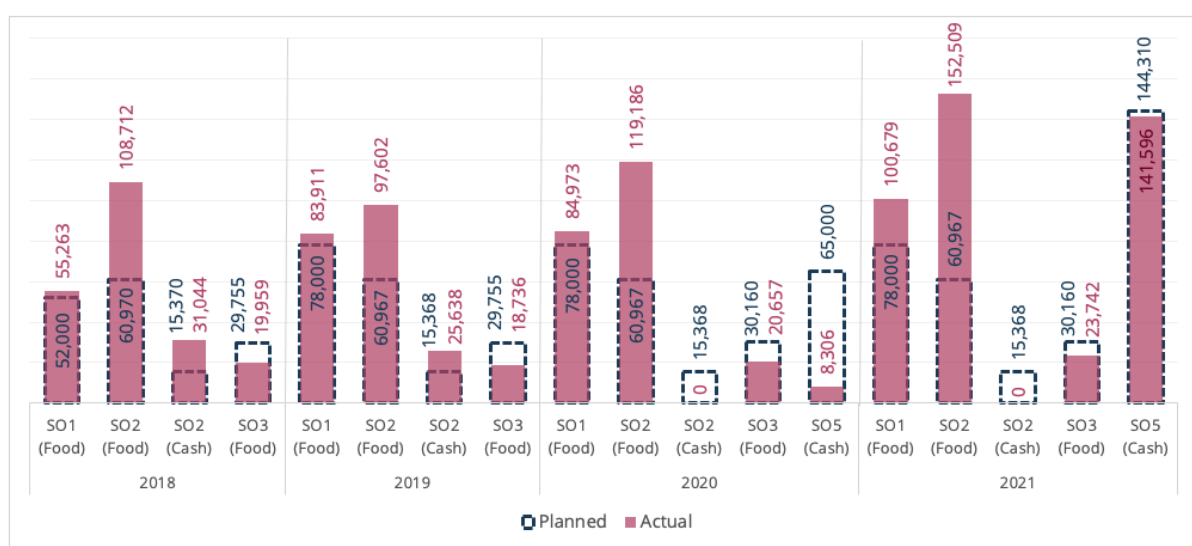
77. The CSP has cumulatively met or exceeded beneficiary targets within strategic outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 5 throughout the CSP period from 2018-2021 with a slight dip in 2020 (93 percent).¹¹⁷ Gender distributions are equal across all strategic outcomes and activities suggesting intentional recruitment (Figure 11). Beneficiary achievements are discussed further in EQ3.2 To what extent was coverage and targeting of interventions appropriate? Were there any changes in coverage and targeting of interventions due to changing needs and WFP adaptations accordingly (as a result of the pandemic)?.

Figure 11: Planned and actual beneficiaries by strategic outcome and by year



Source: ACRs 2018-2021.

Figure 12: Planned and actual beneficiaries by modality

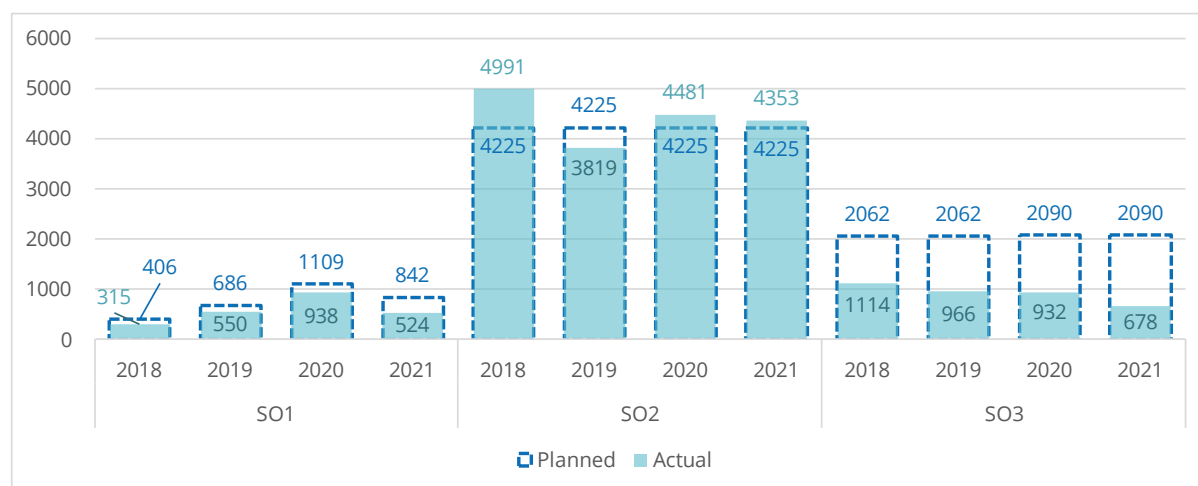


¹¹⁷ WFP. 2018-2021. Annual country reports: Kyrgyzstan.

Source: ACRs 2018-2021.

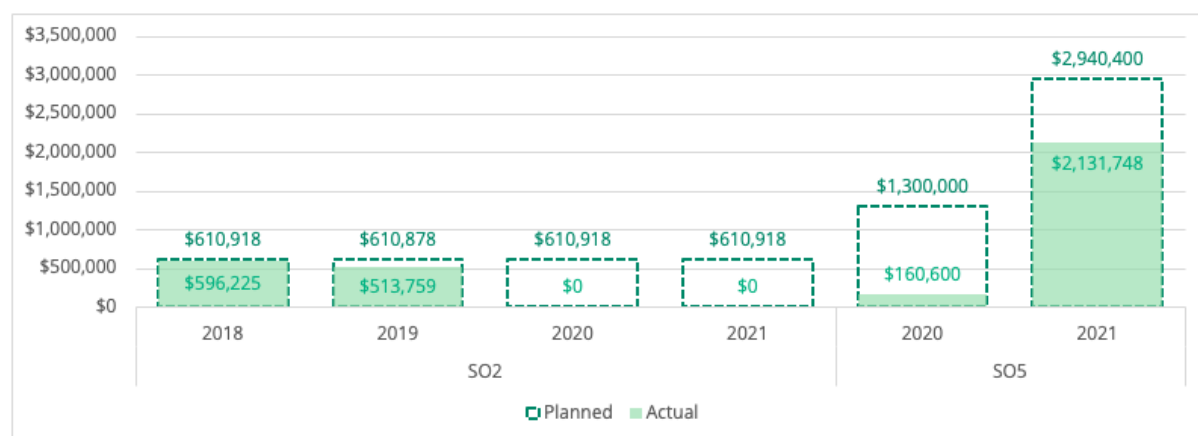
78. **The majority of beneficiaries received food transfers across all four years** (Figure 12). Food and cash transfer allocations varied among the strategic outcomes. SO2 contained the largest amounts of food transfers and SO5 the largest amount of cash transfers (Figure 13 and Figure 14). Achievements against planned amounts were highest in SO1 and SO2 (Described further in EQ 3.1 To what extent were outputs delivered within the intended timeframe? Were there any effects of the pandemic on the ability of WFP to deliver on time or its management of these including consequences on HR needs and management?).

Figure 13: Planned versus actual food transfers (mt) by strategic outcome and by year



Source: ACR 2018-2021.

Figure 14: Planned versus actual cash transfers (USD) by strategic outcome and by year



Source: ACR 2018-2021.

SO1: School meals programme.

79. SO1 contains a single activity¹¹⁸ related to the provision of school meals and strengthening the government institution and school capacity to implement school meals. SO1 includes both a national-level country capacity strengthening component and a direct project implementation promoting the school meal programme roll-out in individual schools. SO1 is a continuation of a long-term school meal programme roll-out in the Kyrgyz Republic that began in 2013 (DEV 200176) aiming to strengthen national capacity for the provision of hot meals in all primary schools in the country.

¹¹⁸Activity 8 introduced under SO1 in 2020 is not reported here because it is not an integral part of School Meals Programming – Annex 10 provides details on Activity 8 performance.

80. The modalities used in SO1 are capacity strengthening and food assistance. Food assistance is limited to the delivery of wheat and oil (60g per child per day or 10.8kg per child per academic year).¹¹⁹ Capacity strengthening in support of the school meal programme roll-out is provided at both the national level (policies and laws) and decentralized levels (monitoring and technical support to individual schools). Table 7 provides an overview of the CSP progress on output and outcome indicator values and targets. Table 8 summarizes the country capacity strengthening mapping exercise. Further outcome and output monitoring details are provided in Annex 10.6.

Table 7: SO1 outcome and output achievements (Activity 1)¹¹⁸

Strategic Outcome	Indicator	Baseline (2018)	Follow Up (2019)	Follow Up (2020)	Follow up (2021)	End of CSP Target
SO1	Number of national food security and nutrition policies, programmes and system components enhanced as a result of WFP capacity strengthening	0	2	3	3	>3
	SABER School Feeding National Capacity	3	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	4
Activity	Output Indicators	Number and achievement percentage				
		2018	2019	2020	2021	
1	Average number of schooldays per month on which multi-fortified foods or at least 4 food groups were provided	17 (100%)	17 (85%)	16 (80%)	16 (80%)	
1	Number of primary schools assisted by WFP	174 (100%)	251 (100%)	249 (100%)	315 (100%)	
1	Value of non-food items distributed (\$US)	336,391 (89%)	413,447 (100%)	458,873 (115%)	311,901 (89%)	
1	Number of beneficiaries receiving capacity strengthening transfers (male)	n.a.	13 (100%)	n.d.	7,720 (102%)	
1	Number of beneficiaries receiving capacity strengthening transfers (female)	n.a.	173 (100%)	n.d.	7,401 (98%)	
1	Number of government or partner staff receiving technical assistance	399 (101%)	470 (100%)	552 (100.4%)	2,465 (99%)	
1	Number of cooks trained in nutrition and healthy cooking	311 (120%)	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	
1	Number of guidance document developed and circulated	7 (100%)	3 (100%)	n.d.	n.d.	
1	Number of technical assistance activities provided	10 (83%)	6 (100%)	20 (143%)	12 (100%)	
1	Number of training sessions/workshops organized	n.d.	12 (100%)	26 (87%)	171 (100%)	

Source: ACR 2018-2021 and WFP Kyrgyzstan Indicator Tracking matrix. Green highlight denotes target has been met to 90% or above. Yellow denotes 51-89% achievement against target. Grey denotes no data (n.d.), not applicable (n.a.), or no target indicated. Annual fluctuations mean that some targets have been met and then missed in ensuing years.

Table 8: SO1 country capacity strengthening activities by pathway of change¹²⁰

Pathway	SO1	
	Number of activities cited	Share of activities per Pathway
P1: Policies	7	30%
P2: Institutional effectiveness	0	0%
P3: Strategic Planning and Financing	0	0%
P4: Programme design and delivery	15	65%
P5: Engagement of CSO/Private Sector	1	4%
Total	23	100%

Source: WFP CO Activities Tracking Sheet 2018-2021

81. School meal programme country capacity strengthening engagements focus primarily on policy development and programme delivery. There are opportunities to expand support to other country

¹¹⁹ WFP Kyrgyzstan. CSP 2018-2022: Food and Minimum Subsistence Gap, Rations and Working Norm Values.

¹²⁰ To understand the methodology in the pathways of change exercise, please refer to the paragraph 46 in Section 1.4 about the CCS framework and further details in Annex 3.

capacity strengthening dimensions. The country capacity strengthening efforts towards NSMP roll-out are extensive, even if the current indicators cannot assess the long-term contributions of the school meal programme. Corporately, the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) indicator is intended to assess the degree of national system readiness for school meal programme management; however, it has not been measured since the 2018 baseline when the capacity was determined to be level 3 “established”. SO1 has already achieved its outcome targets by 2020 in terms of number of policies enhanced as reported in the annual country report outcome data and confirmed by stakeholder interviews.

82. Using the mapping of the country capacity strengthening tracking sheet interviews against country capacity strengthening pathways of change (Table 7),¹²¹ most country capacity strengthening activities relate to programme design and delivery (P4) (65 percent), and policy development (P1) (30 percent). Concentration of country capacity strengthening activities in programme design is due to school-level stakeholder wrap-around trainings and roll-out of the school meal programme in individual schools. There was less need for engagement on institutional effectiveness (P2) because this had been a focus of the DEV200176 school meal programme and had been well established prior to the CSP design. The activities within the pathway on strategic planning and financing (P3) present future opportunities given that the MOES’ allocation to the school meal programme has stayed constant since 2013. The engagement of private sector and civil society organizations (P5) has so far mostly been through seeking private sector funding for school meal programmes in specific schools and for technical service provision rather than coalition building or the establishment of national non-state mechanisms.

83. **WFP CSP indicators show high achievement in outputs.**¹²² For example, throughout the CSP period, the number of primary schools assisted by WFP per year increased and the number of partner or government staff receiving technical assistance annually nearly doubled from 2018 to 2020 before increasing substantively in 2021 by nearly 500 percent. Child school meal beneficiary targets were met all years of the CSP.¹²³ Achievement rates are influenced by the number of instances where no data was reported in a given year, usually related to trainings being administered or guidance distributed where trainings provided by the MOES are not recorded as CSP achievements. The number of school days in which school meals were provided were reduced from five to four days a week due to increasing costs of maintaining the school meals for the entire week.

84. WFP has successfully rolled out sustained school meal programmes at the decentralized level to individual schools across the country. WFP has been successful supporting the Government’s universal roll-out of the NSMP through its SO1 activities. All schools are part of the NSMP and WFP and other actors work with the MOES to identify which schools will receive the technical assistance and material inputs necessary for schools to strengthen their school meals systems.

85. Based on the MOES dataset, out of the 2,144 primary schools in the country in 2021, WFP or other actors have reached 1,317 (61 percent) since 2013.¹²⁴ Since the CSP inception, WFP has supported 331 schools within the NSMP¹²⁵ to provide hot meals and has provided technical support to an additional 82 replication schools.¹²⁶ WFP-supported schools within the NSMP received non-food items (stoves, cooking equipment, ovens, etc.) as well as two years of food rations (wheat and oil) complementing the standard MOES’ school meals per child allowance. After the support period, schools are expected to continue providing the meals with the MOES per-child allowance supplemented by parental contributions. The capacity strengthening process for schools includes trainings of school stakeholders in the administration and management of the school meal programme, awareness-raising activities with parents, and ongoing monitoring and technical support. Replication schools are those that roll out the school meal programme with WFP technical support (the onboarding trainings and monitoring), but that do not receive food rations or non-food items (NFIs). In addition to WFP, other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and state agencies also receive funding from different donors to onboard schools to the NSMP. The modalities differ from WFP processes. Schools supported in roll-out by other NGOs or state agencies usually receive rations

¹²¹ See Annex 3 for a more detailed description of the pathways of change.

¹²² Defined for the purposes of this report as meeting at least 90% of target per year.

¹²³ See Annex 10.4 and 10.5 for details on beneficiary rates over time.

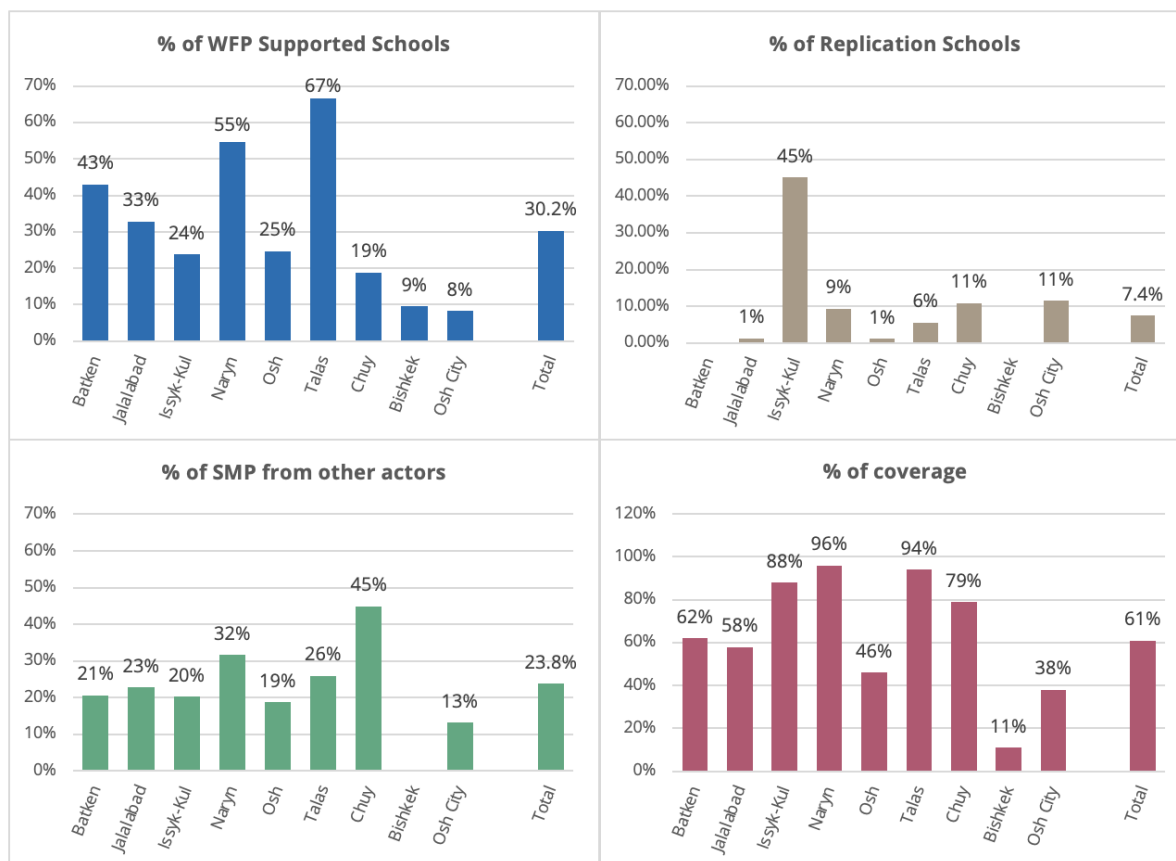
¹²⁴ MOES Country Wide List of Schools, Nov 1, 2021.

¹²⁵ The total number of schools reached through summing up annual reports is a rolling total that each year includes schools just entering the project support plus those schools in year two (or year three) that are receiving ongoing assistance (food rations or technical assistance).

¹²⁶ Coverage and selection criteria for these schools are covered in EQ 3.1

and non-food items as well as trainings, although this can vary depending on the actor. Figure 15 describes the cumulative school meal programme roll-out by province and actor.

Figure 15: SO1 cumulative school meals roll-out coverage by type



Source: MOES database – countrywide list of schools, 1 Nov. 2021.

86. **Coverage has been high nationally but the remaining schools are geographically the most challenging to reach.** More than 80 percent of primary schools have been covered in four of the seven provinces when considering the multiple actors and modalities (Figure 15).¹²⁷ Schools continue to provide hot meals after the cessation of WFP support according to evaluation team observations and interviews with education stakeholders and triangulated from MOES’ monitoring data.¹²⁸ Organizations involved in supporting NSMP estimate that it should be possible to reach all remaining primary schools during the next five years (the next CSP cycle). Nationally, the lowest coverage is in the cities of Osh and Bishkek, which WFP has not traditionally covered because of its attention to rural areas in the regions with the highest food insecurity. As noted in EQ1.2: To what extent did the country strategic plan address the needs of the most vulnerable people in the country to ensure that no one is left behind? To what extent were changes in beneficiary or caseload profiles identified in response to COVID-19?, engagement criteria limit the participation of the most challenging and remote schools.

87. WFP has successfully contributed to a strengthened national capacity for the provision of school meals within the Ministry of Education and Sciences. The school meal programme is housed as an education programme and managed solely by the MOES with WFP providing technical assistance and capacity strengthening at the level of individual schools and with the MOES district and national systems.

¹²⁷ Bishkek and Osh City are cities, not provinces, but are included in the MOES database because they comprise a substantive proportion of the schools in the country.

¹²⁸ MOES countrywide list of schools, 1 Nov, 2021.

Within the MOES, the school meal programme is well integrated at all levels. The SO1 programming at the national level both prior to and during the CSP has contributed to the creation of a strong legal and policy base for the provision of NSMP including the establishment of the School Feeding Policy in 2014 and the School Meals Law in 2019 confirming government provision of school meal programme assistance regardless of WFP presence or inputs.

88. Complementing the legal frameworks, SO1 activities have also established the necessary intermediate steps for the provision of NSMP at the local level including the development of school meals standards, the establishment of quality control committees at the school level and oversight at the district level, and the elaboration of school meals responsibilities within the job descriptions of civil servants and MOES employees at national, district, sub-district, and school levels. WFP collaborated with the Institute for Industrial Food Services (SIFI) to develop the necessary training materials (cookbooks, manuals for administration, posters) that integrate nutrition principles into the provision of meals. These materials aim to strengthen school capacities to provide hot school meals.

89. **WFP support to inter-ministerial and social protection linkages are less visible.** An inter-ministerial working group comprised of other health and food security ministries was established prior to CSP inception to strengthen the linkages to the nutrition and food security components of the NSMP. However, in recent years, their activity is less visible due to transitions and shifts in policy emphasis. The linkages of the WFP school meal programme activities themselves with the social protection system in the Kyrgyz Republic are limited, as described in EQ1.1: **To what extent is the country strategic plan relevant to national policies, plans, strategies and goals, including the achievement of the national Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?**. Although the school meal programme generally falls under the rubric of social protection in government policy documents, the activities are not explicitly linked to the rest of the social protection system.

