SECOND UPDATE ON THE FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION SITUATION IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

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Fighting Hunger Worldwide

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context

- The present update uses data collected by the Kyrgyz Integrated Household Survey (KIHS) between the last quarter of 2008 and the 3rd quarter of 2009.
- The reporting period takes place in the context of the **global economic crisis which affected Kyrgyzstan's economy** through a decline of exports (textile and construction materials), imports (reduced consumer demand) and remittances (slowdown of the construction sector in Russia where most Kyrgyz migrants work). On the positive side, the grain harvest was good in 2009 and inflation decelerated from 24.5% in 2008 to 6.8% in 2009. Financial support from the International Monetary Fund and Russia was also obtained. **Real GDP growth in 2009 was estimated at 2.9%**, down from 8.4% in 2008.
- On 7 April 2010, violent civil protests erupted in the capital city Bishkek and provoked the dismissal of the President. An interim government was instituted but tensions continued, leading to a vacuum of national counterparts in many institutions at central and local levels, freezing of bank assets, and closure of borders, and disruption of the spring planting season.

How many are food insecure and malnourished?

- At national level, the prevalence of food security did not change much between 2006 and the 3rd quarter of 2009: about **1/3rd of the population are food insecure including 1/5th severely food insecure**. **The prevalence of food insecurity remains lower in urban areas** (29%) **than in rural areas** (37%).
- This constancy highlights the **chronic nature of food insecurity**, despite the shocks of the high food and fuel prices in 2008 and global financial crisis in 2009. The rise of cash and pension levels early 2009 was not sufficient to uplift the food insecure out of poverty and improve their access to food. Furthermore, food prices at local level may not have come down significantly despite downward trends noted in central markets.
- However, some variations are noted according to locations. **Transitory food insecurity above 'chronic' levels was noted in urban areas during the 2nd quarter of 2009**. The relatively rapid return to usual levels and the stability in rural areas may be explained by the good harvest in 2009 and the slowdown of inflation which contained the rise of food and non-food prices, as well as increased government's spending in the social (including a rise of pensions), health care and education sectors.
- The **prevalence of acute malnutrition**[1] among children under 5 **remained low** (1.3%), except in **Batken** oblast (7.6%). **Growth retardation**[2] affected **almost one out of 3 children below 5 years of age** in 2008.

Where are the food insecure and malnourished individuals?

- On the longer-term at oblast level, **food insecurity increased since 2006 in Yssuk-Kul, Naryn, Batken and Chuy** oblasts and **Bishkek town**, showing that the situation is worsening for some population groups. The situation remained stable in **Talas** oblast, while it improved in **Jalalabad** (although with signs of deterioration since mid-2009) and **Osh** oblasts. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, the **highest prevalence of food insecurity were found in Batken** (51%), **Yssyk-Kul** (50%), **Naryn** (47%), followed by Talas (37%), Jalal-Abad (36%), Osh (35%), Bishkek town (24%) and Chuy (23%).
- The prevalence of stunting among under-5 children was **higher in rural areas** (35.9%) and seemed also higher in **Jalalabad**, **Naryn** and **Osh** oblasts. Trends since 2006 point towards a **deterioration of the nutritional status of children, in particular among severely food**

[1] Acute malnutrition is defined as weight-for-height below -2 Z-scores among children less than 5 years of age. It reflects a sudden loss of weight.
[2] Stunting is defined as height-for-age below -2 Z-scores among children less than 5 years of age. It reflects longer-term inadequate diet often combined with frequent infectious diseases.

insecure households in rural areas. Stunting rates increased since 2006 in Jalal-Abad, Naryn, Osh and Chuy oblasts

Who are the food insecure people?

- **Men-headed and medium- and large households (more than 4 members) are more likely to be food insecure than women-headed and small households**. The higher proportion of women-headed households in urban than rural areas (44% versus 31%) and the smaller size of urban households explain in part why the prevalence of food insecurity is lower in urban areas. Similar demographic variations also contribute to some of the differences across oblasts.
- **Higher education and specialised education of the head of household contribute to food security in urban areas**, while **primary and specialised education make more difference in rural areas** in terms of achieving food security.
- In rural areas, **food insecure households have lower acreage of land and own less animals** than others, especially the severely food insecure in rural areas. The proportion of animal owners tended to decrease among moderately food insecure households since the end of 2008. **The number of small ruminants owned decreased sharply during the 3rd quarter of 2009 for all households**. Whether this is an anomaly or reflecting a longer term trends must be checked in further rounds, given the **importance of animal ownership for better food security in rural areas**.

Why are people food insecure?

- **Food insecure people consume a low calorie diet** (1,510-1,580 kcal/capita/day for the severely food insecure) compared to a standard daily requirement per person of 2100 kcal. Kilocalorie intake is higher in rural areas probably owing to the greater availability of food from their own crop and animal productions. **The share of food expenditures remains high at 60% of total expenditures** across all food security groups, reflecting widespread poverty. The absolute amount of food expenditures of food insecure households is well below the cost of the official food basket.
- The **prevalence of poverty did not increase** between end 2008 and the first 3 quarters of 2009 despite the global economic crisis. The deterioration noted in urban areas in 2008 seemed to have stopped in 2009. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, some **15% of households were at or below extreme poverty level** and **35% were between extreme poverty and poverty levels**. Poverty rates continued to be **much higher in rural areas than urban areas**: 19% extreme poor and 41% between extreme poverty and poverty in rural areas, versus 7% and 25% respectively in urban areas.
- Salaries and pensions continue to be the main sources of income. **In rural areas, support from relatives helped to moderate or prevent food insecurity. In urban areas, pensions played an important role** in this regard.
- **Average cash income per capita continued its upward trend since early 2008** except for the moderately food insecure in rural areas. This reflects the upgrade of pensions and some increase of wages during the period. However **cash income remained very low at US$1.4 per person per day in rural areas and US$2.1 per person per day in urban areas**, and even less for food insecure households. Moderately food insecure households did not seem to have benefited from the increase of salaries and had less access to pensions than the others.
- **The proportion of beneficiaries from monthly allowances dropped sharply** between the end of 2008 and the 3rd quarter of 2009, reaching only 11% of households in rural areas and 3% in urban areas, compared to 40% and 34% respectively before. It may be due to the reduction of number of allowance categories implemented by the Government early 2009 or to changes in the data collection process, which have to be checked.
- **Domestic assets ownership did not change in 2008**. With the exception of the major items (video, washing machine, fridge, personal computer), there were no differences between the various food security groups.
- Living conditions also did not vary significantly and **access to safe water continue to be a major issue for rural households** (11% only had access), especially the food insecure. Lack

of safe water, difficulties to pay for health care and poor housing contribute to poor health and malnutrition among vulnerable individuals.

- Solidarity mechanisms remain relatively robust. Up to 8% of food insecure households were able to help others (and 10% of food insecure households).

How is the situation likely to evolve?

- The civil unrest early April brought uncertainties to the economic forecasts that were done for 2010-2011. **Real GDP was expected to grow by 3.5% in 2010 and 4% in 2011**. Exports should pick up as demand recovers in Kyrgyz Republic's main export markets (Russia, Kazakhstan) and the price of gold (the main export commodity) increase in 2010. **Inflation was forecast at 8% in 2010 and 10.5% in 2011** due to the slight recovery of remittance inflows and increasing consumer demand, as well as to the rise of utility prices.

- While the food security situation at national level stayed stable since 2006, **the deterioration noted in several oblasts and thus for some population groups** may be related to the continuing poor performance of the agricultural sector (with the exception of the good harvest in 2009), decrease of remittances (in southern oblasts), and slow-down of the housing and trade sectors in northern oblasts especially. Some negative changes observed in the 3rd quarter of 2009 must be checked, such as the **sale of small ruminants** and the decreased contribution of pensions to total income for some groups.

- The recent change of government led to a freezing of bank assets and credit, and to the closure of international borders. **In rural areas,** farmers could not obtain credit to purchase seed and fertilizer. Organizations providing assistance faced delays or suspended their activities in the absence of designated official counterparts to assist with the implementation. Furthermore, the border closure with neighbouring countries has led to shortage of diesel and other essential farm inputs. There were already indications of lower acreage planted in some areas and **the next harvest may be jeopardized**.

- **In urban areas**, shortages of food and fuel are expected if borders' closure persists. **Insufficient food supplies combined to a lower harvest would lead to price increases**, compounding the difficulties of poor and food insecure households to purchase food and exacerbating risks of violence.

- As households struggle with these additional difficulties, the arbitrage between food and other essential needs may be at the expense of spending for education and health. This **may affect enrolment rates and the regularity of attendance at school**, while poor health conditions will further contribute to **malnutrition**.

- Besides increased food insecurity due to a possibly low harvest and rising food prices, Kyrgyzstan is highly susceptible to natural hazards (e.g. earthquake, mudflows, land slides etc.) which can cause heavy losses of lives, livestock and crops, and damage to infrastructure. **The population's resilience capacity is limited** by the low asset base and lack of opportunities to diversify livelihoods.

What is suggested for WFP operations in Kyrgyzstan?

- In view of the expected increased food insecurity **in rural areas**, a step up of WFP interventions is likely to be necessary. The additional caseload in rural areas would consist of households who could not cultivate this year because of the consequences of the civil unrest. **The increase of the proportion of food insecure households could be of 5 to 10 percentage-point** in the villages already covered[3]. Besides, **additional villages could be included** taking into account the general degradation of the food security situation in some oblasts since 2006.

[3] This increase is a rough estimation based on the variation of the prevalence of food security in some oblasts observed during the high food and fuel price crisis in 2008.

- The **feasibility and appropriateness of cash transfers** in combination or alternated with food in-kind should be examined. It may be possible to use the same transfer mechanisms as for pensions and allowances already received by many of the target beneficiaries.
- Even though the current events warrant a temporary increase of food assistance, food insecurity remains a chronic problem that requires **interventions tackling the underlying causes**. This could be done through **food- (or cash-) for-work programmes** to enhance agricultural production (e.g. water management), reduce disaster risks (e.g. reforestation) and upgrade basic services (e.g. drinking water supplies).
- **School feeding** could be envisaged to prevent decreased enrolment and irregular attendance. Selecting schools in the most food insecure locations would complement other interventions that support household food security.
- Assistance may also be required in the **poorest neighbourhoods of urban areas** if food prices increase. There may be scope to use the existing social assistance system to top up the low benefits received by the poor households lacking a regular breadwinner with additional cash. This should be for a limited period of time and if feasible linked to vocational training or other activities that support income generation. Alternatively, food could be provided to vulnerable individuals at risk of malnutrition, including young children, pregnant and lactating mothers, possibly through health centres in these neighbourhoods. Patients affected by tuberculosis are another typical vulnerable groups who could benefit from WFP assistance.
- Establishing a **light Food Security Monitoring System** to complement the KIHS by providing more timely and disaggregated household food security information becomes urgent. Hopefully, the joint FAO/WFP proposal submitted to the EC for funding will be approved.
- **Preparations for a rapid Emergency Food Security Assessment** (EFSA) should start so that changes in the food security situation can be evaluated quickly should the violence escalate. It should be timed to coincide with the Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM) being discussed with FAO and the interim government counterparts. The CSAM and the EFSA could thus take place in July-August 2010. A rapid EFSA would also help to appraise the situation in the poor periphery of Bishkek and possibly other towns and inform decisions on programmes in these areas.

- **The collection and analysis of data on nutritional status need to be strengthened.** Options which could be considered in consultation with the government, UNICEF, WHO and other relevant stakeholders include (i) capacity building of the National Statistics Committee to improve the quality and reliability of anthropometric data collected in the KIHS, (ii) contracting of private institutions to undertake annual or more frequent nutritional surveys, or (iii) setting up a surveillance system through sentinel sites.

CONTENT GUIDE

Section I explains the rationale for this update on the food security situation in Kyrgyzstan and provides information on the macro-economic context in the country in relation to the global economic crisis.

Section II presents the changes of the food security situation of households since the beginning of 2008 up to the 3rd quarter of 2009.

Section III puts these results in the perspective of the political crisis that erupted in April 2010 and projects the possible evolution of the food security situation.

Section IV concludes with suggestions for WFP's operations.

A summary of the main salient features of the various oblasts is given in **Annex**.

I – CONTEXT OF THE UPDATE ON THE FOOD SECURITY SITUATION

1.1 – Rationale for the update and sources of information

This update of the food security situation in the Kyrgyz Republic is being done in the context of civil unrest which broke out early April 2010. As these troubles may affect food security through several channels (see Section III), it was felt important to have a baseline of the 'pre-crisis' situation so as to evaluate the extent of changes that may occur in future.

A comprehensive food security analysis was done in 2008 using nation-wide statistically representative data of the Kyrgyz Integrated Household Survey (KIHS) collected in 2006, 2007 and 1st quarter of 2008 by the National Statistics Committee. It took place with a background of very low temperatures and energy shortages in the winter and high food and fuel price crisis. A first update was done in March 2009, using KIHS data for the first 3 quarters of 2008. As such, it reflected to some extent the effects of the high food and fuel price crisis, even though results did not evidence significant changes in the prevalence of food insecurity.

This second update uses KIHS data for the last quarter of 2008 up to the 3rd quarter of 2009 (latest data available). It is therefore expected to reflect partly the effects of the global financial crisis that spread at the end of 2008 on households.

1.2 – Macro socio-economic context in 2009

The global economic crisis is having effects at macro and household levels through trade, public expenditures, employment, inflation and remittances. For this reason, an update of the main macro-economic and social indicators[4] in Kyrgyzstan in 2009 is given below to interpret food security results at household level. Additional general information on the country can be found in the comprehensive report[5] of 2008.

1.2.1 – Background on the population and economic structure

As of end 2008, the **population** of Kyrgyzstan was estimated at 5.27 million inhabitants, of which almost 2/3rd live in rural areas The capital Bishkek hosts about 804,000 inhabitants. Other important cities are Osh (228,000), Jalal-Abad (78,000) and Kara-Kul (63,000). The population is young, with 42% aged below 20 years in 2006.

The country is split by several mountain ranges running from east to west. Links between the **4 northern provinces** (Chuy, Yssyk-Kul, Naryn and Talas) and the **3 southern provinces** (Osh, Jalalabad and Batken) are tenuous. Much of the country consists of high-altitude steppe that is used mainly for grazing.

The economy of Kyrgyzstan rests on **services**, whose importance has grown in recent years. Much of the sector's contribution comes from trade and catering, which is mostly made up of small private family-run enterprises. It accounted for almost half of GDP in 2008. It employed 13% of the working population overall but more than 70% of the urban population.

Agriculture contributed to 27% of GDP in 2008 but remains an essential component of the economy. It employs 46% of the working population. Livestock raising is widespread given the large coverage mountainous and steppe areas suitable for grazing. Grain production is concentrated in the lower valleys, largely in the south of the country. The main crops are wheat (in decline), maize, barley and potatoes. The area cultivated under cotton, sugar-beet and tobacco has decreased due to low purchasing prices and high price of inputs. Many

[4] Most of the information of this paragraph comes from: Kyrgyz Republic, Country Profile 2008 and Country Report February 2010. The Economist Intelligence Unit.
[5] Food Security Assessment in the Kyrgyzstan Republic, Re-analysis of the Kyrgyzstan Integrated Household Survey 2006, 2007 and 1st quarter 2008, WFP

farmers have switched to growing fruit and vegetables instead. Subsistence agriculture is common.

Industries contributed to 23% of GDP in 2008 but its share, like agriculture, has been declining since 2000. Gold mining is the main contributor to industrial output (40% of total industrial production). It takes place in remote mountainous areas. Manufacturing is concentrated mainly in Bishkek and the northern Chuy oblast, with pockets in the few other urban areas, notably Osh.

The average **unemployment** rate in 2005was estimated at 12.5% of the labour force. However, there are wide regional disparities. The rate of joblessness is also likely to have increased in 2009 due to the construction sector crisis in Russia and Kazakhstan (see paragraph 1.2.2) and related return of many Kyrgyz migrants.

Recorded **wages** remain low, but many households supplement their incomes with **remittances** sent from relatives abroad and with incomes earned in the large shadow economy. At macro-level, the current-account budget deficit would be much wider if not for strong inflows of workers' remittances.

