



# Standard Project Report 2015

## World Food Programme in Kyrgyz Republic (KG)

### Optimising Primary School Meals Programme in Kyrgyz Republic

Reporting period: 1 January - 31 December 2015

Project Information	
Project Number	200176
Project Category	Development Project
Overall Planned Beneficiaries	62,000
Planned Beneficiaries in 2015	62,000
Total Beneficiaries in 2015	79,776

Key Project Dates	
Project Approval Date	February 05, 2013
Planned Start Date	January 01, 2013
Actual Start Date	March 15, 2013
Project End Date	December 31, 2016
Financial Closure Date	N/A

Approved budget in USD	
Food and Related Costs	1,044,025
Capacity Dev.t and Augmentation	6,376,913
Direct Support Costs	3,420,654
Cash-Based Transfers and Related Costs	N/A
Indirect Support Costs	758,911
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,600,503</b>

Commodities	Metric Tonnes
Planned Commodities in 2015	506
Actual Commodities 2015	475
Total Approved Commodities	1,163

# Table Of Contents

## **COUNTRY OVERVIEW**

Country Background

Summary Of WFP Assistance

## **OPERATIONAL SPR**

Operational Objectives and Relevance

Results

Beneficiaries, Targeting and Distribution

Story Worth Telling

Progress Towards Gender Equality

Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations

Outputs

Outcomes

Sustainability, Capacity Development and Handover

Inputs

Resource Inputs

Food Purchases and In-Kind Receipts

Food Transport, Delivery and Handling

Post-Delivery Losses

Management

Partnerships

Lessons Learned

Operational Statistics

Annex: Participants by Activity and Modality

Annex: Resource Inputs from Donors

# COUNTRY OVERVIEW



## Country Background

The Kyrgyz Republic is a mountainous, landlocked country that gained independence in 1991. With a GDP per capita of USD 1,200 in 2014, ranking 120 out of 188 countries in the 2015 UNDP Human Development Index and 67 out of 155 in the UNDP Gender Inequality Index, over two thirds of its multi-ethnic population of 6 million live in rural areas. Malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies are widespread with an anaemia prevalence of 43 percent among the children under 5 and 39 percent among pregnant women (Demographic and Health Survey, 2012), which is considered of severe public health significance, and almost 13 percent of children under 5 suffer from stunting (Kyrgyzstan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), 2014). Maternal mortality rates are high, exceeding 49 deaths per 100,000 live births, hindering progress to achieve Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 5, improved maternal health. These health and nutrition indicators reflect the underlying risks faced by the poor and food-insecure. Although the Kyrgyz Republic was able to reduce the extreme poverty level in MDG 1, radical reduction of extreme poverty, the poverty rate continues to be above 30 percent with 1.8 million people living below the poverty line. Provincial variations in poverty persist, with the south of the country being much poorer than the north.

Political volatility, economic shocks and frequent natural disasters continue to threaten development gains. The country is highly dependent upon the importation of basic food commodities, particularly wheat, and the price of domestic wheat flour has remained at a near-record high throughout 2015, with the price 6 percent higher than in 2014. The Kyrgyz Som has depreciated by 25 percent year-on-year, having a heavy impact on the most vulnerable households who spend over half of their income on food.

The overall access to primary education is high while enrollment rates remain high and there are minimal disparities between gender or regions.

Agriculture remains the main livelihood source for most rural households. However, insufficient and outdated infrastructure and technology hinder productivity levels. Combined with a lack of employment opportunities, this has resulted in a constant flow of outward migration, leaving many rural households highly dependent upon uncertain remittances. Almost a third of GDP in the Kyrgyz Republic is generated from remittances (World Bank, 2014), but the ongoing geopolitical crisis and recession of the Russian economy has resulted in a 31 percent drop since 2014 (National Bank, 2015).

## Summary Of WFP Assistance

Aligned with WFP's Strategic Objectives 3 and 4, WFP pursued three key objectives in the Kyrgyz Republic: 1) strengthen social safety nets to improve food security and nutrition; 2) improve and diversify rural livelihoods by increasing income opportunities, food security and nutrition at the household level; and 3) enhance the capacity of rural communities to cope with shocks, including natural or man-made disasters. WFP strengthened these areas by contributing to policies, systems and field level interventions.

In January 2013, WFP launched development project (DEV 200176), a four-year programme, to optimise primary school meals; the new school meals policy was formulated and supported by Russian non-governmental organization (NGO), the Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute (SIFI). A pilot activity providing nutritious and affordable meals to children in food insecure areas is continuing. It built the capacity of school administrations, local authorities and communities to manage school feeding more effectively, whilst rehabilitating school infrastructure. The policy set a strategic direction for development of the national school meals programme until 2025.

WFP launched DEV 200662, a new 30-month development project in mid-2014, to enhance the government's capacity to contribute to sustainable food security, nutrition and resilience among the poorest and most food-insecure groups. The project focuses on rural development, social protection, and disaster risk management and climate change adaptation. In these areas, support is provided to policy development, systems optimization and field level interventions through building resilience and improving livelihoods of the most vulnerable.