90. Long-term gains from school meal programme achievements are not visible within the current corporate results framework or country office monitoring. As noted earlier, the CSP school meal programme indicators do not collect information that could be used to determine the long-term contributions of the school meal programme to national social protection and resilience. This was a recommendation from the 2017 WFP-sponsored scoping study on the CSP school meal programme design. Long term gains are also not consistently tracked on the government side. For example, the National School Feeding Policy outlines key objectives to be achieved, which are further integrated into the School Meals Law. WFP supports the Government on achieving many of these objectives (dietary requirements, linkages to agricultural sector, monitoring, and information management) and WFP has invested in strengthening the use of the Education Management Information System in collaboration with UNICEF. However, there are still gaps in measuring the dietary, agricultural and food security outcome-level contributions linked to the National School Meals law.

91. The school meal programme successfully continued activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, adapting to provide food directly to households. When schools closed as a result of the pandemic, dry rations previously delivered to schools were distributed directly to all families in proportion to the number of children enrolled at school. Distributions were made equally to all families regardless of vulnerability status. Such adaptations allowed WFP to maintain 2020 output and beneficiary number achievement levels compared with previous years. Some respondents noted that government processes did slow, but national-level consultations and technical support continued even when working remotely.

SO2/SO3: Livelihoods and climate change adaptation

92. **SO2 and SO3 are oriented towards direct project implementation and a field-based presence.** These strategic outcomes continue from the pilot development project on enhancing productive safety nets in the Kyrgyz Republic started in 2014 (DEV 200662). From inception, the logic of these projects was to build household and community resilience through assets creation mediated by food assistance for assets and training modalities. Implementation is conducted through geographically based, targeted multisectoral interventions. District-level project coordination committees (PCCs), comprised of district authorities and representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and the Ministry of Emergency Situations, oversee project implementation in the field. The primary national-level linkages are to SO4; food security and vulnerability data informs selection of sub-districts for project activities. Additionally, a small component of SO2/SO3 included enhancing community capacities through expanding

the vocational education system and establishing processing workshops, improving smallholder production, and reducing post-harvest losses.

93. As both SO2 and SO3 foresaw similar implementation modalities (food for assets and food for training), the country office created linkages between the two strategic outcomes. SO2 activities were to be supported from the food assistance coming from traditional donors while SO3 activities were to be supported with funding from the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The two strategic outcomes were to be implemented in the same 27 districts but targeting different vulnerabilities: SO2 focusing on food security assets and SO3 focusing on climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction assets. The district project coordination committees identified projects for both SO2 and SO3 and linked to the district development plans. Field monitoring assistants (FMAs) from WFP supported both SO2 and SO3 activities.

94. However, when the Green Climate Fund funding for SO3 was delayed,¹²⁹ the country office adopted an interim measure whereby any SO2 activity that involved building assets related to disaster risk reduction would be reported against SO3. SO3 activities were also managed by the SO2 programme manager with the expectation that an SO3 manager would be recruited once the Green Climate Fund funding arrived. Although intended to be temporary, these measures were still in place at the time of the evaluation as the Green Climate Fund funding had not yet materialized. In the absence of funding, the country office reported on SO3 indicators on the basis of a list of activities considered to count towards SO3 objectives submitted by the field monitoring assistants.¹³⁰

95. Each strategic outcome has two sets of mirrored activities (Activities 2 and 3 for SO2 and Activities 4 and 5 for SO3). Activities 2 and 5 focus on asset creation via (primarily) food assistance for assets and trainings through food assistance for training. Activities 3 and 4 are capacity strengthening activities for local authorities. The modalities used under SO2 and SO3 activities are almost exclusively in-kind food assistance except for a small cash-based project that ended in 2018. Food assistance includes wheat and oil for three months for an average household (five persons). Maximum rations were originally 314kg wheat and 32.5kg oil per household for food assistance for assets activities and half this amount for food assistance for training activities.¹³¹ While SO2 beneficiary targets were met or exceeded in all years, those were not achieved for SO3 (see Figures 11 and 12).

96. Although data is not reported in the annual country reports, the country office tracks the number and types of projects conducted and disaggregates project assets into five categories: infrastructure, capacity strengthening, agriculture, income generation, and disaster risk reduction/climate change adaptation. The last of these are allocated as SO3 achievements focused primarily on flood prevention infrastructure or green space development such as tree planting. Infrastructure projects involve activities that build or rehabilitate community assets including bridges, roads, schools or community-wide water systems. Income generation activities seek to enhance an individual household's income through fishponds, beekeeping, or similar actions. Capacity strengthening projects include trainings on new skills and practices including trainings on sewing so that people can get jobs in tailoring. Agriculture includes projects (usually special donor-funded projects such as the rural women's empowerment project) that involve seed distribution or improving individual smallholder production (as opposed to community-level infrastructure).

97. Table 9 and Table 10 summarize the outcome and output achievements for SO2 and SO3 respectively.

¹²⁹ Changes in the structure of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic throughout 2021 delayed the signature of the GCF Subsidiary Agreement – to be signed between the Government and WFP. Names of ministries and structure changes had to be communicated several times to the GCF and confirmed by several ministries. This delayed the project start, which was finally set on 22 December 2021.

¹³⁰ When PCCs submitted project proposals, they did not differentiate between SO2 and SO3. FMAs used a pre-set list of potential SO3 activities to assign a project to SO2 or SO3. They were instructed to allocate a certain percentage of SO3 projects for each cycle. The country office disaggregated reporting depending on FMA project classification as SO2 or SO3.

¹³¹ During 2020, the rations were halved for FFA to reach more beneficiaries.

Table 9: SO2 outcome and output achievements

Strategic Outcome	Indicator	Baseline (2018)	Follow Up (2019)	Follow Up (2020)	Follow up (2021)	End of CSP Target
SO2	Proportion of the population in targeted communities reporting benefits from an enhanced livelihoods asset base	27%	17%	23%	23%	>=50%
	Food expenditure share	48.9	46.6	50.9	41.7	<48.9
	Food consumption score (nutrition) (% never consumed vit. A food)	1.0%	0.2%	0.7%	0.8%	=0%
	Percentage of targeted smallholder farmers reporting increased production of nutritious crops, disaggregated by sex of smallholder farmer	0	3.3%	Not collected due to COVID-19 limitations	2.2%	>=20%
	Consumption-based Coping Strategy Index (percentage of households with reduced CSI)	0%	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	>=70%
	Consumption-based Coping Strategy Index (average)	5.3	3.8	5.7	7.4	<3.8
	Livelihood-based Coping Strategy Index (percentage of households using stress coping strategies)	49%	33%	67%	35%	<44%
	Livelihood-based Coping Strategy Index (average)	4.1	3.3	2.9	4.9	<3.3
	Minimum Dietary Diversity – Women	62	n.d.	n.d.	42	>62
Activity	Output Indicators	Number and achievement percentage				
		2018	2019	2020	2021	
2	Number of participants in beneficiary training sessions	n.a.	n.a.	11,006 (52%)	6,374 (89%)	
2	Hectares of garden created	434 (100%)	1530 (100%)	102 (100%)	13 (81%)	
2	Kilometres of drinking water supply line constructed	665 (100%)	494 (99%)	452 (90%)	724 (1000%)	
2	Kilometres of drinking water supply line rehabilitated	44 (100%)	29 (76%)	23 (74%)	26 (65%)	
2	Kilometres of irrigation canals constructed	114 (100%)	57 (70%)	66 (101%)	60 (154%)	
2	Kilometres of irrigation canals rehabilitated	171 (100%)	93 (70%)	103 (88%)	151 (124%)	
2	Number of fishponds constructed	5 (100%)	24 (89%)	3 (100%)	5 (71%)	
2	Number of dip tanks rehabilitated	13 (100%)	36 (78%)	14 (100%)	24 (100%)	
2	Bridges constructed	88 (100%)	152 (96%)	74 (86%)	137 (118%)	
2	Bridges rehabilitated	22 (100%)	16 (59%)	11 (100%)	11 (46%)	
2	Additional number of assets built, maintained, or restored by targeted communities	625 (100%)	490 (96%)	414 (100%)	608 (62%)	
3	Number of agro-processing units provided to established food-processing cooperatives	6 (100%)	10 (100%)	n.d.	n.d.	
3	Quantity of equipment (computers, furniture) distributed	140 (100%)	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	
3	Number of community members trained in asset management and sustainability	65 (81%)	80 (145%)	52 (no planned data)	n.d.	
3	Number of people trained	20,794 (158%)	10,327 (100%)	n.d.	n.d.	
3	Number of government/national partner staff receiving technical assistance and training	n.d.	n.d.	52 (100%)	n.d.	

Source: ACR 2018-2021 and WFP Kyrgyzstan Indicator Tracking matrix. Green highlight denotes target has been met to 90% or above. Yellow denotes 51-89% achievement against target. Orange denotes less than 50% achievement against target. Grey denotes no data (n.d.), not applicable (n.a.), or no target indicated. Annual fluctuations mean that some targets have been met and then missed in ensuing years.

Table 10: SO3 outcome and output achievements¹³²

Strategic Outcome	Indicator	Baseline (2018)	Follow Up (2019)	Follow Up (2020)	Follow up (2021)	End of CSP Target
SO3	Livelihood-based Coping Strategy Index (percentage of households using coping strategies)	54%	28%	80%	37.3%	<35%
	Livelihood-based Coping Strategy Index (Average)	3.8	2.6	2.6	4.0	<3.3
	Food expenditure share	50.2	45.4	50.8	34.7	<45
	Proportion of targeted communities where there is evidence of improved capacity to manage climate shocks and risks	0%	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	60%
	Food Consumption Score, disaggregated by sex of household head - ACCEPTABLE	96.4%	99.5%	92%	96.7%	>=99%
	Proportion of the population in targeted communities reporting environmental benefits	0	13%	Not reported due to COVID-19	46%	>=40%
Activity	Output Indicators	Number and achievement percentage				
		2018	2019	2020	2021	
4	Number of technical assistance activities provided	3 (100%)	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	
4	Number of training sessions/workshop organized	n.a.	1 (100%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	
5	Linear meters of flood protection dikes constructed	4240 (100%)	11039 (100%)	8263 (100%)	7314 (100%)	
5	Linear meters of flood protection dikes rehabilitated	902 (100%)	7420 (100%)	2905 (100%)	10635 (100%)	
5	Bridges rehabilitated	17 (100%)	12 (100%)	28 (100%)	12 (100%)	
5	Volume of check dams and gully structures constructed	8456 (100%)	5532 (100%)	578 (100%)	4590 (100%)	
5	Number of assets built, restored, or maintained by targeted communities	154 (100%)	203 (100%)	125 (91%)	118 (100%)	

Source: ACR 2018-2021 and WFP Kyrgyzstan Indicator Tracking matrix. **Green** highlight denotes target has been met to 90% or above. **Yellow** denotes 51-89% achievement against target. **Orange** denotes less than 50% achievement against target. **Grey** denotes no data (n.d.), not applicable (n.a.), or no target indicated. Annual fluctuations mean that some targets have been met and then missed in ensuing years.

98. **The WFP CSP logframe indicators show good output achievements against targets.** During the period 2018-2021, 23 output indicators under SO2 and SO3 were measured annually. Overall, 83 percent of the output targets were successfully achieved against annual targets.¹³³ Among those, the number of hectares of gardens created, kilometres of drinking water supply lines constructed and rehabilitated, or the number of irrigation canals rehabilitated have usually met their annual targets. In a few instances, however, there was no data to determine the achievement rates for some for these indicators. This most often occurred in Activity 3 under SO2, which focused on capacity development of community structures and local authorities.

99. **However, outcome achievements are not yet commensurate with output achievements.** Outputs achieved at gradually increasing rates should translate into outcomes also increasing steadily. Instead, reported outcome-level values fluctuate annually. Less than 40 percent of SO2 and SO3 outcome indicators meet the end of CSP target. In the disaggregated data in Annex 10.6, annually reported outcome indicator values tended to follow a similar pattern – showing general improvement from the 2018 baseline measurements to the first follow-up measurements in 2019. However, in 2020, these indicators declined. The annual country reports and subsequent focus group discussions with project participants identified pandemic-related disruptions, leading to food price increases and declining household capacities to purchase food. In 2021, overall food consumption indicators reflect improvement, but the nutritional value has not yet restabilized. Despite some small variations, indicators for men and women tend to move in

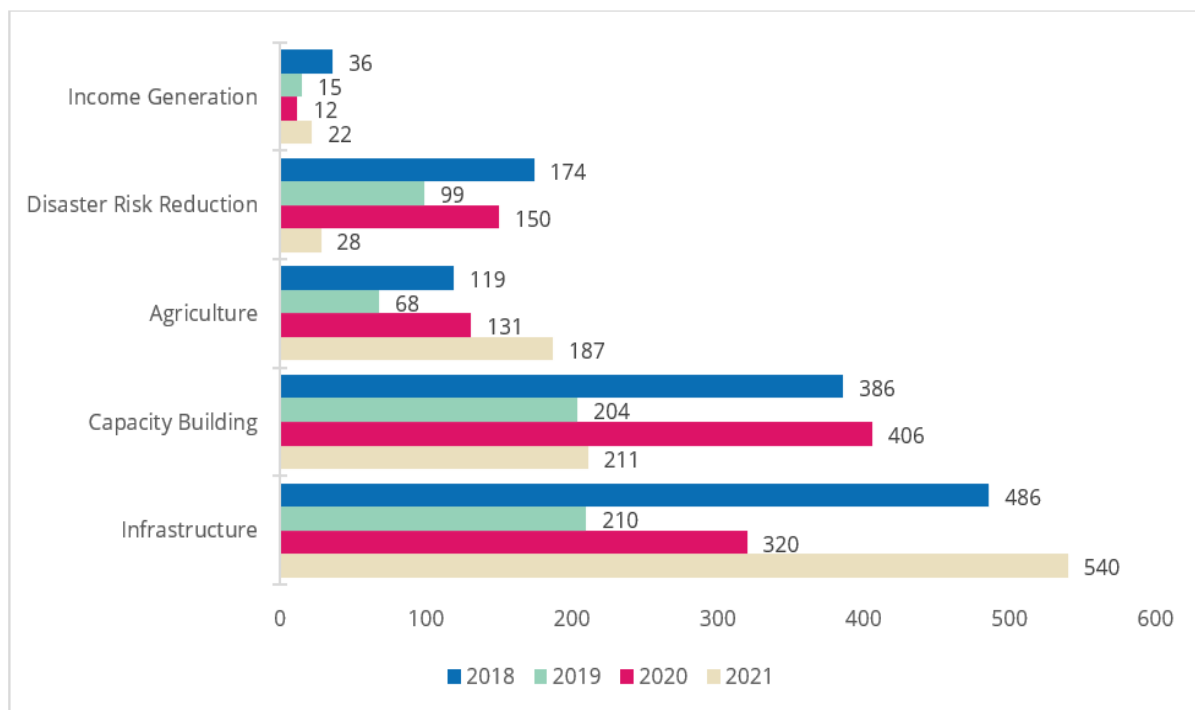
¹³² For the years 2018-2020, Activity 5 only reported against five output indicators. In 2021, this was expanded to nine indicators. For consistency, only the five required indicators used for the bulk of the CSP are included here. The indicator ‘bridges rehabilitated’ in 2021 combines both rehabilitated (2) and constructed (10) as bridges constructed did not exist as an output indicator previously.

¹³³ Considering only when a value was reported.

parallel – increasing from baseline to 2019 measures and then declining in 2020 – and to have similar scores. However, as a general pattern, men also have slightly better initial and ending scores compared to women, although not to a substantive degree.

100. The coverage of projects is national and consistent annually, but the types of project activities over-represent infrastructure and capacity strengthening with little focus on income generation projects. Geographic coverage of the SO2/SO3 activities is national and targeted districts align with the areas of greatest food insecurity in the county and reflect an appropriate geographic focus (Annex 10). The CSP averages just over 1000 projects implemented through these two strategic outcomes each year. Cancelled projects are very few per year (2-4 percent annually), most frequently resulting from local authorities’ and other partners’ inability to provide the requisite cost-share complement to the project, either lacking funds or turnover with incoming authorities unsupportive of the proposed projects. The overall number of projects implemented declined in 2019 (not cancelled, just fewer initially chosen) due to the conclusion of the women’s empowerment project in 2018. However, the total beneficiaries reached did not decline as much as measures were taken to include more beneficiaries in specific projects and shifting projects to training that had lower rations packages. Figure 16 describes SO2 and SO3 projects by type and year.¹³⁴

Figure 16: SO2 and SO3 projects by type and year¹³⁵



Source: CSP databases for cash and food transfers (2018-2021).

101. **WFP successfully created strong project support infrastructure connected to local authorities.** As noted in EQ1, conceptually, SO2 and SO3 project activities align with government strategies supporting “active measures” targeting vulnerable households with the aspiration of eventually getting households out of poverty and subsequently transitioning away from the social protection programmes. However, the percentage of participating households in WFP activities subsequently transitioned from government social protection programmes is not tracked.

102. There is high interest and appreciation for WFP projects and good relationships with local authorities (the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and the Ministry of Emergency Situations), which see the projects as providing important support to local governments to address district and sub-district development needs. The composition of the project coordination committees from government representatives allows for integration of selected project activities within district and sub-district

¹³⁴ CCS considerations are covered in para 115.

¹³⁵ From all donors including the CFT/CFA projects earlier in the CSP. Project categories were under review by the country office at the time of drafting this report.

development plans. There are good linkages with the annual Ministry of Emergency Situations' disaster risk reduction infrastructure rehabilitation plans. WFP-supported projects complement 40 percent of the Ministry of Emergency Situations' annual plans.¹³⁶

103. Although project selection is linked to local and district development plans, there is limited analysis regarding the quality of these local and district development plans themselves and their own internal coherence.

104. There are positive consequences to project implementation beyond asset creation.

Stakeholders cited a range of positive consequences including increased support to vulnerable households creating increased trust and positive perceptions of local authorities. This allows vulnerable households to feel that they are making a positive contribution to the community through the asset creation, strengthening the *Ashar* cultural tradition (community work), and building relationships among vulnerable households participating in project activities.

105. Final project selection is inclined towards the particular interests of the Government (and men) rather than women. During the telephone surveys with beneficiaries and project coordination committee members, respondents were asked to rate the degree to which the selection of project activities took the needs and interests of women into account. Men beneficiary and project coordination committee respondents were much more likely (15-20 percentage points) to believe that women's needs were taken into account compared to women respondents (Annex 9).

106. There was also a gendered pattern regarding preferred project type. Local authorities, predominantly staffed by men, were very interested in conducting community infrastructure activities. However, during focus group discussion interviews and telephone surveys, beneficiaries, including a much greater percentage of women, expressed more interest in income generation projects to directly contribute to the improvement of household incomes beyond the food rations. The project coordination committees, comprised of government representatives, which identify and select projects, tend to be dominated by men. This often leads to the selection of projects that prioritize community infrastructure projects. Figure 16 above shows that relatively few projects relate directly to changing household income generation or household livelihoods.

107. The SO2 and SO3 programmes successfully continued activities during the COVID-19 pandemic and adapted to reach increasingly affected beneficiaries promptly. The numbers of beneficiaries involved and projects completed in 2020 under SO2 and SO3 were in line with previous years even during the pandemic. This was achieved by adapting the way that SO2 and SO3 activities were implemented.

108. The most visible pandemic response adaptation was the decision to increase the number of beneficiaries supported over a shorter period. This involved cutting the food ration in half during 2020 to prioritize more food assistance for training projects, which required shorter time commitments and had a lower ration.¹³⁷ For ongoing SO2 and SO3 projects, the country office organized advance delivery of food rations to allow vulnerable households access to food stocks during lockdown, instead of providing food only on project completion. During selection of beneficiaries for new projects, consultations with department-level representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Social Development factored in the pandemic's economic impact on vulnerable households from those within the Ministry's vulnerability registers.

SO4: Country capacity strengthening

109. SO4 aligns with the corporate approach of WFP to increase investment in upstream capacity strengthening activities, in this case through vulnerability analysis, data generation, and the use of evidence (data) to inform decision making. Activity 6 focuses on the provision of capacity strengthening to national institutions for strengthened social protection systems and for food security monitoring, analysis and management. Activity 7 focuses on the provision of evidence-based analyses to relevant national institutions. The only modality involved is capacity strengthening.

110. There are four primary ministries connected to the SO4 activities plus associated state agencies (the Ministry of Education and Sciences, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry and Melioration, the

¹³⁶ SO3 project reporting, internal report 2020.

¹³⁷ See Annex 10.6 for more details on FFA/FFT shifts during the pandemic.

Ministry of Labour and Social Development and the Ministry of Emergency Situations). Table 11 describes the outcome and output target achievements for SO4 in the CSP logframe. There are no Tier 1 beneficiaries associated with SO4. Table 12 shows the country capacity strengthening activities by pathway of change (see Annex 3 for more details).

Table 11: SO4 outcome and output achievements

Strategic Outcome	Indicator	Baseline (2018)	Follow Up (2019)	Follow Up (2020)	Follow up (2021)	End of CSP Target
SO4	Number of national food security and nutrition policies, programmes and system components enhanced as a result of WFP capacity strengthening	0	1	1	1	2
Activity	Output Indicators	Number and achievement percentage				
		2018	2019	2020	2021	
6	Number of government/national partner staff receiving technical assistance and training	n.d.	130 (100%)	3 (100%)	192 (128%)	
6	Number of technical assistance activities provided	13 (100%)	11 (100%)	52 (104%)	7 (116%)	
6	Number of people trained	367 (100%)	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	
7	Number of capacity development activities provided for advocacy on School Feeding	2 (100%)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	
7	Number of capacity strengthening activities with gender equality mainstreamed	1 (100%)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	
7	Number of technical support activities provided on food security monitoring and food assistance, by type (technical workshops, meetings at national and sub-national level)	11 (100%)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	
7	Number of technical assistance activities provided	1 (100%)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	
7	Number of tools or products developed or revised to enhance national food security and nutrition systems as a result of WFP capacity strengthening support	n.a.	2 (100%)	4 (133%)	9 (133%)	
7	Number of training sessions/workshop organized	n.a.	15 (100%)	1 (100%)	3 (100%)	
7	Number of national coordination mechanisms supported	n.a.	5 (100%)	5 (125%)	4 (80%)	

Source: ACR 2018-2021 and WFP Kyrgyzstan Indicator Tracking matrix. Green highlight denotes target has been met to 90% or above. Yellow denotes 51-89% achievement against target. Grey denotes no data (n.d.), not applicable (n.a.), or no target indicated. Annual fluctuations mean that some targets have been met and then missed in ensuing years.