1.2.2 – Effects of the global financial crisis in Kyrgyzstan and government's response

Up to 2008, a favourable external environment and sound economic policies resulted in a steady increase in the pace of economic growth in the Kyrgyz Republic, while inflation remained low. The growth was mainly driven by external factors such as remittances which generated demand for consumption and investment, and trade, through exports and re-exports with neighbouring countries. Poverty rates declined from 54% in 2002 to 35% in 2007. Since then, the economy was hit by the rise in international commodity prices that caused a sharp increase in inflation. When the global economic crisis spread to the region, the economy was again hit.

Real GDP growth slowed down from 8.4% in 2008 to **2.9% in 2009**. This was explained by the knock-on effects on the economy from the downturn in the Russian and Kazakh economies, in terms of reduced demand for Kyrgyz exports (textile and construction materials) and a fall in inflows of remittances to finance private consumption. **Remittance inflows** accounting for 29% of GDP in 2008 were estimated to decrease in 2009 to around 24% of GDP[6], as the global crisis forced return of some labour migrants as well as declined wages and less employment opportunities abroad. GDP per capita was estimated at US$920 in 2009.

In addition, the frequent power cuts in 2008-09 constrained economic activity. In January-November 2009, **exports** fell by 22% and **imports** by 27% owing to weak domestic demand and fall in imported oil prices. This brought the 11-month trade deficit to US$1.52 billion, compared with US$2.17 billion in the same period of 2008.

The limited growth in 2009 was supported by an **expansion in agriculture** (7.4%) thanks to higher than average yields (grain output increased by more than 20% year-on-year in 2009) and a **robust performance in construction** (owing to an increase in investment in the building of two major hydropower stations), which offset a **decline in industrial production** of 6.4% year-on-year. Manufacturing output fell by 7.8%.

A fall in global commodity and fuel prices from their high levels in 2008 led to a **marked deceleration of inflation**, to an annual average of 6.8%, from 24.5% in 2008. With a decline of inflation rate, real wages have grown. However, consumer demand and purchasing power remained low because of the **fall of remittances by 20%** year-on-year according to the National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic (NBKR).

[6] Kyrgyz Republic: Recent Economic and Policy Developments. The World Bank. August 2009.

	2006	2007	2008	2009
Real GDP growth	3.1%	8.5%	8.4%	2.3%
Consumer Price Inflation	5.6%	10.2%	24.5%	6.8%
Current account balance (US$ m)	-299	-263	-680	-108

Source: Kyrgyz Republic, Country Report. The Economist Intelligence Unit, February 2010

The **national currency (som) depreciated** by 21% against the US dollar in the year to end-August 2009, although the bulk of this fall occurred in late 2008 and 1st quarter of 2009. The NBKR intervened in September 2009 to support the currency and thus avoid large losses of international reserves and to maintain competitiveness.

In terms of expenditures, **social, health care and educational spending, as well as spending on administration and defence, increased at strong, double-digit rates in 2009** as in 2008. The basic pension increased by 40% in July 2009 and by 20% in February 2010. However, the greatest impact of the higher spending bill was caused by subsidies to the real economy as the government attempted to protect domestic businesses from the global downturn. **Economic subsidies more than tripled in 2009**. Increased tariffs for electricity and heating were introduced in 2009 and January 2010 but the interim government instituted in April 2010 announced that it will revert them back to their former levels.

In 2009, the number of those officially registered as unemployed declined by 8.6% year-on-year. However, according to the 2009 census, **the number of people without an own source of income and relying on their families for financial support reached 29%**, compared to 25% in 1999.

As part of its response to the economic crisis, the government agreed an US$100 million, 18-month arrangement with the IMF under the Fund's Exogenous Shock Facility in December 2008. Sizeable assistance was also received from Russia, including US$450 million in highly concessional budget support. This assistance enabled to cover a large part of the balance of payments and fiscal needs for 2009[7].

[7] In the absence of large financial asserts, such as those accumulated by oil and gas producing countries elsewhere in the region, growth support depends critically on the availability of donor assistance.

II – UPDATE ON HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION UP TO THE 3RD QUARTER OF 2009

2.1 – Household food insecurity prevalence and trends

2.1.1 – Methodology

As for previous re-analyses of the food security situation in Kyrgyzstan[8], the prevalence of food security was estimated based on a combination of food consumption (kilocalorie intake) and food access (consumption expenditures) indicators. Severely and moderately food insecure households were determined by crossing groups of households according to their levels of food consumption and food access, as follows:

- **Food consumption indicator**: kilocalorie intake per capita per day (based on a 2-week food diary); 3 'food consumption' groups are defined:
  - poor food consumption: kcal intake < 1800 kcal/cap./day; about 80% standard requirements;
  - borderline: kcal intake 1801-2099 kcal/cap./day; 80-99% standard requirements
  - acceptable: kcal intake ≥ 2100 kcal/capita/day.

- **Food access indicator**: consumption expenditures per capita[9] (monthly recall of all expenditures and valuation of food coming from own production); 3 'food access' groups are defined:
  - poor access: bottom wealth quintile, expenditures < extreme poverty line (640 som at 1st January 2009, corresponding to about US$15);
  - average access: 2nd and 3rd wealth quintiles; expenditures between extreme poverty line and poverty line or just above poverty line (between 640-963 som at 1st January 2009, corresponding to US$15-22);
  - good access: 4th and top wealth quintiles; expenditures well above poverty line.

The below table shows how the proportions of the three food security groups are calculated.

Food access groups	**Food consumption groups**			**Total**
	Poor	**Borderline**	**Acceptable**	
Poor	% severely	% severely	% moderately	%
Average	% severely	% moderately	% food secure	%
Good	% moderately	% food secure	% food secure	%
Total	%	%	%	**100%**

2.2.2 – Prevalence and evolution of household food insecurity

- Nation-wide, the **prevalence of household food insecurity stayed the same at about 34% of the total population**, similar to the proportions found in the first 3 quarters of 2008. Of these, **20% were severely food insecure and 13% moderately food insecure** by the 2nd quarter of 2009, again very similarly to the latest results of 2008.

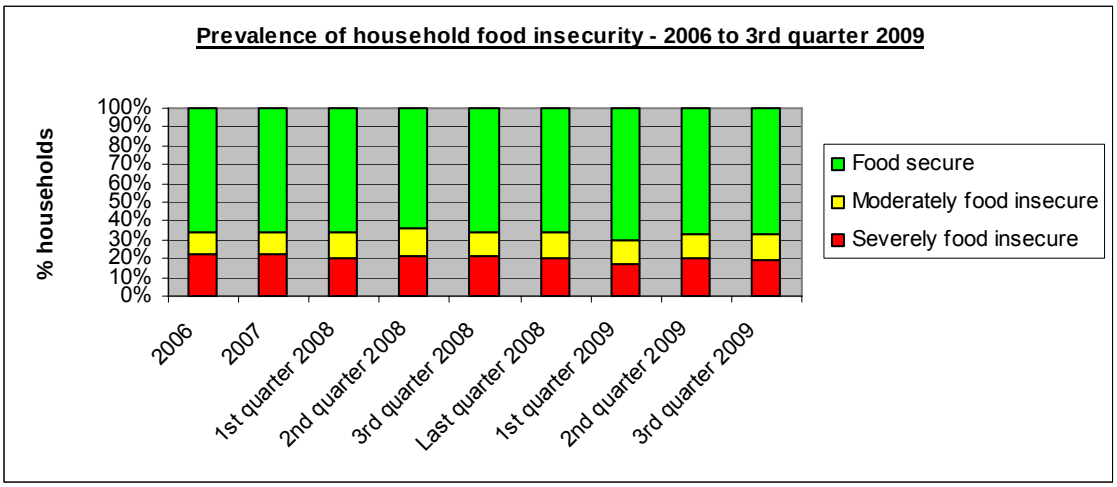
[8] Food Security Assessment in the Kyrgyzstan Republic, Re-analysis of the Kyrgyzstan Integrated Household Survey 2006, 2007 and 1st quarter 2008, WFP – Update on the Food Security and Nutrition Situation in the Kyrgyz Republic, March 2009, WFP.

[9] Consumption expenditures per capita are estimated from a monthly recall of food and non-food expenditures and valuation of food coming from own production. Poverty (and wealth) is defined in the KIHS by comparing the level of consumer expenditures to the poverty line. The value of the poverty line changes from year to year, as it is indexed to inflation rates.

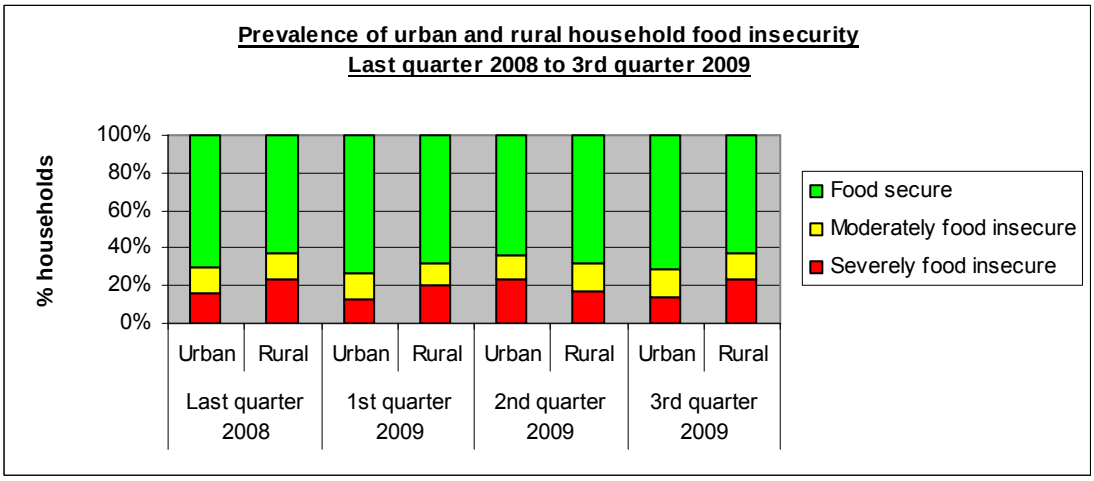
- The slight betterment of the food security situation in the 1st quarter of 2009 may be due to the fact that this is the period when households have build up stocks and some also receive remittances.

	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009
Severely food insecure	20%	17%	20%	19%
Moderately food insecure	14%	13%	13%	14%
Food secure	66%	70%	66%	66%

- From a longer-term perspective, the food security situation at national level did not change much between 2006 and the 3rd quarter of 2009, highlighting the **chronic nature of food insecurity**.



- **Food insecurity remained much more prevalent in rural areas than in urban areas**, affecting respectively 37% and 29% of households. However, the trends did not confirm the increasing prevalence of food insecurity in urban areas noted during the first 3 quarters of 2008.

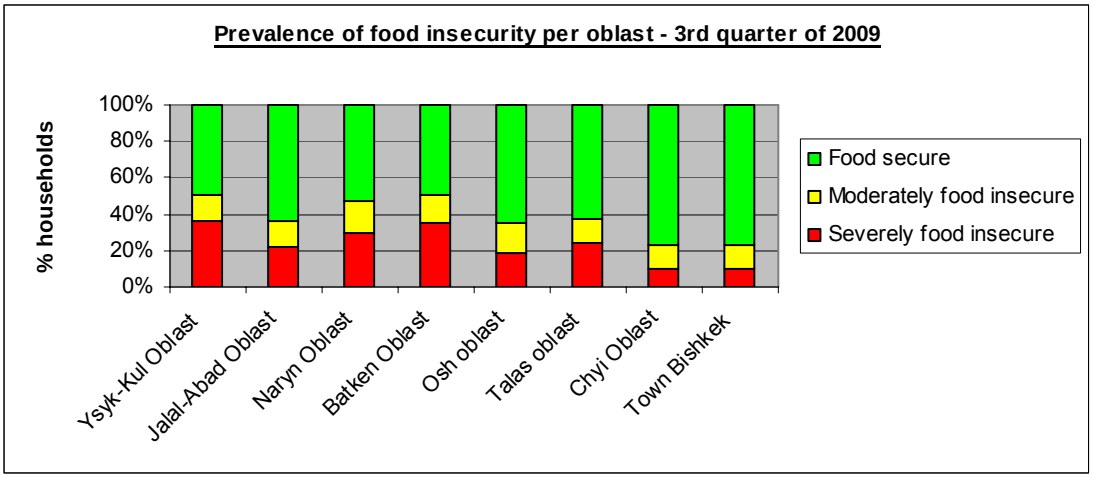


	Last quarter 2008		1st quarter 2009		2nd quarter 2009		3rd quarter 2009	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Severely food insecure	16%	23%	13%	20%	23%	17%	14%	23%
Moderately food insecure	13%	14%	14%	12%	13%	15%	15%	14%
Food secure	70%	63%	73%	68%	64%	69%	71%	63%

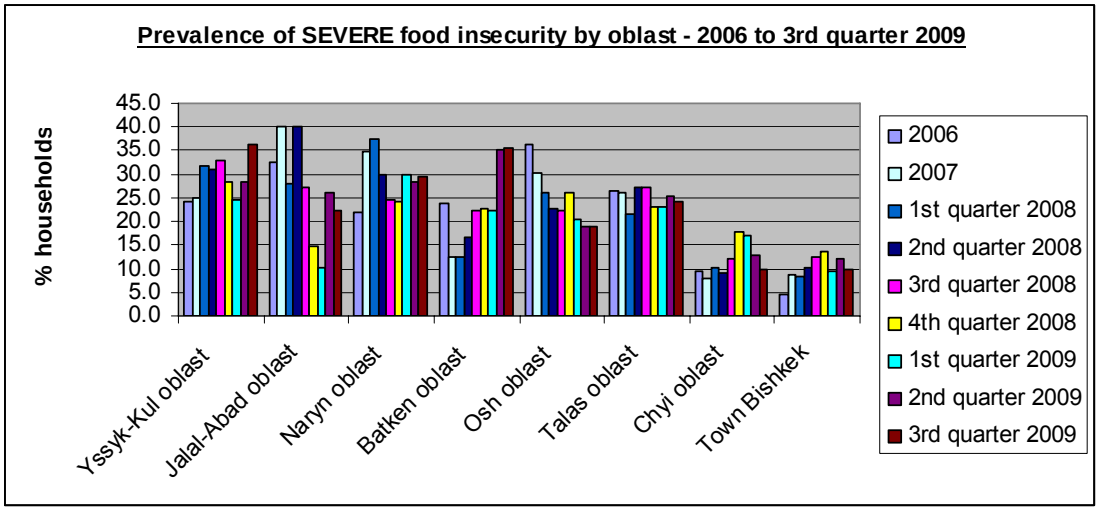
- A deterioration of the situation reflecting transitory food insecurity could have been expected in a context of cumulated high food and fuel prices (in 2008) and global financial crisis (in 2009). Indeed, **in urban areas the proportion of severely food insecure households increased markedly during the 2nd quarter of 2009**, with a peak of 23% severely food insecure urban households, and decreased thereafter. Conversely, in rural areas, the proportion of severely food insecure households declined from 20% to 17% during the period, possibly owing to the greater availability of fruits and vegetables in the spring/summer.
- Similar seasonal variations were not observed in 2008. Rather, the proportion of severely food insecure households declined in rural areas during the 3rd quarter of 2008 compared to the previous 2 quarters, which could be explained by the grain harvest becoming available at that time.
- The short duration of transitory food insecurity in urban areas and the absence of changes in rural areas between the end of 2008 and first 3 quarters of 2009 may also be explained by and the slowdown of inflation which contained the rise of food and non-food prices, as well as by protected government spending in the social (including a rise of pensions), health care and education sectors. These factors may also have compensated the increase of tariffs of electricity and heating that took place in 2009.
- However, **the increased cash income from salaries and pensions is not sufficient to lift food insecure households out of poverty and improve durably their food access**. Furthermore, while food prices have decreased in central markets, they may have remained high in local/village markets, as has been noted in various other countries.

- At oblast level, some slight changes in the prevalence of food insecurity were noted during the reporting period (end 2008 and first 3 quarters of 2009) compared to the previous one (1st to 3rd quarters of 2008). In terms of trends (rather than absolute prevalence) the **deterioration of household food security continued in Yssyk-Kul and Batken**, while it stabilised in **Bishkek town**.
- The improvement noted in **Jalal-Abad** oblast previously was not sustained after the last quarter of 2008 and the **trend was negative** instead. The **situation in Naryn also worsened** compared to the previous reporting period.
- **Improved food security situation** was noted in **Osh** and **Talas** oblasts.