Development of government capacity in the area of food security continued with support toward climate risk and food security analysis, which included monthly price monitoring bulletins and a Food Security Atlas.

These activities contribute to meeting MDG 1, eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, MDG 2, achieve universal primary education, MDG 3, promote gender equality and empower women, and MDG 7, ensure environmental sustainability. These MDGs were aligned with the government's National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) 2013-2017, which focused on agriculture, social protection, education, health, environmental protection and disaster risk reduction.

Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Total
Children (under 5 years)	9,625	9,746	19,371
Children (5-18 years)	55,870	55,648	111,518
Adults (18 years plus)	23,925	23,780	47,705
<b>Total number of beneficiaries in 2015</b>	<b>89,420</b>	<b>89,174</b>	<b>178,594</b>

Distribution (mt)						
Project Type	Cereals	Oil	Pulses	Mix	Other	Total
Development Project	3,518	281	0	0	0	3,799
<b>Total Food Distributed in 2015</b>	<b>3,518</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,799</b>

# OPERATIONAL SPR

## Operational Objectives and Relevance

Since 2006, the government, through the Ministry of Education and Science, has been implementing a national universal primary school meals programme for 400,000 primary school children with an annual budget of USD 10 million. However, this programme was criticized by the general public for delivering schools meals of poor quality and low nutritional value. In many schools, key infrastructure, including canteens and basic water and sanitation facilities, were dilapidated or non-existent. The programme's coordination and management mechanisms also required strengthening.

In 2012, the government requested assistance from WFP to redesign the national school meals programme. Aligned with Strategic Objective 4 and the second pillar of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), social inclusion and equity, WFP launched the development project (DEV 200176) in 2013. The project focused on supporting the government to develop an efficient, sustainable national school meals strategy, an implementation plan, and policy framework that was aligned with international quality standards. Furthermore, it aimed to optimise school meals models, which were planned for nationwide replication.

The project encompassed all aspects of school feeding. Within the project, WFP and its partner, SIFI, supported the development of a national school meals policy, which was formally adopted by the government in December 2014. WFP sought to strengthen institutional capacity in-country and provide stakeholders with tools to manage the school meals programme more effectively. A strong emphasis was placed on the increased role of communities in decision-making and monitoring of the project, which included active involvement of local authorities and parents in resource mobilization, procurement of food items, financial support for cooks, and in the determination of school menus. The project introduced nutritious school meals in pilot schools and improved canteen facilities and water and sanitation infrastructure.

## Results

### *Beneficiaries, Targeting and Distribution*

WFP, the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Health competitively assessed, selected, and introduced school meals optimization models into 127 schools for the third and fourth rounds of the pilot school meals project. These joined the existing 134 schools in the project from the previous years that were providing school meals to primary school children in first to fourth grades, bringing the total number of pilot schools to 261. Project schools were located in 31 out of 34 districts across all seven provinces in the Kyrgyz Republic. All selected schools met criteria established by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Inter-Ministerial Working Committee (IWC), a body established by the government to coordinate the national school meals programme reform and chaired by the Vice-Prime Minister, with support provided by WFP through technical assistance.

The priority for the third and fourth rounds was given to schools located in provinces with high vulnerability levels. These levels were determined by analyzing official national data and combining the findings with WFP's own Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) assessments in order to support WFP and government efforts to combat food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty in-country. The selection of individual schools was taken from a broad cross-section of schools, to ensure that the most suitable pilot schools were included in the activity. The availability of sewage, water and electricity infrastructure or readiness to renovate was also part of the criteria. Other factors taken into consideration included past experience working with WFP, the availability of land for school gardens, the strong engagement of local authorities and parents, and opportunities to build complementary activities with other partners working in the same sector, such as UNICEF. This three-tiered approach sought to ensure that the diversity of schools across the country was reflected in the pilot schools, to assist the government in determining the most effective school meals model to be replicated on a national scale.

The total annual number of beneficiaries exceeded the original plan due to the newly arriving first graders in September which increased the annual number of students receiving meals. However, the total quantity of fortified wheat flour distributed was slightly lower than anticipated due to the postponed launch of the pilot in several schools for the third round (45 schools started in March 2015 and 20 schools in April and May 2015).

The bulk of food commodities for school meals continued to be procured with government funds. WFP provided daily food assistance of 60 g of fortified wheat flour valued at USD 0.05 per student (an increase due to rise in food commodity price and fluctuations in the US dollar rate), thus providing an average of 218 kcal per child per day (514 kcal for the whole meal per child). Fortified wheat flour was only distributed for on-site school meals once infrastructure and sanitary conditions were improved to the required standard with the support of local authorities, parents and WFP, and after clearance by the Sanitation and Epidemiological Surveillance, under the Ministry of Health district education departments and WFP.