Table 12: SO4 country capacity strengthening activities by pathway of change¹³⁸

Pathway	SO4	
	Number of activities cited	Share of activities per Pathway
P1: Policies	27	31%
P2: Institutional effectiveness	39	44%
P3: Strategic Planning and Financing	0	0%
P4: Programme design and delivery	14	16%
P5: Engagement of CSO/Private Sector	8	9%
Total	88	100%

Source: CD Activities Tracking Sheet 2018-2021

111. The CSP has contributed to national capacity strengthening even if there are challenges in tracking and reporting on all CSP contributions. All country capacity strengthening-related engagements within the CSP are channelled through SO4 except for SO1 school meal programme national capacity strengthening work. For SO4, the outcome-level indicator (number of policies enhanced) increased from the baseline but has not yet reached the CSP target. The annual targets for SO4 output indicators, such as the number of government staff receiving technical assistance, number of technical assistance activities provided, or number of tools or products developed, have been met all times that they were reported. However, neither these indicators nor the subsequent country capacity strengthening activity database compiled by the

¹³⁸ See Section 1.4. Evaluation methodology, limitations and ethical considerations and Annex 3 for further details.

country office capture the entirety of country capacity strengthening engagements. In the absence of a corporate country capacity strengthening framework and complementary monitoring guidance, the country office developed and managed its own country capacity strengthening activity database, which the evaluation team used to retrospectively assess progress against the subsequently developed five pathways of change.

112. Under SO4, the country office has invested primarily in country capacity strengthening activities classified under the “policies” (P1) and “institutional effectiveness” (P2) pathways of change within the corporate country capacity strengthening framework. Table 12 shows that most of the SO4 country capacity strengthening activities (44 percent) related to vulnerability analysis and mapping and data analysis technical support provided to the four different ministries (Pathway 2), followed by policy development (31 percent).¹³⁹

113. The evidence and analysis work of WFP and its technical support to the management of the data collection, analysis and visualization systems was consistently cited as one of the most positive country capacity strengthening contributions. All four ministries interacting with SO4 valued these contributions. Furthermore, enhanced inter- and intra-agency coordination provided timely information during situations such as the COVID-19 response, including the rapid analysis and delivery of frequent price bulletin updates to assess the economic effects of the pandemic. Valuable country capacity strengthening contributions were also made through technical inputs on the elaboration of national policies, most notably the inputs into the Food Security and Nutrition Programme (FSNP) established in 2019 and the subsequently developed FSNP Action Plan. WFP has also been active within the UNCT providing technical inputs on United Nations priorities on country capacity strengthening and participation in coordination working groups, cited earlier.

114. The CSP country capacity strengthening conceptual framework is well defined for the vulnerability analysis and mapping in SO4 roll-out but is less clear for other forms of country capacity strengthening engagement. The vulnerability analysis and mapping-related work has well-defined activities with a clear orientation in terms of final outcomes in the CSP. However, other forms of country capacity strengthening engagement under SO4 lack this degree of internal coherence, clarity and connection to the CSP results framework. Outside of the vulnerability analysis and mapping (and school meal programme under SO1), the country capacity strengthening activities reported in the country office database are not well connected, ranging from single events to complex extended time commitments. They cover diverse topics including supporting a nutrition-awareness campaign, facilitating a workshop on toxic masculinity, supply chain technical trainings and long-term participation in coordination working groups covering nine different categories such as food security and nutrition and social protection. All the activities listed fall within a conceptual universe of country capacity strengthening, but with limited internal coherence, which contributed to challenges in measuring progress.

115. Country capacity strengthening interventions in SO4 are concentrated at national government systems-level with little connection “downstream” to district or local authorities. Within the CSP theory of change, country capacity strengthening should also be implemented at district and sub-district levels. However, besides the school meal programme roll-out interventions to local schools and the district education departments, there are few examples in SO4 of country capacity strengthening at the subnational level. The district and sub-district focus within the SO2/SO3 activities are oriented more towards improving project implementation efficiency and effectiveness rather than the capacity strengthening of subnational institutions themselves. The CSP provided computers or trainings to local stakeholders, which could be construed as country capacity strengthening but more accurately falls under project implementation support. In implementation, limited linkages connect the SO2/SO3 interventions and the SO4 activities beyond the SO2/SO3 activities relying on the national-level food security and vulnerability analyses for the targeting of specific sub-districts for inclusion in projects.

116. Structural factors within the Government have slowed uptake of the vulnerability analysis and mapping-oriented country capacity strengthening interventions. The vulnerability analysis and mapping work has successfully provided technical support to the four key ministries to install, manage and utilize vulnerability data systems and mapping. These systems have already been handed over during the CSP. However, high turnover in some ministries has resulted in an institutional capacity gap for maintaining

¹³⁹ The CCS work related to school feeding is covered under the SO1 section.

system management, resulting in ministries returning to WFP and requesting additional training for new technical staff. The turnover and institutional memory loss also impedes the use of the data for informing policy decisions.

SO5: COVID-19 response

117. The SO5 strategic outcome and its single activity (Activity 9) represent the culmination of WFP engagement in the COVID-19 crisis and response. SO5 provided conditional cash-based transfers of USD 100¹⁴⁰ to vulnerable households in peri-urban areas. The payment was conditional on completing an agreed-upon activity (such as painting hospitals, cleaning streets or taking part in a Ministry of Labour and Social Development-sponsored training course) over a period ranging from two weeks for trainings to four weeks for activities. Implementation began in the second half of 2020 with the first disbursements received in late December 2020. The only modality used under SO5 is cash-based transfer. Food assistance delivered to vulnerable populations under SO2 was mistakenly reported under SO5 in 2020, because it was considered to have some connection to supporting those affected by COVID-19 economically. However, these food rations were delivered to rural populations targeted under SO2 and not to SO5 beneficiaries in peri-urban areas.

118. There are no values reported for the four SO5 outcome indicators until 2020 as SO5 was only added to the CSP in 2020. Outcome indicators have improved from 2020 to 2021 for all indicators. All output targets have been achieved in 2021 (Table 13). Figure 17 describes the SO5 project activities by type.

Table 13: SO5: Outcome and output achievements.¹⁴¹

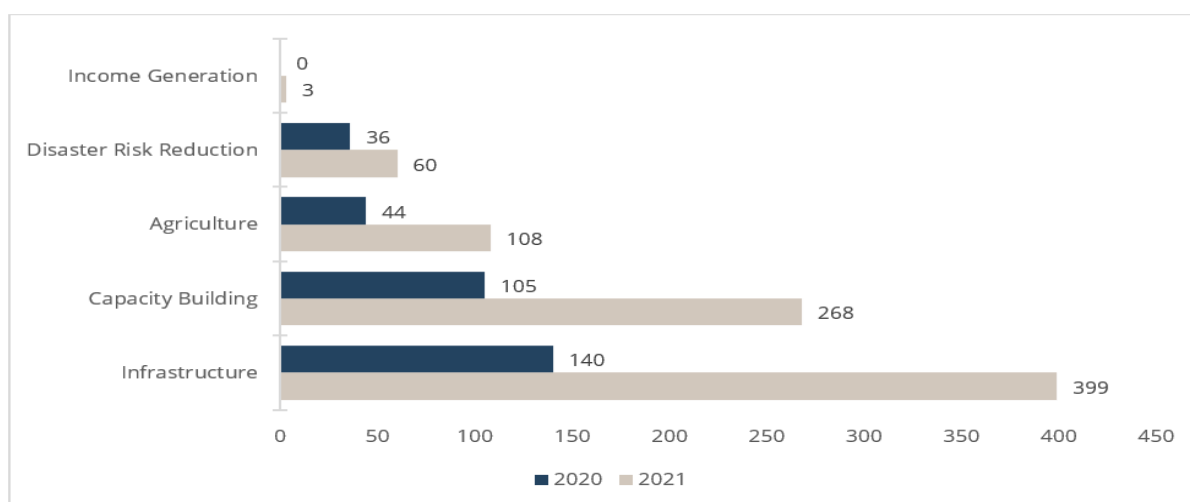
Strategic Outcome	Indicator	Baseline (2018)	Follow Up (2019)	Baseline (2020)	Follow up (2021)	End of CSP Target
SO5	Food Consumption Score, disaggregated by sex of household head - ACCEPTABLE	n.a.	n.a.	74%	92%	>90%
	Consumption-based Coping Strategy Index (Average)	n.a.	n.a.	9.7	8.3	<5
	Food expenditure share	n.a.	n.a.	63.5	43.2	<40
	Proportion of the population in targeted communities reporting benefits from an enhanced livelihoods asset base	n.a.	n.a.	0%	54%	>50%
Activity	Output Indicators	Number and achievement percentage				
		2018	2019	2020	2021	
9	Hectares of garden created	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1 (100%)	
9	Kilometres of drinking water supply line constructed	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	37 (100%)	
9	Kilometres of drinking water supply line rehabilitated	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	6 (100%)	
9	Kilometres of irrigation canals constructed	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	3 (100%)	
9	Kilometres of irrigation canals rehabilitated	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	42 (100%)	
9	Linear meters of flood protection dikes rehabilitated	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	6,800 (100%)	
9	Number of assets built, maintained, or restored by targeted communities	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	229 (100%)	
9	Number of concrete bridges constructed	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	3 (100%)	
9	Number of concrete bridges rehabilitated	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	9 (100%)	

Source: ACR 2018-2021 and WFP Kyrgyzstan Indicator Tracking matrix. Green highlight denotes target has been met to 90 percent or above. Yellow denotes 51-89 percent achievement against target. Grey denotes no data (n.d.), not applicable (n.a.), or no target indicated. Annual fluctuations mean that some targets have been met and then missed in ensuing years.

¹⁴⁰ Approximately depending on inflation and exchange rates.

¹⁴¹ No outputs have been reported for SO5 as of the time of this evaluation report. Therefore, only the outcomes are listed.

Figure 17: SO5 projects by type



Source: CSP cash and food databases for 2018-2021.

119. **SO5 beneficiaries were appreciative of WFP support and SO5 project activities.** Over 90 percent of SO5 beneficiaries and respondents interviewed in the telephone survey (Annex 9) perceived positive household changes, rated the assistance to be sufficient to meet household needs and considered the project activities to be well organized. These patterns were triangulated with focus group discussions with SO5 beneficiaries during the data collection phase. Furthermore, municipal authorities also viewed engagements with WFP positively and expressed interest in further collaboration.

120. **However, the prognosis for long-term outcomes is not as clear.** Within the CSP logframe, the designated outcome indicators for SO5 imply that through engaging in active measures for asset creation, beneficiaries can improve their long-term household situations beyond the USD 100 cash distributions. However, there is a disconnect between the specific assets selected by local authorities and these longer-term outcomes. Because of the cost-share requirement, the infrastructure activities selected by local authorities, which had limited funding at the time of the project, tended to be the low-cost actions cited earlier, which could not contribute to long-term household outcome changes. Furthermore, the actual amounts distributed in the early recovery support were too little to be able to allow households to achieve these outcomes. Local authority representatives interviewed suggested that it would be better for project activities to be linked to municipal employment programmes or opportunities. This may explain why the telephone survey respondents were much less positive about their long-term livelihood situation, with only 11.5 percent of SO5 respondents feeling that their livelihood situation had improved (Annex 9).

121. **WFP SO5 implementation significantly increased the overall number of CSP beneficiaries reached.** After initial delays in 2020, the number of beneficiaries reached through SO5 has nearly reached the 2021 planned target (86 percent achievement when combining food and cash-based beneficiary targets). In absolute numbers, the CSP has significantly increased the numbers of beneficiaries reached through WFP programming because of the SO5 implementation. The number of beneficiaries reached in 2021 is nearly double the normal annual average for the CSP (Annex 10.4). The number of projects has also increased. According to the country office-managed food and cash databases from 2018-2021, even though projects for SO5 were only rolled out in October 2020, they comprise nearly a quarter of all CSP projects for 2020 and nearly half of all CSP projects for 2021. These databases record that about 4.4 percent of the projects under SO5 were cancelled, which is consistent with reported percentages for other strategic outcomes. According to interviews, project cancellations most frequently result from local authorities not providing the agreed-upon cost-share.

122. WFP contribution to the COVID-19 response went beyond the SO5 engagement and is considered to have been a positive contribution to the national response. WFP expertise in delivery (logistics, procurement and administration) were important in both the implementation of SO5 and in coordination and support of the United Nations and government response to the pandemic. The additional vulnerability mapping and data analysis provided by WFP on the economic effects of the pandemic were used by multiple actors for shaping their responses. The engagement with new municipal partnerships (through local authorities) was a positive feature with district representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social

Development and beneficiaries citing the importance of the SO5 contributions. This was also triangulated from the telephone beneficiary survey results (Annex 9).

EQ2.2 To what extent did WFP contribute to achievement of cross-cutting priorities (protection, accountability to affected populations, gender and other equity considerations, as well as the environment)? In addition, did the response to COVID-19 change the degree of contribution in any of these areas?

Cross-cutting indicators overview

Summary

The cross-cutting indicators show overall high achievement rates, especially in protection and environmental issues.

Country strategic plan activities were implemented in alignment with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, although the conditional transfer requirement is a concern.

Accountability to affected populations is strong in seeking beneficiary feedback but fluctuates among strategic outcomes and years in ensuring that people are consistently informed about the programmes. There are no protection issues within the country strategic plan.

The country strategic plan complies with WFP corporate gender requirements; however, there are limitations on gender sensitivity in project activity selection and women's engagement in leadership and decision making. There are barriers to increasing further gender transformative programming including the lack of senior gender expertise.

Environmental risk assessment is included in all project activity selection, but more could be done on environmental programming – especially within climate change adaptation.

Nutrition is a stated focus in the CSP design but most prominent at the national level rather than in project implementation. True country office nutrition contributions are under-reported within CSP framework.

123. Cross-cutting indicators show high achievement rates against most targets except for information about projects and women's leadership. As part of the CSP framework, 11 cross-cutting indicators reflect the transversal themes of accountability to affected population, protection, gender and the environment. The indicators show a high level of compliance illustrating positive integration of these cross-cutting themes within the activities targeting beneficiaries and local communities. All indicators show high rates of achievement except for two: the percent of beneficiaries who had been informed about the projects and the degree of women's leadership in decision making in project implementation. These are discussed in more detail below.

124. WFP CSP activities were implemented in alignment with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, but the conditional transfer requirement is a concern. This was indicated through document review and interviews. During the COVID-19 crisis, WFP was active in coordinating working groups and conducting broad-based consultations to assure support for vulnerable groups. WFP used multiple registers and sources to identify beneficiaries and minimized inclusion error through beneficiary verification processes. In the field-level agreements (FLAs) with cooperating partners, references are made to gender and other equity considerations. The only concern is that the conditional transfer requirement reduces access for those who cannot work, possibly denying vulnerable households from receiving timely support, as discussed under EQ1.2: To what extent did the country strategic plan address the needs of the most vulnerable people in the country to ensure that no one is left behind? To what extent were changes in beneficiary or caseload profiles identified in response to COVID-19?

Accountability to affected populations

125. Accountability to affected populations is evidenced through the establishment and use of beneficiary complaint and feedback mechanisms. However, more can be done on these mechanisms and

consultation processes for project activity selection. All project activities solicit beneficiary feedback to inform programme improvements (Table 14). There are three formal feedback mechanisms: 1) post-distribution monitoring surveys are conducted annually to track WFP performance; 2) project coordination committee members convene annually by district at year-end to review implementation progress, identify challenges or gaps and discuss future project opportunities; and 3) a beneficiary complaint hotline is available. Additionally, WFP and cooperating partners gather beneficiary feedback through regular process monitoring and through less formal consultations via social media platforms.

126. Indicator C.1.2 references the post-distribution monitoring exercises. Most calls to the beneficiary hotline seek project information or express interest in project participation, with few complaints and none related to sexual exploitation, abuse or protection issues.

127. However, the proportion of assisted people who are informed about the projects ahead of time fluctuated among the years and among the strategic outcomes, and rarely met targets. Disaggregation by strategic outcome shows the highest percentages in the SO1 school meal programme roll-out (nearly 100 percent) and lowest in SO2 activities. The parallel telephone surveys triangulated this pattern. Over 40 percent of the beneficiaries and more than 15 percent of project coordination committee members were unaware that a hotline existed, and few people were informed about the projects before they commenced.

128. One of the influencing factors is the respective division of roles in the SO2/SO3/SO5 projects between the representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and WFP field monitoring assistants. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development social workers nominate the persons to be included and are responsible for informing people about the programme, while WFP field monitoring assistants monitor the quality of the project implementation. The low percentages of persons informed of the programme may be reflective of a breakdown in communication between the department social workers and the project participants. In contrast, in SO1, school roll-out and awareness raising is managed by the SO1 field monitoring assistants – and percentages informed about the project are consequently higher for SO1.

Table 14: Cross-cutting indicators – accountability to affected populations

Indicator	Activity and modality	Sex	Baseline	2018 Follow up	2019 Follow up	2020 Follow up	2021 Follow up	End-CSP target
Accountability to affected populations: C.1. Affected populations are able to hold WFP and partners accountable for meeting their hunger needs in a manner that reflects their views and preferences								
C.1.1 Proportion of assisted people informed about the programme (who is included, what people will receive, length of assistance)	Act. 1; Food	Female	98	87	94	100	85	>=98
		Male	98	92	89	100	93	>=98
		Overall	98	87	93	100	86	>=98
	Act. 2; Food	Female	57	27	68	n.d.	28	>=80
		Male	61	21	62	n.d.	18	>=80
		Overall	61	22	65	n.d.	19	>=80
	Act. 2; Cash	Female	31	13	70	n.d.	34	>=80
		Male	52	13	53	n.d.	27	>=80
		Overall	47	13	57	n.d.	29	>=80
	Act. 5; Food	Female	50	6	49	n.d.	11	>=80
		Male	60	17	72	n.d.	13	>=80
		Overall	55	16	69	n.d.	13	>=80
C.1.2 Proportion of project activities for which beneficiary feedback is documented, analysed, and integrated into programme improvements	CSP activities; Food	Overall	100	100	100	100	100	=100
	CSP activities; Food	Overall	100	100	100	100	100	=100

Source: ACR 2018-2021 and WFP Kyrgyzstan Indicator Tracking matrix. **Green** highlight denotes target has been met to 90% or above. **Yellow** denotes 51-89% achievement against target. **Orange** denotes less than 50% achievement against target. **Grey** denotes no data (n.d.), not applicable (n.a.), or no target indicated. Annual fluctuations mean that some targets have been met and then missed in ensuing years.

Protection

129. **WFP performs well in protection aspects.** The protection dimension has four indicators assessing it: protection, access, safety and dignity elements. For all four, the reported values are nearly 100 percent. This is triangulated from the telephone beneficiary surveys where respondents reported that they did not perceive any protection or safety issues regarding WFP delivery and participation in project activities (Table 15). The hotline logs also showed no protection issues as noted in the previous accountability to affected population section.

Table 15: Cross-cutting indicators – protection

Indicator	Activity and modality	Sex	Baseline	2018 Follow up	2019 Follow up	2020 Follow up	2021 Follow up	End-CSP target
Protection: C.2 Affected populations are able to benefit from WFP programmes in a manner that ensures and promotes their safety, dignity, and integrity								
C.2.1 Proportion of targeted people accessing assistance without protection challenges	Act. 2; Cash	Female	100	100	100	100	n.a.	=100
		Male	100	100	100	100	n.a.	=100
		Overall	100	100	100	100	n.a.	=100
	Act. 2; Food	Female	100	100	100	100	n.a.	=100
		Male	100	100	100	100	n.a.	=100
		Overall	100	100	100	100	n.a.	=100
	Act. 5; Food	Female	100	100	100	100	n.a.	=100
		Male	100	100	100	100	n.a.	=100
		Overall	100	100	100	100	n.a.	=100
C.2.2 Proportion of targeted people receiving assistance without safety challenges (new)	Act. 2; Cash	Female	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	85	=100
		Male	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	89	=100
		Overall	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	88	=100
	Act. 2; Food	Female	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	100	=100
		Male	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	87	=100
		Overall	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	88	=100
	Act. 5; Food	Female	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	78	=100
		Male	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	83	=100
		Overall	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	82	=100
C.2.3 Proportion of targeted people who report that WFP programmes are dignified (new)	Act. 2; Cash	Female	100	n.d.	n.d.	97	93	=100
		Male	91	n.d.	n.d.	95	94	=100
		Overall	93	n.d.	n.d.	96	94	=100
	Act. 2; Food	Female	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	100	=100
		Male	100	n.d.	n.d.	98	95	=100
C.2.3 Proportion of targeted people who report that WFP programmes are dignified (new)	Act. 2; Cash	Female	100	n.d.	n.d.	97	93	=100
		Male	91	n.d.	n.d.	95	94	=100
		Overall	93	n.d.	n.d.	96	94	=100
	Act. 2; Food	Female	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	100	=100
		Male	100	n.d.	n.d.	98	95	=100
		Overall	100	n.d.	n.d.	99	98	=100
	Act. 5; Food	Female	100	n.d.	n.d.	99	100	=100
		Male	100	n.d.	n.d.	99	93	=100
		Overall	100	n.d.	n.d.	99	94	=100
C.2.4 Proportion of targeted people having unhindered access to WFP programmes (new)	Act. 2; Cash	Female	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	92	=100
		Male	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	93	=100
		Overall	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	93	=100
	Act. 2; Food	Female	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	94	=100
		Male	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	95	=100
		Overall	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	94	=100
	Act. 5; Food	Female	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	100	=100
		Male	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	93	=100
		Overall	100	n.d.	n.d.	100	94	=100

Source: ACR 2018-2021 and WFP Kyrgyzstan Indicator Tracking matrix. Green highlight denotes target has been met to 90% or above. Yellow denotes 51-89% achievement against target. Grey denotes no data (n.d.), not applicable (n.a.), or no target indicated. Annual fluctuations mean that some targets have been met and then missed in ensuing years.

