



UNITED NATIONS
KYRGYZ REPUBLIC



United Nations
**COMMON COUNTRY
ANALYSIS**
for the Kyrgyz Republic



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Acronyms

ADP	Additional Drug Package
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CAREC	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation
CSO(s)	Civil Society Organization(s)
DPCC	Development Partners Coordination Council
EAEU	Eurasian Economic Union
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EDF	Eurasian Development Fund
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
GHG	Greenhouse gas
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex
ICT	Information and communications technology
IFIs	International financial institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INFF	Integrated National Financing Framework
LLDCs	Land-locked developing countries
MDBs	Multilateral development banks
MSL	Minimum subsistence level
MSMEs	Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises
NCDs	Non-communicable diseases
NCPT	National Center for the Prevention of Torture
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NGO(s)	Non-governmental organization(s)
NSC	National Statistical Committee
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OOP	Out-of-pocket payments
PwD	Persons with disabilities
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SGBP	State Guaranteed Benefit Package
SDG(s)	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SOEs	State-owned enterprises
SPECA	UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia
TRACECA	Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia
TVET	Technical and vocational education training
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene

Preface

This Common Country Analysis (CCA) provides the evidence base and analytical foundations for the UN Country Team's programming in the Kyrgyz Republic for preparing the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for 2023-2027. The CCA constitutes the UN system's independent, integrated, forward-looking and data-driven analysis of the context for sustainable development in the country. It is meant to serve as a guide the UN family's ongoing support to the Government and people of the Kyrgyz Republic in their effort to build back better after the COVID-19 pandemic and to accelerate achievement of the country's national Sustainable Development Goals and commitments to various international conventions and obligations.

The preparation of this CCA is the result of the collaborative efforts of the UN Country Team. The following agencies participated in the development of the CCA: UNDP, ILO, ITC, FAO, IOM, UNIDO, WFP, UN Women, UNFPA, UN Environment, OHCHR, UNODC, UNAIDS, UNECE, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO and IFAD. I would like to thank the many UN staff members and other colleagues from partner organizations who were involved in the preparation of this report. Special appreciation goes to CCA Team Leader Nuria-Roza Choibaeva with support from Ekaterina Perfilyeva, (UN RCO) and the CCA chapter and section leads: Baktybek Kainazarov (UNFPA), Erkina Urazbaeva (UNDP), Umar Shavurov (UNDP), Artur Iatsevych (OHCHR), Kurtmolla Abdulganiyev (UN RCO), Gulnara Abdykalykova (UNDP), Elisabetta D'Amico (WFP), Ulukbek Usubaliyev (UN RCO), and Sagipa Jusaeva (UN Women). Appreciation is also extended to Kanykey Orozbaeva, Nurshat Abybakorov, Olga Tarabashkina, Chris Howells, Temir Burzhubaev, and Tom Stephens (lead consultant) for their valuable support during the preparation of this report. Allow me to also express my thanks to the many participants who attended the workshops that were organized to discuss various sections of the draft report. Their names are listed in Annex F.

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UN Resident Coordinator in the Kyrgyz Republic

Executive Summary

The Common Country Analysis has been prepared at a time when the Kyrgyz Republic continues to face many existing and potentially unforeseen development challenges in the wake of the COVID pandemic. The analysis presented in this report indicates that, despite the major strides and accomplishments made by the country in the last few decades, the pandemic exposed or exacerbated many trends about the structure of the economy and the linkages to the social vulnerabilities facing a large portion of the Kyrgyz population.

Even before the pandemic, the Kyrgyz Republic faced challenges in a number of areas, such as the importance of diversifying the economy and attracting foreign investment, addressing human rights and rule of law concerns, reducing corruption, and improving the delivery and quality of a wide range of government services, notably in the health and education sectors, in the availability of social safeguards and protections, and in addressing the rising threats to the environment in both rural and urban areas. The chapters of this report lay out in some detail the characteristics of these challenges and how they were impacted by COVID-19, affecting both the economy and social spheres, particularly for the poor, near-poor, and other vulnerable groups. A key message of the report is that the growing numbers of poor and vulnerable affected by the pandemic have the potential of becoming a “lost generation” who fall further behind, particularly children, youth, and women who have been left out of available economic opportunities and existing social services and safety-nets.

The report also takes note of continuing levels of social unrest that could jeopardize not only the political changes underway in the country but could also endanger efforts to tackle the economic and social challenges mentioned above. In this regard, social unrest – while still largely an urban issue – reflects the frustrations, perceptions, and polarization that is happening when people feel they are being marginalized by economic and social forces beyond their control.

In looking at how the UN family of agencies can best support the Kyrgyz Republic to address these challenges, the report identifies four areas of priority concern:

1

Exclusion and inequalities, defined to include multiple and intersecting discriminations, deprivations and injustices, are key development challenges facing the country in its journey to achieving its national development priorities and realization of the 2030 Agenda.

2

Reestablishing trust between government and society remains a critical lynchpin in achieving development aspirations. This will require concerted efforts among a wide range of stakeholders and constituencies that will be conducive only if there is an enabling democratic and civic space in place. Economic transformation cannot proceed without respect for human rights and the rule of law, and the resulting increase in social cohesion and reduction in potential political and social flashpoints.

3

There is a clear need for stronger integration of ongoing reforms, national development strategies, and sectoral programmes, calling for stronger national coordination capacities.