In addition to food, WFP supplied all project schools with modern canteen equipment such as ovens, stoves and washbasins for washing dishes. The availability of equipment, combined with the provision of fortified wheat flour, enabled schools to prepare quality hot meals and bake fresh products in proper hygienic and sanitary conditions.

Beneficiary Category	Planned			Actual			% Actual v. Planned		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<b>Total Beneficiaries</b>	31,000	31,000	62,000	40,367	39,409	79,776	130.2%	127.1%	128.7%
<b>By Age-group:</b>									
Children (5-18 years)	31,000	31,000	62,000	40,367	39,409	79,776	130.2%	127.1%	128.7%
<b>By Residence status:</b>									
Residents	31,000	31,000	62,000	40,367	39,409	79,776	130.2%	127.1%	128.7%

Activity	Planned			Actual			% Actual v. Planned		
	Food	CBT	Total	Food	CBT	Total	Food	CBT	Total
School Feeding (on-site)	62,000	-	62,000	79,776	-	79,776	128.7%	-	128.7%

Beneficiary Category	Planned			Actual			% Actual v. Planned		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<b>School Feeding (on-site)</b>									
Children receiving school meals in primary schools	31,000	31,000	62,000	40,367	39,409	79,776	130.2%	127.1%	128.7%
<b>Total participants</b>	<b>31,000</b>	<b>31,000</b>	<b>62,000</b>	<b>40,367</b>	<b>39,409</b>	<b>79,776</b>	<b>130.2%</b>	<b>127.1%</b>	<b>128.7%</b>
<b>Total beneficiaries</b>	<b>31,000</b>	<b>31,000</b>	<b>62,000</b>	<b>40,367</b>	<b>39,409</b>	<b>79,776</b>	<b>130.2%</b>	<b>127.1%</b>	<b>128.7%</b>

The total number of beneficiaries includes all targeted persons who were provided with WFP food/cash/vouchers during the reporting period - either as a recipient/participant or from a household food ration distributed to one of these recipients/participants.

Commodity	Planned Distribution (mt)	Actual Distribution (mt)	% Actual v. Planned
Wheat Flour	506	475	93.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>93.8%</b>

## Story Worth Telling

Arabaev school joined the school meals programme in spring 2015 after receiving support from WFP, the Ministry of Education and local authorities to renovate the canteen infrastructure; restore water supply, electricity and sewage systems; install WFP-provided ovens and stoves; and attend mandatory procurement, cooking and school meals management training.

Venera Jakypova, the school principal, explains, “Now 582 primary students receive milk-based porridge, soup, freshly baked pastries and fruit compote every day.” Parents contribute five Som a day (USD 0.06) to supplement government allocations for these school meals and ensure more diversified ingredients and kitchen utensils are procured.

“Parents quickly recognized the benefits of the school meals project, such as nutritional meals and improved sanitary conditions. With this support, we are working to expand the programme beyond the primary school and introduce school meals for the pre-school children,” said Jakypova.

WFP's school meals model proved to be so successful that parents and school administration with support from local authorities want to ensure that younger children in pre-school also benefit from the high quality meals, which improve their health and educational opportunities.

## Progress Towards Gender Equality

WFP ensured that gender equality and other crosscutting themes were included in the design, planning and implementation of all activities. Primary schools across the country continued to be well attended by both girls and boys, with similar attendance levels and dropout rates. The project encouraged further gender equality and empowerment through the inclusion of women and men as decision-makers in parent teacher associations (PTAs) and in training. Examples of training included school meals management, logistics and procurement, school gardens, nutrition and healthy eating habits for children, school meals preparation, and sanitary and hygiene requirements.

Gender equality continued to be promoted through community participation mechanisms. To foster a sense of ownership and to empower both parents and teachers, the project worked through PTAs that functioned as project management committees. Although men were involved as parents and teachers, the majority of PTA members, many of whom held leadership positions, were female. This percentage was higher than initially anticipated signalling a success in efforts to improve the representation of women in key project activities.

PTAs supported the oversight of spending, contributed to planning discussions and mobilized communities. It is anticipated that this substantial inclusion of parents and teachers in the project will contribute to more effective procurement and ensure longer-term sustainability in the provision of high quality, affordable school meals for primary school children. In turn, giving women a voice in the enhancement of school meals has empowered them to play a greater role in the wider management of schools.

School directors, 50 percent of whom were female, played a central role in the operational management of the project, including the management of school meals activities and contributing to national policy development and community mobilization. Almost 98 percent of school cooks in pilot schools, who completed training as school meal cooks, were women while 39 percent of participants who benefitted from the school garden training were women. Men were included in all training sessions, particularly those on community mobilization, school gardens, and project management and implementation, in which they represented almost a third of all participants.