Gender

130. **Gender sensitivity remains a focus within the CSP, and WFP plays a role in supporting gender within the UNCT.** After the design of the CSP, the Gender Action Plan developed after the 2017 gender review continued to be annually updated throughout the CSP. The shift from a “focal point” approach to the gender results network approach within the country office allowed more gender-sensitive engagement throughout the CSP. The gender results network is chaired by the Deputy Country Director (DCD) to ensure management support in gender promotive measures. WFP participates in the UNCT gender working groups and inter-agency work under the rural women’s economic empowerment project.

131. Internally, in WFP programming approaches, gender sensitivity is evident in beneficiary inclusion, but more could be done for adapting the selection of project activities to the needs of women. Beneficiary inclusion in project activities for SO2, SO3, and SO5 are equally split between men and women, reflecting intentional recruitment of households headed by women among vulnerable households. In reporting, the CSP uses sex-disaggregated data for its CSP results framework.

132. While both WFP and government stakeholders feel that CSP activities are inclusive, there is a discrepancy between beneficiary men and women regarding the inclusiveness of the project selection process. As noted in paragraphs 105 and 106, the role played by government authorities on the project activity selection has an unintended effect on the types of projects being selected. In the telephone surveys, a majority of men and women agreed that women’s needs were taken into account in project selection, but in substantively different proportions depending on gender. The percentage of women responding positively was about 10-30 percentage points lower than men respondents for both beneficiaries and for women who were on project selection committees (or were school focal points). For example, project adaptations often did not include childcare options. Additionally, women beneficiaries tended to prefer income generation activities, but these were under-represented among the project selection portfolio.¹⁴²

133. **Gender disparities exist in women’s decision making within project activities.** WFP annual country reports include two gender indicators as cross-cutting themes – the proportion of households where decisions on transfer resource usage are made jointly, and the proportion of women who participate in the decision making.¹⁴³ The values on both these indicators are low and have declined over the course of the CSP. One reason for the decline in decision making is that in the CSP, the project selection role was shifted from village-level committees to a district-level project coordination committee on the recommendation of the previous evaluations. When the project coordination committees were designated at the district level, these entities were comprised of more government representatives. Since women are under-represented in government positions, the shift led to a decline in women’s participation in project decisions. In the telephone surveys with beneficiaries, men were still more likely to think that women participated in project decision making to a greater degree than the women themselves by about 10 percentage points.

134. There are differences in the data trends over time between men and women (Table 16). For households that receive cash-based transfers, decision making on cash usage tends to be much more dominated by men in comparison to households that receive in-kind food where women or spouses jointly make decisions. This is particularly true for SO2 livelihoods activities. Under SO5, this gender bias was not as pronounced.

¹⁴² Based on the country office cash and food transfer databases.

¹⁴³ Indicators reported in ACRs 2018-2021. Data on decision making comes from annual post-distribution monitoring surveys conducted by WFP field monitors with SO2 and SO3 project beneficiaries in targeted areas.

Table 16: Cross-cutting indicators – gender

Indicator	Activity and modality	Sex	Baseline	2018 Follow up	2019 Follow up	2020 Follow up	2021 Follow up	End-CSP target
Gender: C.3 Improved gender equality and women's empowerment among WFP-assisted population								
C.3.1 Proportion of households where women, men, or both women and men make decisions on the use of food/cash/vouchers, disaggregated by transfer modality	Act. 2; Cash	Decisions made by women; Overall	25	8	24	n.d.	31	<=20
		Decisions made by men; Overall	17	41	55	n.d.	19	<=20
		Decisions jointly made by women and men; Overall	58	51	21	n.d.	50	<=60
	Act. 2; Food	Decisions made by women; Overall	75	49	54	n.d.	39	=20
		Decisions made by men; Overall	6	11	24	n.d.	16	=20
		Decisions jointly made by women and men; Overall	19	32	22	n.d.	45	=60
	Act. 5; Food	Decisions made by women; Overall	67	45	25	n.d.	38	=20
		Decisions made by men; Overall	12	8	43	n.d.	18	=20
		Decisions jointly made by women and men; Overall	21	47	32	n.d.	44	=60
C.3.2 Proportion of food assistance decision-making entity – committees, boards, teams, etc. – members who are women	Act. 2; Cash	Overall	41	26	20	87	36	>=50
	Act. 1; Food	Overall	60	83	79.50	82	84	>=60
	Act. 2; Food	Overall	41	22	50	80	20	>=50
	Act. 5; Food	Overall	41	10	50	80	20	>=50

Source: ACR 2018-2021 and WFP Kyrgyzstan Indicator Tracking matrix. **Green** highlight denotes target has been met to 90% or above. **Yellow** denotes 51-89% achievement against target. **Orange** denotes less than 50% achievement against target. **Grey** denotes no data (n.d.), not applicable (n.a.), or no target indicated. Annual fluctuations mean that some targets have been met and then missed in ensuing years.

135. The CSP complies with WFP corporate gender requirements on reporting, indicators, beneficiary inclusion and financial tracking. There are however barriers to increasing further gender-transformative programming including the lack of adequate gender expertise. The country office complies with WFP corporate requirements. However, there is little evidence that the disaggregated gender data is used to inform programme adaptations and decision making. Furthermore, while the country office reports on budget share of CSP programming going to GEEW, reporting is based on the number of women beneficiaries in all projects. While women's participation is good, it does not necessarily translate into a gender-transformative project.

136. The country office staffing structure has been gender balanced. The country office has nominated a gender focal point and established a gender working group, which elaborates an annual gender action plan as part of the gender-transformation programme. However, there are barriers to increasing further gender-transformative programming. For example, gender working group members are not gender experts and there is no adequate gender expertise within the country office to provide more refined gender-transformative inputs on activity selection, implementation and management or to assess the potential implications of the ongoing legal review by the Kyrgyz Republic Government of policies and strategies on the operating landscape for gender, diversity and inclusion.

Environment

137. Environmental risk assessment is included in all project activity selection, but more could be done on environmental programming. The two corporate indicators on environment relate to the degree to which project activities were screened for environmental and social risks and the number of field-level agreements/memorandums of understanding screened for risks (Table 17). These both register 100 percent and suggest little concerns for this cross-cutting theme. In the absence of a corporate standard tool, the country office developed a project review form for assessing these indicators. In these assessments, environmental risks are reviewed, although there is less evidence of environment rehabilitation or a long term climate change adaptation focus present on the selection of project activities.

This is largely driven by the absence of high-level environmental or climate change adaptation expertise within the country office due to the Green Climate Fund funding delays.

Table 17: Cross-cutting indicators – environment

Indicator	Activity and modality	Sex	Baseline	2018 Follow up	2019 Follow up	2020 Follow up	2021 Follow up	End-CSP target
Environmental protection: C.4 Targeted communities benefit from WFP programmes in a manner that does not harm the environment								
C.4.1 Proportion of activities for which environmental risks have been screened and as required, mitigation actions identified	Act. 2; Cash	Overall	0	100	100	100	100	=100
	Act. 2; Food	Overall	0	100	100	100	100	=100
	Act. 5; Food	Overall	0	100	100	100	100	=100
C.4.2 Proportion of FLAs/MOUs/CCs for CSP activities screened for environmental and social risk	Act. 2; Food	Overall	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	100	=100
	Act. 5; Food	Overall	100	n.a.	n.a.	100	100	=100

Source: ACR 2018-2021 and WFP Kyrgyzstan Indicator Tracking matrix. Green highlight denotes target has been met to 90% or above. Grey denotes no data (n.d.), not applicable (n.a.), or no target indicated. Annual fluctuations mean that some targets have been met and then missed in ensuing years.

Nutrition

138. **Nutrition actions are prominent at the national level but more limited at the level of nutrition-sensitive field activities.** Nutrition was intended to be a priority in the CSP through the designation of SO1 and SO2 as “nutrition-sensitive” strategic outcomes. The CSP has engaged in substantial national-level contributions to nutrition through direct inputs to the Government and UNCT actions. The development of the FSNP is a notable example as is WFP being a co-chair of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) network. WFP has also contributed to social behaviour and communication change campaigns, cost of diet studies and other nutrition publications from 2021. Furthermore, 12 percent of the country capacity strengthening activities are related to nutrition.¹⁴⁴ One alignment challenge to national strategies is that the indicators for the government programmes highlight nutrition outcomes, whereas the CSP logframe and CSP annual country reports have predominately food security indicators with less emphasis on nutrition indicators, making it more difficult to track WFP nutrition contributions towards government nutrition outcomes (with the exception of SO2, which has numerous nutrition indicators). Furthermore, the evidence for nutrition work at the country office level is under-reported due to its treatment as a cross-cutting theme.

139. For example, there is less evidence of nutrition-sensitive programming informing field-level project activities in SO1, SO2, SO3 and SO5, including targeting, project activity selection or programme design. In SO1, nutrition sensitivity can be seen through materials and activities conducted within the school meal programme roll-out at school levels with parental committees and other school meal programme stakeholders, as well as the nutrition awareness activities teachers conduct with children as part of after-school activities. The cookbooks developed for school meal preparation also aspire to maximize nutrition. However, the school meal programme is only partially designed as a nutrition-sensitive intervention as the food actually served is too varied to be a guaranteed regular source of protein and micronutrients; this is due to insufficient state or parental contributions to comply with the targeted meals standards. Furthermore, WFP monitoring only includes anthropometric or micronutrient analysis of the meals in 2017 with subsequent light monitoring in 2018 and 2019 (and none since). The micronutrient monitoring is not included in the annual country reports. The nutrition status of the participating children is also not tracked.

140. In SO2/SO3, outcome indicators relate to nutrition in tracking household consumption of vitamin A, protein, and iron-rich foods. However, nutrition sensitization activities are not a significant component of the SO2 and SO3 activities, therefore behaviour change cannot be attributed to these activities. There is no evidence that project activity selection or beneficiary targeting is informed by nutrition sensitization. Finally, the food rations delivered do not contain vitamin A, protein, or iron-rich foods and therefore are not likely to affect the household outcome indicators related to these elements.

¹⁴⁴ Country office CCS activities tracking sheet.

EQ2.3 To what extent are the achievements of the country strategic plan likely to be sustained?

Summary

Sustainability challenges remain for handover and transformation of CSP programmes, especially for institutionalization of capacity development across all strategic outcomes. WFP has not developed transition strategies for handover for most of the strategic outcomes. There are different challenges to sustainability within each strategic outcome.

SO1 - Good progress has been made on sustainability and transition, but potential barriers to sustainability include ongoing capacity development needs and school meal programme subsidization.

SO2 and SO3 - There is strong government representation on district project coordination committees, which can provide potential leverage for social protection contributions, but the SO2 and SO3 project activities show limited integration with existing national social assistance programmes.

SO4 activities have contributed to national systems but face challenges in national capacities to sustain them.

141. Progress towards sustainability of CSP achievements varies by strategic outcome.¹⁴⁵

Sustainability, as defined in the evaluation matrix, includes five dimensions: i) the degree to which CSP activities have strategic integration in government programmes; ii) the degree to which the Government is likely to fund continuation of programmes; iii) the technical capacity within the Government to manage and implement programmes; iv) existence of a plan with WFP to transition away from WFP support; and v) the degree of political will and ownership of the Government in programmes.¹⁴⁶ To understand the collective contribution to sustainability, each of the strategic outcomes has been assessed against these five dimensions (Table 18). Overall, the most progress towards sustainability has been made on SO1 and SO4.

Table 18: Sustainability and strategic outcome stoplight rating

Sustainability rating	SO1	SO2/SO3	SO4	SO5
Strategic integration	Significant progress	Limited progress	Significant progress	Time bound early recovery assistance initiated in 2020
Resourcing	Limited progress	Very limited progress	Limited progress	
Technical capacity	Some progress	Some progress	Limited progress	
Transition and transformation strategy	Very limited progress	Very limited progress	Some progress	
Political will	Significant progress	Limited progress	Some progress	

Source: Evaluation team from document review and interviews.

SO1: School meal programme

142. Good progress has been made on sustainability for SO1 (school meal programme) but there is limited progress to transition from ongoing WFP support for school meal programme roll-out in schools. The MOES support for and ownership of the school meal programme roll-out is positively evidenced through the legislative, institutional and resourcing frameworks within the MOES. National budget allocations provide government resourcing for the NSMP roll-out, although at levels that have not changed over the past decade, with strong ownership and interest among education stakeholders. The description of roles and responsibilities for NSMP implementation at national, subnational, district and local levels is also established. As noted earlier, schools continued providing school meals after the cessation of the project, the MOES has passed laws for institutionalizing school meals, and local authorities and stakeholders are supportive of its roll-out.

¹⁴⁵ Extrapolations on sustainability are constrained by an ongoing comprehensive legal review carried out by the Government which may affect subsequent policy and strategy directions. For the purposes of this analysis, these sustainability gains are presented on the basis of the evaluation exercise carried out in late 2021.

¹⁴⁶ Annex 3 provides details on classification rubric.

143. At the school level, challenges relate to the lack of institutionalization of capacity development and nutrition sensitization within the Ministry of Education and Sciences' system for the school meal programme. Individual school roll-out of the school meal programme is usually conducted with technical assistance (and rations support) from WFP or other school meal programme actors that provide the initial trainings and organizational support to parent committees, cooks, school directors and other school meal programme stakeholders. However, there are limited opportunities for further trainings for new stakeholders upon membership turnover. The nutrition-sensitization activities face similar institutionalization challenges. Currently, the nutrition awareness activities are treated as extra-curricular activities, which are less likely to continue after WFP support ends, compared to activities that are part of the educational curriculum or integrated into teacher training colleges. WFP is supporting efforts to establish a training centre for cooks within the vocational training system in the Kyrgyz Republic.

144. After project support ends, schools continue to provide hot meals within the school meal programme, but with different frequencies and not always to the level outlined in the school meal programme materials and standards. The systems and procedures established require time and monetary investments to maintain. Not all schools can maintain the same degree of quality in managing these systems without WFP technical support. During evaluation school visits, this pattern was also observed, with meals served sometimes not meeting standards (for example, not including nutritious vegetables) or being of a lower standard (sometimes only serving hot meals twice a week). School performance is assessed through a school feeding monitoring module during the two years that a school receives WFP food assistance (or technical support in the case of the replication schools). However, in the absence of monitoring the quality of school performance after project support ends, the extent to which schools continue providing hot meals cannot be determined, nor the exact degree of the effect on school meal programme development outcomes (household safety nets, nutrition, etc.).

145. **The subsidization of the school meal programme through parental contributions may be an important bottleneck in the future.** While the MOES' allocation of resources for the school meal programme is a positive sign of sustainability, the levels of support have not been adjusted for over a decade and are not sufficient to account for inflation. As a result, in almost all schools, parents of primary-aged children are expected to provide a supplementary contribution to support school meals. This parental contribution has tripled since 2013 (from an average of 50 *Soms* (or USD 0.0046) a month to an average of 150 *Soms* (or USD 0.014) a month)¹⁴⁷ even as the MOES' contribution to the school meal programme has remained constant. Although there was only one case in WFP monitoring records of parental committees refusing to provide the contribution during project support, the increasing proportion of subsidization by parents required to sustain the school meal programme may become a barrier to future sustainability, especially after the employment and income shocks due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

146. Increasing parental contributions can also potentially negatively affect vulnerable households by requiring increased payments. During the data collection phase, school stakeholders reported that normally vulnerable families can be exempt from paying their contribution. However, this requires submitting a written request to the parental committee, which could expose some vulnerable families to public shaming.

147. The CSP has explored other mechanisms for subsidizing the costs of the school meal programme to mitigate the parental contribution burden. These include school gardens, private sector contributions, and income generation activities for schools. Based on project reports from donor projects, some of these activities have been established in specific schools but are not yet integrated into the formal MOES legislative frameworks for school meal programme implementation and are often left to individual action.

148. **There is no transition or transformation strategy currently documented in the CSP.** The CSP is focused on strengthening school meal programme national capacities for sustainability. Multiple interventions systematically target multiple levels of the MOES' system to ensure the integration of the school meal programme into national structures. However, no specific transition or transformation plan is elaborated with the Government for articulating the eventual transition from the WFP school meal

¹⁴⁷ The Kyrgyzstani Som (UZS) is the local currency of the Kyrgyz Republic. As of July 2022, the USD-UZS exchange rate is USD 1 = UZS 10,945.13.

programme to national support, nor a timeline for transformation of WFP relationships with the Government related to school meal programmes.

SO2/3: Livelihoods and climate change adaptation

149. **Sustainability challenges for SO2/SO3 involve maintaining the gains from project assets.** The selected activities align with the district and sub-district development plans. The SO2/SO3 activities may be envisioned as filling gaps in the provision of local district and government services, providing positive results at the output level. The interventions support community-level actions such as the cleaning of canals or the reconstruction of roads or bridges, but sustainability is limited since these projects were selected precisely because local government could not afford maintenance without WFP intervention. During the data collection interviews, beneficiaries in focus group discussions noted that they often participate annually in WFP projects cleaning the same canals or repairing the same infrastructure.

150. Additionally, despite the project logic based on a geographic multisectoral set of interventions designed to develop household and community infrastructure; no outcome measures currently reflect the long-term sustainability of these investments for changing community development. No outcome indicators track the entirety of a community or district's assets over time, such as determining whether a rehabilitated road continues to be maintained after the end of the project activity or whether a water system continues to function a year later. There is also no summative measure of community-level development changes, such as a community assets index (CAI) tracked at the level of sub-districts or districts to determine long-term changes or sustainability over time.¹⁴⁸

151. **The CSP does not describe an exit or transition strategy for SO2/SO3.** The project activities have functioned and there is strong local and district appreciation for WFP projects. However, no specific transition or transformation plan is elaborated with national government for articulating the eventual transition from SO2/SO3 activities from WFP to national support, nor a timeline for transformation of WFP relationships with the Government related to these parallel programmes.

SO4: Country capacity strengthening

152. SO4 activities have contributed to national systems but country capacity strengthening efforts have not institutionalized the capacity development processes necessary to sustain the gains. The national-level country capacity strengthening engagements are proxy approaches for maintaining sustainability. Within the vulnerability analysis and mapping component, activities are strategically integrated and resourced from ministries to sustain these data systems. The elaboration of the FSNP illustrates legislative grounding of SO4 engagements. The data management and analysis systems have been handed over to the Government already, but turnover of technical staff (leading to institutional memory loss) and limited evidence of data-informed decision making highlight the gap for institutionalization of these gains in capacity development.

SO5: COVID-19 response

153. SO5 was developed as a specific action to provide assistance to support early recovery within a focused period, with low expectations for sustainability. Based on interviews with municipal stakeholders, these activities could transition into a longer-term development programme targeting peri-urban vulnerable populations through cash-based transfers and linked to existing government programmes, but no articulated transformation plan is developed yet within WFP to examine this potential.

¹⁴⁸ WFP revised CRF 2017-2021 included the community assets score as an optional indicator which the country office opted not to include in the CSP logframe.

EQ2.4: To what extent did the country strategic plan facilitate more strategic linkages between and across humanitarian, development and peace work?

Summary

Historically, WFP has been engaged in facilitating strategic linkages within the nexus and this has continued during the CSP. However, external and internal factors, including the CSP architecture around three focus areas, and how external stakeholders perceive WFP, did not facilitate the strengthening of these linkages during the CSP period.

154. **WFP historically has been engaged in facilitating strategic linkages within the nexus, which has continued during the CSP.** Prior to the establishment of the CSP, WFP has engaged in all three dimensions of the nexus in the Kyrgyz Republic including a cross-border peacebuilding project. WFP has also coordinated actively within the UNCT as part of working groups involved in multiple sectors across the nexus. These engagements also continued during the CSP period through active engagement in coordination platforms and working groups covering multiple UNDAF priorities. Finally, in all project activity reviews, project review forms include an assessment of potential conflict sensitivity and the risk of the project to create inter- and intra- community conflicts.