4

Ensuring policy coherence, fixing statistical gaps, and addressing administrative and civil society capacities will be vital enabling factors for further progress towards achievement of the nationally defined development goals.

In this regard, the report goes on to identify five strategic entry points, or accelerators, that will form the building blocks of support that the UN family will incorporate into the next Cooperation Framework. These accelerators encompass a functional approach, rather than a traditional sectorial approach, with the goal of simultaneously impacting multiple sectors in ways that can have medium- and longer-term benefits for sustainable and inclusive development. This functional entry-point approach may imply allocating increased investments in the chosen entry points, but such an approach has the highest likelihood of positive outcomes for the greatest number of people. This approach is further seen as way of easing bottlenecks and blockages in moving from policy articulation to actual implementation as well as helping to reach critical mass of supporting reforms in order to generate tipping points for success.

The five strategic entry points are:

DIGITALIZATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES FOR IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY

An important lesson of COVID-19 is that the Government should redouble its efforts to 'digitize' the economic foundation and social services in order to bring the country in line with the digital infrastructure found in many parts of the Global South, not just in developed countries. As the pandemic demonstrated, online access is critical for improving the quality and reach of government services and for allowing the business community to become more productive and efficient.

PROMOTING SOCIETAL INNOVATION

Observers of successful companies have noted that crises and rapid change give rise to remarkable innovations and insights for dynamic and forward-looking enterprises. Such alacrity should also be the case for the Kyrgyz Republic as it addresses ongoing COVID challenges and looks to the future on the other side of the pandemic. While digitalization and information technologies are important tools for innovation, societal innovation encompasses a broader spectrum of facilitating requirements. For such innovation to

occur will first require an honest and thorough examination of the foundational nature of improved governance institutions, services, laws, and regulations. Innovation is more likely to happen when the rule of law is protected and when the enabling environment presented by the Government is seen as responsive, accountable, and inclusive.

APPLYING GREEN SOLUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

The Kyrgyz Republic is well recognized for its rich natural resource endowments, including minerals, forests, arable land, and pastures, and has significant potential for the expansion of its agriculture sector, hydroelectricity production, and tourism industry. Yet by any measure, many of these natural resources are under threat from over exploitation and misuse. Equally important will be efforts to ramp up renewable energy solutions, more forcefully encourage natural resource management and biodiversity protection, address environmental pollution and waste management, and incentivize sustainability and recycling in business and government operations. Placing much greater emphasis on green solutions to economic, social and environmental challenges will entail deploying solutions that require a long-term perspective and downplay short-term political and economic costs.

CREATING A RESILIENT KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

A number of factors have demonstrated the importance of the Kyrgyz Republic becoming a more resilient and agile economy to address the kinds of external shocks that have confronted the country. The heavy dependence on remittances and gold are but two examples of the kinds of risks that place the country at potential jeopardy. And, of course, the pandemic has made more apparent the kinds of vulnerabilities facing Kyrgyz society. Creating a resilient national social and economic fabric calls for special attention to the kinds of adaptive institutions that can strengthen the private sector, spur international trade, and encourage fiscally sustainable government services.

YOUTH, WOMEN, AND HUMAN RIGHTS AT THE CENTER OF DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

With half of the population under 24, the Kyrgyz Republic is at a unique demographic juncture. With the right long-term investments, today's children, youth and women can take the country to the next stage of socio-economic development. The youth and women of the Kyrgyz Republic are both the promise and the peril of the country, and how they are assimilated into the economy and society can have enormous generational spillover effects, whether positive or negative. As a strategic entry point, focusing on children, youth and women in the context of human protections would be manifested across multiple sectors: jobs creation and skills training, gender equality in educational access and employment, improved and more accessible health services for girls and young women, expanded access to financial services, and a greater role in public consensus-building and decision-making processes.

These five entry points are seen as a way of leveraging efforts that transcend specific sectors and that can be applied both for addressing a pandemic of indefinite duration and jumpstarting long-term development efforts. It is believed that such an approach for policy design and implementation can meet the much-needed objective of bringing synergies and greater resource efficiencies to the development challenges confronting the Kyrgyz Republic in the foreseeable future.



Introduction

The 2021 Common Country Analysis (CCA) has been written to consolidate the views of the United Nations Country Team with the goal of offering the analytical framework by which the UN family of organizations can support the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic to achieve its development priorities, including attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since the earlier CCA was written in 2016 and then updated in 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the economy and society of the country. The failure of the Kyrgyz health system to be the first line of defense and adequately contain and manage the COVID19 had knock on effects in the economy, social fabric and political stability. Despite some signs of economic recovery at the end of 2020 and early 2021, the impacts have been significant and are ongoing, touching not only public health and social services, but also business and trade, reducing economic growth, putting strains on the education system, and increasing numbers of poor and marginalized people, not to mention the reallocation of government spending priorities in order to mitigate COVID-19's consequences.

Seen from this light, this CCA provides the evidence base and analytical foundations for the UN Country Team's programming to develop the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the period of 2023–2027. It constitutes the UN system's independent and data-driven analysis of the context for sustainable development in the Kyrgyz Republic.

This report is organized into 11 chapters and several annexes that examine different elements of the agreed framework by which the UN family will support the Kyrgyz Republic in the foreseeable future. Chapter 2 presents the overall development context in the Kyrgyz Republic as seen from multiple perspectives. Chapter 3 offers a brief overview the Government's national vision for sustainable development. Chapter 4 summarizes the country's progress towards the 2030 Agenda. Chapter 5 presents an overview of different social groups who are most at risk of being left behind.