Cross-cutting Indicators	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
<b>Proportion of women beneficiaries in leadership positions of project management committees</b>  KYRGYZSTAN, <i>School Feeding (on-site)</i> , <b>Project End Target:</b> 2016.12 , <b>Base value:</b> 2014.12 , <b>Latest Follow-up:</b> 2015.06	>60.00	70.00		70.00
<b>Proportion of women project management committee members trained on modalities of food, cash, or voucher distribution</b>  KYRGYZSTAN, <i>School Feeding (on-site)</i> , <b>Project End Target:</b> 2016.12 , <b>Base value:</b> 2014.12 , <b>Latest Follow-up:</b> 2015.06	>60.00	70.00		70.00

## Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations

There were no reported safety incidents at any of the schools. Distances to schools were generally short and security conditions were calm at all project sites.

The project emphasized information sharing with beneficiaries and stakeholders, particularly in the new target schools and at the national level. Mechanisms for informing beneficiaries and stakeholders were expanded and developed over the project lifespan and were revised to include activities at the community, district, provincial and national levels using a wide range of media outreach and publications.

Through these mechanisms for information sharing and feedback, WFP maintained a very high level of satisfaction with the project: two thirds of respondents rated the school meals implementation in pilot schools as excellent, while the remaining third rated it as very good or good. Prior to the expansion, four out of five parents reported dissatisfaction with the national school meals programme due to the poor quality of the meals provided and the disparity between the planned and actual costs of meals.

Before initiating activities in each new pilot school, WFP met with stakeholders to explain the process and answer any queries. WFP then participated in school-based meetings and initiated regular meetings and training sessions at the provincial and community levels to build the capacity of stakeholders, increase awareness and encourage participation in the programme. Community mobilization meetings and awareness raising activities were conducted throughout the year within all pilot schools to ensure a continuation of support for the projects, to share results and ideas and to ensure that the communities were committed to the programme, which is vital for its sustainability.

A newsletter and magazine focusing on the activities and achievements of the school meals project were distributed on a quarterly basis to all schools, PTAs, district and provincial authorities, and relevant Ministries. These efforts were combined with media outreach activities that included a series of advertisements in local languages broadcast on national public television; roundtable discussions on both national public radio and television with participation from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, school directors, local authorities and parents; social media and frequent articles in the local print media.

Other forms of information sharing and feedback gathering included annual lessons learned sessions, which were fed back to beneficiaries, post-distribution monitoring (PDM) and satisfaction surveys. These tools and methods ensured support and understanding of the school meals programme and provided opportunities for people to complain, share their views on the project and provide suggestions on its development. Crucially, all assessment respondents were able to identify existing informal complaint mechanisms, such as reporting to school directors, WFP staff and local authorities.

Additionally, a formal complaints mechanism was established through a hotline to provide beneficiaries with direct contact to WFP to raise any queries and problems. In its final stages of development, the hotline will be fully operational from early 2016.

Cross-cutting Indicators	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
<b>Proportion of assisted people (men) informed about the programme (who is included, what people will receive, where people can complain)</b> KYRGYZSTAN, School Feeding (on-site) , <b>Project End Target:</b> 2016.12 , <b>Base value:</b> 2014.12 , <b>Latest Follow-up:</b> 2015.06	=90.00	97.00		99.00
<b>Proportion of assisted people (women) informed about the programme (who is included, what people will receive, where people can complain)</b> KYRGYZSTAN, School Feeding (on-site) , <b>Project End Target:</b> 2016.12 , <b>Base value:</b> 2014.12 , <b>Latest Follow-up:</b> 2015.06	=90.00	99.00		97.00
<b>Proportion of assisted people informed about the programme (who is included, what people will receive, where people can complain)</b> KYRGYZSTAN, School Feeding (on-site) , <b>Project End Target:</b> 2016.12 , <b>Base value:</b> 2014.12 , <b>Latest Follow-up:</b> 2015.06	=90.00	93.00		98.00

## Outputs

Since the adoption of the school meals policy by the government in December 2014, the focus has been on how to implement this policy throughout 2015 and to develop a complementary National Implementation Strategy (NIS) for school meals.

In July 2015, a joint IWC and Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) meeting was held where it was agreed to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the national school meals programme to provide the basis for the design of the NIS. Additionally, an examination of the full range of feeding models that could be considered to further improve the national school meals programme has been initiated. This will inform the design and costing of the NIS. WFP, together with SIFI, have started the design of the methodology for the comprehensive assessment, which is to be completed in mid-2016, and based on this, the draft NIS will be designed in the second half of 2016 through a multi-stakeholder consultative process.

WFP provided technical support to the government in formalizing the position of school cooks in 788 schools, including pilot and non-pilot schools serving hot meals. This led to a threefold increase in the salary paid to school cooks. This was an important measure to support the sustainability of the enhanced school meals model and directly addresses the high turnover of school cooks. Other forms of technical assistance included increasing the number of recipes to 132, revising and enhancing existing menus and designing handbooks for non-pilot schools to switch to hot meals.

Hot meals were served in 99 percent of pilot schools, compared to 27 percent before the project started. This was the result of the combined efforts of schools, communities and local authorities, WFP and CPs. By working together, these parties dramatically improved infrastructure, established sanitary and improved hygiene conditions and trained relevant parties on the adherence to strict national sanitary and hygiene requirements. This ensured that schools were capable of serving hot meals and managing more efficient expenditure of government allocations and contributions to the menu received from parents and local communities. School gardens were established in order to encourage schools to use their own produce.