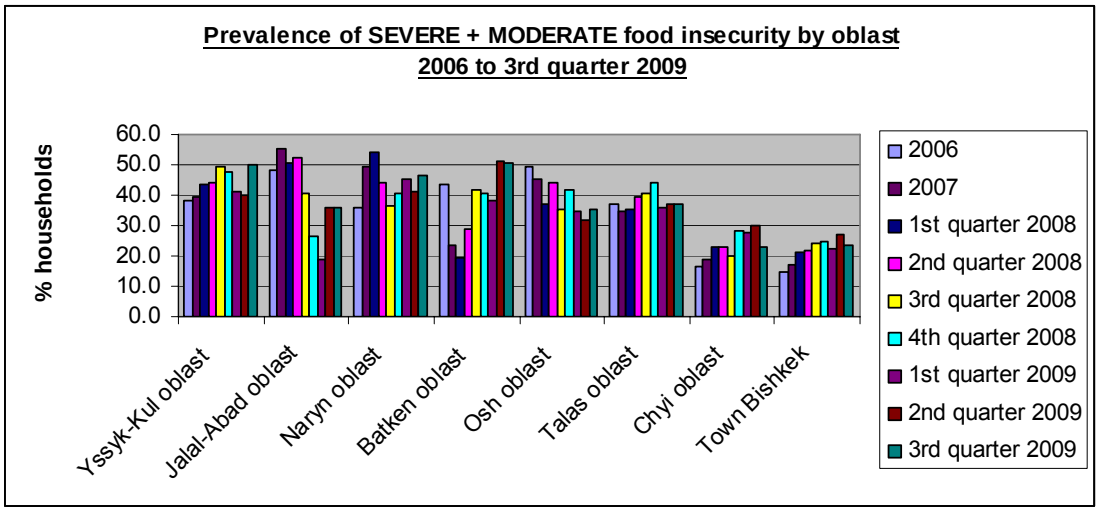
- By the 3rd quarter of 2009, the **highest proportions of *total* food insecure households** (severe and moderate) were found in **Batken** (51%), **Yssyk-Kul** (50%), **Naryn** (47%), **Talas** (37%), **Jalal-Abad** (36%) and **Osh** (35%) oblasts. While Batken and Yssyk-Kul remained the oblasts with the worse food security situation, **Naryn** joined the top three due to the worsening of the situation there.
- The **highest proportions of *severe* food insecurity** were found in **Yssyk-Kul** (36%), **Batken** (36%), followed by **Naryn** (29%), **Talas** (24%), **Jalal-Abad** (22%) and **Osh** (19%).
- The most favourable food security situation overall was in **Chuy** oblast (77% food secure households) and **Bishkek town** (76%).



- Looking at longer-term changes since 2006, **in terms of severe food insecurity the situation deteriorated in Yssuk-Kul, Naryn and Batken oblasts and Bishkek town**. The prevalence of severe food insecurity returned to 2006 levels in **Chuy** oblast after a deterioration at the end of 2008. The situation remained stable in **Talas** oblast, while it improved in **Jalalabad** oblast (although with signs of deterioration since mid-2009) and in **Osh** oblast.



- **In terms of overall food insecurity (severe and moderate), the situation between 2006 and the 3rd quarter of 2009 deteriorated in Yssyk-Kul, Naryn, Batken and Chuy oblasts and in Bishkek town**. The prevalence of total food insecurity remained stable in **Talas** oblast, while it improved in **Jalalabad** oblast (though with signs of deterioration by mid-2009) and **Osh** oblast.

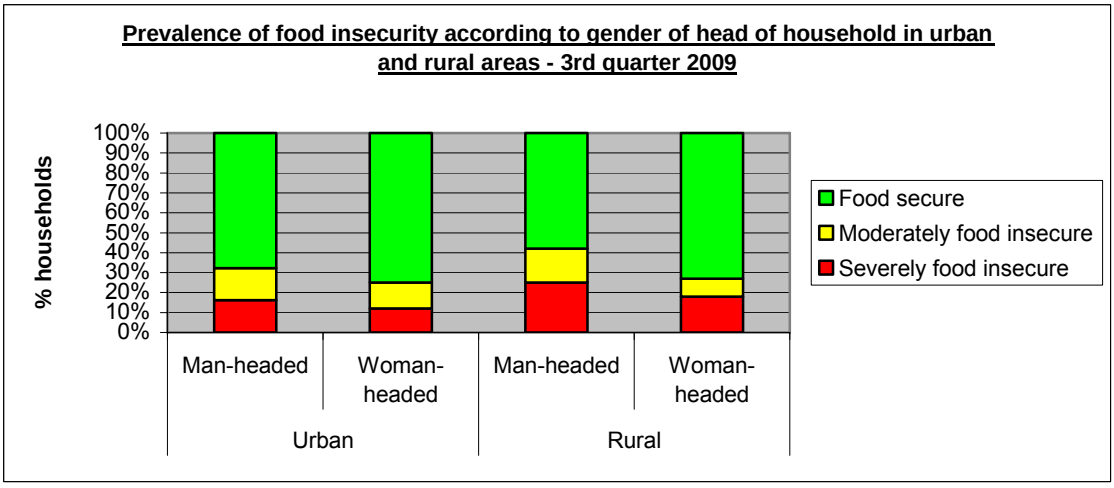


2.2 - Demographic characteristics of food insecure households

2.1.1 - Characteristics of the head of household

Gender of the head of household

- Nation-wide, by the 3rd quarter of 2009 more than 1/3rd of households were headed by a woman (36%). The proportion was higher in urban areas (44%) than rural areas (31%). Compared to the national average, the proportion of woman-headed households was higher in **Bishkek town** (48%) and lower in **Naryn** (26%), **Batken** (26%) and **Talas** (27%) oblasts.
- Data from the 2007 KIHS up to the 3rd quarter of 2008 data did not demonstrate a clear difference of food security status between men- and women-headed households and this was confirmed by data from the last quarter of 2008 and first 3 quarters of 2009. The **prevalence of food insecurity tends to be lower among women-headed households** than men-headed households in both urban and rural areas. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, 15% of women-headed households were severely food insecure and 11% moderately food insecure, compared to 22% and 17% of men-headed households respectively. The comprehensive review done in 2008 had shown that male-headed households tended to be larger, include less pensioners and receive less remittances, thus possibly explaining the higher prevalence of food insecurity compared to female-headed households.



- Over the review period, the prevalence of food insecurity tended to decrease among women-headed households in rural areas (from 34% to 27%) but remained stable in urban areas as well as among men-headed households.

Age of head of household

- Nation-wide, almost a quarter of households were headed by an elderly, i.e. a man above 63 years of age or a woman above 57 years of age. The proportion was similar in both rural and urban areas.

- As during the previous 3 quarters, **the proportion of food insecure households headed by an elderly** was **similar to that of households headed by a younger individual**. Some variations were noted between quarters which may be linked to temporary migration of younger heads of households (?). By the 3rd quarter of 2009, 18% of households headed by an elderly were severely food insecure and 12% moderately food insecure, compared to 20% and 15% respectively among households with a younger head.

- This result confirms that the negative trend observed between 2006 and early 2008 of rising food insecurity among elderly heads of household did not hold. The situation at that time may have reflected the particular hardship suffered by households headed by an elderly during the winter and high food and fuel prices crisis. The increase of the level of pension in 2009 may also have contributed to protect households headed by an elderly.

Education of the head of household

- As during the first 3 quarters of 2008, the positive relationship between **specialised or higher education (university)** of the head of household and food security was noted in **urban areas**. These represented 55% of all urban households. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, about 73% of urban households whose head had specialised or higher education were food secure, compared to 63% of households whose head did not have education or had secondary education.

- **In rural areas**, food security was positively associated with **primary and specialised secondary education** of the head of household. However these represented only 24% of all rural households.

2.2.2 - Size of household

- The **direct relationship between size of household and food security** was confirmed for the review period, in both rural and urban areas. On average, the size of **severely food insecure households was 5.3 members**, **moderately food insecure households 4.7 members**, and food secure households 3.3 members (same as before).

- However, in rural areas severe food insecurity associated to medium-size and large families seem to have increased compared to the previous 3 quarters. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, 71% of severely food insecure households had more than 4 members, compared to 61% before. It seems that some medium-size and large rural families which were food secure fell into severe food insecurity since the 3rd quarter of 2008. This finding will need to be examined again in future to check if it indicates a longer-term trend and warrants investigation of the contributing factors.

Size of household	Number of members		Proportion of members					
			Urban			Rural		
	Urban	Rural	< 4 members	4-6 members	> 6 members	< 4 members	4-6 members	> 6 members
Severely food insecure	4.8	5.6	8%	34%	43%	11%	35%	51%
Moderately food insecure	4.3	5.0	12%	24%	*	10%	20%	19%
Food secure	2.9	3.6	80%	41%	*	79%	45%	30%

**: Number of households too small to derive meaningful percentages.*

- Compared to the national average (3.9 members), family size was larger in **Batken** oblast (4.7 members) and smaller in **Bishkek town** (3.1 members).

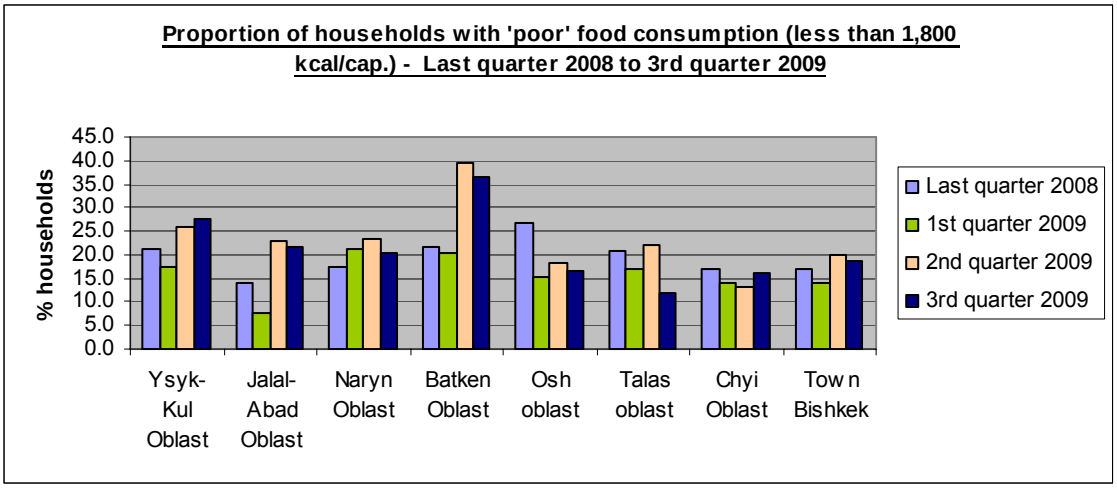
2.3 – Food consumption

- Nation-wide, the average level of daily kilocalorie consumption per capita remained comparable to the previous reporting period and relatively stable. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, **households were consuming on average 2,300 kcal/cap/day**. Kilocalorie consumption peaked at 2,430 kcal/cap./day in the 1st quarter of 2009, possibly reflecting the larger stocks of food available and lower market prices after the harvest.
- The **proportion of households consuming less than the average kcal requirements** per capita stayed at a similar level as during the previous reporting period (first 3 quarters of 2008) at **about 36%** in both rural and urban areas.

- **Per capita kcal consumption continued to be much lower among food insecure households, especially the severely food insecure** who consumed only between 1,510-1,580 kcal/cap./day.

	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009
Poor food consumption	20%	14%	21%	20%
Borderline food consumption	17%	15%	16%	16%
Acceptable food consumption	63%	70%	63%	64%

- Also similarly as before, **food insecure households in rural areas consumed on average more kilocalories per capita per day than food insecure households in urban areas**, probably as a result of the greater availability of food from their own crop and animal productions.
- The average consumption of protein and fat per capita per day also remained relatively stable between the last quarter of 2008 and the first 3 quarters of 2009 for food insecure households, while protein intake slightly increased for food secure households in both rural and urban areas. This can reflect the better ability of these households to procure expensive animal food items from their own livestock (rural) or from the market (urban).
- By the 3rd quarter of 2009, compared to the national average, a lower kilocalorie consumption per capita was noted in **Batken** (2,060 kcal) and **Yssyk-Kul** (2,170 kcal) oblasts, while it was higher in **Talas** (2,490 kcal) and **Chuy** (2,580 kcal) oblasts. Quite important seasonal variations were noted in most oblasts, rendering difficult the identification of general trends.
- By the 3rd quarter of 2009, **the proportion of households consuming less than 80% of dietary requirements was higher than the national average** (standing at 20%) **in Batken oblast** (36%) and **Yssyk-Kul** (28%) oblasts and lower in **Talas** oblast (12%). A similar ranking was noted in the previous reporting period, highlighting the stability of the situation.
- During the last quarter of 2008 and first 3 quarters of 2009, the proportion of households with such an insufficient diet increased in **Batken oblast, confirming the deteriorating trend** observed in the first 3 quarters of 2008, as well as in **Yssyk-Kul** and **Jalal-Abad** oblasts. The proportion of households consuming a deficient diet decreased in **Talas** oblast in the 3rd quarter of 2009.



2.4 – Economic access to food

2.4.1 - Sources of food

- **Market purchases continue to be the main source of bread**, **wheat flour** and **meat** for both rural and urban households and across all food security groups.
- In **urban areas**, **market purchases are also the main source of potatoes, milk and vegetables**. As virtually all the food consumed by urban households must be purchased variations of prices in 2008 created hardship for many, especially already food insecure households and with limited cash resources to buy food. However, the **velocity of change of consumer prices slowed down between the last quarter of 2008 and the first 3 quarters of 2009** (Consumer Price Inflation down from 18.5% to 2.7%) and has eased the situation despite the fact that most price have remained higher than before 2008.
- As noted in earlier reports, a significant proportion of urban households (9% by the 3rd quarter of 2009) obtained **milk through gifts**. This was especially the case of severely food insecure households.
- In **rural areas**, depending on the season **33%-48% of the potatoes, 30%-41% of the milk and 12%-31% of the vegetables consumed come from own field, garden or animal production**. These ranges were comparable to those observed during the first 3 quarters of 2008. Compared to the national average, variations are noted between oblasts reflecting different shares of urban/rural population and orientation of the agricultural production. For example, in potato-producing areas such as **Yssyk-Kul**, **Naryn, Talas** and **Chuy** oblasts, the proportion of potatoes consumed that were coming from own production was higher than the average.
- In **Bishkek town** most of the food consumed by all households comes from market purchases, but a significant share of the milk comes from own animal production and from gifts. Given that the proportions of animal owners and recipients of gifts are rather low, this result also indicates that many households in town do not consume milk at all.

2.4.2 - Food expenditures and market food prices

Share of food expenditures

- Similarly as for the previous reporting period, **food expenditures represented about 60% of total expenditures**, with a higher share in rural areas (63%) than in urban areas (58%).
- Food secure households in both rural and urban areas dedicated almost the same proportion of their income to food expenditures as food insecure households, reflecting the general priority given to food over other expenditures across the whole population and,

beyond that, the fact that the **majority of households lives close to poverty**. As mentioned, the rise of consumer prices slowed down between the last quarter of 2008 and 3rd quarter of 2009, but prices may have remained high and not sufficiently compensated by higher incomes, forcing an arbitrage of scarce resources in favour of meeting food needs.

- In both rural and urban areas, some differences in the share of food expenditures between quarters of the year were noted but remained limited. They are probably linked to seasonal variations of food availability from the harvest and of market prices linked to the harvest as well.
- Compared to the national average, by the 3rd quarter of 2009 the share of food expenditures was higher in **Talas** (67%) and **Jalal-Abad** (67%) oblasts and lower in **Bishkek town** (55%).