Chapter 6 turns to an examination of the global, trans-boundary and regional issues that impact the Kyrgyz Republic's development trajectory. Chapter 7 briefly outlines the SDG financing landscape and the challenges facing the country in securing sufficient development capital and technical assistance. Chapter 8 explores the role of partnerships in support of the country's development priorities and the capacity challenges associated with those partnerships. Chapter 9 provides a multidimensional risk analysis of areas and challenges which could pose problems for the Government and for the UN family in achieving its development cooperation objectives.

Chapter 10 offers some reflections on the preconditions for more effectively addressing the development challenges confronting the country and provides some 'strategic entry points' for addressing those challenges. Finally, chapter 11 gives some summary thoughts on the importance and means for linking the strategic entry points found in chapter 10 with the issues discussed in earlier chapters.



The Kyrgyz Republic's development context

This chapter provides a general overview of the current state, progress made, and development challenges confronting the Kyrgyz Republic. The chapter provides a summary across a range of sectors and policy issues that form part of the policy dialogue between the UN family and counterparts in Kyrgyz government and society. This analysis is not meant to be an exhaustive examination of the issues but rather a short synopsis of what are ongoing policy and programmatic challenges and issues. The chapter looks at these issues from different perspectives: economic, political, social, environmental, and demographic reviews, as well as peace and conflict, and commitments to international norms and standards.

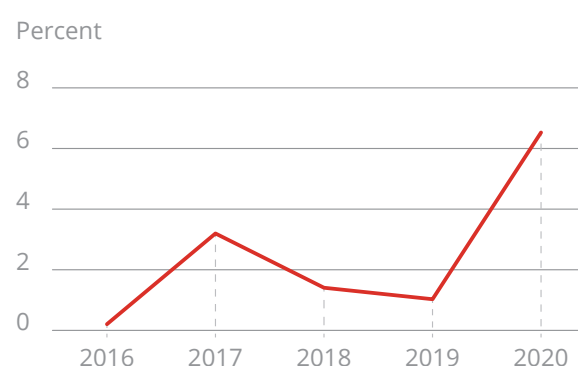
2.1 Economic context

OVERALL MACROECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

The Kyrgyz Republic, with its small and open economy, high public debt and significant dependence on the extractive and tourism industries and remittance financing, has been hit hard by COVID-19. Inflation reached an annual rate of 10.7 percent in May 2021,¹ exposing the population to heightened vulnerability. The Kyrgyz Republic experienced the worst currency depreciation in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), including a depreciation of 18.9 percent against the US dollar in 2020. These dynamics resulted in food price inflation increasing by 17.3 percent on average for main staples,² and up to 30 percent for some essential products, such as wheat and flour. This inflation restricts access to food for the poorest quintile of the population, who spend

an estimated 70 percent of their income on food, and it affects the affordability of a nutritious diet, as 44 percent of households reported reducing their food spending as a coping mechanism.³ This situation has also resulted in costly asset depletion, which renders households more fragile to future economic and natural shocks.

Figure 1. Inflation and consumer prices (annual% change), 2016–2021



Source: World Bank, *Inflation, consumer prices (annual %) – Kyrgyz Republic*

1 MoEF, Macro Indicators.

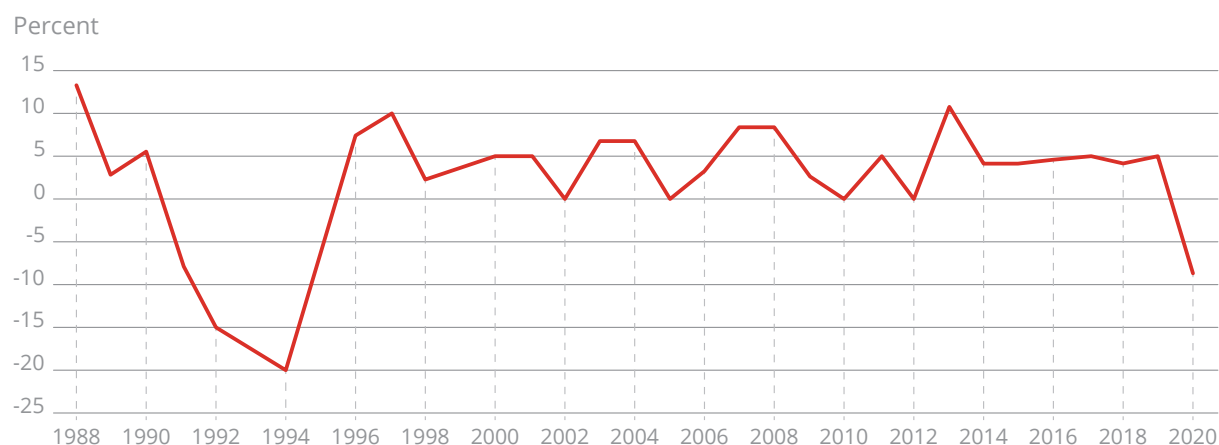
2 NSC, Consumer Price Index.