155. The CSP architecture, distinguishing three focus areas (crisis response, resilience building and root causes), did not help facilitate new strategic linkages. The shift to a country portfolio approach that encompasses three focus areas (crisis responses, resilience building and root causes) was meant to facilitate the strategic linkages across the three dimensions of the nexus. Indeed, the CSP structure around focus areas and strategic outcomes was found to be helpful for engaging in emerging opportunities when these new opportunities are thematically consistent with an existing focus area. However, since the original CSP focused on root causes and resilience building and did not include a focus area on crisis response, it was harder for the country office to pivot to emergent opportunities that did not fall within an existing focus area. The country office addressed this after undertaking a budget revision that added a focus area and related strategic outcome on crisis response. These dynamics are described further in [EQ4.3: To what extent did the country strategic plan lead to partnerships and collaborations with other actors that positively influenced performance and results?](#) and [EQ4.4 To what extent did the country strategic plan provide greater flexibility in dynamic operational contexts and how did it affect results in particular as regards to the response to the COVID-19 and other unexpected crises and challenges?](#)

156. The WFP comparative advantages as perceived by partners have an unintended effect of limiting its messaging for strategic linkages across the nexus, especially peacebuilding. WFP has implemented peacebuilding activities and contributed to peacebuilding outcomes. Beyond the previous peacebuilding projects, WFP developed a conflict-sensitivity checklist tool during the CSP for project activities to further linkages to peacebuilding. Beneficiaries in interviews (and triangulated from the telephone survey responses) cited cite from the way projects were implemented that contributed to social cohesion (see [EQ2.1: To what extent did WFP deliver expected outputs and contribute to the expected country strategic plan strategic outcomes?](#)). These suggest that there are opportunities for engaging with peacebuilding. However, there are internal and external factors that prevent WFP from being perceived as a valid peacebuilding partner.

157. WFP is perceived as having comparative advantages in data analysis, coordination and delivery as well as being proactive, practical and flexible in problem solving. Thus, many of its technical support interventions focus on logistics, procurement and supply chain or on vulnerability mapping and targeting. Furthermore, because of limited resources, the country office has few advisors in development or peacebuilding fields. The absence of those advisors, while maintaining other advisors such as supply chain experts, may affect how other organizations perceive WFP inputs on these issues in coordination circles, even if WFP contributions to these themes are significant.

158. WFP corporate terminology sometimes led to misconceptions by external stakeholders (including donors) regarding the potential relevance of WFP to development or peacebuilding priorities. The terminology WFP uses corporately to conceptualize its role or describe key concepts is different from that of donors or other United Nations agencies. This has unintentionally reduced the perceived relevance of

WFP in national priorities or donor strategies. One example is the mismatch between the Government's national development strategy, which uses terminology such as the development of small and medium enterprises, employment and infrastructure development, and the WFP CSP terminology around resilience, food security and school meals. The actual actions taken may be similar (trainings and capacity strengthening for income generation activities, or rehabilitating community assets based on local development plans) but the language used has created an impression of disconnect, and potential areas of collaboration were not pursued. A 2018 WFP mission on social protection emphasized that if WFP were to provide effective support to government policy and programming, it first needed to fit itself into the current political narrative before it could engage the relevant ministry in alternative narratives.¹⁴⁹

159. This dynamic around language affected donor perceptions of the relative contributions of WFP to peacebuilding and development. Donors appreciate the ability of WFP to engage in rapid response, data and coordination, but did not see these as relevant to their long-term strategic plans within peacebuilding and development. A review of donor strategic plans identified opportunities for WFP to provide potential inputs into these areas. However, an evaluation team review of project proposals elaborated during the CSP shows few development and peacebuilding proposals funded among the many written.

2.3. EQ3: TO WHAT EXTENT HAS WFP USED ITS RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY IN CONTRIBUTING TO COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN OUTPUTS AND STRATEGIC OUTCOMES?

EQ 3.1 To what extent were outputs delivered within the intended timeframe? Were there any effects of the pandemic on the ability of WFP to deliver on time or its management of these including consequences on HR needs and management?

Summary

The evaluation found no significant delays in the delivery of outputs within the intended timeframe for the CSP except for the initial cash-based transfer disbursements in the SO5 emergency response. CSP implementation for SO3 was affected by delayed funding from the Green Climate Fund. The quality of the food transferred was good and beneficiaries and partners commended WFP for quality project organization and implementation. Beneficiary achievement was greater than transfer achievements because of pandemic reductions in ration size. Internal administration and donor processing created delays in expenditure reporting causing fluctuations year to year in utilization rates.

160. **The CSP displays consistent national programming quality.** WFP is consistent in how projects are implemented even though CSP direct assistance covers a wide range of districts and provinces. Beneficiary responses from the telephone surveys had no regional variations; respondents from all strategic outcomes and all regions consistently rated WFP highly in terms of quality of project implementation and quality of the products transferred.

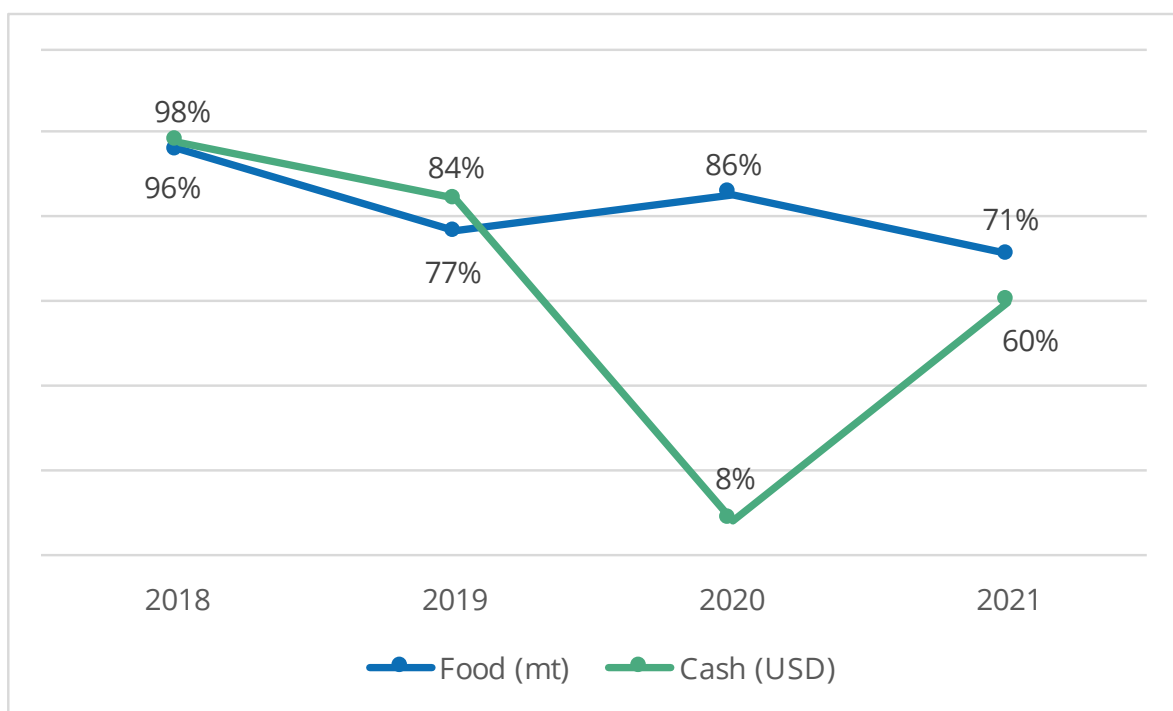
161. In-kind transfers (wheat and oil) have been timely, but cash transfers - principally found in SO5 Activity 9 - experienced delays. The Government manages all the logistics and facilitation of food transfers under SO1, SO2 and SO3 activities through the Ministry of Labour and Social Development. According to the WFP annual performance plans end-of-year reviews throughout the CSP cycle, the CSP has been successful in on-time delivery of commodities and non-food items and food losses are minimal to non-existent (Annex 10.8).¹⁵⁰ Food transfer achievement percentages were above 70 percent in 2018-2021 but cash achievements declined in 2020 during the pandemic to increase up to 60 percent in 2021 (Figure 18). Timeliness of individual strategic outcomes were internally consistent year to year (Figure 19) even if SO3 implementation was affected by delayed funding from the Green Climate Fund.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ HQ/RBC Social Protection Mission to Bishkek, 2018.

¹⁵⁰ WFP Kyrgyzstan. 2018-2020. Annual performance plans - end-of-year reviews.

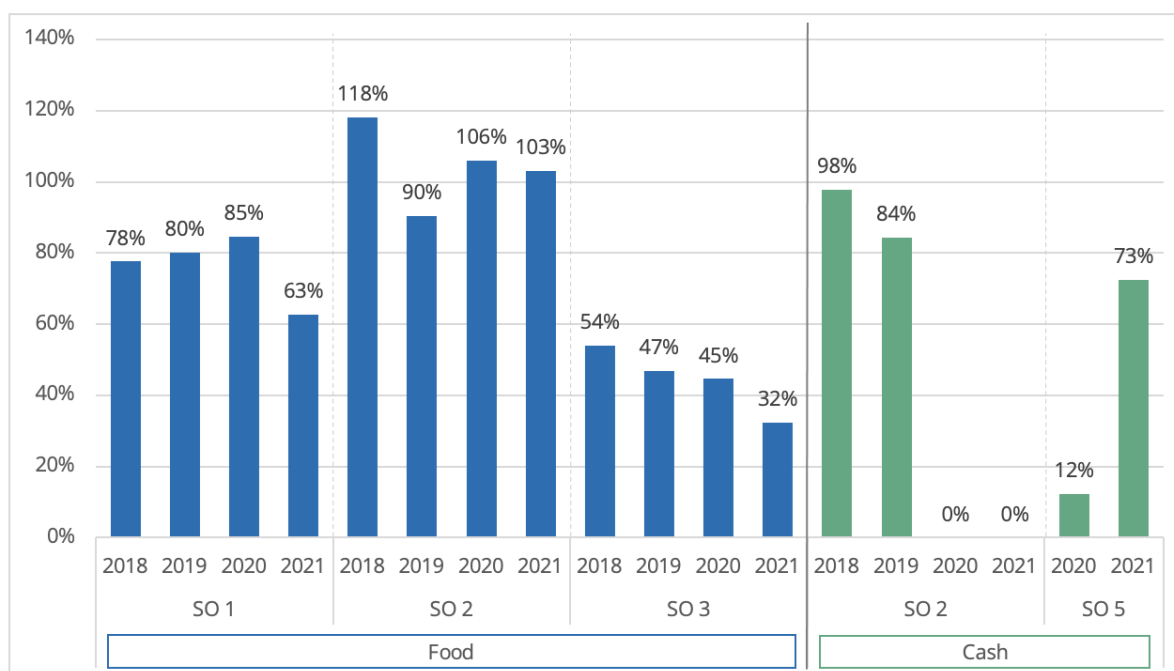
¹⁵¹ Mentioned in every ACR report from 2018-2020.

Figure 18: Food and cash-based transfer annual achievement rates



Source: ACRs 2018-2021.

Figure 19: Food and cash achievements by strategic outcome and year¹⁵²



Source: ACRs 2018-2021.

162. Over 98 percent of the beneficiaries in the telephone survey rated the food transfers as timely and of good quality, but below 50 percent for cash beneficiaries (Annex 9). The cash delays are related to a

¹⁵² The country office had planned to continue cash-based transfers in 2020 and 2021, but then did not receive expected funding to complete these - hence the achievement rate for CBT for 2020 and 2021 is 0 percent.

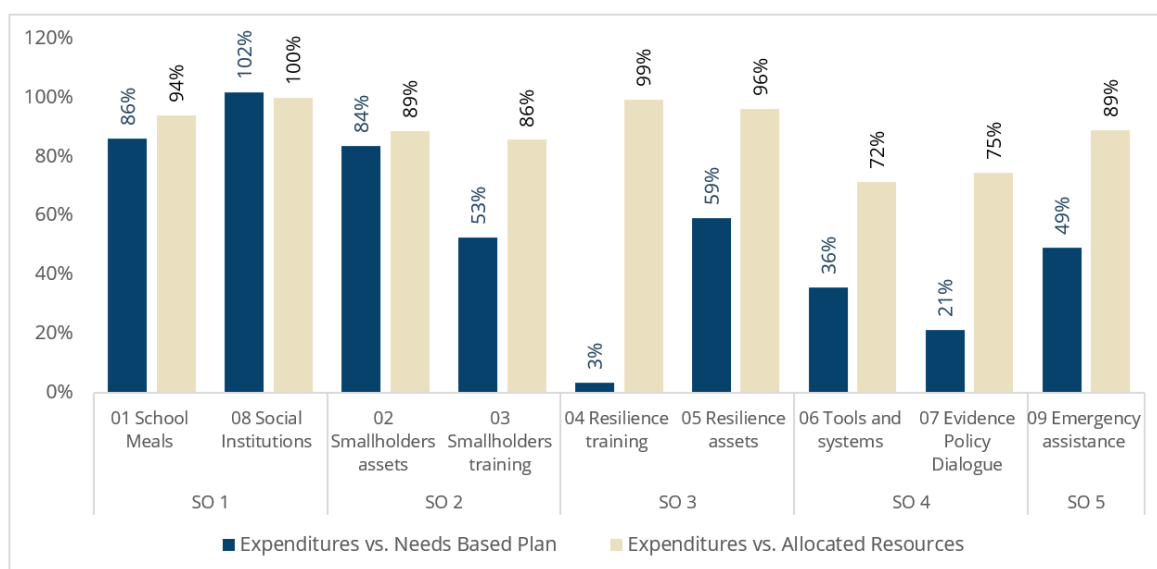
combination of factors, notably the fact that the CSP design did not include a crisis-response focus area and therefore required a budget revision. Other factors included delays in receiving funding from donors and establishing the necessary banking relationships for cash transfers (Further detailed in EQ4.4 To what extent did the country strategic plan provide greater flexibility in dynamic operational contexts and how did it affect results in particular as regards to the response to the COVID-19 and other unexpected crises and challenges?). The pandemic also affected the human resource capacity to deliver (described in EQ4.5: What are the other factors that can explain WFP performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected by the country strategic plan?).

163. **The assets and trainings created through in-kind transfers have been timely.** Tracking the creation of assets against annual targets infers efficiency in asset creation. Achievement rates for asset creation are high, with achievement rates against targets being met about 90 percent of the time for all assets (Annex 10.6).

Expenditure percentages are lower than transfer and asset creation percentages and more variable, suggesting processing delays in contributions. **Disbursement rates against the implementation plan can give a measure of insight into the timeliness of expenditures. The CSP reports a 65 percent expenditure rate against the implementation plans. These figures are slightly misleading due to some multi-year commitments. Because the country office received multi-year funding, funding for year 2022 is already included in financial reporting as allocated resources, although it is not actually available for spending in 2018-2021, leading to a perceived low expenditure rate. Within these caveats, the highest expenditure achievements are for SO1 and SO2 even as expenditure rates for all strategic outcomes declined substantively in 2020 due to the pandemic (Figure 20**

164. Figure 20).¹⁵³

Figure 20: Cumulative expenditure rates against the needs-based plan BR05 and allocated resources by activity¹⁵⁴



Source: ACR-1 report as of 31 December 2021. Direct and indirect support costs are not included in this figure.

165. **Fluctuations in expenditure rates are consistent with the fluctuation rates in achievements of outputs and transfers.** The utilization rate varies substantially among the strategic outcomes/activities and across the years (Figure 21).¹⁵⁵ When disaggregated by year, expenditure rates vary significantly even within a single strategic outcome. The COVID-19 pandemic has somewhat depressed expenditure

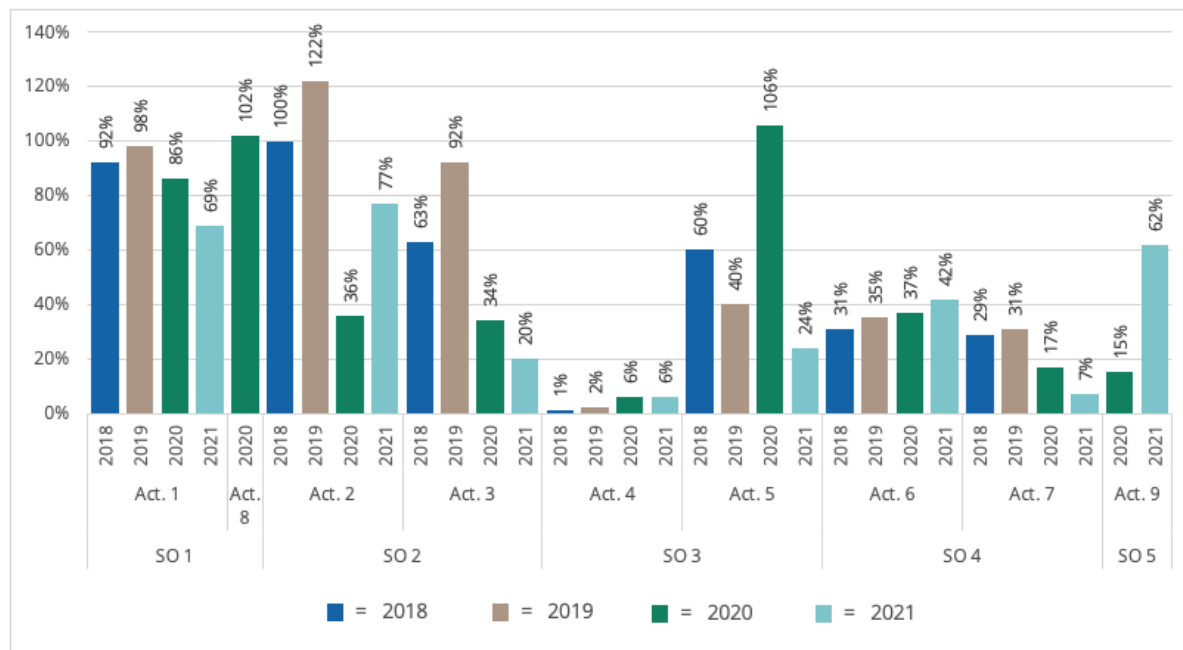
¹⁵³ Details against the NBP are found in Annex 10.

¹⁵⁴ This figure is a simplification to show a general overall pattern for the CSP based on the implementation plans. These are annual tools and not cumulative. Actual figures will differ if taken from ACRs.

¹⁵⁵ Annex 10 provides further details.

percentages. Fluctuation within and among the activity expenditures is not correlated with achievement rates of beneficiaries or delivery of transfers (Annex 10.3 and Annex 10.4). Beneficiary and transfer rates remain high and constant over the years even as expenditures vary, suggesting the variations are likely due to administration processes - such as donor contributions coming late in the year - creating challenges for same-year spending.

Figure 21: Expenditure rates against needs-based plan by activity and year



Source: ACR5-A-Annual Country Report 2018-2021. 2021 Data as of December 2021.

EQ3.2 To what extent was coverage and targeting of interventions appropriate? Were there any changes in coverage and targeting of interventions due to changing needs and WFP adaptations accordingly (as a result of the pandemic)?

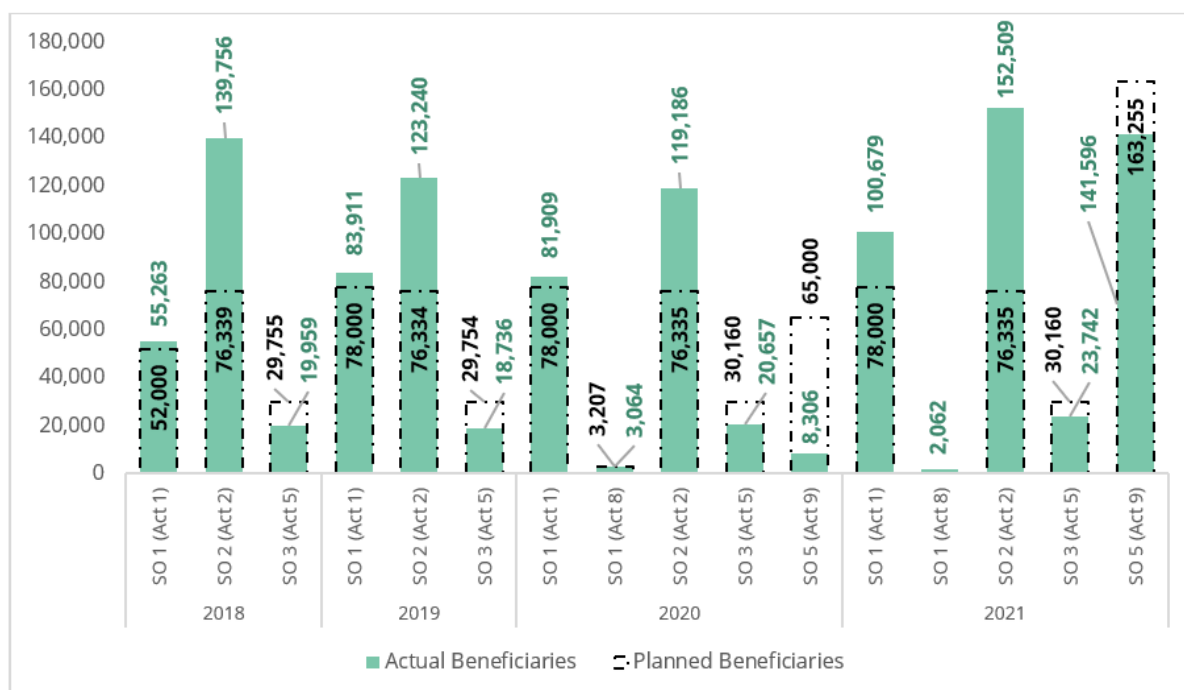
Summary

CSP national coverage is appropriate, with planned beneficiary targets mostly reached or exceeded. CSP targeting relies on justifiable methodologies. Operational targeting concerns mostly pertain to the use of conditional transfers and school criteria, possibly excluding the most vulnerable.

166. **The CSP has mostly reached its beneficiary targets.** The CSP beneficiaries are heavily represented in SO2 followed by SO1 activity (Figure 23). SO2 beneficiary overachievement compensated for underachievement in beneficiary reach in SO3 and SO5. Activity 5 beneficiary targets are underachieved throughout the CSP due to delayed Green Climate Fund funding, while in 2020, SO5 beneficiary targets were underachieved due to the first cash distributions starting late (December 2020). During the pandemic, the CSP adapted to reach increased numbers of beneficiaries, despite the disruptions, by halving the food ration package (and work requirements) to include more beneficiaries in specific projects. The cash value in SO5 was also halved to double the potential coverage. Figure 22 provides a summary of beneficiary achievement by strategic outcome and year.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁶ 2021 values are only as of 31 October, 2021 and will increase by year end.