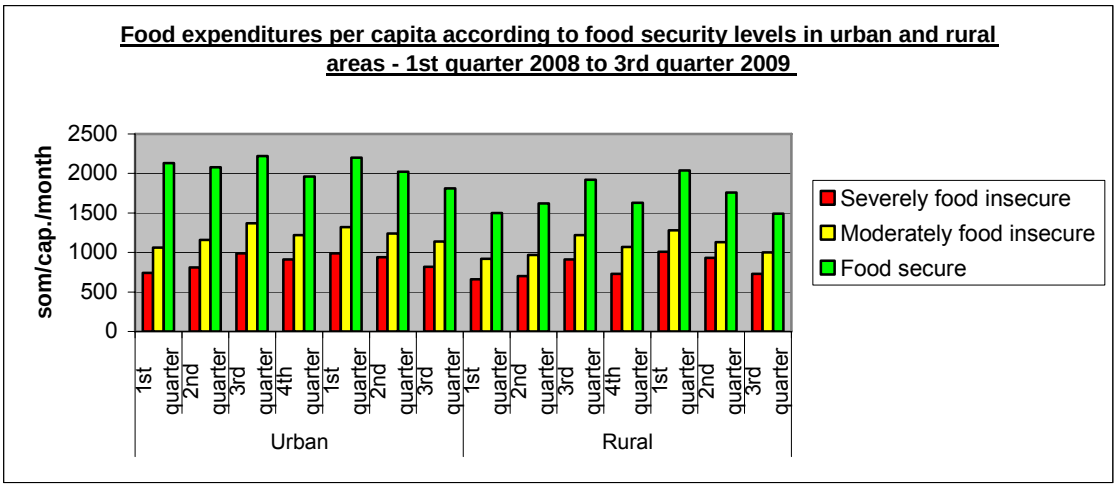
Absolute amount of monthly food expenditures per capita

- The level of food expenditures per capita between the last quarter of 2008 and the first 3 quarters of 2009 continued to be higher than at the beginning of 2008 but slightly lower than the peak of the 3rd quarter of 2008. The decrease reflects the slow down of food price inflation but also indicates that prices have remained higher than in 2007. Indeed, they may not have fallen as much in local village markets in rural areas as they have in central markets in major cities. Local market prices should be monitored in future to check this assumption.
- By the 3rd quarter of 2009, **rural households spent on average 1,180 som per capita** and **urban households spent 1,480 som**. At an exchange rate[10] of 43.7 som:US$1, these amounts correspond to US$27 and US$34 respectively.
- In both rural and urban areas, **food expenditures per capita stayed lower among food insecure households**, particularly the severely food insecure. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, **severely food insecure households spent on average 730 som (US$17) per capita in rural areas and 820 som (US$19) per capita in urban areas**. These amounts are just above the extreme poverty line (640 som, US$15) but below the poverty line (960 som, US$22). They are **well below the cost of the official food basket** (2,240 som, US$51).

Food expenditures per capita *(som)*	Last quarter 2008		1st quarter 2009		2nd quarter 2009		3rd quarter 2009	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Severely food insecure	910	730	990	1010	940	930	820	730
Moderately food insecure	1220	1070	1320	1280	1240	1130	1140	1000
Food secure	1960	1630	2200	2040	2020	1760	1810	1490

- As noted in previous reports, the level of food expenditures per capita is lower among rural households than urban households most probably owing to self-consumption of their crop and animal productions.
- Looking at the whole period 2008 to 3rd quarter of 2009, it seems that the amount of food expenditures decreased at the beginning of 2009 **but remained slightly higher than at the beginning of 2008 for food insecure households**. In urban areas, the level of food expenditures was lower than at the beginning of 2008 for food secure households only.

[10] Kyrgyz Republic Country Report. The Economist Intelligence Unit. February 2010.



- Compared to the national average (1,290 som), by the 3rd quarter of 2009 the amount of food expenditures per capita was lower in **Naryn** (1,100 som), **Yssyk-Kul** (1,120 som), **Batken** (1,110 som) and **Osh** (1,110 som) and higher in **Bishek town** (1,670 som) and **Chuy** (1,570 som) oblast. These variations may be due to differences of food prices locally as well as of the proportions of rural versus urban population in the oblasts. Similar differences had been noted in the previous reporting period.

2.4.3 - Non-food expenditures

Expenditures on services

- **Expenditures on services continued to be the most important non-food expenditures**, representing **17% of total expenditures average**, similar to the previous reporting period.
- This share tended to be higher among households in urban areas than in rural areas (18% and 14% respectively). It was lower among severely food insecure households in rural areas (12%) reflecting a lower economic access and use of these services.

Share of expenditures on services	Urban				Rural			
	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009
Severely food insecure	22%	20%	18%	18%	19%	12%	11%	12%
Moderately food insecure	23%	21%	20%	20%	23%	12%	15%	15%
Food secure	21%	20%	18%	19%	24%	15%	15%	17%

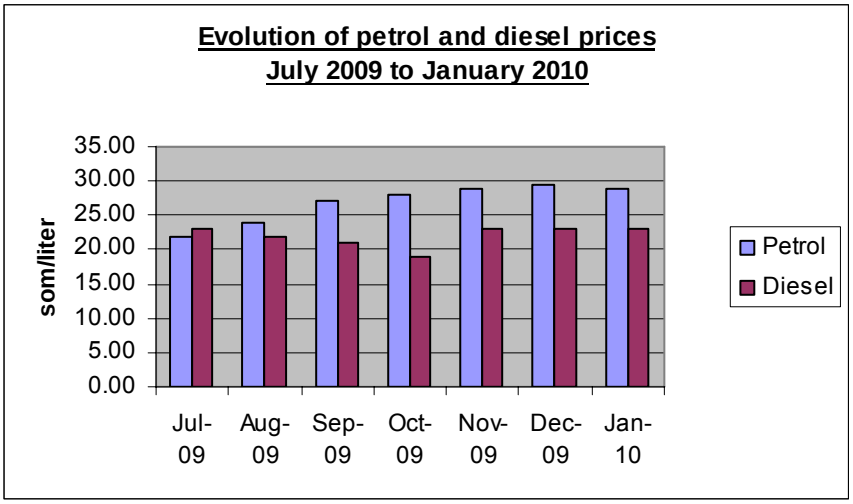
Expenditures on utilities

- The **share of expenditures on utilities** remained the same as earlier in 2008, with a similar trend towards a higher share in **urban areas (5%)** than **rural areas (2%)** and no association with food insecurity. The highest share was in **Bishkek town** despite a declining trend between the last quarter of 2008 and the first 3 quarters of 2009 (from 10% to 6%). The changes may reflect the increase of electricity tariffs in 2009. It must be noted that these tariffs further doubled in January 2010.

Expenditures on transportation and fuel prices

- The share of **transportation expenditures** during the reporting period also remained similar as before at about **3%-4%** of total expenditures, with no differences across food security groups. It tended to be higher in **Bishkek town** across all food security groups, probably because of the size of the town requiring larger distances to reach places of work, markets/shops and services.

- The cost of diesel and fuel were monitored by WFP since July 2009. The evolution shows an increase of petrol cost while diesel cost remained pretty stable.



Expenditures on education

- The share of **education expenditures stayed low** in both rural and urban areas. It reached about **2%** of total expenditures by the 3rd quarter of 2009, not much different from the first 3 quarters of 2008 (1%). There was no noticeable differences between food security groups, reflecting a similarly (low?) importance given to child education relatively to other essential household expenditures.

Expenditures on clothing

- Compared to the previous reporting period which had noted a slight increase, the **share of expenditures for clothes** remained at **about 7%** of total expenditures in both rural and urban areas. This proportion did not differ across the various food security groups (but the absolute amount is likely to be lower among the food insecure as their income is also generally lower than the food secure households).

Expenditures for equipment and construction material

- The **share of expenditures for equipment and for construction material** continued to be low at about **2%** each of total expenditures.

2.4.4 – Crop and animal productions

Access to land

- Data for the whole year 2008 confirmed that practically all rural households had land (97%) as well as more than half of urban households (59%). Almost 30% of households in the capital city Bishkek also mentioned having access to land.
- **The level of food security was not associated with *access* to land in rural areas** (but it is associated with acreage). In urban areas, the prevalence of food insecurity was slightly higher among households having access to land (32% food insecure compared to 25% among those without land), possibly reflecting less opportunities to obtain food and income through other means, compared to food secure households.

Overall 2008	Cultivate land	
	Urban	Rural
Severely food insecure	68%	98%
Moderately food insecure	62%	95%
Food secure	56%	97%

- Over the year 2008, the average acreage of land available for cultivation continued to be low on a per capita basis. Land acreage was 1.5 ha/household (0.23 ha/capita) in rural areas, and 0.08 ha/household (0.15 ha/capita) in urban areas.
- As noted before, **food insecure households had less land than the others**. The difference was particularly marked for severely food insecure households. Access to land also does not mean that all of it is cultivated, as procuring agricultural inputs is often difficult for the poorest.
- Also confirming previous results, compared to the national average the acreage cultivated by households was larger in **Naryn** (1.7 ha/household – 0.40 ha/capita), **Talas** (1.1 ha/household – 0.33 ha/capita) and **Yssyk-Kul** (0.9 ha/household – 0.30 ha/capita).

Access to any harvest

- Even though access to land is widespread, not all households having land are able to harvest. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, **82% of rural households had harvested and 24% of urban households**, while access to land was respectively 97% and 59%.
- Compared to the national average (57%) the proportion of households having harvested was higher in **Talas** (92%), **Yssyk-Kul** (84%), **Batken** (76%), **Osh** (69%) and **Chuy** (66%) oblasts, presumably reflecting the marked agricultural orientation of these oblasts. In **Bishkek town**, only 10% of households had harvested, highlighting the heavy dependence of most Bishkek households on the market throughout the year to obtain their food.

Potato harvest

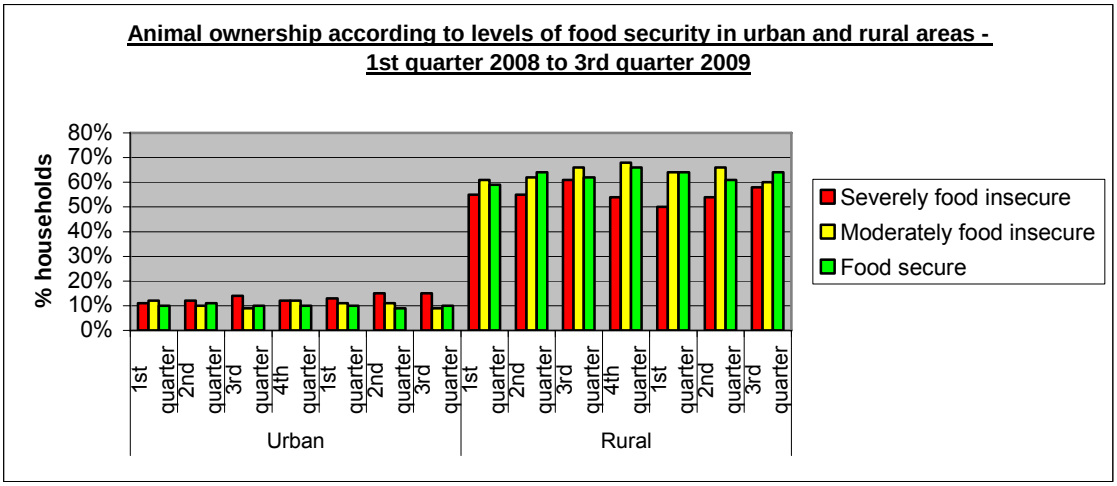
- Potato is one of the main crops cultivated in Kyrgyzstan and an essential source of food and income for the population. Similar trends as noted for the previous reporting period (first 3 quarters of 2008) were observed for the current reporting period (last quarter of 2008 and first 3 quarters of 2009). By the 3rd quarter of 2009, the amount of potato harvested per household was almost 3 times larger in rural areas than in urban areas (respectively 870 kg and 278 kg).
- In some oblasts (e.g. **Naryn, Chuy**), severely food insecure households harvested (and stocked) as much potato as food secure households. In **Yssyk-Kul** and **Talas** oblasts, food secure households harvested more potatoes, possibly because cultivation of this crop is a major activity in these oblasts and contributes more to income and food security than in other locations.
- Compared to the national average (795 kg), by the 3rd quarter of 2009 the potato harvest was larger in **Yssyk-Kul** (2,013 kg) and **Osh** (1,121 kg) oblasts and lower in **Batken** (202 kg) and **Chuy** (213 kg) oblasts.
- The share of potato harvest kept for family consumption varies between quarters. When the main harvest is being done, households tend to sell a large part of it possibly to reimburse debts incurred for the production and harvest activities as well as because of limitations of storage capacity. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, rural households indicated that they would keep about 44% of the potato harvest for their own consumption, while urban households would keep only 24% of it. At that time, the average amount of potatoes in stock was 850 kg for rural households and 275 kg for urban households.

Animal ownership

- Since the beginning of 2008, the proportion of animal owners remained stable: **62% of rural households** and **10% of urban households** owned animals by the 3rd quarter of 2009. This differs from the previous reporting period when a slight decrease in animal ownership was noted in urban areas. The difference may be related to seasonal effects, as cash (procured through animal sales) may be needed more at certain times of the year than others. It may also reflect the more difficult economic situation in cities to cope with increased prices during a large part of 2008.
- As noted in previous reports, **severely food insecure households in rural areas were less likely to own animals** than other households. This was not the case in urban areas, probably because animal ownership plays a more minor role for food consumption and income than in rural settings.

- The proportion of severely food insecure households owning animals in rural areas tended to rise in 2009, but this was not the case for moderately food insecure households. The proportion of animal owners among moderately food insecure households decreased especially in **Yssyk-Kul**, **Naryn** and **Batken** oblasts.

% animal owners	Urban				Rural			
	4th quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009	4th quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009
Severely food insecure	12%	13%	15%	15%	54%	50%	54%	58%
Moderately food insecure	12%	11%	11%	9%	68%	64%	66%	60%
Food secure	10%	10%	9%	10%	66%	64%	61%	64%

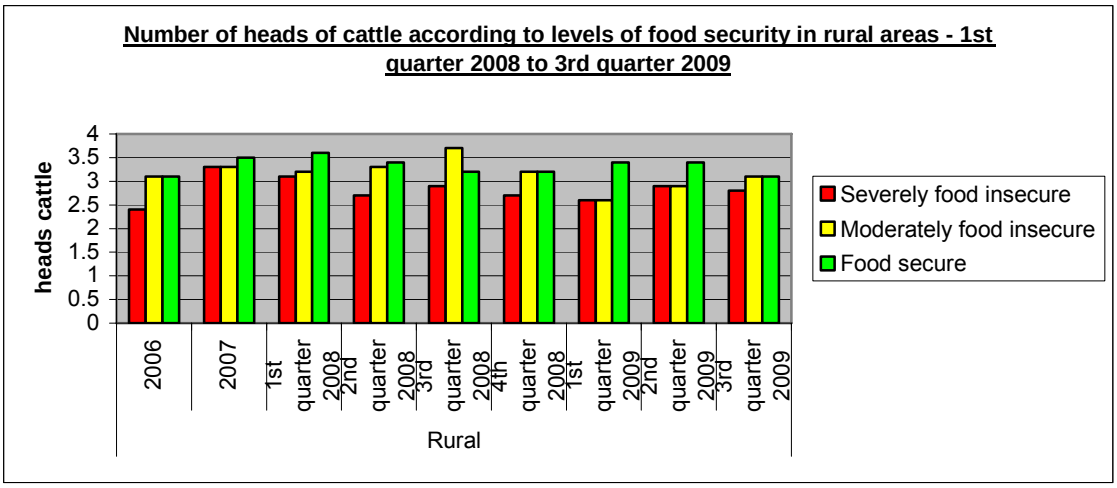


Cattle

- **The average number of cattle owned by households did not vary compared to the previous period**. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, rural households owned on average **3.1 heads of cattle**..

Heads of cattle *(for those who own)*	Urban				Rural			
	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009
Severely food insecure	2.0	*	*	*	2.7	2.6	2.9	2.8
Moderately food insecure	*	*	*	*	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.1
Food secure	2.2	2.6	2.1	2.0	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.3

**: number of households too low to calculate a meaningful average.*



- **The proportion of cattle owners also remained stable since the beginning of 2008 except for moderately food insecure households in rural areas**, particularly in **Yssyk-Kul** oblast. On average, **about 42% of the rural households and 4% of urban households owned cattle**. However, during the 3rd quarter of 2009 the proportion of cattle owners among moderately food insecure households dropped to 29% compared to 42%-46% during the previous quarters.