3 NSC (2020). On the results of the sample survey "Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on households".

Domestic lockdown measures and restrictions abroad resulted in a severe slump in demand and disruptions to supply chains, causing businesses and export potential to suffer considerably. These factors have given rise to an unemployment rate of up to 19–21 percent due to the estimated 350,000–500,000 people that are newly unemployed, mostly concentrated in peri-urban areas linked to the trade, tourism, and textile and apparel sectors.⁴ In 2020, the economy therefore contracted by 8.6 percent. The Kyrgyz Republic's public debt stood at

68.1 percent of GDP at the end of 2020 (42 percent to China), combined with a budget deficit of 4.2 percent of GDP in 2020 triggered by emergency spending related to the COVID-19 crisis.⁵ Falling domestic revenues in conjunction with obligations for servicing the country's growing debt have left a large share of the population with little state protection. Many households thus continue to rely on remittances from family members abroad, which has prevented an increase in extreme poverty but is contingent on economic conditions overseas which are thus vulnerable to external shocks.⁶

Figure 2. Real GDP growth rate (%), 1988–2020



Source: World Bank, GDP growth (annual %) - Kyrgyz Republic

Nevertheless, the IMF projects the economy to grow by 2.1 percent in 2021 and by 5.6 percent in 2022, based on assumptions about an acceleration in domestic economic activity including gold production, tourism and transportation, and the rapid rebound of remittance inflows after plummeting by 62 percent in April 2020 compared to the year before.⁷ These projections largely depend on measures including the roll-out of the vaccination programme, which has been slow thus far. As of 17 October 2021, only

13.8 percent of the population⁸ had been vaccinated with at least one dose due to the lack of supply chains, the late mobilization of resources and coordination issues, causing significant uncertainty in COVID-19 epidemiological trends. The dispute around the Kumtor gold mine, the cross-border conflict in Batken, and increasing climate hazards will likely deteriorate the prospect of a rapid recovery, demonstrated by the 0.7 percent contraction in GDP in the first eight months of 2021.

4 WFP (2021). Food Security Situation in the Kyrgyz Republic and UNDP-ADB (2020). COVID-19 in the Kyrgyz Republic: Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment and Policy Response.

5 World Bank Group in the Kyrgyz Republic, Economic Overview.

6 NSC (2020), Poverty rate of the population of the Kyrgyz Republic in 2020

7 IMF (2021). World Economic Outlook: Recovery During a Pandemic.

8 According to the MHSD children are currently not covered by the National Vaccination Campaign.

The Kyrgyz Republic's market has experienced profound structural changes due to COVID-19 that have tested traditional business models. Notably, the share of the private sector in relation to GDP reached an estimated 70–75 percent by 2019.⁹ The service sector's share of GDP has almost doubled since the mid-1990s, and around five times more people were employed in construction in 2020 than in 2000.¹⁰ However, the service and construction industries, accounting for 46.5 percent and 9.5 percent of GDP in 2019 respectively, were hit hardest by COVID-19, contracting by 10 percent and 15.9 percent in 2020, respectively.¹¹ Considering the labor-intensive nature of these sectors and their participation in the informal economy that was disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, large sections of the population face structural unemployment. The tourism sector contributed 5.1 percent of GDP in 2019 but owing to worldwide travel restrictions, the sector fell to 2.9 percent of GDP as the gross value-add of the tourism sector almost halved,¹² although revenues could have contracted by up to 90 percent considering that 89 percent of the 161,000 people working in the sector are informal workers.¹³ The informal economy in total accounted for up to 40 percent of GDP and 73.8 percent of the labor market in 2018, meaning that

many lack coverage by the labor code and social insurance,¹⁴ including contributions to the mandatory health insurance, which grants access to health service. Of those in formal employment, 60 percent work in the public sector, despite this sector only accounting for around 20 percent of overall employment.¹⁵

On a positive note, the digital sector has grown because of social distancing restrictions and the agricultural sector has seen slight growth, although lockdown measures, border closures and climate-related issues have still impacted many farmers. Agricultural goods are the third largest export in the Kyrgyz Republic after gold (37 percent) and mineral resources, with the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan being the country's main trading partners for exporting. However, due to border restrictions, foreign trade turnover decreased by 19 percent in 2020.¹⁶ Currently, the Kyrgyz Republic's business sector's capacity to absorb and adapt knowledge and technology from abroad is weak.¹⁷ However, technology-based start-ups have started to succeed in catering to foreign clients, attracted by falling communications costs and the low capital investment needed.

9 EBRD (2019). Kyrgyz Republic Diagnostic. Found at: <https://www.ebrd.com/publications/country-diagnostics>

10 World Bank Group (2020). Kyrgyz Republic - Country Economic Memorandum: Main Report

11 MoEF, Information on the preliminary results of the socio-economic development of the Kyrgyz Republic for January-March 2021.

12 NSC (2020). Key indicators of tourism development in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2020.

13 UNDP-ADB (2020). COVID-19 in the Kyrgyz Republic: Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment and Policy Response.

14 ILO (2020). Rapid assessment of the employment impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Kyrgyzstan

15 World Bank Group (2020). Op. cit.

16 MoEF, Information on the preliminary results of the socio-economic development of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2020 and targets for 2021.

17 United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (2019). Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Kyrgyzstan. New York and Geneva. <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=51968>

Table 1. Structure of GDP and real growth rates by economic sector¹⁸

	Share of GDP in 2019 (%)	Real growth rate in 2020 (%)	Share of GDP in 2020 (%)	Informal employment share (%)
GDP	100.0	-8.6	100.0	73.8
Industry	19.0	-7.5	21.2	78.5
Agriculture	11.7	1.1	13.5	95.9
Construction	9.5	-15.9	8.3	87.8
Services	46.5	-10.0	46.2	93.0

The health sector is essential to the recovery. The health sector is a fiscal multiplier and thus a driver of the recovery. It is a large employer in the most developed and in the rural, remote underdeveloped areas. It employs highly skilled professionals such as doctors but also low skilled ones such as cleaners. It is a large-scale purchaser of goods and services with the potential to source locally and help the economic recovery of areas of the country that are left behind. High quality health services strengthen trust in government institutions and foster social cohesion.