Figure 22: Beneficiaries by year and strategic outcome



Source: ACRs 2018-2021.

167. **CSP targeting is appropriate and based on an evidence-based methodology.** Targeting is done using a two-step process. Initially, data from integrated context analysis exercises were used to analyse multiple vulnerability dimensions including poverty, food security, agricultural production, susceptibility to shocks and climate change. This process led to the identification of 27 target districts (and 296 sub-districts) across five provinces that had the greatest vulnerability. In those districts, specific beneficiaries were identified based initially on the social registries of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and verified through follow-up assessments to confirm their vulnerability status. About 80 percent of the beneficiaries are found in 17 districts located in the southern provinces of Osh, Jalalabad and Batken. The CSP logic included a multi-dimensional geographic-based approach whereby the three original strategic outcomes with field-based activities prioritized operations within these districts. For SO1, the selection of schools to receive the full WFP school meal programme package (non-food items, trainings, technical support and two years of rations) was based within the targeted 27 districts using the food security data. For schools outside these districts, WFP employed the replication system to provide technical support but not the food rations. When SO5 activities began, the CSP coverage shifted to include the peri-urban vulnerable households as noted in EQ2.1: To what extent did WFP deliver expected outputs and contribute to the expected country strategic plan strategic outcomes?

168. **The CSP meets beneficiary needs although there is a potential concern from unintended exclusion of vulnerable households.** Over 85 percent of telephone survey beneficiary respondents positively rated SO2, SO3 and SO5 activities as contributing to household and community infrastructure changes and more than 95 percent of school meal programme stakeholders surveyed reported positive changes in the schools for SO1 contributions.¹⁵⁷ Targeting is considered good with only a few concerns (Annex 10.4). The beneficiary inclusion error is low (usually less than 3 percent according to WFP monitoring data). The exclusion error is not tracked although it is largely recognized that there are more vulnerable households in the targeted districts than can actually be supported by WFP. The primary targeting concerns pertain to the conditionality requirements in the beneficiary selection criteria, which may exclude the extremely vulnerable households who cannot work for health or childcare reasons (covered in EQ1.2: To what extent did the country strategic plan address the needs of the most vulnerable people in the country

¹⁵⁷ Annex 9 provides more details.

to ensure that no one is left behind? To what extent were changes in beneficiary or caseload profiles identified in response to COVID-19?).

169. **The selection criteria of SO1 schools potentially limits the participation of the most vulnerable schools.** The country office consults with the MOES to determine which schools meet the operational criteria, which are: the willingness of school authorities to be involved, the presence of water, electricity, a suitable space at the school for administering hot meals and a district commitment to cost share. Despite WFP selection of vulnerable districts for support, the most vulnerable schools within these districts often do not meet the requirements to receive WFP support. WFP is working with the MOES to try and obtain additional funding for the ministry to provide the necessary infrastructure support to these schools so that they can participate, although this funding has not yet materialized.

170. For the direct assistance activities under SO2, SO3 and SO5, a collaborative beneficiary targeting process based on Ministry of Labour and Social Development registers ensured alignment and geographic distribution of project activities. Project activity and beneficiary selection involves close collaboration with local authorities down to the village level, consistent with good development practice. Specific project activities are selected through a consultative process that begins with village heads consulting with local citizens on project needs, which are then communicated to sub-district leaders, who in turn identify those projects aligned with sub-district development plans. The selections are then passed to district leaders where final projects are chosen by the project coordination committee based on district development plans.

171. The selection of beneficiaries is conducted in collaboration with Ministry of Labour and Social Development representatives in each district who manage the vulnerability registers that track vulnerable households and the social assistance support they receive through the various government social protection programmes. WFP conducts a review of a sample of proposed beneficiaries for inclusion in the projects to confirm eligibility.

172. For the crisis response activities under SO5, beneficiaries were selected through a process relying on local authorities and Ministry of Labour and Social Development district representatives in the targeted towns. Beneficiary targeting came from a combination of three sources filtered through the local Ministry of Labour and Social Development representatives representing three types of vulnerability: UBK (vulnerable), unemployment registers, and the COVID-19 hotline. The multiple streams of registers used allowed for expanded household coverage. The relative percentage of beneficiaries presented to WFP from these multiple sources is tracked by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development but not shared with WFP.

EQ3.3 To what extent were WFP activities cost-efficient in delivery of its assistance? In particular, were there any additional costs incurred regarding COVID-19 protective measures?

Summary

The country strategic plan cost efficiency is overall considered reasonable although there is variation in efficiency across strategic outcomes and activities. The pandemic and the shift to a response supporting early recovery reduced efficiency in 2020 but this was regained in 2021. Food transfers are more cost-effective for WFP than cash because of the government management of food distribution.

173. Cost-efficiency can be examined from multiple perspectives including: i) direct support costs (DSC) as a percentage of total direct costs;¹⁵⁸ ii) transfer value for in-kind food/cash-based transfer assistance as a percentage of the total transfer costs; or iii) transfer costs per beneficiary for a given amount of food or cash distributed.

174. Total direct cost expenditures and the share of direct support costs varied across years depending on available funding and level of implementation. The pandemic affected efficiency performance within the CSP in 2020-2021. The annual CSP total direct cost expenditures ranged between USD 6.1 million and USD 9.2 million (Table 19). Variations are primarily due to the annual funding level as well as the scale of

¹⁵⁸ Annex 10.2 and Annex 10.3 provides detailed analysis of expenditures and transfers.

implementation. The lowest direct costs expenditures were observed in 2020 and can be explained by the reduced implementation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (Annex 10). When looking at the percentage of direct support costs against total direct costs, it varies between 5.5 percent in 2019 and 8 percent in 2021. This increase is likely due to: i) the reduced level of implementation in 2020 while fixed costs such as country office staff remained constant; and ii) the addition of new activities (BR03 for Activity 8, BR04 for Activity 9). Table 19 summarizes the direct support costs per year.

Table 19: Direct support costs expenditures as a percentage of total direct costs

Cost category	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total direct operational costs	7,694,479	8,720,598	5,664,577	8,016,280
Direct support costs	489,046	512,264	482,799	700,271
Total direct costs	8,183,525	9,232,863	6,147,376	8,716,551
DSC as percentage of total direct costs	6.0%	5.5%	7.9%	8.0%

Source: ACR5 - annual country reports 2018-2021.

175. **Some efficiency gains were observed despite the impact of the pandemic.** Table 20 shows that for both food and cash-based transfer assistance, the percentage of the transfer value out of the total transfer costs was in most instances higher in practice than what had been originally envisaged in the needs-based plan.¹⁵⁹ This suggests that the country office was able to seek some efficiencies. The percentage of the transfer value is higher for in-kind food assistance than for cash-based transfer because of the government contribution to managing and facilitating the logistics of food distributions.

Table 20: Food/cash-based transfer value as a percentage of total food/cash-based transfer cost (needs-based plan v actuals)

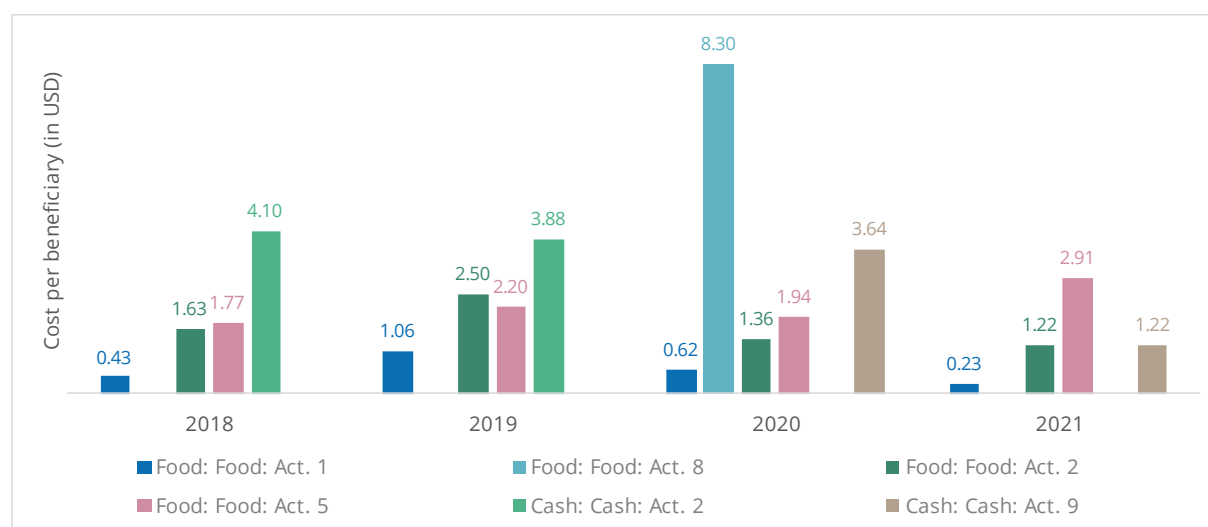
Activity	Modality	2018		2019		2020		2021	
		NBP	Actual	NBP	Actual	NBP	Actual	NBP	Actual
Act. 1	Food	73%	93%	76%	75%	77%	86%	77%	90%
Act. 8	Food	-	-	-	-	85%	84%	-	-
Act. 2	Food	87%	94%	88%	94%	88%	88%	87%	94%
	Cash	79%	83%	81%	84%	81%	-	81%	-
Act. 5	Food	82%	92%	82%	87%	82%	97%	96%	-
Act. 9	Cash	-	-	-	-	93%	84%	90%	93%

Sources: CPB - Plan vs Actuals Report v2.1 Extracted on 31 December 2021, ACRs. Green shade denotes actuals exceeding NBP while red shading denotes actuals falling short of NBP.

176. **Transfer costs per beneficiary vary considerably across strategic outcomes and activities.** Transfer costs per beneficiary are lower for Activity 1 (SO1) compared to Activity 2 (SO2). This is explained by the large number of beneficiaries under Activity 1, which leads to some efficiency gains despite the fact that costs associated with Activity 1 also include wrap-around support to system building in schools beyond food delivery. Even although Activity 2 (SO2) and Activity 5 (SO3) are implemented under the same CSP programming structure, the transfer costs per beneficiary for Activity 5 are higher than for Activity 2. This is explained by the fact that Activity 2 involves more trainings than Activity 5. As only half rations are provided for trainings, this lowers the costs per beneficiary. Under Activity 8 (SO1) and Activity 9 (SO5), costs per beneficiary were quite high in 2020 at the start of the projects in response to COVID-19. However, as the funding became more established and as more beneficiaries were being reached in 2021, the transfer costs per beneficiary declined for both activities. Additional factors affecting Activity 9 are further described in EQ4.4 To what extent did the country strategic plan provide greater flexibility in dynamic operational contexts and how did it affect results in particular as regards to the response to the COVID-19 and other unexpected crises and challenges?. Figure 23 shows the actual transfer costs per beneficiary by year and activity.

¹⁵⁹ Total direct costs include the transfer value, transfer costs and implementation costs; transfer value represents the purchase price of the food provided to the beneficiaries; transfer costs are costs incurred in transferring the commodity or service to the beneficiaries or recipients.

Figure 23: Actual transfer costs per beneficiary by year and activity (in USD)¹⁶⁰



Source: CPB-Plan vs. Actuals Report as of 31 December 2021, and COMET actual beneficiaries 2018-2021, as of 31 December, 2021.

EQ3.4 To what extent were alternative, more cost-effective measures considered?

Summary

Alternative cost-effective measures have been explored within the country strategic plan. The feasibility of alternative measures is constrained by an operating environment almost entirely reliant on international in-kind food assistance and where the Government already manages all internal storage and distribution costs. There is little adjustment that can be made at the macro-level, but there are actions for increased programme cost effectiveness found in all strategic outcomes. Small operational inefficiencies could be improved although these are likely to result in marginal gains.

177. **Macro-level cost-effective measures are constrained by donor parameters.** Alternative cost-effective measures may include exploring local procurement for food distributions or switching from food to cash transfer modality. However, within the larger operating context of the CSP, these types of measures cannot be adjusted easily. The contributions from the CSP's largest donors are exclusively in-kind food assistance, so local procurement options are therefore not possible. Cash-based transfer is used for projects funded by other donors, but these comprise only a small percentage of CSP resourcing. Because of government complementarity in the management of food transfers, food is more cost-effective for WFP in the Kyrgyz Republic than cash transfers and savings cannot be made in supply chain adjustments since those are with the Government.

178. **Individual strategic outcomes have considered cost-effective measures.** Strategic outcomes have explored cost-effectiveness through a variety of mechanisms. For example, under SO1, efforts have been made to promote alternative means to subsidize the school meals costs and mitigate the costs on parent committees. The school meal programme has also supported processing centres to increase the availability of vegetables for schools (and reduce costs). In SO2, SO3, and SO5, cost-sharing contributions from district authorities are both to help promote sustainability and to increase ownership of the project activities, but they also reduce the costs of the project asset creation and trainings as well. Collaborations with the Ministry of Labour and Social Development representatives at all levels increases the efficiency of beneficiary recruitment and management.

¹⁶⁰ Calculation based on division of cost of transfer by the number of beneficiaries in each activity.

179. **Operational cost efficiency is considered, with some operational inefficiencies in strategic outcome management.** The primary transfer costs are relatively stable and cannot be more efficiently managed. This includes staff salaries and cooperating partner costs. Government-managed food distribution reduces WFP transfer costs. The use of open tenders among cooperating partners can reduce partner costs. WFP has also conducted periodic assessments of food versus cash efficiencies in rural and urban areas. Staffing costs are efficient given that there are few international contracts.¹⁶¹ Operational efficiency could be marginally improved in the coordination and management of WFP field monitoring assistants and field visits conducted by the different strategic outcomes where currently multiple vehicles each carry different strategic outcome personnel while traveling to the same district and sub-district.

2.4. EQ4: WHAT ARE THE FACTORS THAT EXPLAIN WFP PERFORMANCE AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT HAS MADE THE STRATEGIC SHIFT EXPECTED BY THE COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN?

*EQ4.1 To what extent did WFP analyse or use existing evidence on the hunger challenges and on the food security and nutrition issues in the country to develop the country strategic plan? Were there any data specific to the COVID-19 response being collected that had not been collected previously?*¹⁶²

Summary

The CSP design is appropriately based on food security evidence and well-informed by corporate sources and studies. Recurring food security and vulnerability mapping allows for updates of WFP geographic interventions and responding to emergent issues such as the pandemic.

180. **The design of the CSP was based on an array of appropriate evidence analyses.** The CSP design was built on the previous two development projects, each of which had a strategic focus on addressing the root causes of malnutrition, poverty and food insecurity, and on building community and household resilience to shocks. The CSP design was further informed by the 2017 Zero Hunger National Strategic Review,¹⁶³ the 2016 evaluations of the two previous development projects¹⁶⁴ and a gender analysis.¹⁶⁵ An evaluation of WFP's Policy on Capacity Development (for which the Kyrgyz Republic was a case study)¹⁶⁶ and the 2017 UNDAF evaluation also fed into the CSP design. In the design, WFP integrated the recommendations of the 2016 evaluations to continue enhancing linkages with government social protection systems, and to focus on the institutionalization of the projects, as well as strengthen national capacities at both central and decentralized levels. The recommendations also suggested that WFP continue to support the development of an evidence base to inform policy decisions and capacity strengthening. The country office also supported assessments within thematically relevant areas including school meals, food assistance for assets, social protection and food security, agro-forestry, SDG positioning and peacebuilding.

181. **The design of the CSP was further informed by other consultative and research processes.** WFP facilitated a multisector workshop in 2017 to consider government partner priorities and agree on opportunities for WFP support. Throughout the CSP, evaluations included both in-country evaluations such as the rural women's empowerment project and global evaluations such as the Gender Policy Evaluation (for which the Kyrgyz Republic was a case study). There are no documented actions that show how these evaluations changed CSP implementation, as the pattern of CSP activities do not appear to have shifted from year to year.¹⁶⁷ The biggest changes in CSP programming have been due to the pandemic, described in more detail in EQ2.2 To what extent did WFP contribute to achievement of cross-cutting priorities

¹⁶¹ Country office staff data disaggregated by gender (annual performance plans, 2018-2021).

¹⁶² EQ4.1 overlaps with EQ1.1 with primary details presented in EQ1.1.

¹⁶³ National Institute for Strategic Studies, *Food Security Governance Review* (2017).

¹⁶⁴ WFP. 2017. Operation Evaluation of the Development project 200176 "Optimizing the Primary School Meals Programme (February 2013–December 2017)", WFP. 2017. Operation Evaluation of the Development project 200662 "Support for National Productive Safety Nets and Long-Term Community Resilience (July 2014–December 2017)."

¹⁶⁵ WFP Kyrgyz Republic, *Gender Analysis*, WFP CSP 2018-2022.

¹⁶⁶ WFP. 2015. *Evaluation of WFP's Policy on Capacity Development (2009-2015)*.

¹⁶⁷ The global gender evaluation recommendations were not required to be addressed by the Kyrgyz Republic's country office as it was a global evaluation, but there is also no other indication of how this evaluation may have shaped subsequent CSP actions.

(protection, accountability to affected populations, gender and other equity considerations, as well as the environment)? In addition, did the response to COVID-19 change the degree of contribution in any of these areas? and EQ4.4 To what extent did the country strategic plan provide greater flexibility in dynamic operational contexts and how did it affect results in particular as regards to the response to the COVID-19 and other unexpected crises and challenges?.

182. **The pandemic led to new data collection exercises.** As described in EQ1.3: To what extent has the strategic positioning of WFP remained relevant throughout the implementation of the country strategic plan in light of changing context, national capacities and needs – in particular in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?, the pandemic led to updated data collection exercises related to food insecurity. EQ2.2 To what extent did WFP contribute to achievement of cross-cutting priorities (protection, accountability to affected populations, gender and other equity considerations, as well as the environment)? In addition, did the response to COVID-19 change the degree of contribution in any of these areas? describes the pandemic's effect on the frequency of data analysis exercises such as the weekly price bulletins. New assessments on the effects of the pandemic on peri-urban populations were conducted, as noted in EQ1.3: To what extent has the strategic positioning of WFP remained relevant throughout the implementation of the country strategic plan in light of changing context, national capacities and needs – in particular in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?, which led to the subsequent development of SO5.

EQ4.2 To what extent has WFP been able to mobilize adequate, predictable and flexible resources to finance the country strategic plan? Did the pandemic have any effects on financial needs and the level of funding of any additional requests?

Summary

CSSP resourcing benefits from flexible and multi-year funding but is at risk because of minimal donor diversity, although there are potential new opportunities for the next CSP. The pandemic provided opportunities for additional funding to support early recovery responding to COVID-19, but did not substantively change funding needs or requests for the originally designed CSP programming.

183. **Resource mobilization has been overall stable during the period 2018-2021 but is at risk due to low donor diversity.** The CSP has benefitted from stable long-term funding commitments from the Russian Federation, which comprises over 76.5 percent of all donor commitments and nearly half of the needs-based plan.¹⁶⁸ In December 2021 the needs-based plan was funded at 61.28 percent.¹⁶⁹ Figure 24 depicts allocated contributions against the needs-based plan¹⁷⁰ by donor.

Figure 24: CSP resourcing by donor

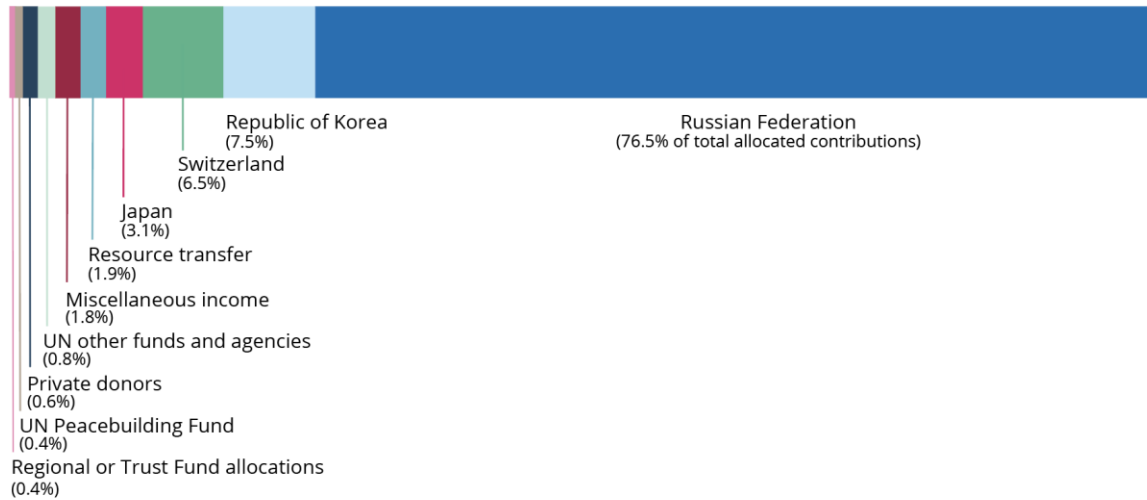
¹⁶⁸ Annex 10.

¹⁶⁹ FACTory. CSP Kyrgyzstan Annual Resource Situation Report (2018-2021). Extracted 31 December 2021. When the funding is calculated based on IRM Analytics data, the funding percentage is 64 percent. Variation between FACTory and IRM Analytics data is due to IRM Analytics including allocated resources up to the date when data is downloaded, and FACTory including resources already committed for the future.