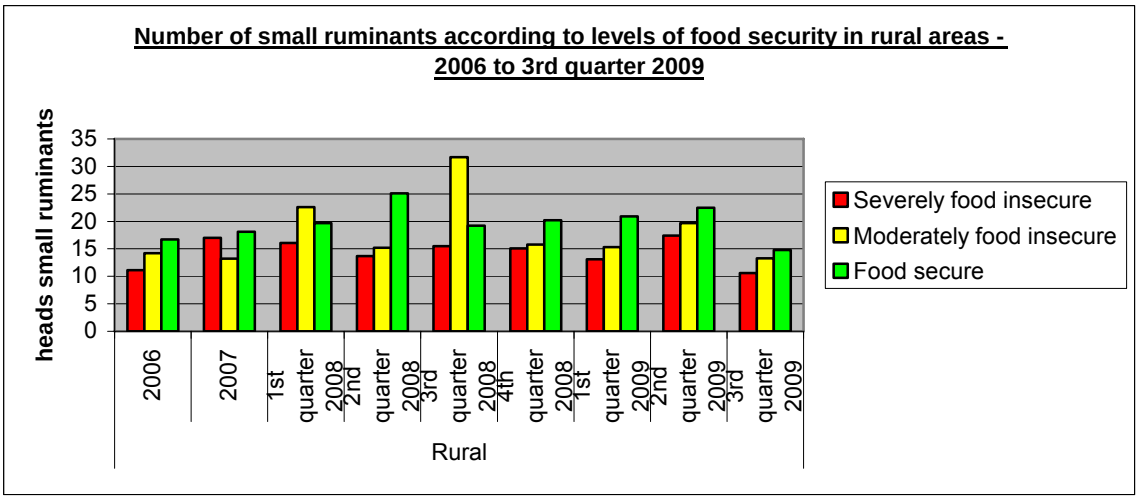
- The relationship between food insecurity and cattle ownership varied between rural and urban locations. **In rural areas, the proportion of food insecure households tended to be lower among cattle owners than non-owners** highlighting the positive role of cattle for food security. This was not the case in urban areas, possibly because of the lesser role of these animals for food consumption and income compared to rural areas.

Small ruminants

- The number of small ruminants owned by both rural and urban households dropped sharply during the 3rd quarter of 2009 compared to previous quarters. By that time, **rural households owned on average 11 small ruminants** while **urban households owned 6**. This trend needs to be checked in later rounds, as it may reflect an urgent need for cash that cannot be obtained from other means and could deplete one of the only asset base of rural households.

Number of small ruminants *(for those who own)*	Urban				Rural			
	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009
Severely food insecure	8.6	10.0	10.7	5.2	15.1	13.1	17.4	10.6
Moderately food insecure	8.5	7.5	6.6	*	15.8	15.3	19.7	13.3
Food secure	8.0	8.8	10.2	6.2	20.2	20.9	22.5	14.8

**: Number of households too small to derive a meaningful average*



- While the number of small ruminants owned decreased in the 3rd quarter of 2009, the proportion of owners of small ruminants remained stable since the beginning of 2008. **By the 3rd quarter of 2009, 26% of rural households and 4% of urban households owned small ruminants**.

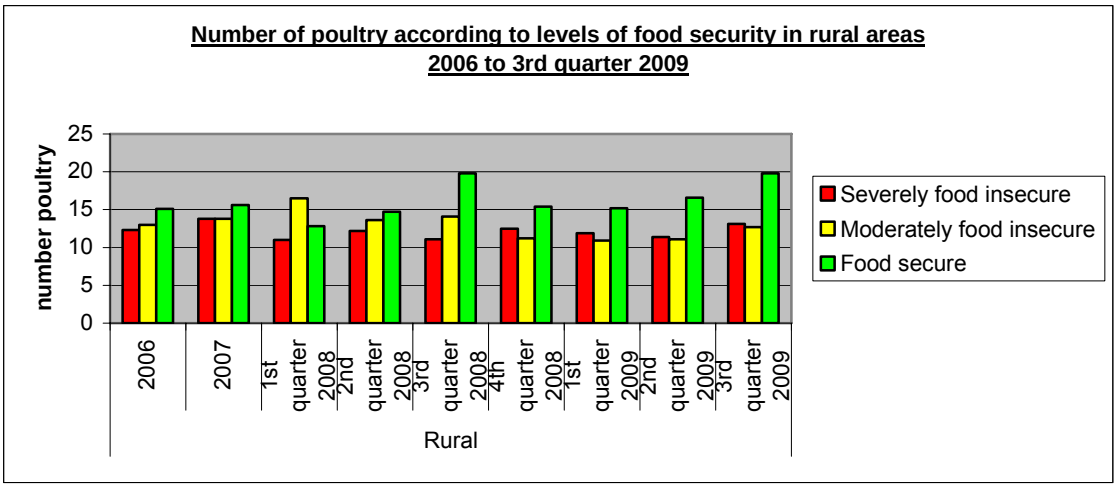
- **Food security seemed associated with small ruminant ownership in rural areas** but not in urban areas: the proportion of food insecure rural households was higher among non-owners than among owners, but the reverse occurred in urban areas. The reason is likely to be the same, i.e. animal ownership plays a more important role for food and income in rural areas than in urban areas.

Poultry

- The average number of poultry owned by households stayed the same. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, **rural households owned on average 18 poultry and urban households owned 13**.
- Similarly to the other animal species, **the proportion of food insecure households was higher among non-owners than owners**.

Number of poultry *(for those who own)*	Urban				Rural			
	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009
Severely food insecure	10.2	7.4	10.2	7.0	12.5	11.9	11.4	13.1
Moderately food insecure	10.5	7.1	8.2	*	11.2	10.9	11.1	12.7
Food secure	15.4	15.2	16.6	14.9	15.4	15.2	16.6	19.8

**: Number of households too small to derive a meaningful average*



- The proportion of poultry owners also remained stable since the beginning of 2008. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, **40% of rural households and 6% of urban households owned poultry**.
- The positive relationship between food security and ownership of poultry was also confirmed.

Expenditures for crop and animal productions

- The **share of expenditures for crop and animal productions** tended to be a bit lower than during the previous reporting period, possibly due to seasonal differences as well as decreased prices of fertilizer (to be confirmed). As previously, rural households dedicate a larger share of their expenditures to agricultural activities than their urban counterparts (3% versus 1% by the 3rd quarter of 2009.
- Compared to the national average (2%), by the 3rd quarter of 2009 the share of these expenditures was higher in **Naryn** (8%) oblast. Seasonal variations and different needs according to the main crops cultivated likely contribute to the differences observed between quarters and between oblasts.

- Expenditures dedicated specifically to the **maintenance of animals** represented 5% of total expenditures in rural areas and less than 1% in urban areas, similarly as during the previous reporting period.

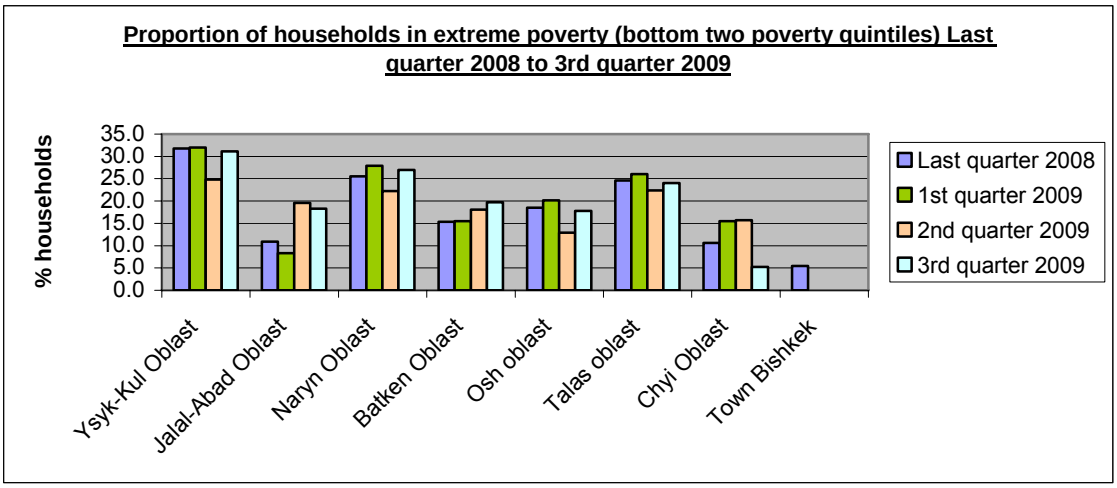
2.4.5 - Poverty

- The proportion of households with low levels of consumption expenditures remained comparable to the previous reporting period (first 3 quarters of 2008), including the marked difference between rural and urban households. Hence on average the **prevalence of poverty between end 2008 and the first 3 quarters of 2009 did not increase** despite the global economic crisis. The deterioration noted in urban areas in 2008 seemed to have stopped in 2009.
- By the 3rd quarter of 2009, some **15% of households had consumption expenditures at or below extreme poverty level** and **35% had consumption expenditures between extreme poverty and poverty levels**.

- **Poverty rates continued to be much higher in rural areas than urban areas**: 19% extreme poor and 41% between extreme poverty and poverty in rural areas, versus 7% and 25% respectively in urban areas.

	Last quarter 2008		1st quarter 2009		2nd quarter 2009		3rd quarter 2009	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
< extreme poverty line: poor food access	9%	19%	8%	20%	8%	19%	7%	20%
Between extreme and poverty line: average food access	30%	41%	28%	41%	27%	41%	25%	41%
> poverty line: good food access	61%	40%	63%	39%	65%	39%	68%	38%

- By the 3rd quarter of 2009, compared to the national average (15%) the proportion of extremely poor households was higher in **Yssyk-Kul** (31%), **Naryn** (27%) and **Talas** (24%) oblasts. The lower proportions of extreme poor households were noted in **Chuy** oblast (5%) and **Bishkek town**.
- During the reporting period, the proportion of extreme poor households tended to increase in **Jalal-Abad** and **Batken** oblasts.



2.4.6 - Income sources, salaries and cash income

Sources of income

Note: Income obtained from the sale of agricultural products is not reflected in the KIHS data available. As such, the below results may underestimate the contribution of agricultural activities to household income. On the other hand, most cultivation and animal raising is done at subsistence level, especially among the food insecure, and therefore not expected to provide high amounts of cash, except for the large – food secure – farmers.

- Salaries (83%) and pensions (39%) continued to be the most frequent sources of income, with no significant changes over the reporting period or between food security groups with the exception of **moderately food insecure households who were less likely to report pensions as a source of income** (31%). These households may have access to slightly better remunerated jobs than the severely food insecure households, enabling them to escape severe food insecurity, but **pensions could be the additional revenue that makes the difference to achieve food security**.
- Compared to the national average, pensions as a source of income were mentioned more frequently in **Naryn** (58%) oblast.
- A significant proportion of households (15%) in both rural and urban areas report **help from relatives as a source of income**. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, this assistance was received less frequently by severely food insecure households in rural areas (6%).

- Compared to the national average, income support from relatives was mentioned more frequently in **Naryn** (23%), **Chuy** (26%) and **Talas** (21%) oblasts, especially among moderately food insecure and food secure households. Inasmuch as this source of income can be assimilated to remittances, the variations across oblasts could reflect higher proportions of migrants.
- Severely food insecure households are less likely to benefit from remittances either because they cannot afford to migrate or because they do not have members able to do so for lack of physical capacity or insufficient education level to secure employment abroad. **Remittances do seem to play a positive role for food security**, considering the higher proportion of remittance receivers among the moderately food insecure and the food secure households.
- In terms of contribution to income, **salaried work provided the larger share of total income** (77% by the 3rd quarter of 2009), **followed by pensions** (13%) and support from relatives (4%). It must be noted that the level of pensions was raised in 2009 by 25% to compensate for the increase of electricity tariffs.
- In urban areas, the share of income provided by pensions was lower among food insecure households than food secure households (respectively 8%-9% versus 18%). This indicates a **higher dependence of food insecure urban households on wage-paid labour for their total income** and confirms the **importance of pensions to support food security**.
- Compared to the national average, the contribution of pensions to total income was higher in **Naryn** (34%) and **Yssyk-Kul** (25%) oblasts. Conversely, the contribution of salaries to total income was lower in these oblasts.

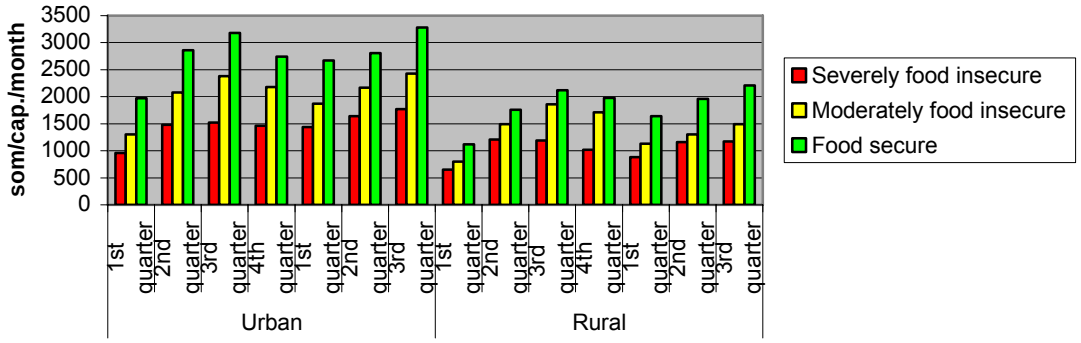
Total cash income

- Compared to the first 3 quarters of 2008, the **average cash income per capita continued its upward trend for all food security groups at national level**, except for a decline during the 1st quarter of 2009 which may reflect the exhaustion of agricultural product sales and lower opportunities for casual labour during the winter. The increase of cash income is consistent with the growth of real monthly wages reported by official statistics[11].
- Differences in levels were noted according to the degree of food insecurity and between urban and rural areas. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, average cash income was 1,780 som per capita for rural households and 2,810 som per capita for urban households. At an exchange rate[12] of 43.7 som:US$1, this represents **US$41 per household (US$1.4 per person per day) in rural areas and US$64 per household (US$2.1 per person per day) in urban areas**, reflecting very low income overall.
- **The average cash income per capita of severely food insecure households increased between the last quarter of 2008 and the 3rd quarter of 2009**, reaching 1,170 som (US$27) in rural areas and 1,770 som (US$40) in urban areas. While these amounts are above the official poverty line (963 som, US$22) they are below or very close to the international 'reference' of US$1.2 per capita per day. In contrast, **a decline of cash income was observed for moderately food insecure households in rural areas**, while in urban areas the level of income fluctuated but did not decrease. Cash income tended to increase for food secure households in both urban and rural areas.
- While the increase of cash income per capita is a positive signal for severely food insecure households, especially in urban areas, **the downward trend of income for moderately food insecure in rural areas may push them towards severe food insecurity**. Furthermore, the rise of income is probably insufficient to lift households out of food insecurity, as demonstrated by the lack of change in the proportion of food insecure households compared to the previous reporting period.

[11] Kyrgyz Republic Country Report. The Economist Intelligence Unit, February 2010 – Kyrgyz Republic: Recent Economic and Policy Developments. The World Bank, August 2009.
[12] Kyrgyz Republic Country Report. The Economist Intelligence Unit, February 2010.

Total monthly income per capita *(som)*	Urban				Rural			
	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009
Severely food insecure	1460	1440	1640	1770	1020	880	1160	1170
Moderately food insecure	2180	1870	2170	2430	1710	1130	1300	1490
Food secure	2740	2670	2810	3280	1980	1640	1960	2210

Cash income per capita according to food security levels in urban and rural areas - 1st quarter 2008 to 3rd quarter 2009



- Compared to the national average (2,150 som), cash income per capita was lower in **Talas** (1,050 som), **Yssy-Kul** (1,070 som), **Naryn** (1,320 som) and **Batken** (1,650 som) oblasts, and higher in **Chuy** oblast (2,570 som) and **Bishkek town** (3,240 som).