WOMEN, YOUTH AND MIGRANTS

The Kyrgyz Republic ranks in Group 2 on the Gender Development Index and 82nd out of 162 countries on the Gender Inequality Index. According to the 2021 World Bank report on Women, Business and the Law, the Kyrgyz Republic scored 76.9 out of 100 regarding how women's employment and entrepreneurship are affected by legal discrimination, with particularly poor results on "getting salaries paid" (25 out of 100) and "getting a pension" (50 out of 100).¹⁹ Due to existing stereotypes on women's role in society, women also spend 3.6 times more time than men on unpaid

domestic work and two times more on childcare. With the erosion of subsidized childcare facilities and distance learning induced by the COVID-19 pandemic, this burden has been further exacerbated.²⁰ This especially impacts young women as they often leave jobs due to childbirth and just 23 percent of children have access to preschool education. The highest gender gap in employment is found among men and women aged 25–29, with 89 percent of males employed versus 45 percent of female employed. These responsibilities reduce their time to invest in professional self-development needed for participating in the formal economy. In 2020, just 38.9 percent of the working population were women,²¹ and women's labor participation rates show a downward trajectory, reaching 47.3 percent in 2019.

Unemployment also disproportionately impacts other vulnerable groups. The youth unemployment rate was 14.8 percent in 2019, around triple the general unemployment rate prior to the pandemic, as approximately 350,000 youth enter the labor market every year, far exceeding labor demand.²² 20.5 percent of the total youth population in 2018 were in the "not in employment, education, and training" (NEET) category, i.e., those who are either

18 MoEF, Op. cit., ILO (2020). Rapid assessment of the employment impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Kyrgyzstan, and Tilekeyev, Kanat "Understanding Informal Economy in Kyrgyzstan" (2021).

19 World Bank (2021). Women, Business and the Law.

20 UN Women (2021). COVID-19 Impacts on Livelihoods of Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic.

21 NSC (2020). Number of working populations by sex and age.

22 World Bank. Unemployment, youth total (% of total labor force ages 15-24) (modeled ILO estimate) - Kyrgyz Republic.

unemployed or economically inactive.²³ In addition, a survey on the socio-economic effects of COVID-19 on returned migrant workers revealed that only three in ten people reported having employment, and that it is more challenging for female returnees to find employment than male returnees.²⁴

PRODUCTIVITY

Economic productivity has shown sluggish 0.5 percent growth on average since 2000, posing a structural obstacle for sustainable and inclusive growth and the formalization of MSMEs.²⁵ The agricultural sector is the country's largest employer, accounting for around 20 percent of the workforce, but its share of GDP has shrunk by over three times since the mid-1990s, contributing to only 13.5 percent of GDP in 2020.²⁶ This is due to the fact that 75.5 percent of entities operating in agriculture are smallholder farmers accounting for 61.2 percent of overall output, with 95.9 percent of employment in the sector being informal.²⁷ Other key drivers are an absence of cooperation and coordination, weak knowledge of climate-smart and efficient agricultural production, processing, marketing and management for ensuring food safety and security, ineffective water resource use causing soil infertility and erosion, a lack of targeted subsidies, and deficiencies in rural infrastructure, compounded by a lack of certification and compliance with standards. The macroeconomic conditions limit the economy's ability to attract long-term and reasonable finance, invest in intensive capital inputs and provide adequate quality and consistency of volumes for export

to encourage businesses to formalize and contribute to tax collection. On the other hand, wholesale trade and retail, which employ around 16 percent of the workforce, have obtained more significant productivity increases due to arbitrating transit routes between the EAEU and non-member countries.²⁸

INVESTMENT AND BUSINESS CLIMATE

Despite competitive advantages in the costs of labor and utilities, taxation, and membership in the EAEU and WTO, the Kyrgyz Republic's political turbulence and COVID-19 situation further exacerbated the trend of significant capital flight, slow business growth, and high informality. The business environment has been deteriorating due to poor institutional frameworks for resolving insolvency and enforcing contracts, complex tax compliance requirements, limited minority investor protection, reports of corruption, degraded infrastructure and low productivity combined with rapid wage growth, despite some progress in improving access to finance. The designation of free economic zones to attract investment in certain areas has obtained mixed results and reactions from the public. In 2020, FDI collapsed by 50 percent compared to 2019 because of high economic and political uncertainty.²⁹ In 2020 alone, over USD800 million left the country.³⁰ The Government's decision on the Kumtor gold mine, which contributed 11.4 percent of GDP in 2020 and remains one of the largest taxpayers, casts a shadow on the future investment climate.³¹ The remittances from migrant workers and the diaspora have the potential to be

23 World Bank. Share of youth not in education, employment or training, total (% of youth population) - Kyrgyz Republic.

24 IOM (2021). Regional Overview: Survey on the Socioeconomic Effects of COVID-19 on Returnees and Stranded Migrants in Central Asia and the Russian Federation.