To build capacity to implement the schools meals intervention, WFP, ministries and CPs conducted a series of training sessions for all pilot areas. This included training on programme management and implementation for school directors and staff, local authorities and parents and a separate training for cooks and kitchen staff. To support serving enhanced school meals in non-pilot schools, stakeholders from non-pilot schools who expressed an interest were included in training sessions. Consequently, a significantly higher number of people completed training than initially anticipated.

Monitoring data suggested that the procurement efficiency rate improved significantly since the start of the project: pilot schools served hot meals to children over three times a week (increase from 3.3 to 3.6) with almost the same level of expenditure with which the government previously provided tea and unfortified buns. The high procurement efficiency rate can be attributed to schools being encouraged to forge links with local food suppliers. PDM conducted from September to December 2015 concluded that almost all surveyed pilot schools procured milk from local farmers. To further support the optimization of procurement practices, and in line with recommendations of the mid-term review, WFP conducted a feasibility study to explore the possibility of introducing decentralized procurement modalities for the schools which have capacity to do so.

Prior to the start of the project, children received a snack of less than 400 kcal with little nutritional value (in terms of diversity and micronutrients). While the average caloric value of the improved school meal was about 515 kcal, it was still lower than WFP recommendations for school feeding; however, the content of the menu and food diversity considerably improved through the inclusion of dairy and meat products, more diversified cereals and pulses, vegetables and fruit. The protein and micronutrient values in the menus of pilot schools doubled in 2015 compared to what was provided before the project started.

The expansion of the school garden project saw the inclusion of an additional 24 pilot schools, which demonstrated how school meals could benefit from more diversified and affordable meals, and contribute to local economic development within the community.

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
<b>SO4: Capacity Development - Strengthening National Capacities and School Feeding (on-site)</b>				
Energy content of food distributed (kcal/person/day)	individual	520	514	98.8
Number of WFP-assisted schools that have school gardens for learning or complementary food input	school	29	24	82.8

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
Number of government/national partner staff receiving technical assistance and training	individual	150	1,184	789.3
Number of pilot schools with hot meals	school	192	259	134.9
Number of primary schools assisted by WFP	school	261	261	100.0
Number of technical assistance activities provided	activity	24	24	100.0
Procurement efficiency rate	%	90	96	106.7
<b>SO4: School Feeding (on-site)</b>				
Number of pilot schools baking bread and pastry products at school level	%	90	100	111.1

## Outcomes

The project continued to make progress in the areas of national capacity and ownership, and maintaining access to education. High attendance rates continued at pilot schools and in the opinion of school directors, parents and educational authorities, the participation of schoolchildren in the school meals programme contributed to their improved attendance. This enthusiasm and commitment to improving access to education was highlighted by the activities of two districts, Kemin and Bakai-Ata, who independently replicated the school meals model developed by WFP. In these two districts, implementation strategies were designed and endorsed during 2015 for all schools, which formed a basis for schools moving to hot meals using budgets from local authorities. In addition, in a major new development, the two provinces of Chuy and Issyk-Kul requested WFP assistance to assess the requirements for a gradual shift to hot meals, which will be supported by province level budget allocations in 2016.

The government's commitment to improve the national school meals programme is indicative of its recognition of the role of school meals as a social safety net, a tool that can help overcome nutritional and educational challenges in primary schools and bring other socio-economic benefits.

A National Capacity Index (NCI) for school meals was prepared based on the SABER framework. The SABER baseline was developed in 2013, and a follow-up to the SABER exercise conducted in 2015 with technical support from WFP. This determined an increase in NCI which is explained by the adoption of the National School Meals Policy and the implementation of a number of policy actions for the NIS. These included approval of cook positions, school meals in non-pilot schools and guidance prepared for the policy framework, improved financial and institutional capacity, and community roles beyond schools.

The adoption of the school meals policy enabled the government to focus on longer-term objectives, such as the formulation of a framework for school meals until 2025. The endorsement of the school meals policy and support for WFP pilot activities has provided a strong foundation to ensure proper implementation and oversight of the project, giving close attention to the aspects of quality, efficiency and effectiveness. The focus now moves to the design of the NIS for 2016, which commenced with the nationwide assessment that started in late 2015.

The pilot project in schools, combined with district level implementation plans, province plans and comprehensive policy work at the central level, provided evidence that the optimization of the National School Meals Programme was feasible with ownership and contributions from national stakeholders. A further commitment of national stakeholders was expressed at the Education Sector Workers Congress, in which school meals were identified as one of the key priority areas for the development of the education system.