Salaries

Note: As noted before, earnings from the sale of agricultural products is not distinguished in the KIHS. The high proportion of households in rural areas receiving 'salaries' is likely to include income from agricultural activity as well as from unskilled and casual labour, rather than just wages from formal employment. The latter would also be true for 'salaries' of urban households.

- As before, most households received a salary during the reporting period, especially in urban areas. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, **81% of rural households and 87% of urban households had received a salary**. There were no significant differences according to the level of food insecurity, meaning that the absolute level of salary rather than access to any paid work made the difference.
- Given the heavy contribution of salaries to the total income of households, similar variations between time periods, food security groups, urban and rural locations, and oblasts were noted for salaries as above for total income. While the average salaries per capita of severely food insecure households generally increased between the last quarter of 2008 and 3rd quarter of 2009 in rural areas, it decreased for moderately food insecure households.

Per capita monthly salaries*(som)*	Urban				Rural			
	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009	Last quarter 2008	1st quarter 2009	2nd quarter 2009	3rd quarter 2009
Severely food insecure	1250	1220	1410	1340	860	720	960	930
Moderately food insecure	1940	1660	1900	2120	1510	860	1030	1220
Food secure	2270	2170	2290	2370	1560	1260	1600	1790

Monthly pensions

- As mentioned, **pensions appear to play a significant role in supporting food security**. The trends observed in the previous reporting period were confirmed, with a general increase in the proportion of households receiving pensions (41% in rural areas and 35% in urban areas by the 3rd quarter or 2009) but a decrease among moderately food insecure households (34% in rural areas and 28% in urban areas).
- The rise of the amount of pensions noted during the first 3 quarters of 2008 continued during the reporting period. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, pensions amounted to 2,310 som (US$53) in rural areas and 2,910 som (US$67) in urban areas. The amount was lower among food insecure households.

Per capita monthly pensions*(som)*	**Urban**				**Rural**			
	Last quarter 2008	**1st quarter 2009**	**2nd quarter 2009**	**3rd quarter 2009**	**Last quarter 2008**	**1st quarter 2009**	**2nd quarter 2009**	**3rd quarter 2009**
Severely food insecure	1820	1720	2000	2780	1380	1290	1530	2010
Moderately food insecure	1670	1860	2220	2830	1590	1720	1980	2010
Food secure	1990	2060	2380	2950	1620	1750	1980	2480

- Compared to the national average (2,540 som), pensions were lower in **Yssyk-Kul** (1,890 som), **Talas** (2,010 som) and **Osh** (2,120 som) oblasts and higher in **Naryn** (2,660 som) and **Chuy** (3,150 som) oblasts and **Bishkek town** (3,360 som). Similar results had been noted for the first 3 quarters of 2008, reflecting the different distribution of rural/urban population and food insecurity.

Monthly allowances

- **A significant decrease of the proportion of beneficiaries was noted between the last quarter of 2008 and the first 3 quarters of 2009**: from 40% to 11% in rural areas, and from 34% to 3% in urban areas. The reasons for this drop may be linked to the reduction of the number of allowance categories implemented by the Government at the beginning of 2009. They may also be due to problems of data collection which will have to be checked.
- The proportion of households receiving allowances was higher among the severely food insecure households. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, **18% of severely food insecure households in rural areas received allowances versus 7% of food secure households**.
- However, the amount of allowances continued to be low and the increasing trend noted in the first 3 quarters of 2008 did not continue. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, allowances amounted to **450 som on average** (US$10) with no major differences between rural and urban areas.

Remittances

- The KIHS does not distinguish remittances as such. Presumably, income received from relatives can be understood as remittances. Even though 15% of households reported to have received such support[13], the contribution of these transfers to total income is modest (4%). Severely food insecure households in rural areas were less likely to benefit from remittances. As such, **remittances do seem to play an important role for food security**.
- The proportion of remittance receivers and share of income from migrant transfers reported in the KIHS may underestimate the actual contribution of remittances, as the KIHS questionnaire is not designed to capture that particular information. Indeed, more changes compared to the previous reporting period would have been expected given that, according

[13] This is slightly less than the 19% of remittance receivers reported in a study conducted by the Asian Development Bank in 2007. However, the actual proportion may be higher, as household surveys at oblast level may not be the best suited to capture this information.

to a study[14] conducted in 2009, the global economic crisis negatively affected Kyrgyz migrants working in Russia, due to the depression of the construction labour market and lower wages. Migrant salaries were reported to have decreased by 20%-30% and the amounts of remittances sent back by 25%-40%.

2.4.7 – Compensations and benefits

Socially protected price scheme

- Less than 1% of households benefited from the socially protected scheme.

Benefits for utilities (central heating, gas and hot water)

- Very few households received benefits[15] for central heating (1% in rural areas, 2% in urban areas), gas (4% in urban areas) or hot water (2% in urban areas). Urban beneficiaries were mostly in Bishkek town.
- Electricity benefits were received by about 7% of households, slightly more frequently by severely food insecure households (11%).

2.4.8 – Savings, debts and credit

- As for the previous reporting period, **the proportion of households able to save money was very low**: 2% in rural areas, 1% in urban areas.
- Also as previously, **very few households have credit or loans** (1%).
- Compared to the national average, while remaining very low the proportion of households with credits or loans was slightly higher in **Naryn** (4%) and **Chuy** (3%) oblasts.
- Compared to the previous reporting period, the average size of credit or loan seemed to have decreased at the end of 2008 and first 3 quarters of 2009. This variation may be due to seasonal needs related to agricultural activities or possibly to migration (cost of travel).
- The average size of credit or loans was much higher in urban areas than in rural areas. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, credits or loans amounted to 3,990 som (US$91) for borrowing rural households and 5,250 som (US$120) for urban households. **These amounts are well above the average cash income reported for these households.**
- The main providers of credit or loans continue to be private individuals rather than banks or formal financial institutions.
- As before, the **main reason for requesting a loan was for business**. Compared to the first 3 quarters of 2008, food was less frequently mentioned as a reason for requesting credit or loans.

2.5 – Domestic assets ownership and living conditions

2.5.1 – Domestic assets ownership

- Overall, domestic assets ownership did not change between 2007 and 2008. This result indicates that **households have not been selling domestic assets despite the global economic crisis and other possible shocks at household or community levels**. Selling such assets is often an early sign of difficulties, as it is a coping mechanism used when income from regular activities is not sufficient.
- The below figures provide the average for the whole of 2008, but do not differ in any significant manner from those reported before up to the 3rd quarter. With the exception of the major items (video, washing machine, fridge, personal computer), there was no differences in ownership across the various food security groups.

[14] EC/OSCE/ACTED: Impact of the Global Financial Crisis on Labour Migration from the Kyrgyz Republic to Russia. Qualitative Overview and Quantitative Survey. Bishkek, 2009.
[15] Much higher proportions were reported for the first 3 quarters of 2008 but these figures seem to have been mistaken at that time.

Motorcycle

- **Very few households owned a motorcycle** (3%).
- Compared to the national average, the proportion of motorcycle owners tended to be higher in **Batken** oblast (8%) and **Bishkek town** (8%).

Bicycle

- Some 14% of households owned a bicycle. There were no differences across food security groups.
- Compared to the national average, the proportion of bicycle owners was higher in **Jalal-Abad** (27%) and **Chuy** (24%) oblasts and lower in **Osh** oblast (4%).

Radio

- On average **13% households owned a radio** (12% urban and 14% rural). This proportion as in 2006 (14%) and 2007 (12%).
- There were no significant differences between food insecure and food secure households, but the proportion of radio owners decreased somewhat among moderately food insecure between 2006-2007 and 2008.
- Compared to the national average, the proportion of radio owners was higher in **Naryn** oblast (29%) and lower in **Osh** oblast (6%).

Television

- **Most households owned a black-and-white television** (98%), similarly as in 2006 and 2007.

Video

- **About a quarter of households owned a video** in both urban and rural areas.
- The proportion of video owners continued to increase compared to 2006 (16%) and 2007 (19%).
- **Severely food insecure households were less likely to own a video** than other households, especially in rural areas (14% owners).
- Compared to the national average, the proportion of video owners was higher in **Jalal-Abad** oblast (36%) and lower in **Naryn** (12%), **Yssyk-Kul** (13%) and **Talas** (15%) oblasts.

Personal computer (PC)

- **Less than 5% of households owned a PC**, mostly in urban areas (8% versus 2% in rural areas). This represents a very modest increase compared to 2006-2007 (3%).
- Compared to the national average, the proportion of PC owners was higher in **Bishkek town** (13%).

Mobile phone

- On average **47% of households owned a mobile phone**, with a lower proportion in rural (44%) compared to urban areas (52%). This represents a marked increase compared to 2006 and 2007.
- **Severely food insecure households were much less likely to own a mobile phone**: 30% in rural areas and 39% in urban areas. Nevertheless, the proportion of owners among severely food insecure households was multiplied by 5 in rural areas and almost doubled in urban areas between 2007 and 2008.

Mobile phone	Urban			Rural		
	2006	2007	2008	2006	2007	2008
Severely food insecure	16%	25%	27%	6%	8%	30%
Moderately food insecure	23%	37%	58%	5%	22%	54%
Food secure	18%	26%	53%	11%	26%	47%

Washing machine

- On average **45% households owned a washing machine**: 49% in urban and 42% in rural areas. These proportions were similar in 2007.
- **Severely food insecure households were less likely to own a washing machine** than other households, especially in rural areas (29% owners).
- Compared to the national average, the proportion of households owning a washing machine was higher in **Chuy** (74%) and **Yssyk-Kul** (67%) oblasts and lower in **Batken** (19%), **Osh** (24%) and **Naryn** (31%) oblasts.

Sewing machine

- About **half of the households owned a sewing machine**, more in rural areas (55%) than in urban areas (42%). There was no discernable difference between food security groups.
- Compared to the national average, the proportion of sewing machine owners was higher in **Naryn** (67%), **Batken** (67%), **Yssyk-Kul** (63%) and lower in **Talas** (35%) and **Bishkek town** (38%).

Fridge

- On average 63% of all households owned a fridge, but **only half owned a fridge in rural areas** (51%) compared to **78% in urban areas**.
- **Food insecure households were less likely to own a fridge** than food secure households. Only 37% of the severely food insecure in rural areas and 62% in urban areas had one.
- Compared to the national average, the proportion of fridge owners was higher in **Chuy** oblast (87%) and **Bishkek town** (88%), and lower in **Batken** (33%), **Naryn** (47%) **Osh** (38%) and **Talas** (35%) oblasts

Table

- **About 18% households owned a table**, slightly more in urban areas (23%) than in rural areas (13%). Food insecure households tended to own less frequently a table than food secure households.
- Compared to the national average, the proportion of table owners was higher in **Jalal-Abad** oblast (27%) and **Bishkek town** (32%) and lower in **Naryn** (5%), **Osh** (5%) and **Batken** (less than 1%) oblasts.

2.5.2 - Living conditions

Living conditions did not vary significantly compared to the first 3 quarters of 2008.

Central heating

- A low proportion of the population continued to have access to central heating (less than 4%), even less among the food insecure.

Running water

- Similarly as before, **access to running water was much better in urban areas with almost 2/3rd of urban households having access compared to only 11% of rural households**.
- **Food insecure households were less likely to have running water**. In urban areas, only about half of food insecure households had access.
- Compared to the national average (34%), the situation was better in **Bishkek town** with 91% of households having access to running water and in **Chuy oblast** (46%), and worse in **Batken** (5%), **Naryn** (9%), **Talas** (12%), **Yssyk-Kul** (14%) and **Osh** (16%) oblasts.

Central gas

- Access to central gas was also unchanged compared to the previous reporting period, and continued to be **much higher in urban areas (56%) than rural areas (8%)**. Food secure

households in urban areas had also better access than food insecure households (60% versus 46-48%).

	Running water		Central gas	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Severely food insecure	52%	7%	48%	3%
Moderately food insecure	50%	12%	46%	16%
Food secure	70%	13%	60%	8%

Electricity cuts

- Over the whole year of 2008, disconnection from electricity affected 29% of urban households and 8% of rural households several times a year, and 19% of urban households and 26% of rural households a few times per week. The rather high frequency of electricity disconnection also concerns industrial and other companies with negative effects on productivity and benefits.

2.6 – Health and nutrition

2.6.1 - Use of health services and expenditures

Access to health services

- Compared to the first 3 quarters of 2008, the **proportion of households who had to forego the use of medical services** because they could not afford it **remained low at 3%**. This proportion also continued to be slightly higher among severely food insecure households (5%) than the others. There were no differences according to the level of food insecurity or between rural and urban areas.

Share of health expenditures

- As noted in previous reports, **the share of health expenditures is surprisingly low at about 1% of total expenditures** in both urban and rural areas. This may be explained by the coverage of virtually all households by the Mandatory Health Insurance Fund.
- Compared to the national average, by the 3rd quarter of 2009 the share of health expenditures tended to be lower in **Talas** oblast (less than 1%) and higher in **Naryn** oblast (almost 4%).

Coverage by the Mandatory Health Insurance Fund

- Almost all households (99%) continue to be covered by the Mandatory Health Insurance Fund.

2.6.2 - Nutritional status of under-5 children

Note: While the household sample in the KIHS is large (about 5,600 households), it may not include more than 700 children below 5 years of age, assuming that about 12% of the population consists of children in this age group. As such, disaggregating the sample per urban and rural areas and per food security group within each area, and per oblast, likely produces very small sample sizes of children and thus puts some doubts on the accuracy of the figures. Furthermore, some quality control of the anthropometric measurements may be lacking, contributing to the improbable large variations noted on a year-on-year basis in the same locations. ***The below results must be considered taking these caveats in mind***.

- Overall, the **prevalence of acute malnutrition**[16] **in 2008 was low** (1.3%), except in **Batken** oblast (7.6%). In the latter, acute malnutrition seemed especially high among severely food insecure households.
- **Growth retardation**[17], reflecting a combination of inadequate diet and repeated infections on the longer term, affected **almost one out of 3 children below 5 years of age** in 2008.

[16] Acute malnutrition is defined as weight-for-height below -2 Z-scores among children less than 5 years of age. It reflects a sudden loss of weight.

- The prevalence of stunting was **higher in rural areas** (35.9%). Trends since 2006 point towards a **deterioration of the nutritional status of children, in particular within severely food insecure households in rural areas**.
- Using the 2008 prevalence figures, compared to the national average, stunting tended to be more prevalent in **Jalal-Abad** (39.8%), **Naryn** (37.47) and **Osh** (36.4%) oblasts and lower in **Chuy** (21.6%), and **Batken** (24.9%) oblasts and **in Bishkek town** (26.3%). The trends since 2006 indicate a deterioration of the nutritional status situation in **Jalal-Abad**, **Naryn**, **Osh** and **Chuy** oblasts.

Residence	Under-5 children(< -2 Z-scores) Stunting (height-for-age)		
	2006	2007	2008
Total	**24.0%**	**29.3%**	**32.1%**
Severely food insecure	19.4%	35.1%	39.7%
Moderately food insecure	37.3%	26.0%	20.9%
Food secure	23.2%	24.8%	27.8%
Urban areas	**27.9%**	**23.8%**	**25.0%**
Severely food insecure	23.2%	22.8%	12.9%
Moderately food insecure	37.8%	22.2%	21.2%
Food secure	26.3%	25.2%	20.7%
Rural areas	**22.2%**	**32.2%**	**35.9%**
Severely food insecure	18.0%	40.3%	47.5%
Moderately food insecure	37.0%	27.9%	20.7%
Food secure	21.1%	24.6%	23.4%
Yssyk-Kul oblast	19.8%	37.1%	31.6%
Jalal-Abad oblast	24.9%	27.6%	39.8%
Naryn oblast	22.0%	34.2%	37.7%
Batken oblast	21.6%	23.3%	24.9%
Osh oblast	24.3%	35.3%	36.4%
Talas oblast	20.9%	49.8%	30.7%
Chuy oblast	15.0%	14. %	21.6%
Bishkek town	33.7%	26.0%	26.3%

2.7 - Coping mechanisms

2.7.1 - Solidarity

- The ability to help others did not appear to be affected by the degree of food insecurity. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, about **8% of the food insecure households and 10% of food secure households were able to support others**. Put it another way, 16% of those able to assist others were severely food insecure, 13% moderately food insecure and 71% food secure.
- This indicates that **quite robust solidarity mechanisms** exist in the country as even households facing food and economic difficulties still mobilise their meagre resources to help others. These mechanisms also seem somewhat **stronger in rural areas** compared to urban areas (respectively 11% and 7% of households were able to assist other relatives during the 3rd quarter of 2009).
- **Naryn** oblast stood out with more than half of households who assisted others in the 3rd quarter of 2009.