25 World Bank Group (2020). Op. cit.

26 NSC. Structure of GDP by types of economic activity.

27 NSC. Agriculture of the Kyrgyz Republic.

28 World Bank (2020). Op. cit.

29 NSC, Foreign direct investment.

30 NSC, Outflow of foreign direct investment.

31 MoEF (2020). Information on the preliminary results of the socio-economic development of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2020 and targets for 2021.

directed into productive investments, but most of these are currently channeled into consumption.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation for development and diffusion of technologies is vital in diversifying production and accelerating productivity growth. In 2015, the Kyrgyz Republic joined the EAEU to gain from the unrestricted movement of goods, services, capital, and labor, which also boosted financing through the Kyrgyz-Russian Development Fund (USD300 million). However, increased FDI and export growth have not materialized due to the exposure to more competitive EAEU economies, a lack of quality standards and quality assurance systems, and gaps in legislation and infrastructure. Inefficient customs further disincentivize exporting, and the removal of barriers to movement has caused a loss of human capital due to higher labor emigration, especially to the Russian Federation. The country is also a beneficiary of the EU's new Generalized Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+) regulation, which incentivizes sustainable development, human rights compliance, environmental protection and good governance by removing import duties on Kyrgyz exports to the EU. The Government deems membership in the EAEU and GSP+ as compatible policy options for bringing its institutional and regulatory framework up to international standards. Furthermore, the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative also aims to boost regional trade through large-scale investment in construction, trade, transportation, and energy, creating optimism for growth prospects. However, gains from this opportunity have thus far not materialized amid concerns about Chinese influence, environmental damage, job displacement, and worsening inequality.

2.2 Political context, governance, and institutions

KEY POLITICAL EVENTS

The Kyrgyz Republic has undergone a difficult transition process characterized by complex social, economic, and political changes since gaining independence in 1991. Corruption and nepotism were key factors leading to public discontent resulting in upheavals and changes of government in 2005, 2010, and again in 2020. In 2020, the fragile democratic governance structure and rule of law were seriously undermined by crisis events that were the result of the wide public distrust in the Office of the President, the Government and the Parliament. The events were compounded by the pandemic-related health emergency and socio-economic crisis and, secondly, by a political crisis that unfolded following the 4 October 2020 parliamentary elections and ensuing large-scale protests claiming that the elections were fraudulent.

As a result, Mr. Sadyr Japarov was elected President in January 2021 with 79 percent of the vote.³² A constitutional referendum was held following the presidential election, in which the new constitution provides for increased presidential powers over the Executive, Judiciary and Parliament. The new constitution also reduces the number of MPs from 120 to 90 and the decision-making powers of the parliament. The new constitution also envisions the creation of the People's Kurultai, an advisory council with as yet unclear functions.³³

³² Central Commission on Elections and Referenda of the Kyrgyz Republic. See: <https://shailoo.gov.kg/ru/news/4353/>

³³ Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic. Available at: <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/112215>

POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEM AND THE PARLIAMENT

The political party system in the Kyrgyz Republic remains diverse and competitive but also marked by crisis events which is the result of the highly fragmented and volatile political perspectives. There are over 200 registered parties, each claiming to stand for the general well-being and development of the country, and for championing the whole of society's aspirations.³⁴ A few parties have narrower political agendas and electoral bases, such as an environmental party and the agrarian party. Under the parliamentary democracy framework, the power of Parliament (Jogorku Kenesh) was significant and all parliamentary elections have been fiercely contested. However, elected by party lists in a proportional system, the parliament has been dogged by the instability of ruling coalitions, turnover of leadership within party factions, and the tendency of both factions and individual members of parliament to switch positions on issues and engage in political bargains with no overarching principles. Challenges in policymaking and oversight further affected by weak and ineffective coordination between the Jogorku Kenesh and the Government resulted in low public trust in the parliament.

The process of revision of the electoral system has been ongoing in the country since April 2021. As a result, the constitutional law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Amendments to the Constitutional Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Elections of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic and Deputies of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic" was adopted by the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic in July 2021 and has now been signed into law by President.

The law proposes to elect deputies to the Parliament according to a new, mixed (parallel) electoral system.³⁵ A total of 36 deputies are to be elected using a majority-based system in single-mandate constituencies. Another 54 deputies are to be elected according to the preferential system, which preserves the previous gains on ensuring quotas within the party lists, stipulating that every third person on the lists of candidates should be of a different gender. As per the newly adopted legislation, no more than 70 percent of candidates are to be of the same sex.³⁶ Thus in practice, the new mixed electoral system might lower the total proportion of seats in Parliament available to women given that there is no gender quota for majoritarian seats. The current Jogorku Kenesh comprises only 16.5 percent women parliamentarians (19 out of 115 deputies).³⁷

GOVERNMENT AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The governance institutions have well-developed formal mechanisms of operation, but significant gaps remain in organizational, financial and technical capacities. Inclusive and accountable policy-making capabilities are insufficient. A disconnect exists between planning for sectorial reforms and budgeting, resulting in insufficient resources for priority programmes. Inter-ministerial, horizontal coordination and cooperation are, in many cases, rather weak and inefficient, with many core functions overlapping across government institutions and in need of improving human resources capacities due to frequent government reshuffling and staff turnover. Since his appointment, President Japarov has started the reorganization of governance structures, the cabinet, and ministerial appointments.