Communities and parents have been so involved that their inputs have enabled schools to top-up menus to focus on nutritious meals. Many parents provided substantial cash contributions to complement the school menus: on average 81 percent of pilot schools visited from September to December 2015 received cash contributions from parental committees. Community contributions doubled in terms of the national currency, although due to significant depreciation against the US dollar, they only slightly increased from USD 0.02 to USD 0.03 per child per day. This was a positive sign that WFP's wheat flour is likely to be eventually replaced by local contributions. The project developed models combining menus with 132 improved recipes, approved by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, that not only provided choice, but also helped schools prepare meals based on available local ingredients. These menus have been shared with non-pilot schools and are the only menus and recipes in the country which have been endorsed for school meals use.

WFP conducted a series of interactive games for children in pilot schools which encouraged them to foster better hygiene, nutrition and healthy lifestyles. Games for school children were effective in increasing knowledge, skills and motivation on nutrition and hygiene, and taught them about how to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Outcome	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
<b>SO4 Reduce undernutrition and break the intergenerational cycle of hunger</b>				
<b>Increased equitable access to and utilization of education</b>				
<b>Enrolment: Average annual rate of change in number of children enrolled in WFP-assisted primary schools</b>				
<i>KYRGYZSTAN , Project End Target: 2016.12 school records , Base value: 2014.12 Secondary data school records , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data school records</i>	=6.00	3.30	-	2.20
<b>Enrolment (girls): Average annual rate of change in number of girls enrolled in WFP-assisted primary schools</b>				
<i>KYRGYZSTAN , Project End Target: 2014.12 School records , Base value: 2014.12 Secondary data school records , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data school records</i>	=6.00	3.70	-	4.90
<b>Enrolment (boys): Average annual rate of change in number of boys enrolled in WFP-assisted primary schools</b>				
<i>KYRGYZSTAN , Project End Target: 2016.12 School records , Base value: 2014.12 Secondary data school record , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data school records</i>	=6.00	3.20	-	0.40
<b>Attendance rate in WFP-assisted primary schools</b>				
<i>KYRGYZSTAN , Project End Target: 2016.12 school records , Base value: 2012.12 Secondary data school records , Previous Follow-up: 2014.12 Secondary data school records , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data school records</i>	=100.00	98.50	98.00	98.00
<b>Attendance rate (girls) in WFP-assisted primary schools</b>				
<i>KYRGYZSTAN , Project End Target: 2016.12 school records , Base value: 2012.12 Secondary data school records , Previous Follow-up: 2014.12 Secondary data school records , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data school records</i>	=100.00	98.50	98.00	98.00
<b>Attendance rate (boys) in WFP-assisted primary schools</b>				
<i>KYRGYZSTAN , Project End Target: 2016.12 school records , Base value: 2012.12 Secondary data school records , Previous Follow-up: 2014.12 Secondary data school records , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12 Secondary data school records</i>	=100.00	98.50	98.00	98.00
<b>Ownership and capacity strengthened to reduce undernutrition and increase access to education at regional, national and community levels</b>				
<b>NCI: School Feeding National Capacity Index</b>				
<i>KYRGYZSTAN , Project End Target: 2016.12 SABER exercise , Base value: 2013.07 WFP survey SABER exercise , Latest Follow-up: 2015.07 WFP survey SABER exercise</i>	=2.60	1.60	-	2.80

## ***Sustainability, Capacity Development and Handover***

The government's commitment to work with WFP to optimize school meals has provided a strong foundation for the sustainable development of the national school meals programme. This vital partnership has ensured strong national ownership and contributed to the long-term sustainability of the activity, including a continued commitment of financing. The IWC, which is chaired by the Vice Prime Minister, set key strategic directions for the project and supported the development of the National School Meals Policy. However, despite strong government commitment, there remains institutional gaps such as the need for the government to establish a specific school feeding management unit within the Ministry of Education. This would enhance the development and roll out of the NIS and provide support to the governance of the school meals programme at the central level. WFP will continue to lobby for the creation of this unit in the coming year, which would be able to undertake planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation activities as the WFP project develops.

As a result of significant efforts undertaken, the government endorsed the national school meals policy as a cornerstone of the national strategy for the schools meals programme. Arrangements for the progressive handover of this WFP-supported project to relevant line ministries are underway and will be further developed through the formulation of the NIS in 2016. In terms of sustainability, the results achieved in schools indicated that government funding, which covered up to three quarters of the cost of food (USD 0.10 - 0.15 per child per day), was sufficient to provide more nutritious and diversified meals together with limited external food support. In 2015, all pilot schools optimized their menus within the government budgetary allocation and with support from the local community.

The value of fortified wheat flour provided by WFP was matched by funds from other sources such as parents, local authorities and communities. These contributions tended to grow as communities became increasingly engaged in the school meals activity. To foster sustainability, WFP will continue to encourage these initiatives as well as look into providing technical support to the government to institutionalize contributions to the school meals, while ensuring that all contributions are used effectively.

Inspired by WFP's project, schools that were not targeted by this pilot activity, began to independently upgrade their feeding models to hot meals using WFP's implementation strategy. This included technical implementation, such as sanitation and hygiene standards and menus. To support these schools, WFP invited their canteen staff to participate in cooks' training, while local authorities provided resources to procure the minimum level of canteen equipment and to improve infrastructure.