¹⁷⁰ The NBP after BR5 approved in mid-2021.

Funding sources of the CSP Kyrgyzstan (as of 31 December 2021)

61.28 percent of the needs-based plan (NBP) funded (USD 42,058,542 million out of USD 68,634,703 million).



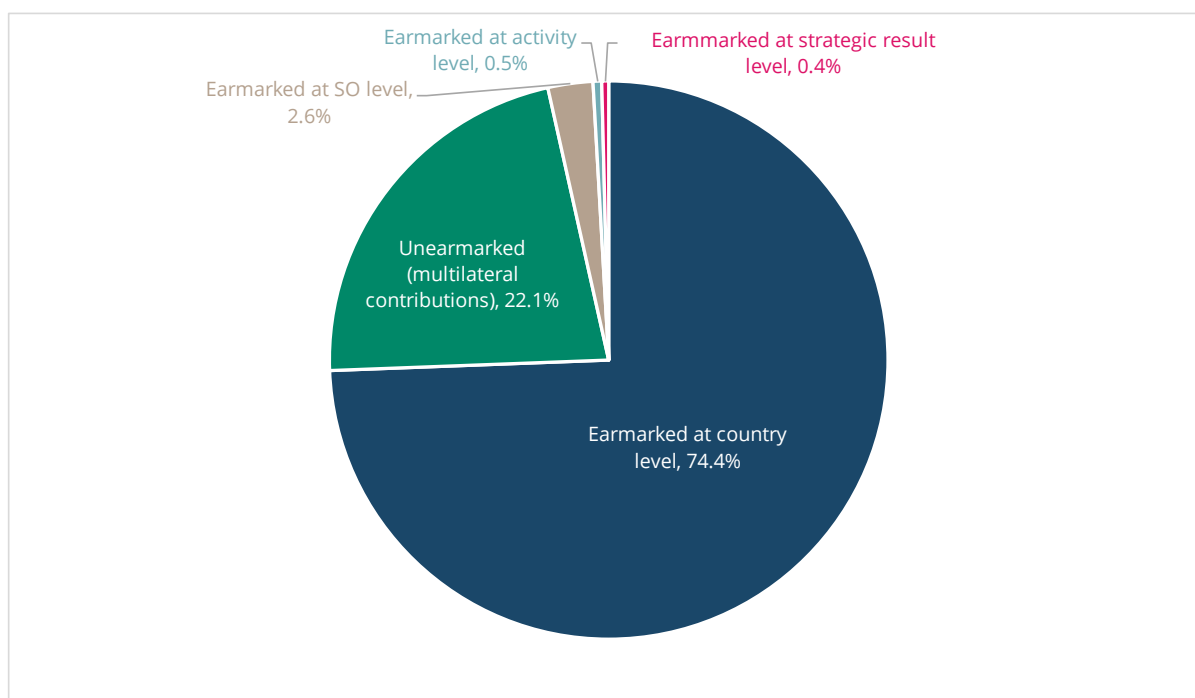
Source: CSP Kyrgyzstan Resource Situation Report (2018-2022) vs latest NBP, FACTory. Extracted on 31 December 2021.

184. **Donor diversity is low.** Donor diversity in the CSP portfolio is relatively low. As of December 2021, 76.5 percent of the total allocated resources were coming from one donor and the number of donors per year has declined from seven donors in 2018 to three donors in 2021.¹⁷¹ Other donor-funded projects were also implemented earlier in the CSP period including the rural women’s empowerment project and the cross-border peacebuilding project.

185. **The CSP benefits from a high percentage of flexible funding with multi-year commitments.** Most of the directed multilateral contributions (74.4 percent) were confirmed at the country level, primarily from the three largest donors, whereas 22.1 was unearmarked. Only 2.6 percent of the funding was earmarked at the strategic outcome-level and 0.4 percent at the activity level (Figure 25). Earmarked funding came primarily from the relatively small donors comprised under "miscellaneous income". Additional details on earmarking are available in Annex 10.

¹⁷¹ Annex 10, Resource Situation Report, 2018-2021. 5 October, 2021.

Figure 25: Allocated resources by earmarking level



Source: FACTory. Distribution contribution and forecast stats and resource situation reports. Extracted on 31 December 2021.

186. The pandemic created opportunities for funding to support assistance for early recovery but did not affect long-term patterns in resourcing to the rest of the CSP. The Swiss contribution emerged as part of the pandemic response; a crucial donor for Activities 8 and 9. This funding led to the elaboration of SO5 and subsequent inclusion of more than 100,000 beneficiaries into the CSP coverage. However, other activities within the CSP were not substantively affected. The resourcing patterns prior to the pandemic (in terms of which strategic outcomes might be underfunded or to what degree they were underfunded) continued in the same pattern during 2020 and 2021. No new projects were financed or funded during this period – leading to the donor diversity decline described earlier.

187. **Avenues for future funding diversity exist for the CSP.** The current CSP has limited examples of joint programming, but the UNDAF evaluation and the CSPE identified an increased appetite for joint programming among the UNCT agencies. Furthermore, there may be an opportunity for renewed support under the next CSP cycle from some less prominent donors that had funded the earlier stage of the current CSP implementation. Proposals submitted by the country office were not funded, with some donors saying that their strategic plans do not align with the WFP mandate – although this is likely more a misunderstanding of WFP positioning than a true divergence. The country office collaborated with the regional bureau in seeking to present the strategic outcomes in better alignment with European Union donor funding, but this has not yet resulted in diversifying funding sources. Finally, interviews indicate that climate change resources will continue to be available in the Kyrgyz Republic and are likely to increase. This may provide good opportunities for WFP if appropriately positioned for climate change adaptation engagement. The success of SO5 interventions also indicates potential for expanded peri-urban programming through linkages to employment-oriented mechanisms.

EQ4.3: To what extent did the country strategic plan lead to partnerships and collaborations with other actors that positively influenced performance and results?

Summary

WFP has maintained pre-existing partnerships with the UNCT, the Government, and NGOs, with new partnerships emerging in response to COVID-19. WFP plays an important coordination role within the UNCT and partnerships with government ministries are long term and strong, although often siloed. Partnerships within climate change adaptation exist but have not been operationalized due to funding delays. Potential exists for strengthening relationships with existing NGO partners.

188. WFP has facilitated good coordination for development and crisis response within the UNCT.

WFP has a reputation of being actively engaged within the UNCT and engaged with the UN Resident Coordinator's office, coordinating with a wide range of United Nations agencies including UNICEF, FAO, ILO, and UNDP. Interviews with UNCT members highlight good relationships with WFP and appreciation of their contributions. WFP is seen as active in the various platforms including the COVID-19 response platform. WFP led the procurement of personal protective equipment (PPE) and analyses prepared by the UNCT.

189. Related to United Nations agencies, WFP strengths in coordination are greater than in collaboration. The recently completed UNDAF evaluation noted that relatively few examples of joint programming among the UNCT memberships exist. One example consistently cited is the rural women's empowerment project funded by Japan that finished in 2018. This included collaborations with WFP, UN Women, IFAD, and FAO. Another example was a cross-border project funded through the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) that included collaborations with UNICEF, UNDP, UN Women and FAO. The establishment of an annual joint retreat with Rome based agencies - FAO and IFAD - to develop an annual joint workplan was also mentioned. Progress on these joint retreats was interrupted by the pandemic, but respondents still cited this as an important activity for UNCT collaborations.

190. WFP partnerships with government ministries are long-term and strong although often siloed. WFP has long standing relationships with four ministries (the Ministry of Education and Sciences, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry and Melioration, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Development), which pre-existed the CSP development. WFP engagement with the Government is often siloed both because of individual strategic outcomes and because of limited government inter-ministerial coordination. SO1 relates to the Ministry of Education and Sciences, SO2 relates to the department levels of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development but does not engage with national-level stakeholders. In contrast, the SO4 relationships are primarily at the national level rather than with district and sub-districts. SO4 relates to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry and Melioration and the Ministry of Education and Sciences as well as the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, however, different units within the country office usually have specific relationships with each ministry. Another limitation is that WFP relationships with ministries are stronger at the technical levels but less at higher political levels due to the constant shifts in government structures and personnel. The country office has been fostering inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms throughout the CSP cycle although the level of activeness of these structures can be affected by government transitions and shifts. The country office also provides limited reporting on these inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms, which reduces the evidence base for WFP contributions.

191. Government partnerships within climate change adaptation have been limited during the current CSP due to limited funding and ongoing institutional reforms. One of the implications of the Green Climate Fund funding delay is that it limited the operational engagement with government climate change adaptation stakeholders. Among the specific projects supported, most are aligned with the disaster risk reduction programmes sponsored under the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES) rather than climate change adaptation activities that would be connected to the lead climate change adaptation ministries and departments within the Government. Disaster risk reduction is important, and indirectly connected to climate change adaptation, but the climate change adaptation strategic outcome should have a greater scope than just a disaster risk reduction focus and would need to link with different government units leading climate change adaptation, including different government sectoral priorities. Coordination has

happened with local climate change adaptation actors and WFP is the co-chair for formulating the climate change adaptation outcomes in the upcoming UNSDCF, but climate change adaptation outcome indicators are not yet reported on systematically nor linked to operational outputs, reducing their visibility in the documented evidence base. Furthermore, ongoing governmental reforms affect partnership development. For example, as part of disaster risk reduction, WFP has emphasized collaboration with Kyrgyz Hydromet, the key state body for the upcoming Green Climate Fund project, which was under the Ministry of Emergency Situations. In late 2020, however, Kyrgyz Hydromet was relocated to the former State Committee on Environment and Climate and promoted to the status of a ministry, before being placed back under the Ministry of Emergency Situations in 2021.

192. **WFP relationships with NGO organizations have changed over the CSP.** WFP has relationships with non-state cooperating partners, primarily in the school meal programme and SO2/SO3 implementation. There are fewer examples of civil society organization engagement at the national level, and less diversity of engagement among civil society organization actors as evidenced by the country capacity strengthening activity tracking tables for SO1 and SO4 (Annex 10.7). The limited number of activities cited under P5 (engagement of civil society organization and private sector) is noteworthy as this is a shift from the 2016 school meal programme evaluation, which cited that WFP had a strong core of private sector and NGO partnerships. The 2016 school meal programme recommendations suggested strengthening the linkages of the school meal programme to government institutions, especially at the district levels. This appears to have happened, but at the expense of reducing the degree of NGO and civil society organization engagement. During interviews, NGOs consistently noted that they felt less included as partners in decision making and strategic visions during the CSP period in comparison to the past. They are still engaged as partners in the school meal programme, but NGOs now perceive themselves to be primarily contracted service providers.

193. **WFP developed new partnerships during the COVID-19 response and strengthened existing relationships.** During the pandemic, WFP made significant progress in covering a new beneficiary group (peri-urban vulnerable populations) and building new relationships with local municipal authorities. In SO2 and SO3 implementation, WFP established new relationships with small local NGOs and organizations such as the village health committees to aid project monitoring and ongoing situation assessments of COVID-19 effects in the communities. At the national level, the Swiss funding was an important new partnership, although it is not anticipated to last beyond the current SO5 project cycle.

194. **Opportunities for strengthening partnership relationships exist.** There are opportunities for building on the strengths of existing partnerships through increased joint project implementation within the UNCT, to engage with ministries such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Development for policy support on government social protection programmes, and to build coalitions of NGOs as collaborators rather than just service providers.

EQ4.4 To what extent did the country strategic plan provide greater flexibility in dynamic operational contexts and how did it affect results in particular as regards to the response to the COVID-19 and other unexpected crises and challenges?

Summary

The CSP has responded to evolving opportunities and adapted programming to emerging needs. The CSP architecture, without a strategic outcome dedicated to crisis response, inhibited WFP capacity to swiftly respond to the COVID-19 crisis with entirely new projects that were not able to be categorized within the existing activities. These CSP structural limitations and subsequent design choices for SO5 reduced the speed of the response and beneficiary coverage in SO5. The CSP shows limited linkages among strategic outcomes even although the CSP architecture is intended to promote this.

195. **The CSP has allowed WFP to respond to evolving opportunities and adapt programming to emerging needs within existing projects.** Consistent references throughout stakeholder interviews to WFP flexibility and proactiveness to respond to emergent needs indicates that the CSP has been successful in this. The CSP also provides flexibility for engaging in the “invisible work” building relationships with ministries necessary for country capacity strengthening. The CSP structure enabled resource allocation to

underfunded streams such as supporting SO3 activities under SO2 resourcing when the expected Green Climate Fund allocations did not arrive. The country office was also able to adjust its existing activities during the pandemic even before accessing the dedicated funding for activities 8 and 9. This included the distribution of SO1 rations to families during school closures, the advancement of food rations in SO2 ongoing projects, prioritizing of COVID-19-affected households in new SO2 projects in consultation with the departmental representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, and carrying out rapid assessments to support the Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

196. The CSP architecture and focus on development inhibited WFP capacity to swiftly respond to the COVID-19 crisis with entirely new projects. Even although the CSP was able to adapt existing projects rapidly for the COVID-19 response, the CSP architecture did not have crisis response as a focus area, inhibiting WFP capacity to integrate entirely new projects into its programming during the pandemic. WFP stakeholders considered the WFP response to have been less than ideal due to delays in finalizing budget revisions and shortages in human resources. However, external stakeholders were more positive about WFP responsiveness to the COVID-19 crisis than WFP country office stakeholders.

197. **Activity 8 exemplifies the challenge of pivoting under CSP architecture.** When the Swiss Embassy approached WFP during the 2020 pandemic to request WFP assistance in facilitating the delivery of wheat and oil to the elder care hostels and orphanages that the Swiss supported, WFP was a logical partner. However, the project did not fit within the existing CSP line of sight and could not be integrated into any of the existing activities. SO1 was the most sensible place to house this ad-hoc project because of the delivery of food, but the activity under SO1 was exclusively oriented to interventions associated with school meal programme roll-out in primary schools. Delivering wheat to a new set of beneficiaries for a one-off engagement did not neatly fit under this activity. Consequently, WFP had to process a budget revision to introduce a new activity under SO1. Budget revisions can require up to three months to finalize, despite the limited resources involved (less than 0.04 percent of the annual CSP budget). As a result, the process delayed delivery of the food rations to the orphanages and elder care hostels, slowing what should have been a rapid response to a crisis.

198. This situation resulted from not having any crisis response focus area within the original CSP design. In contrast, ad-hoc opportunities for development-related projects, such as the projects with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to support smallholders, were integrated relatively seamlessly into the existing SO2 or SO3 activities without any budget revisions.

199. **CSP structural factors and programme choices reduced the speed of response and beneficiary coverage in SO5.** Beneficiary achievements in SO5 for 2020 did not meet targets. Four factors reduced the speed of the initial response. First, the budget revision process delayed the beginning of project implementation by several months. Second, in line with government requirements, the country office opted to employ a conditional transfer modality, despite global WFP COVID-19 responses being unconditional. The conditions required beneficiaries to engage in trainings or asset creation activities and required a cost-share contribution from municipalities for project implementation. Negotiating cost-share allocations from local authority budgets for the project activities took place towards the end of the calendar year, by which time local authorities had already allocated their funding, leaving little flexibility to shift resources to the new project. This led to the selection of low-cost options and further delays as procurement tenders were required. Third, when project implementation began, participants had to first complete the activity before they could receive the cash transfer - usually about two weeks of work required either in cash for assets (CFA) or cash for training (CFT). Finally, there were substantive delays in delivering the cash disbursements due to delays in setting up the necessary banking relationships for SO5. The culmination of all these factors resulted in relatively few participants receiving cash in 2020, hence the underachievement of beneficiary targets. For 2021, beneficiary coverage is much greater across the entire country (Annex 10). However, consultations with local authorities on cost share were still conducted in the middle and latter part of the calendar year, reducing the flexibility for project design.

200. **The CSP shows limited linkages among strategic outcomes even although the CSP architecture is intended to promote this.** The CSP is intended to create greater internal coherence in WFP operations than were present under the previous EMOP, PRRO, and DEV operations. While the potential exists, as per the implied theory of change (Annex 3), the programme management and the focus of the strategic outcomes result in limited linkages in practice. For example, project databases are managed

separately by different programme managers even when reporting lines would overlap. Programme planning is conducted by individual strategic outcome managers. Field monitoring assistants work exclusively on one strategic outcome and do not coordinate individual workplans across strategic outcomes. Beyond the support of SO3 by SO2 activities, there is limited evidence of resourcing being shifted among strategic outcomes even if most funding provided such flexibility.

EQ4.5: What are the other factors that can explain WFP performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected by the country strategic plan?

Summary

Substantive changes in the socioeconomic and political scenarios disrupted the CSP implementation at mid-point. Yet, the CSP benefits from strong national interests and capacities and a strong UNCT framework for coordination. Internal management of the CSP has been challenging due to both unfilled positions and gaps in organizational structure affecting CSP coherence, expertise and workload.

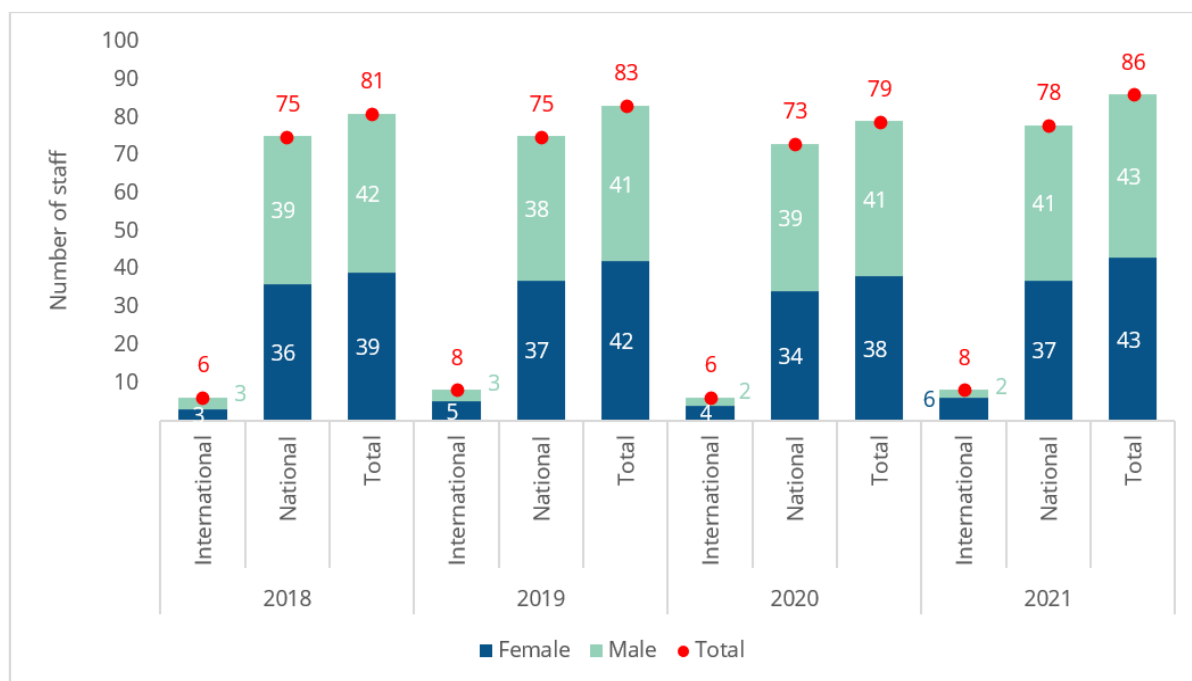
201. **There are strong national interests and capacities for CSP-related components.** The Kyrgyz Republic Government has a strong interest in social protection, providing a solid enabling environment with which WFP can engage. For example, the Government promotes universal roll-out of the school meal programme including allocating domestic resources. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development manages all food distributions for SO1, SO2 and SO3 activities. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development also has relatively well-functioning social protection registers for beneficiary recruitment. The Government provides the oversight for the food security and vulnerability mapping with ongoing technical orientation from WFP. Social protection programmes under the Ministry of Labour and Social Development exist for public works, unconditional transfers and capacity development trainings.

202. **Substantive changes in the socioeconomic and political scenarios disrupted the CSP implementation at mid-point.** As already noted, the CSP was grounded on the assumptions that there would be no major disruptions in the socioeconomic or political landscape beyond the normal transitions and turnover in Government common to all countries. This was predicated on a review of previous disasters wherein the last major social upheaval had been in 2010 and environmental disruptions were largely localized in nature. For the first two and half years of CSP implementation, these assumptions held true, but changed abruptly in the middle of 2020 with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (which no one could have foreseen), along with sweeping governmental changes and ongoing constitutional reform starting in late 2020, and a resurgence of social conflicts at the Tajikistan border in 2021. These disruptions substantively changed government priorities and functioning and shifted priorities, and consequently the country office's ability to partner in activities that aimed at addressing root causes rather than responding to increasing immediate needs. They also affected pre-existing WFP relationships with ministries and donor priorities as well as the country office's day-to-day work. The implications of these disruptions have been cited throughout the findings section as relevant.

203. **There is a strong UNCT framework for integrated coordination.** The Kyrgyz Republic UNCT evidences a strong ethic of coordination and operating as a single United Nations. Even though there are challenges in joint programming, there is a perception of added value for operating as a single United Nations and WFP invests considerable time and energy not only in coordination and technical inputs, but also in reporting against the common framework.

204. WFP staffing has remained relatively constant, with a high percentage of unfilled positions especially in 2020, which presented challenges during the pandemic. As of October 2021, the country office had 83 staff, the majority (94 percent) of which were national staff, and half (50 percent) of which were women. In addition to the main office in Bishkek, WFP operates a sub-office in Osh, the second largest city of the Kyrgyz Republic, and the primary location for programming support to the three southern provinces. The staffing levels have remained relatively constant across the CSP (Figure 26).