34 List of political parties, Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic, http://old.minjust.gov.kg/?page_id=6551

35 Draft Constitutional Law on revisions of the Constitutional Law on elections of the President and deputies of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic. See: <http://kenesh.kg/ru/article/show/6737/na-obshtestvennoe-obsuzhdenie-s-6-maya-2020-goda-vynositsya-proekt-konstitutsionnogo-zakona-kirgizskoy-respubliki-o-vnesenii-izmeneniy-v-konstitutsionnyy-zakon-kirgizskoy-respubliki-o-viborah-prezidenta-kirgizskoy-respubliki-i-deputatov-zhogorku-kenesha-kirgizskoy-respubliki>

36 <https://shailoo.gov.kg/media/aidana/2021/09/03/tsvtdx.pdf>

37 <http://www.kenesh.kg/ru/deputy/list/35>

The governance challenges are even more evident at lower (regional and district) levels of government and self-government. An underlying cause is that political, administrative and financial decentralization has been evolving unevenly since independence. For example, political decentralization has given a certain level of autonomy and power, but the administrative, financial and economic decentralization functions were inadequate to fulfil the given mandates effectively.

The role of civil society, workers and employers' organizations in decision making processes is decreasing. National Tripartite Commission on Labour, Social and Economic Issues has not convened any single meeting since the beginning of 2020. The effectiveness of the governance could be strengthened if social dialogue and partnership between the government, workers and employers' organizations, and representatives of civil society is strengthened as stipulated in the Law № 154 on Social Partnership.

The expansion of women's political participation in decision-making processes in state and municipal services is seen as one of the main indicators of the observance of equality of human rights and opportunities. In the Kyrgyz Republic, the gender parity of women's representation has not been achieved at the level of state and municipal authorities and has been declining over the past years. In 2019 in comparison to 2010, the representation of women decreased in public service from 39.9 percent to 39.2 percent, and at the municipal service level from 35.8 percent to 34.1 percent. In 2020, the highest representation of women among civil servants was noted in Chui (48.5 percent) and Issyk-Kul (46.5 percent).³⁸

The health sector has suffered from chronic underinvestment. Health share

of government spending has decreased from its highest 14% in 2006 to 6% in 2017 and somewhat increased to 8% in 2018. Low public spending and chronic gap in financing has led to the increase of out-of-pocket spending and informal payments. Dwindling resources are absorbed by excessive and inefficient hospital infrastructure which siphons limited resources away from Primary Healthcare. The consequences were laid bare during the pandemic when primary healthcare was unable to perform a gatekeeper and triage role which reinforced the lack of trust of the population leading them to bypass the system altogether. This led to the collapse of the hospital system in July 2020.

LEGAL SYSTEM AND RULE OF LAW

In parallel to the constitution-making process, the Government has also started a comprehensive legal revision process, the so-called 'legal inventory' which aims to revise 356 laws within a short period of time, to promote alignment with the Constitution, and to assess compliance with a number of established criteria, including effective implementation of the law, cost-effectiveness and impact on the business environment.³⁹ The inventory also plans to abolish laws if they meet disqualifying criteria such as low cost-effectiveness and the impact on businesses and legal consistency. Overall, the international community and civil society have expressed concerns about the hasty nature of the process due to the unrealistic time frames, limited space for effective and inclusive consultations with the public, and risks that legislative initiatives stemming from this process may result in the elaboration or amendment of laws to the detriment of human rights protection. The Government is also revising many other pieces of legislation, including the tax code and fiscal legislation, as well as criminal justice codes.

³⁸ UN Women (2021). Gender Equality in Kyrgyzstan

³⁹ Presidential Decree of the Kyrgyz Republic of February 8, 2021 unitary enterprise No. 26 About carrying out inventory count of the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic. Available at: <https://cis-legislation.com/document.fwx?rgn=130138>

GENDER EQUALITY

Over the past decade, the Kyrgyz Republic has made important progress with legislation on stopping gender-based violence, abduction of women for forced marriage, and other important gender issues; however, many challenges remain. Based on World Economic Forum data which benchmark progress towards gender parity and compare countries' gender gaps across four dimensions (economic opportunities, education, health and political leadership,) the Kyrgyz Republic ranked 108⁴⁰ in 2020 having dropped from 93rd ranking in 2019. With a current value of 0.369, the Kyrgyz Republic also ranked 82 out of 162 countries in 2020 in the Gender Inequality Index⁴¹ which measures gender inequalities in three important aspects of human development. Persistent and deep-rooted patriarchal attitudes, stereotypes and practices around the roles and responsibilities of both men and women continue to impede enforcement of existing laws and prevent women and girls from fully realizing their rights in political and economic domains, limiting effective access to justice and protection against gender-based violence.

In September 2020, during the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the Kyrgyz Republic supported recommendations "to take all necessary action, including through awareness-raising campaigns and training, to effectively implement legislation on violence against women and girls and ensure that all reports of violence are thoroughly investigated and that perpetrators are brought to justice" and "to create mandatory training programmes for judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officials on the application of criminal law dealing with violence against women".

According to the previous CEDAW recommendations, the following key challenges remain: ending discrimination against women on all grounds, creating an educational and social environment that is stereotype-and-violence-free, eliminating root causes of gender and pay inequality and pay gap, modifying social and cultural patterns, ensuring high-quality health-care services for women and girls including with respect to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, increasing women's participation in peace building, and strengthening political representation of women in decision-making bodies. CEDAW also highlights that national educational programmes have to address the criminal nature of abduction of women for forced marriage and child marriage as well as the negative repercussions of these practices.ⁱ

In the past five years, public views on social norms and relationships have also continued to polarize, with very negative repercussions on the status of women and girls in the country. The tendency to perceive gender equality and the empowerment of women as an "alien" and pro-western concept is growing. The supporters of this idea rely on a false premise about the "traditionally" subordinate role of women in society, referring to cultural traditions and norms that historically define and confine women's roles exclusively to the family and household. The pressure to marry and immediately bear children remains very strong, with the majority of married women requiring permission to use contraception from family members. This public attitude has more dangerous implications, as it is expected to lead to the continuation of harmful and discriminatory practices, such as child and forced marriage, kidnapping, and abduction for the purpose of forced marriage and polygamy.