These successful examples of replication caused the district educational department to look into promoting this initiative in other schools in the district. Following community mobilization activities by WFP and CPs in Chuy province to increase awareness on best practices for school meals optimization, WFP received a request from the Governor of the Chuy province to conduct an assessment of the needs for the introduction of optimized school meals. The assessment results provided guidance to provincial authorities to prepare their budgets for required infrastructure improvements and canteen equipment, and helped identify the status of readiness of schools in Chuy province to introduce hot meals. WFP is further testing this approach to identify areas where pilots could be introduced without the financial support of WFP. The results of this will contribute to the design of the NIS.

Vegetables collected from school gardens have become a good source of ingredients for soups and salads, enriching and diversifying school meals. The school gardens initiative has contributed to the sustainability of the programme, with a large number of pilot schools taking the initiative to grow vegetables and fruit. To support this process, WFP worked to disseminate guidance on school gardening through handbook design and provision of technical instruction. The first step of guidance for the set-up of school vegetable plots was endorsed by the Ministry of Education in 2015.

## **Inputs**

### ***Resource Inputs***

The project was fully funded in 2015. Food provided by WFP through the project was complemented by food provided by the government from its own budget. Complementary support to the project was provided by local authorities, parents and communities toward infrastructural improvements, enhancement of menus and increased salaries for school cooks.

Donor	2015 Resourced (mt)		2015 Shipped/Purchased (mt)
	In-Kind	Cash	
Russian Federation	0	540	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>0</b>

See Annex: Resource Inputs from Donors for breakdown by commodity and contribution reference number

## Food Purchases and In-Kind Receipts

Fortified wheat flour was purchased regionally from the Russian Federation.

Commodities	Local (mt)	Developing Country (mt)	Other International (mt)	GCMF (mt)
Wheat Flour	0	0	541	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>0</b>

## Food Transport, Delivery and Handling

The commodity under this project was purchased on delivery-at-place terms to railway stations in the central and southern regions where WFP warehouses were located. Railway operations, handling and secondary transportation from warehouses to schools were covered by WFP. Under WFP's partnering terms with the Kyrgyz government, the government covered the storage, handling and distribution of fortified wheat flour to schools.

## Post-Delivery Losses

In-country losses were kept to a minimum through adherence to proper food management practices, including food storage. The value of commodities short-delivered during in-country transportation was fully recovered from contractors. Written instructions on warehousing in addition to warehouse training on food handling and proper storage were provided to school staff in local languages.

## Management

### Partnerships

The school meals optimization project partnered at the strategic and policy level with the government through the IWC and SABER exercise, at the design and technical levels with SIFI, and at the implementation level with local NGOs, schools, PTAs, local authorities and communities. WFP prioritized strategic partnerships with entities that were able to provide technical expertise or other complementary inputs to the school meals project.

Established to coordinate the implementation of the project, the IWC was comprised of representatives from the Ministries of Education, Health, Agriculture and Social Development, WFP, UNICEF, Mercy Corps and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The IWC contributed expertise and support to the SABER exercise as required. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health acted as line ministries for project implementation and WFP held regular consultative workshops at government level to plan for the institutionalization of project activities within government, in preparation for the roll out of pilot approaches on a nationwide scale in 2017. Complementary funds provided by districts and local government were higher than expected as the desire to improve infrastructure prior to the implementation of the schools meals project was very high and funds were made available in a shorter than expected timeframe.

SIFI provided technical assistance to WFP, including inputs for the development of policy, concept papers and guidelines on modalities of implementation. SIFI further supported a capacity assessment and gap analysis, which helped design the optimized school meals approach, supported training, and assisted in the methodological design

of the nationwide comprehensive assessment, including cost analysis, which will form the basis for NIS. SIFI provided technical support for the introduction of school meals at the field level.

Regional representatives of the Ministries of Education and Health, school directors and cooks worked closely with WFP to ensure pilot schools had sufficient capacity to serve improved meals. WFP worked in partnership with schools and local authorities to mobilize communities, provide appropriate water and sanitation facilities in schools, and establish connections for the local procurement of produce.

WFP continued to engage with local NGO Initiative of Rosa Otunbaeva International Public Foundation, which organised a range of advocacy and outreach events, such as meetings with members of Parliament, field visits, media tours and nationally broadcasted round table discussions, which provided extensive media coverage of the school meals activities. These activities helped to raise awareness of the importance of school meals and inform stakeholders of the project's progress.

The local NGO, Agency for Development Initiatives (ADI), continued to support WFP in the implementation of school gardens, in the design of province level plans and the undertaking of advocacy activities. ADI conducted various assessments and delivered complementary training on agricultural techniques and project management. As the number of schools increased, WFP involved the Center of Activation and Development of Rural Initiatives (CADRI) to coach stakeholders, monitor schools, and provide technical and logistical support for field activities.