2.7.2 - Collection of wild food

As for previous periods, the **proportion of households who engaged in wild food collection stayed very low** between the last quarter of 2008 and the 3rd quarter of 2009 (less than 2%, essentially in rural areas). As such, wild food collection does not seem to play a key

[17] Stunting is defined as height-for-age below -2 Z-scores among children less than 5 years of age. It reflects longer-term inadequate diet often combined with frequent infectious diseases.

role in households' diet or income, even though for some groups it may be important in times of particular hardship. Qualitative studies would be necessary to refine the understanding of the extent and role of this practice in Kyrgyzstan.

III – POSSIBLE EVOLUTION OF THE FOOD SECURITY SITUATION IN A CONTEXT OF CIVIL UNREST

3.1 – Civil unrest of April 2010

On 7 April 2010, violent civil protests in Bishkek spurred by the rise in utilities prices, allegations of corruption and arrest of some senior opposition leaders, forced the incumbent President to flee, first to his home province of Jalalabad and then outside the country. An interim government made up of representatives of a number of opposition political parties took power and control of all government ministries and most local authority buildings in the country. Demonstrations for or against the interim government have continued since then and several ethnic troubles have been reported in Chuy, Batken, Osh and Jalalabad oblasts.

3.2 – Food security and nutrition situation prior to the unrest of April 2010

The update of the food security situation in rural and urban areas of Kyrgyzstan in Section II used data of the Kyrgyz Integrated Household Survey up to the 3rd quarter of 2009. Results indicate that since 2006, the **national prevalence of food insecurity stands at about 1/3rd of the population, with 1/5th being severely food insecure**. The stability of the prevalence of food insecurity and of many factors contributing to food insecurity (e.g. demographic composition of households, level and sources of income, land acreage) since 2006 and the absence of dramatic climatic or economic changes since the end of 2009 support the **assumption that the food security situation would have remained the same by early 2010** prior to the civil protests and political upheaval.

Food insecurity in the Kyrgyz Republic is essentially chronic, with **poverty** as the basic cause of poor food consumption. Poverty translates into underlying factors of food insecurity including large family size, lack of education, low access to land and irrigation, inability to procure proper agricultural inputs to secure good harvests, small number of animals, absence of markets and remunerative prices for products, and low-paid and irregular wage occupations. These factors combine to limit access to food from own production and from market purchase, resulting in the consumption of a diet lacking varied, nutritious food and especially expensive items such as animal products.

Chronic food insecurity combined with frequent infections manifests itself into **rising stunting rates among young children**[18]. Poverty and food insecurity are indeed also linked to limited access to adequately equipped and staffed health services, to safe sources of water and to proper housing conditions (e.g. heating and energy), which contribute to poor health.

While at national level the prevalence of food insecurity remains stable, some variations were noted at oblast level over the past 4 years, showing that **food insecurity has regularly aggravated for some population groups**. In addition, shocks such as the harsh winter and high food and fuel prices of 2008, and decreased remittances from migrants in 2009 provoke transitory food insecurity at household level.

Between 2006 and the 3rd quarter of 2009, **severe food insecurity increased in Yssuk-Kul, Naryn and Batken oblasts and Bishkek town** The prevalence of severe food insecurity fluctuated over the years in **Chuy** oblast while it remained stable in **Talas** oblast. Severe food insecurity decreased in **Jalalabad** oblast (although with signs of deterioration since mid-2009) and **Osh** oblast.

[18] As mentioned, the quality of the nutritional status data is likely to be less than optimal, and sample size low to derive accurate figures. However, the combination of rising food insecurity in various locations and poor health and water conditions would support the assumption that stunting rates are increasing rather than decreasing.

In terms of **overall food insecurity (severe and moderate), the situation since 2006 deteriorated in Yssyk-Kul, Naryn, Batken and Chuy oblasts and in Bishkek town**. The prevalence of total food insecurity remained stable in **Talas** oblast, while it improved in **Jalalabad** oblast (though with signs of deterioration by mid-2009) and **Osh** oblast.

The deteriorating trends in Yssyk-Kul, Batken and Naryn are particularly worrying in view of the high levels of food insecurity in these oblasts. By the 3rd quarter of 2009, about half of the population in these oblasts were food insecure, and between 29% and 36% were severely food insecure. It must be noted that stunting among children also rose since 2006 in Jalalabad, Naryn, Osh and Chuy oblasts.

The reasons for deterioration of the food security situation are not fully clear based on the KIHS data and further research would be necessary to elucidate the contributing factors and design interventions accordingly. Presumably, the continuous declining performance in the agricultural sector is playing a role in the most agriculture-oriented oblasts. Also, the decrease of remittances in 2009 is more likely to have affected southern oblasts (Jalalabad, Naryn, Batken) which have a larger proportion of migrants. In more trade- and industrially-oriented regions (e.g. Chuy and in Bishkek town), the fall in trade and housing construction activities since 2008 may have contributed to the rise of food insecurity.

Some public works initiatives in Jalalabad oblast may have created employment for the poorest and contributed to the relative food security improvement noted there, although the trend became negative in the latest part of 2009. .

Another recent trend that requires close monitoring is the sharp reduction of the number of small ruminants owned during the 3rd quarter of 2009. Should this trend persist, it could lead to an increase of severe food insecurity, given the key role played by animals to provide food as well as a safety net in case of urgent need for cash.

Unfortunately, the KIHS does not collect specific information on **coping strategies**. As such, it is difficult to gauge the extent to which households are engaging in potentially damaging strategies to face seasonal or longer-term difficulties, such as decreasing the amount of food consumed, eating less nutritious food, or selling productive assets, and what are the trends. The decreased number of livestock owned in the 3rd quarter of 2009 could represent a depletion of productive assets if reproductive animals are sold in excess. On the other hand, no depletion of domestic assets and no increase in the proportion of households indebted were noted since the beginning of 2008, while these could signal difficulties to cope.

Monitoring conducted by WFP among beneficiaries of food assistance in February 2010 in Batken, Jalal-Abad, Osh and Talas oblasts did report frequent resorting to reduction of food consumption (more than 70%) and indebtedness to shop-keepers for food (70%). These households are among the poorest and most vulnerable.

3.2 – Possible evolution of the food security situation for the rest of 2010 and 2011

3.2.1 – Political and macro-economic outlook

Issues of land shortages, economic slowdown and the high level of unemployment have intensified regional tensions and indirectly contributed to the violent unrest of April 2010. The grievances of the opposition (now part of the Provisional Government) were centred partly on what was perceived as the illegitimacy of the parliament, the disproportionate power in the hands of the presidency, and suspicions of vote-rigging in the presidential elections in July 2009.

However, public protests were also motivated by poor living standards and controversial privatisations, which in a context of a low performing national, regional and global economy affecting the remittance inflows on which many Kyrgyz families rely, resulted in a increasing sense of socio-economic and political marginalization.

The disposal of the President in April 2010 and the introduction of an interim government are likely to perturb a number of economic forecasts that were made, especially those which entail negotiations with international financing institutions and other governments (e.g. Russia). **The below anticipations must thus be taken with caution.**

The Economist Intelligence Unit's projections on economic growth[19] were relatively optimistic. **The economy was expected to expand by 3.5% in 2010 and 4% in 2011**, following growth of 2.3% in 2009. The economies of two of the Kyrgyz Republic's most important economic partners – Kazakhstan and Russia – are expected to return to growth in 2010. They are important destinations for Kyrgyz non-gold exports, as well as the main host countries for Kyrgyz migrant labour.

Higher oil prices anticipated in 2010-2011 will have an adverse effect on Kyrgyzstan's import bill. On the other hand, the price of gold, the country's main export commodity, is forecast to rise by 22% in 2010 and by 4% in 2011.

While inflation had come down in 2009, a new rise in global commodity prices expected in 2010 will lead to an acceleration in consumer price inflation. Global food prices are forecast to rise by a cumulative 3% in 2010-2011. Prices may also rise as remittance inflows recover slightly, thus increasing consumer demand for domestically produced goods and for services. Utility prices have already increased in 2009 and again in January 2010 as the government attempted to raise prices to cost-recovery levels in the electricity sector. Average **annual inflation is thus forecast at 8% in 2010 and 10.5% in 2011**.

The **national currency** (som) depreciation against the US dollar slowed down at the end of 2009 and is **forecast to depreciate by 5.2% by end 2011**, thanks to disbursements from the IMF and financing inflows from Russia, as well as renegotiation of Paris Club debt and use of concessional sources of credit. The change of government however, may modify these plans.

Exports are expected to pick up in 2010-2011 as demand recovers in the Kyrgyz Republic's main export markets (Russia, Kazakhstan), although imports will also rise as a result of higher international commodity prices. Nevertheless, **high prices for gold will help offset the rise in import costs**. The country's persistent susceptibility to energy shortages will be reduced when the first unit of the new Kambarata-2 hydropower plant is completed, in May 2010.

	2009 (actual)	2010 (forecast)	2011 (forecast)
Real GDP growth	2.3%	3.5%	4%
Consumer Price Inflation	6.8%	8.0%	10.5%
Current-account balance (% GDP)	-2.3%	-1.5%	-1.6%

Source: Kyrgyz Republic Country Report. The Economist Intelligence Unit, February 2010

The National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic anticipates that in 2010 remittances from Russia (source of 90% of all official remittances) will remain lower than in 2007-08, because the Russian construction sector, where most Kyrgyz migrants are employed, is expected to continue to struggle.

3.2.2 – Household food security and nutrition outlook

The main shocks that can be anticipated in the coming 18 months are a combination of political and economic changes, and natural disasters and climatic events.

Kyrgyzstan is highly susceptible to earthquakes, avalanches, snow storms, mudslides and floods, which cause losses of human lives, livestock and harvest and heavy damage to infrastructures. While weather conditions and earthquakes are obviously hard to predict, **the low asset base of households and lack of opportunities to diversify their sources of income severely limit their resilience to natural hazards**.

[19] Most of the information in this paragraph originates from: Kyrgyz Republic, Country Report. The Economist Intelligence Unit. February 2010.

As mentioned before, the economy was expected to resume growth in 2010 before the political crisis, but the change of government and persistent instability may prevent a number of improvements to take place. In particular, **the closure of borders with key suppliers such as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and China, if sustained, will rapidly limit the supply of food, fuel and other essential goods including agricultural inputs, and lead to price increases and inflation**.

Difficulties with procuring seeds together with the closing or freezing of assets of several bank and credit institutions since the troubles started, are already affecting farmers. In several areas of the country, farmers and international and national organizations providing assistance have reported delays to purchase, transport or distribute inputs, leading to less acreage planted. **The shortages of seeds, fertilizer and fuel for agricultural machinery and credit will compound the usual problems of poor households to cultivate and obtain a proper harvest. In urban areas, rising food prices will negatively affect poor consumers** who obtain their food almost exclusively through market purchases.

The above indicates that even in the absence of a dramatic deterioration of the security situation in the country, which could lead to displacement and related widespread loss of assets and livelihoods, hardship is likely to occur for the already poor and food insecure households. **In the absence of interventions from the government and international community, rural households will have lower food stocks from their own production and all households will have reduced capacity to purchase a varied diet if prices rise and/or supplies decrease**, resulting in higher prevalence of food insecurity.

In such a scenario, households will make ever difficult arbitrages between food expenditures (which already represent more than 60% of all expenditures) and other essential expenditures such as education and health. **This may result in decreased enrolment rates or irregular attendance of children at school** in order to save on clothing and education-related expenditures, with longer-term negative effects on livelihoods, as the lack of education is directly associated with higher prevalence of food insecurity. Delayed or foregoing the use of health services for lack of means to pay for treatment, combined with a further degradation of the diet, **will continue to increase stunting rates among young children**. The latter also has long-term effects on livelihoods, as stunting is associated with lower earnings at adult age.

IV – SUGGESTIONS FOR WFP'S OPERATIONS

The international community - including WFP - in Kyrgyzstan is already preparing to respond to the threats caused by the civil unrest and has formulated several scenarios to inform contingency planning. The below suggestions take the most likely scenario currently retained, which envisages a relative stabilisation of the political situation by the end of 2010 and no major violence or displacement of population, as a basis.

4.1 – Suggestions for WFP food assistance interventions

4.1.1 – Food assistance in rural areas

The troubles early April 2010 have delayed WFP food distributions scheduled for the spring to 215,000 vulnerable individuals (43,000 households) in Batken, Naryn, Yssyk-Kul and Jalalabad oblasts. **In view of the expected increase of food insecurity in rural areas, a step up is likely to be necessary** for the next rounds.

At the same time, the chronic nature of food insecurity must be remembered. WFP interventions should attempt to address as much as possible the underlying causes of food insecurity, particularly low agricultural production, poor health environment and vulnerability to natural disasters, through collaboration with other agencies (and government counterparts when restored) engaged in agricultural activities, reforestation, water management, upgrading of infrastructures and disaster risk reduction.

Caseload and target groups

The additional caseload would be constituted of poor households who could not cultivate this year because seeds, fertilizer and fuel could not been obtained on time, or had to sell their animals to compensate for the lack of credit. The identification of these households should be made with local authorities and representatives of the villagers who can confirm that they have suffered hardship in direct relation to the recent political events.

The data available do not enable to estimate the number of additional beneficiaries that could be enrolled, but if the variations in the prevalence of food insecurity observed in some oblasts in 2008 due to the winter and high food and fuel price crisis are taken as a rule of thumb, **an increase by 5 to 10 percentage points of the current figures could be anticipated**. This would bring the total caseload to 346,500-363,000 beneficiaries in the areas currently covered, **but additional villages may need to be included**, especially in the oblasts where a deterioration of the food security situation has been noted over the past few years (Yssyk-Kul, Naryn, Batken).

Modalities of food assistance

While in-kind food support is provided through the Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) programme, **further enquiries should be made on the possibility to combine it with cash or to replace food by cash at certain times of the year**. A rapid study conducted by WFP in 2008 had pointed out a number of difficulties, particularly in relation with the lack of financing institutions and implementing partners to distribute the cash. However, as many of the WFP target beneficiaries are receiving some kind of social assistance (pensions, benefits), there may be scope to use the same channels to transfer additional cash. A calculation of the cost for WFP to procure and distribute food versus giving cash to households to purchase the same amounts and types of food would be necessary, as well as a review of local markets functioning to check upon the capacity of traders to increase supplies and to anticipate price increases.

While the beneficiaries of WFP assistance include a number of elderly and other households with a low capacity to engage in labour activities, some beneficiaries are engaged in cultivation and have an ability to work. With the view to address some of the underlying factors of food insecurity, **food- (or cash-) for-work programmes** could be envisaged at some periods of the year. Agricultural and other rural development and disaster risk prevention activities could be identified jointly with villagers, local and international NGOs, FAO and ILO for example.

The risk of decreased enrolment or irregular school attendance to cope with the additional economic difficulties caused by the unrest would warrant **considering school feeding** as a complementary intervention. Schools located in areas of high prevalence of food insecurity should be given preference. A **combination of location** (remote areas more likely to face poverty and food insecurity), **high proportion of large families, high dependence on subsistence farming, small acreage actually cultivated and small herd size could be used to select these schools**. The existence of facilities to cook food is likely to be a challenge and some rehabilitation or upgrading of infrastructure (water supply, storage, cooking and eating space) may be required. Alternatively, take-home rations to school children could be considered.

3.1.2 – Food assistance in urban areas

The KIHS does not collect data in urban slums where a large number of the poor and food insecure urban households reside. The rapid assessment conducted in Bishkek periphery in 2008 indicated that 9% of households were severely food insecure and 20% moderately food insecure, thus pointing out to a rather high prevalence of food insecurity. No information is available on households living in slums in other major cities such as Osh, Jalal-Abad or Karakul. **Should food prices rise due to the closure of borders, hoarding behaviour of traders and lower harvest, the difficulties of poor urban households to procure food will increase**, further fuelling risks of social unrest.