Figure 26: CSP staffing profiles by year



Source: Country office staff data disaggregated by sex, as of December 31, 2021.

205. However, in a relatively small WFP office, small shifts in staff numbers can have disproportionate effects on workload. During the 2020 pandemic, when workload requirements increased, there was a decline in country office staffing. As of January 2021, the country office organizational chart cites six unfilled positions – all empty during the pandemic – representing just under 10 percent of full staffing.¹⁷² The SO5 programme required an expanded human resources department. Delays in contracting new programme personnel for SO5 implementation led to the SO5 activity management being integrated under SO2/SO3 management even although they targeted different populations with a different modality (cash versus food).

206. **Key gaps in the organizational structure reduced coherence and expertise and increased workload throughout the CSP cycle.** In addition to unfilled positions, four organizational gaps reduced internal coherence and further increased workload. First, the Deputy Country Director (DCD) also functions as head of programme, which creates a double workload and can reduce the degree of attention available to inter-programme linkages or coordination. Second, SO4 programming requires multiple units including gender, nutrition, vulnerability analysis and mapping, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and policy and partnerships, but without clear linkages among the departments or a general manager to provide organizational oversight. Third, even although development and climate change adaptation programming both occupy prominent positions strategically within the CSP (and use 60 percent of allocated resources), the country office has no senior-level development or climate change adaptation experts. Triangulating with the earlier observations regarding stakeholder perceptions of WFP comparative advantages, the absence of visible senior-level advisors in development and climate change adaptation (or gender) limited the degree to which other agencies perceive WFP as a development partner. This is reinforced by a structural gap in SO2 and SO3 implementation for field-level community development expertise. Field monitoring assistants were contracted because of logistics or monitoring and evaluation expertise, but were then required to assume other roles because of a gap in the development design. This means that WFP field monitoring assistants not only carried out monitoring and administration roles, but also needed to function as “development facilitators”, building relationships among stakeholders and providing expertise to identify development projects that are sustainable, multisectoral and integrated.

¹⁷² This is noted to cite pre-existing gaps in 2020 and during the pandemic. Some positions have been filled as of October 2021, and a new Organigram structure was created in October 2021.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

3.1. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1: The shift to the CSP has facilitated WFP strategic positioning on country capacity strengthening and collaboration with the UNCT in supporting the Government to achieve its SDG targets. It has also contributed somewhat to increased strategic engagement across the nexus and improved operational flexibility and responsiveness but it has only partly enabled expanded resource mobilization.

207. The shift to the CSP has facilitated WFP strategic positioning for country capacity strengthening within the UNCT in supporting the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic in achieving SDG targets. The strategic positioning is relevant for contributions across the entire nexus; however, WFP is perceived by other actors in the Kyrgyz Republic context to have a stronger comparative advantage in the humanitarian response rather than in development or in contributing to peace. WFP could further strengthen its positioning as a key development actor by mobilizing credible and visible senior-level expertise in gender, development and climate change adaptation and facilitating alignment in terminology (see Conclusion 6).

208. The CSP benefits from flexible and multi-year funding but it has not led to expanded resource mobilization. The CSP is still underfunded and the majority of funding commitments come from “traditional” donors who preceded the CSP. The shift to a country portfolio approach provides an opportunity for flexible responsiveness in order to adjust to funding shortfalls, seize emergent opportunities and better coordinate. However, the corporate CSP structure has shown that flexibility and responsiveness are easier within pre-existing CSP focus areas and strategic outcomes: it is harder to respond to new opportunities outside of the existing focus areas and strategic outcomes.

Conclusion 2: The CSP has improved national capacity strengthening visibility and has achieved beneficiary and output targets. There are mixed results against the strategic outcomes.

209. The most significant result in the shift to the CSP has been the increased visibility of national-level country capacity strengthening, although the internal coherence of the disparate country capacity strengthening actions could be strengthened. Under SO1, WFP has been successful in contributing to the legislative and management systems for national capacity on the school meal programme as well as in supporting individual schools for roll-out. Under SO2, WFP has been successful in reaching beneficiary and output targets. SO3 achievements were more limited due to funding delays. The majority of outcome indicator targets for SO2 and SO3 have not been reached and tend to be volatile from year to year. Under SO2, the absence of a unifying framework reduces the ability to track WFP contributions and limits the assessment of longer term, larger scale impacts for long-term development outcomes.

210. SO4 has met its output and outcome targets and has contributed to building vulnerability mapping analysis systems. Outcome contributions for SO4 would be strengthened by developing a conceptual framework uniting the disparate WFP actions across multiple themes and with multiple ministries to reflect social protection work and achievements. The country capacity strengthening interventions focused on vulnerability analysis and mapping and data are coherent, but other country capacity strengthening interventions include an additional range of disparate activities with limited internal coherence. Mapping out the activities against the country capacity strengthening pathways of change illustrate an overconcentration in some pathways with limited attention to other dimensions. Drawing more explicitly on WFP corporate framework for country capacity strengthening – and its five pathways of change – could help develop a more systematic framework for country capacity strengthening interventions.

211. SO5 implementation experienced significant delays in 2020 for start-up but has reached output targets in 2021. However, the types of project activities chosen are unlikely to contribute to long-term food security outcomes for the targeted households. The CSP has achieved cross-cutting targets and there are no protection, accountability to affected populations, access, or environmental concerns.

Conclusion 3: While the CSP's implicit theory of change foresaw multiple internal linkages across strategic outcomes, those have been largely ad-hoc. Gaps in outcome indicator definition and tracking limit the opportunities to identify the long-term effects of WFP interventions.

212. The logic of the interventions and their key assumptions have held true with some important provisos. Although the implied theory of change highlights multiple potential points for systematic internal linkages, in practice, linkages among strategic outcomes are largely ad hoc instances rather than a coherent framework for internal engagement. Linkages among strategic outcomes could be increased by connecting national level and subnational level WFP activities more systematically, connecting strategic outcomes operating in the same field and targeting the same households through different interventions under SO1 and SO2/SO3.

213. WFP is recognized as an important partner for vulnerability mapping, food security analysis and extensive data mapping and analysis. More could be done on building the internal evidence base for its own programming actions, particularly at the outcome level. In SO1, no education, health, nutrition, or household outcomes are tracked, even although these tools already exist within WFP corporate monitoring frameworks, nor is there systematic reporting on the tracking of schools that no longer receive WFP support to identify what happens with the school meal programme application over time. In SO2 and SO3, the methodology for measuring outcome indicators is predicated on context vulnerability mapping, but this limits opportunities to understand the long-term consequences for WFP beneficiaries over time and the optimal configuration of assets/trainings per geographic area. It also limits the opportunity to assess the continued use/sustainability of assets created over time toward long-term community development.

Conclusion 4: There is progress towards gender sensitivity, but gender-transformative programming could be strengthened with the deployment of adequate gender expertise.

214. The CSP has complied with corporate requirements on gender sensitivity as is evidenced by beneficiary targeting ratios, the elaboration of the requisite internal gender working group and nominated gender focal point, and the elaboration of the ongoing gender action plan. More could be done to strengthen the gender sensitivity of activities and the participation of women in decision making on the selection and implementation of project activities, as is evidenced by the differential responses in the telephone surveys and cross-cutting indicator trends.

Conclusion 5: WFP is very willing to engage in coordination. There are opportunities for strengthened and more diversified partnerships.

215. WFP is recognized for its clear comparative advantage in data analysis, mapping, coordination and delivery. WFP is also recognized as a major actor in school meals programming and brings a strong field presence and a reputation for practical, proactive and flexible responsiveness.

216. Collaboration could be strengthened through increased joint programming drawing on the respective complementarity expertise from United Nations agencies and allowing for a multisector, multi-actor integrated response. The joint rural women's empowerment project provides an example of the integration of different agency expertise and capacity within the same project framework.

217. Partnerships with the Government and civil society are strong at the technical and service provision levels. These partnerships could be strengthened through the establishment of higher-level relationships with government ministries and the development of coalitions or associations of civil society and NGOs for increased collective decision making and mobilization to address sectoral issues and provide increased accountability with the Government.

218. Partnerships are strong with traditional long-term donors but lack sufficient diversity for risk management. There are opportunities to expand donor diversity including outreach to peacebuilding or development donors. However, mismatches between WFP language and terminology and those used by partners lead to donor misperceptions regarding the potential contributions of WFP to donor strategic plans.

Conclusion 6: Country capacity strengthening in social protection has progressed. There is room for WFP to further expand and consolidate its strategic positioning on social protection and support the Government's efforts in transitioning vulnerable households away from assistance.

219. The social protection intervention logic undergirding the CSP has provided an appropriate conceptual framework within which to position WFP programming and align with the overarching UNCT frameworks. Considerable contributions to social protection systems were made during the CSP. The next steps for expansion could include further integrating strategic outcome project activities into existing government social protection programmes and there are opportunities for increased engagement in social protection beyond the CODI exercise through the development of a UNCT roadmap for social protection.

220. Social protection as a concept is interpreted differently among UNCT actors and there are multiple interventions across the United Nations agencies targeting similar households, but they are not always coordinated. Currently, the UNCT has no formal position on social protection nor a roadmap for joint or collaborative points of engagement with government social protection programming. Developing this UNCT roadmap collectively would further strengthen WFP capacity to support social protection within the frame of the “Delivering as one” approach within the Kyrgyz Republic.¹⁷³ The next CSP in the Kyrgyz Republic could provide a timely opportunity to support the strengthening of the national social protection system and ensuring that it is shock-responsive. More specifically, it could also advocate for and promote enhancements to the quality of active labour market programmes and social assistance packages and the amounts received by households. It should also advocate for reaching all eligible households.

221. WFP project activities using active measures are well received by government counterparts but create two challenges. First, setting up parallel initiatives that mimic pre-existing government social protection programmes (such as in SO2 and SO3) or that create activities outside of existing government processes (such as nutrition sensitization as an extra-curricular activity rather than it being integrated into education curriculum reform or teacher training colleges) limits the degree to which these projects can support national structures and systems. Limited linkages further limit the degree to which these programmes can support national social protection policies, programmes, and structures. Second, there is a risk that the extremely vulnerable may be excluded from participation in WFP project activities if they cannot work due to health or children care reasons.

222. The Government has an interest in transitioning vulnerable households away from social protection assistance, but WFP currently does not track its beneficiaries after the delivery of food rations in order to determine whether the assets created, or trainings conducted, have led to permanent household income changes that have allowed households to be removed from social protection lists.

Conclusion 7: Sustainability remains a challenge across the CSP, particularly with respect to the institutionalization of capacity development.

223. The logic of the interventions within the CSP assumes the eventual institutionalization of capacity development. However, gains in sustainability are uneven across the CSP.

224. Under SO1, progress towards sustainability is the most advanced, with a well-established legislative framework, relevant materials, systems and opportunities to achieve universal roll-out within the next cycle. However, the further institutionalization of capacity development remains a need. The increasing costs of subsidizing the school meal programme and the increased parental contribution burden represent a future challenge for maintaining school meal programmes in schools. Strengthening the capacities of parental committees for management, or for raising the additional parental contributions, therefore, becomes an important priority.

225. In SO2 and SO3, sustainability challenges can be seen in the current isolation of these programmes as standalone projects. Strengthening the institutional capacities related to the existing government social protection programmes that they replicate and the subsequent integration of these project activities into these programmes would enhance sustainability.

226. In SO4, while data systems have already been handed over to the Government, the absence of institutionalized capacity development limits the degree to which they can be used by ministries, given the rapid turnover in the personnel previously trained and oriented on the systems – affecting their potential for informing decision making.

¹⁷³ Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and The United Nations in the Kyrgyz Republic. 2017. *The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the Kyrgyz Republic 2018-2022*.

227. SO5 is currently treated as a short-term intervention to support early recovery, but further sustainability could be enhanced through organizing longer-term linkages to existing municipal employment programmes – and a subsequent focus on strengthening those systems.

228. Through the CSP, outside of the SUN network, there are few examples of civil society platforms related to SO1, SO2, and SO3 activities that could provide mechanisms of support to complement the state mechanisms by providing avenues for information exchange, ongoing encouragement, mobilization for advocacy, or opportunities for capacity development to mitigate turnover.

Conclusion 8: WFP successfully navigated barriers resulting from the pandemic to continue scheduled programme activities and also took an active role in the coordination and implementation of the national pandemic response. The inclusion of a dedicated strategic outcome for crisis-response within the next CSP to be activated only upon request would strengthen WFP responsiveness to potential relief and early recovery needs.

229. The pandemic created barriers to ongoing implementation by slowing down government activities, creating donor distractions, and generating logistical barriers to movement during the lockdown. WFP was able to make adaptations to continue implementation in the face of these obstacles in order to reach almost the same number of beneficiaries as planned.

230. The pandemic also created internal challenges for WFP in 2020 through the decline in human resource staffing while the pandemic response increased country office workload. These challenges were successfully navigated, and external perceptions of the WFP response are far more positive than internal self-assessments by WFP itself. WFP was seen as an active leader in pandemic response coordination and proactive engagement.

231. The engagements with new peri-urban populations and the new partnerships with municipal authorities in towns has created interest and opportunities for post-pandemic ongoing support to these peri-urban populations through development activities.

232. The CSP structure itself, including the fact that in its original design it did not include a dedicated strategic outcome related to crisis response and including the conditionality requirements placed on the early recovery activities, delayed the speed by which WFP could get transfers to beneficiaries under the new SO5. The inclusion of a dedicated strategic outcome for crisis response, to be activated only upon request within the next CSP, would strengthen WFP responsiveness to potential relief and early recovery needs.

3.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

234. The evaluation makes one operational and five strategic recommendations that address key issues for the Kyrgyz Republic in the next CSP. Annex 11 contains the table linking findings to recommendations.

Table 21: Recommendations

#	Recommendation	Level/nature	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	Priority	Action deadline
1	Internal integration, adaptation and coherence. When developing the next country strategic plan, WFP should strengthen the overarching and strategic outcome-specific conceptual frameworks, in particular for country capacity strengthening. WFP should also establish clearer links among strategic outcomes to enhance the internal coherence of the country strategic plan and foster greater contributions to long-term development outcomes.	Strategic	Country office			
	1.1 Develop an overarching conceptual framework for the entire country strategic plan drawing from theories of change specific to each strategic outcome and establish clearer links among strategic outcomes, connecting them conceptually through a pathway for contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals.			Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division (PRO); regional bureau	High	October 2022
	1.2 Update the country capacity strengthening strategy grounded in a documented capacity gap assessment and mainstream it across the whole country portfolio.			Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service (PROT) and its Country Capacity Strengthening Unit	High	October 2022
	1.3 Review the country office organizational structure and staffing capacity to identify gaps and develop approaches to enhance country office expertise in gender, climate change adaptation and country capacity strengthening to support country strategic plan implementation.			Regional bureau	High	June 2023

#	Recommendation	Level/ nature	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	Priority	Action deadline
2	Social protection strategic positioning. For the next country strategic plan, WFP should continue to expand its social protection strategic positioning.	Strategic	Country office			
	2.1 Draw on the findings from the joint Core Diagnostic Instrument assessment, co-funded by the World Bank, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the International Labour Organization and WFP, when defining WFP’s social protection positioning with regard to all strategic outcomes and in relation to other agencies with the aim of expanding access to national social protection systems that foster people’s ability to meet their food security, nutrition and other essential needs.			Regional bureau, Government representatives for social protection and climate change adaptation	High	October 2022
	2.2 Identify means whereby the country strategic plan can contribute to enhancing the management and delivery of existing government social protection mechanisms (such as public works, the social contract, capacity development centres and disaster risk reduction rehabilitation activities sponsored by the Ministry of Emergency Situation). This could include linking nutrition awareness activities to existing education curriculum reform, increasing wraparound support for vulnerable families through interconnected programming or linking activities to existing employment opportunities through state services.			Regional bureau, WFP headquarters (Social Protection Unit), Government representatives for social protection and climate change adaptation	Medium	May 2023
	2.3 Contribute to ongoing discussions on the development of a single United Nations social protection road map, setting out a joint United Nations country team multi-year long-term plan for providing support for national social protection with priority areas for policy development and technical support.			United Nations country team social protection representatives	Medium	May 2023
3	Partnerships and collaboration for impact and sustainability. In the next country strategic plan, WFP	Strategic	Country office			

#	Recommendation	Level/ nature	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	Priority	Action deadline
	should build on existing good practices to continue strengthening its partnerships with the Government, other United Nations entities and civil society for enhanced complementary programming and sustainability.					
	3.1 <i>Government</i> : In order to strengthen the sustainability of country strategic plan outcomes, continue to support the Government and develop a transition strategy that articulates how the Government would continue country strategic plan activities beyond the life of the country strategic plan, including the maintenance of the school meals programme by schools, community development outcomes and country capacity strengthening engagements.			Government representatives involved in development and social protection	Medium	September 2023
	3.2 <i>United Nations country team</i> : Continue to strengthen partnerships with other United Nations entities that have complementary expertise and identify possible synergies across programmes that could be pursued even in the absence of funding for joint programmes. For example, collaborate with the United Nations Development Programme on improving the quality of community-based action plans under strategic outcomes 2 and 3; work with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on agricultural programmes aimed at reducing post-harvest losses; partner with the International Labour Organization to link income-generation training to long-term employment opportunities, especially in peri-urban contexts.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (Partnerships and Advocacy Department), United Nations country team representatives involved in development and social protection	Medium	September 2023
	3.3 <i>Civil society</i> : Work throughout the next country strategic plan to establish self-sustaining multi-stakeholder non-state actor platforms that can serve as mechanisms for information exchange, continuous socialization and community mobilization on emergent issues in collaboration with the Government. This could include			Support from regional bureau, civil society groups and non-governmental organizations involved in development and social protection	Medium	May 2024

#	Recommendation	Level/ nature	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	Priority	Action deadline
	building platforms of school meals programme service providers or expanding project coordination committee membership to include more civil society or women representatives.					
4	Resource diversification. As part of the next country strategic plan, WFP should continue to seek to diversify its donor base.	Strategic	Country office			
	4.1 Maintain strong relationships with long-standing donors by reviewing donor directions and strategic plans.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (Private Partnerships and Fundraising Division, Public Partnerships and Resourcing Division)	Medium	December 2023
	4.2 Systematically review where and how WFP corporate terminology and concepts may inhibit donor willingness to support WFP and adapt materials accordingly before approaching new donors.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (Private Partnerships and Fundraising Division, Public Partnerships and Resourcing Division, Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction Programmes Unit)	Medium	December 2023
5	Coverage and targeting. For the next country strategic plan, WFP should continue to refine and reassess its coverage and targeting to better reach extremely vulnerable or potential new beneficiary groups covered by WFP direct assistance programmes and country capacity strengthening interventions.	Operational	Country office			

#	Recommendation	Level/ nature	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	Priority	Action deadline
	5.1 <i>Extremely vulnerable groups</i> : Integrate unconditional transfer options into projects as part of the WFP support package in line with government social assistance cash transfers.			Regional bureau and WFP headquarters (Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction Programmes Unit; Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division [RAM])	High	October 2022
	5.2 <i>Extremely vulnerable groups</i> : Support the formulation of an inter-agency strategy for complementary holistic wraparound support through multiple interventions aimed at targeted vulnerable households.			United Nations country team agencies engaged in social protection	Medium	April 2023
	5.3 <i>Peri-urban vulnerable groups</i> : Build on early recovery assistance to introduce a development strategic outcome for peri-urban populations and establish new partnerships to link interventions with municipal employment opportunities.			Regional bureau and WFP headquarters (PROT/Country Capacity Strengthening Unit; Social Protection Unit)	High	October 2022
6	Evidence base for development outcomes. In the next country strategic plan WFP should invest further in evidence generation either through WFP-led studies or by supporting government capacity to track long-term contributions to development outcomes, enhance project management and inform policy development.	Operational	Country office			
	6.1 Under school meals programme-related work, advocate, and support the Government in, the measurement of long-term education, health and food security outcomes derived from the school meals programme. Support the integration of WFP tools for assessing school performance into government systems and undertake an assessment of all schools implementing the school meals programme since 2013 to determine their ability to continue the school meals programme after their transition away from WFP support.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (RAM; School-Based Programmes; Corporate Planning and Performance Division [CPP]), government representatives with links to the school meals programme	Medium	September 2023

#	Recommendation	Level/ nature	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	Priority	Action deadline
	6.2 Under livelihoods and resilience activities, support the Government in undertaking, or directly carry out, studies to track the long-term effects on beneficiaries of participating in food assistance for assets or food assistance for training projects, i.e. their effects beyond the duration of the projects.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (RAM, PRO, CPP), government representatives with links to food assistance for assets or food assistance for training projects	Medium	September 2023
	6.3 Under livelihoods and resilience activities, consider reintroducing the community asset indicator in the next country strategic plan logical framework and support Government-led mechanisms for measuring the quality and robustness of community infrastructure over time and understanding the long-term contributions and sustainability of WFP-supported interventions and their long-term effects on communities.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (RAM, PRO)	High	December 2022
	6.4 Under livelihoods and resilience activities, support Government-led mechanisms for identifying the combination of project types to be implemented in a district that is best able to maximize community development outcomes.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (RAM)	Medium	September 2023
	6.5 For country capacity strengthening interventions, consider developing additional country capacity strengthening output and outcome indicators beyond the current corporate results framework indicators to capture the entirety of WFP country capacity strengthening interventions and measure progress in a more comprehensive and accurate manner.			Support from regional bureau and WFP headquarters (RAM, CPP, PROT/ Country Capacity Strengthening Unit)	High	December 2022

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