WFP coordinated its activities with UNICEF for the water and sanitation activities and the nutrition related advocacy plans through the coaching of stakeholders at province, district and local levels.

Partnership	NGO		Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement	UN/IO
	National	International		
Total	3	1		1

Cross-cutting Indicators	Project End Target	Latest Follow-up
<b>Amount of complementary funds provided to the project by partners (including NGOs, civil society, private sector organizations, international financial institutions and regional development banks)</b>		
<i>KYRGYZSTAN, School Feeding (on-site) , Project End Target: 2016.12 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.06</i>	=737,000.00	1,456,109.00
<b>In-kind and cash inputs provided by local authorities, parents, communities into school meals on top of the government allocation (US\$ per child per day)</b>		
<i>KYRGYZSTAN, School Feeding (on-site) , Project End Target: 2016.12 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12</i>	=0.04	0.03
<b>Number of partner organizations that provide complementary inputs and services</b>		
<i>KYRGYZSTAN, School Feeding (on-site) , Project End Target: 2016.12 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.06</i>	=3.00	3.00
<b>Proportion of project activities implemented with the engagement of complementary partners</b>		
<i>KYRGYZSTAN, School Feeding (on-site) , Project End Target: 2016.12 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.06</i>	=100.00	100.00
<b>Share of inputs provided for infrastructure rehabilitation (including canteen, water and sanitation) by local authorities, communities and parents out of total value of costs for infrastructure</b>		
<i>KYRGYZSTAN, School Feeding (on-site) , Project End Target: 2016.12 , Latest Follow-up: 2015.12</i>	=30.00	100.00

## Lessons Learned

The WFP project implementation strategy was updated to reflect changes in conditions and revisions to project design and implementation to bring project activities in line with learning on the ground which included school infrastructure demands and types of school meals models. This has been aided by feedback received from extensive consultations with the Ministries of Education and of Health, and with project stakeholders in the field. This approach ensured that results and challenges were taken into account when expanding school meals implementation, and when revising school meals models, which were crucial for the development of the NIS.

WFP continued close coordination with the IWC, the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders to ensure that the government remained committed to the design of the NIS. The SABER exercise contributed to continued ownership and sustainability of school meals optimization, and increased the awareness of stakeholders at various levels about existing capacities and gaps in the school meals policy framework. WFP prepared participants from all ministries, local authorities and schools for the design of the NIS exercise to ensure that they made informed decisions.

During 2014, WFP observed that procurement committees at field level needed clearer guidance on how best to implement government procedures to ensure fair and efficient procurement. Some schools were found to be implementing activities according to their own interpretation of the rules, which caused inefficiencies and led to ineffective control. In 2015, a feasibility study explored the legal and implementation options for decentralized procurement and proposed recommendations for technical support to the government on procurement procedures and practices. These recommendations will form the basis for a procurement pilot in 2016, which is expected to further enhance the efficiency of procurement.

Lessons learned in 2014 demonstrated that there was a strong correlation between investment in awareness raising and advocacy and replication. In 2015, WFP continued its advocacy work, which included a comprehensive community mobilization component covering pilot and non-pilot areas. This identified provinces where governors requested support from WFP in costing the gradual shift to hot meals for inclusion in estimates of their annual budgets. During 2015, WFP collected data from all schools within these provinces which will allow for action plans and costing to be finalized in 2016. As a follow-up, WFP will monitor the implementation of the replication process.

The mid-term review of the school meals project highlighted positive feedback received by WFP on the school meals optimization programme. It outlined recommendations that focused on sustainability and ensuring that school meals could continue in a cost effective manner, whilst adhering to high standards established by WFP for the delivery and composition of school meals. This included recommending that WFP pro-actively lobby for having a staff member inside the School Feeding Unit in the Ministry of Education to enhance government involvement in the development and roll-out of the implementation plan and provide support to school feeding governance at central level. It also suggested that in order to promote policy momentum, WFP should assist the government in developing an evidence based argument for the importance of the school feeding programme including its function as a social safety net. Against this background, WFP will increasingly focus on enhancing project sustainability through the institutionalization of project management functions at all levels of government and continue to lobby for greater institutionalization of the programme within the budgetary process managed by the Ministry of Education. Further work in 2016 will ensure that WFP guides the government in adhering to its 2014 school meals policy commitments and maintains political buy-in for the programme to continue in a long-term sustainable manner.

## Operational Statistics

### Annex: Participants by Activity and Modality

Activity	Planned			Actual			% Actual v. Planned		
	Food	CBT	Total	Food	CBT	Total	Food	CBT	Total
School Feeding (on-site)	62,000	-	62,000	79,776	-	79,776	128.7%	-	128.7%

### Annex: Resource Inputs from Donors

Donor	Cont. Ref. No.	Commodity	Resourced in 2015 (mt)		Shipped/Purchased in 2015 (mt)
			In-Kind	Cash	
Russian Federation	RUS-C-00035-03	Wheat Flour	0	540	0
<b>Total</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>0</b>