WFP does not carry out food distributions in urban areas and any assistance in slums is likely to be delicate due to the tense security situation there. However, **given that many of the most food insecure are depending on pensions or social benefits, there may be scope to use existing systems to top up these transfers with additional cash for a short while**. Selecting who should receive additional support might be feasible through the official social assistance system, by identifying families receiving only low pensions or benefits and who not have a regular breadwinner.

However, many of the most food insecure in urban areas are not enrolled in the official social assistance system for lack of resources to pay the administrative costs and lack of official documentation. Identification of these potential beneficiaries could be attempted through local associations where they exist (?).

Alternatively, food assistance to vulnerable groups including young children, pregnant and lactating mothers could be considered in poor urban neighbourhoods by distributing supplementary food enriched in micronutrients through existing health centres. The primary objective in this case would be to prevent a degradation of the nutritional status of children, but the distribution of a household food ration to a sub-group of these beneficiaries (e.g. large families, no breadwinner) in order to address food insecurity could also be envisaged. Collaboration with UNICEF and other counterparts engaged in health and nutrition programmes would be important.

Individuals affected by tuberculosis (TB) are another potential vulnerable group in urban area, typically indigent and living in poor housing conditions. Their disease often prevents them to work and the lack of resources impairs compliance with the long-term TB treatment. WFP's experience with assisting TB patients in other countries of the region could be profitable to operations in Kyrgyzstan to **further explore needs and possible institutional set-up to engage with food assistance to this particular group**. Collaboration with WHO, UNICEF and other actors playing a role in the health and TB sectors would be important.

While increased support may be required at this critical juncture if food prices rise due to the political unrest, food insecurity in urban areas – as in rural areas - remains a chronic phenomenon which requires addressing the underlying causes in order to enable phasing down and phasing out. Link up with other activities that assist with job creation, employment and facilitating enrolment in the official social assistance system will thus be indispensable if WFP decides to engage in the above activities.

3.2 – Monitoring and rapid emergency assessment of the food security and nutrition situation

3.2.1 – Food Security Monitoring System

As mentioned in the previous update, **the set up of a light food security monitoring system (FSMS) to complement the KIHS and provide timely information on changes would be important**. It would enable to capture changes in food production, access and consumption, and on coping strategies early enough to adjust ongoing programmes and target areas and groups at municipality and village level (the KIHS provides information only at oblast level, with a delay of 2 to 3 quarters delay). Additional details on the possible structure of this FSMS were given in the previous update done in March 2009 and are not repeated here[20].

WFP and FAO have submitted in February 2010 a proposal to the European Commission to establish such system and build capacities of national counterparts. The recent political developments have delayed the consideration of funding this project by the EC but it is hoped that it will be approved in view of the expected benefits for WFP and FAO and the international community more generally.

Collaboration with the KIHS should continue to enable regular updates of the food security situation and monitor trends at national and oblast levels. It will also ensure that the proposed FSMS is consistent with the data collected by the KIHS (thus permitting some comparisons). Negotiating the inclusion of a few additional indicators in the KIHS such as the Food Consumption Score used by WFP in its usual food security assessments and coping strategies would also be very useful.

3.2.2 – Rapid Emergency Food Security Assessment and Crop and Food Supply Assessment

A rapid food security assessment was suggested one year ago to compensate for the delay in obtaining KIHS results and to obtain information at a lower disaggregation level in some 'hot spots' of poverty and food insecurity. The Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) survey carried out by WFP after each food distributions (winter and spring) and including additional questions on crop production, animal ownership, sources and level of income, food expenditures and coping strategies, provides information on the situation of the target beneficiaries, who are expected to represent the most vulnerable individuals and households in the areas. As such, it is a useful complement to the KIHS but it does not inform on the situation in areas or of households not included in the programme.

In view of the latest political development and scope for degradation of the food security situation in both rural and urban areas, **preparations for a rapid Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) in selected locations would be important**. The EFSA should capture the same type of information as the PDM, together with information on markets at the local level (prices, supplies, traders' behaviour).

The EFSA would best be timed to coincide with a **Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM)** currently being discussed with FAO and the interim government

[20] Food Security Assessment in the Kyrgyzstan Republic, Re-analysis of the Kyrgyzstan Integrated Household Survey 2006, 2007 and 1st quarter 2008, WFP

counterparts. The CFSAM would take place in **July-August 2010** in order to capture information on the main harvests, animal productions and markets.

The EFSA could be undertaken exactly at the same time, covering the same rural areas as the CFSAM, as well as any area not covered by current WFP interventions and the PDM surveys. A purposive sampling approach could be used to collect information in areas of high expected prevalence of food insecurity, taking also into account the occurrence of civil unrest. Selection of locations could be done in consultation with local authorities and organisations knowledgeable of the areas. Typically, a combination of remoteness, high proportion of large families, high dependence on subsistence farming, and small herd sizes could identify such areas.

As much as possible, the rapid EFSA should include a few poor neighbourhoods in Bishkek town and in Osh town, and possibly others if civil troubles have taken place there and are expected to have affected access to food and income. Additional information on constraints to access employment (e.g. documentation, skills) and social benefits (e.g. registration), and to the use health services by mothers and young children could be collected in order to better inform decisions on some types of interventions suitable in urban areas.

3.2.3 – Monitoring of the nutrition situation

As mentioned in paragraph 2.6.2, the KIHS's data on nutritional status of children below 5 years of age presents some problems that prevent having a clear picture on the extent of acute and chronic malnutrition, and of trends. The problems are likely to stem from a combination of:

- too small sample size, especially in urban areas, to enable analysis of causal factors, including relationship with household food insecurity;
- lack of quality control on how the anthropometric measurements are made;
- lack of resources for KIHS enumerators to travel to the areas (e.g. vehicles), which renders difficult the transportation of anthropometric measurement equipment and is a disincentive to proper sampling of children and measurements.

UNICEF has undertaken a Multi-Cluster Indicators Survey (MICS) in 2006 which provided information on malnutrition rates at rural, urban and oblast levels, and another survey in 2009 which will provide results at national level only (not yet available at the time of writing this report). The frequency of these surveys does not enable to identify changes in a timely manner and the level of disaggregation is too high to inform decision-making on specific interventions at District and village levels.

Several options could be discussed with UNICEF and other partners including WHO, NGOs, government counterparts and the National Statistics Committee (NSC) to better capture changes in acute and especially chronic malnutrition which reflects longer-term effects of food insecurity, poor health environment and inadequate caring practices:

1) **Capacity building and allocation of resources to the NSC to improve the reliability and validity of results on the nutritional status of under-5 children in the KIHS**. This support will enable to increase the sample size, facilitate travel, improve data collection practices of enumerators, and speed up data entry and analysis so that yearly results are produced more rapidly. The KIHS would continue to be the main source of nutritional status data, undertaken once a year and representative at urban, rural and oblast levels. Under this option, the timing of anthropometric measurements could also be re-discussed if it can help to optimize resources. The limitation of not having data at District level will remain.

2) **Sub-contracting private institutions (e.g. research institute, academia, NGO) to undertake a yearly survey of the nutritional status of under-5 children**. The timing and level of disaggregation of the survey would also need to be discussed. As results at District level are arguably more useful to make operational decisions on where to intervene, it may be decided to focus on areas and oblasts presenting the highest rates of malnutrition in the past and highest rates of food insecurity, and draw a sample representative at District level

there. As long as resources to ensure training, quality control and timely analysis of the data can be secured on a sustainable basis, this option could relieve NCS from the need to collect anthropometric data in the KIHS while maintaining the capacity to monitor the nutritional status situation within the country.

3) **Identifying and monitoring nutritional status information in Sentinel Sites, through local health agents, partners (e.g. NGOs) and/or the communities themselves.** The focus would be on areas expected to present high levels of acute or chronic malnutrition due to overall poverty, food insecurity and lack of adequate public health environment. Measurements could be undertaken at several times of the year, to capture seasonal variations and the role played for example by the harvest or other events. One advantage would be the greater ownership by communities as well as the possibility to design interventions more directly attached to the actual situation at village level. Ensuring quality control, sustaining the willingness of local actors to collect, analyse and act upon the data, and lack of statistical representativity will be some of the main limitations of this approach.

ANNEX - MAIN FOOD SECURITY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE OBLASTS AND BISHKEK TOWN

Oblast/town	Main food security characteristics
Yssyk-Kul	• High prevalence of total food insecurity (50% by 3rd quarter 2009) • High prevalence of severe food insecurity (36% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Deterioration of food security situation between end 2008 and first 3 quarters of 2009 • Since 2006, severe and overall food insecurity increased • Low kcal consumption per capita (2,170 kcal by 3rd quarter 2009) • High proportion of households consuming less than 80% of dietary requirements (28%) • Increased prevalence of households with an insufficient diet since 2008 • Low amount of food expenditures per capita (1,120 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • Low share of expenditures for services (11%) • Large acreage of land cultivated (0.9 ha/household, 0.30 ha/capita) • High proportion of households having harvested (84% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Large potato harvest (2,013 kg/household by 3rd quarter 2009) • Decreased proportion of moderately food insecure households owning animals between end 2008 and first 3 quarters 2009 • High proportion of extremely poor households (31%) • High contribution of pensions to total income (34%) and relatively low contribution of salaries • Low levels of pensions (1,890 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • Low cash income per capita (1,070 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • High proportion of households owning a washing machine (67% in 2008), a sewing machine (63%) • Low proportion of households owning a video (13% in 2008) • Poor access to running water (14% households by 3rd quarter 2009)
Jalal-Abad	• Relatively high prevalence of total food insecurity (36% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Relatively high prevalence of severe food insecurity (22% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Deterioration of food security situation between end 2008 and first 3 quarters of 2009 • Nevertheless, severe and overall food insecurity improved since 2006 • Increased prevalence of households with an insufficient diet since 2008 • High share of food expenditures (67%). • Low share of expenditures for services (12%) • High proportion of households owning a bicycle (27% in 2008), a video (36%), a table (27%) • High rates of stunting (39.8% in 2008), deteriorating since 2006
Naryn	• High prevalence of total food insecurity (47% by 3rd quarter 2009) • High prevalence of severe food insecurity (29% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Deterioration of food security situation between end 2008 and first 3 quarters of 2009 • Since 2006, severe and overall food insecurity increased • Low proportion of women-headed households (26%) • Low amount of food expenditures per capita (1,100 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • Large acreage of land cultivated (1.7 ha/household, 0.40 ha/capita) • Decreased proportion of moderately food insecure households owning animals between end 2008 and first 3 quarters 2009

Oblast/town	Main food security characteristics
	• High share of expenditures for crop and animal productions (8% by 3rd quarter 2009) • High proportion of extremely poor households (27%) • Pensions frequently mentioned as a source of income (by 58% of households by 3rd quarter 2009) • High contribution of pensions to total income (34%) and relatively low contribution of salaries • High levels of pensions (2,660 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • Support from relatives frequently mentioned as a source of income (by 23% of households by 3rd quarter 2009) • Low cash income per capita (1,320 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • Relatively high proportion of households with credit or loans (4%) • High proportion of households owning a radio (29% in 2008), a sewing machine (67%) • Low proportion of households owning a video (12% in 2008), a washing machine (31%), a fridge (47%), a table (5%) • Poor access to running water (9% households by 3rd quarter 2009) • Relatively high share of health expenditures (4% by 3rd quarter 2009) • High rates of stunting (37.7% in 2008), deteriorating since 2006 • High proportion of households able to help others (more than half of households by the 3rd quarter 2009)
Batken	• High prevalence of total food insecurity (51% by 3rd quarter 2009) • High prevalence of severe food insecurity (36% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Deterioration of food security situation between end 2008 and first 3 quarters of 2009 • Since 2006, severe and overall food insecurity increased • Low proportion of women-headed households (26%) • Large family size (4.7 members) • Low kcal consumption per capita (2,060 kcal by 3rd quarter 2009) • High proportion of households consuming less than 80% of dietary requirements (36%) • Increased prevalence of households with an insufficient diet since 2008 • Low amount of food expenditures per capita (1,110 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • High proportion of households having harvested (76% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Small potato harvest (202 kg/household by 3rd quarter 2009) • Decreased proportion of moderately food insecure households owning animals between end 2008 and first 3 quarters 2009 • Low cash income per capita (1,650 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • High proportion of households owning a sewing machine (67% in 2008) • Low proportion of households owning a washing machine (19% in 2008), a fridge (33%), a table (less than 1%) • Poor access to running water (5% households by 3rd quarter 2009) • High rates of acute malnutrition (7.6% in 2008). • Relatively low rates of stunting (24.9% in 2008)
Osh	• Average prevalence of total food insecurity (35% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Relatively high prevalence of severe food insecurity (19% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Improvement of food security situation between end 2008 and first 3 quarters of 2009 • Severe and overall food insecurity improved since 2006 • Low amount of food expenditures per capita (1,110 som by 3rd quarter 2009)

Oblast/town	Main food security characteristics
	• Relatively high proportion of households having harvested (69% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Large potato harvest (1,121 kg/household by 3rd quarter 2009) • Low levels of pensions (2,120 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • Low proportion of households owning a bicycle (4% in 2008), a radio (6%), a washing machine (24%), a fridge (38%), a table (5%) • Poor access to running water (16% households by 3rd quarter 2009) • High stunting rates (36.4%), deteriorating since 2006
Talas	• Relatively high prevalence of total food insecurity (37% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Relatively high prevalence of severe food insecurity (24% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Improvement of food security situation between end 2008 and first 3 quarters of 2009 • Severe and overall food insecurity remained stable since 2006 • Low proportion of women-headed households (27%) • Relatively high kcal consumption per capita (2,490 kcal by 3rd quarter 2009) • Low proportion of households consuming less than 80% of dietary requirements (12%) • Decreased prevalence of households with an insufficient diet since 2008 • High share of food expenditures (67%) • Low share of expenditures for services (12%) • Large acreage of land cultivated (1.1 ha/household, 0.33 ha/capita) • High proportion of households having harvested (92% by 3rd quarter 2009) • High proportion of extremely poor households (24%) • Support from relatives frequently mentioned as a source of income (by 21% of households by 3rd quarter 2009) • Low cash income per capita (1,050 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • Low levels of pensions (2,020 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • Low proportion of households owning a video (15% in 2008), a sewing machine (35%), a fridge (35%) • Poor access to running water (12% households by 3rd quarter 2009) • Very low share of health expenditures (less than 1% by 3rd quarter 2009)
Chuy	• Low prevalence of food insecurity (23% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Severe food insecurity returned to 2006 level after a peak end-2008, but overall food insecurity increased • High kcal consumption per capita (2,580 kcal by 3rd quarter 2009) • Low amount of food expenditures per capita (1,570 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • High share of expenditures for services (22%) • Relatively high proportion of households having harvested (66% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Small potato harvest (213 kg/household by 3rd quarter 2009) • Low proportion of extremely poor households (5%) • Support from relatives frequently mentioned as a source of income (by 26% of households by 3rd quarter 2009) • High cash income per capita (2,570 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • High levels of pensions (3,150 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • Relatively high proportion of households with credit or loans (3%)

Oblast/town	Main food security characteristics
	• High proportion of households owning a bicycle (24% in 2008), a washing machine (74%), a fridge (87%) • Relatively good access to running water (46% households by 3rd quarter 2009) • Relatively low rates of stunting (21.6% in 2008), but deteriorating since 2006
Bishkek	• Low prevalence of food insecurity (24% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Stabilisation of food security situation between end 2008 and first 3 quarters of 2009 • Since 2006, severe and overall food insecurity increased • High proportion of women-headed households (48%) • Small family size (3.1 members) • Relatively low share of food expenditures (55%) • High amount of food expenditures per capita (1,670 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • High share of expenditures for services (22%) • High share of expenditures for utilities (6%) • Low proportion of households having harvested (10% by 3rd quarter 2009) • Low proportion of extremely poor households (less than 1%) • High cash income per capita (3,240 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • Low levels of pensions (3,360 som by 3rd quarter 2009) • High proportion of households owning a personal computer (13% in 2008), a fridge (88%), a table (32%) • Low proportion of households owning a sewing machine (38% in 2008) • Good access to running water (91% of households by 3rd quarter 2009) • Relatively low rates of stunting (26.3% in 2008)