40 http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

41 <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>

CIVIC SPACE

Kyrgyz Republic has strong and vibrant civil society, with nearly 22,000 CSOs operating openly,⁴² receiving funds from national and international resources. CSOs, with their close links to communities, are uniquely placed to tackle social, political and economic vulnerabilities and to create an environment in which people are empowered to shape their own communities.

Yet, challenges and risks to civil space remain. The voices of certain groups that demand curbs on the operations of CSOs and NGOs have become louder. Various legal initiatives – like the amendments to the Law on Non-Commercial Organizations adopted by the Parliament on 17 June 2021 – envisioned additional and discriminatory reporting requirements for NGOs.⁴³ There are major concerns that the law may create additional confusing and bureaucratic obstacles for NGOs to operate in the country. Civil society and the international community have also raised

concerns about other legal initiatives and recently adopted legislation impacting the media, access to information, freedom of expression, internet regulations and civil society organizations. These concerns include the Law on Protection against False (Unreliable) Informationⁱⁱ, which is seen as paving the way to restrict the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms in contradiction to the existing international human rights commitments of the Government.

2.3 Social context

The social contextⁱⁱⁱ in the Kyrgyz Republic can be analyzed from a number of different perspectives. Broadly speaking, the country is faced with high concentrations of poverty and social assistance systems that are not fully meeting the needs of the country's population. While Chapter 5 on leaving no one behind will go into more detail on different vulnerable groups of concern, the focus in this section turns to seven defining issues which put the lives of so many people at risk^{iv}.

Box 1. Social indicators at a glance

Human Development Index ranking (2020)	120 th of 189
Human Development Index value (2020)	0.697
Life expectancy (female)	76.0
Life expectancy (male)	67.9
Expected years of schooling	13.0
National poverty rate (2020)	25.3%
Working poor at PPP\$ 3.20/day - percent of working population	13.7%
National multidimensional poverty rate (2020)	42.2%
Youth age 15-29 not in education, employment or training (NEET)	20.5%
Gross National Income per capita (2017 constant PPP\$)	USD 4,864
Gini coefficient index (2018)	34.1%
Human Capital Index	0.6

Sources: UNDP, UNICEF, World Bank, NSC

42 <http://www.stat.kg/ru/news/v-respublike-uvlichilos-chislo-obshestvennyh-organizacij/>

43 See: <http://kenesh.kg/ru/article/show/8189/2021-zhildin-17-iyunundagi-4659-vi-kirgiz-respublikasinin-ayrim-miyzam-aktilarina-kom-mertsyalik-emes-uyumdar-zhonundo-yuridikalik-zhaktardi-filialdardi-okulchuluktordu-mamleketik-kattoo-zhonundo-kirgiz-respublikasinin-miyzamin-kabil-aluu-zhonundo>

THE POOR, NEAR POOR, AND FOOD INSECURITY

The country has a high poverty rate and high concentration of the population just above the poverty line.⁴⁴ The proportion of the population living below the national poverty line stood at 25.3 percent in early 2020,⁴⁵ which has no doubt worsened because of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.⁴⁶ Poverty disproportionately affects children. The poverty rate among children aged 0–17 is 31.8 percent.⁴⁷ Households living below the poverty line spend on average 70 percent of their income—80 cents, if they earn the equivalent of USD1.20/day – to cover their basic food needs. A high share of income spent on food leaves households with little room for other expenses, such as education and health services, hindering their ability to transition out of poverty. In 2019, it was estimated that 46 percent of the population consumed less than 2,100 kcal per day (NSC), implying that the poor and those concentrated just above the poverty line do not meet their daily adequate energy consumption requirements.⁴⁸ A considerable share of the population falls into the ‘vulnerable’ category as, in 2020, the minimum subsistence level was almost twice as high as the threshold of the national poverty line, reaching USD 2.3 a day (KGS 5,359 per capita per month) of which USD 1.5 a day (KGS 3,483 per capita per month) goes to cover only food products. The amount of minimum subsistence level has grown by 11.5 percent compared to last year, in line with the rise in inflation. This confirms that high food prices continue to be amongst the greatest threats to the food security of the most vulnerable, which combined with the depreciation of the national currency (by 21 percent), leads to a reduction in

purchasing power, hindering access to nutritious food and improved livelihoods.

The geographic composition of poverty has also been changing in recent years. While higher poverty rates are largely found in rural areas, there have been growing numbers of urban poor, due to the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in lost jobs in cities and having no agricultural assets to rely on – leading to a “clusterisation” of poor populations. Migrants are often overrepresented in the informal sector or have unstable employment, leaving them without social protections, including health, of particular importance during the pandemic, or access to basic social services. Migrant workers, particularly low-skilled, women and older workers, can face more acute inequality. Post-COVID-19 trends reveal that returned migrants tend to go to urban areas where there are more opportunities for jobs, networks and services, increasing the rural-urban migration.

SOCIAL BENEFITS

System wide, social benefits programmes are not enough even for those who receive them. This is due to the great disparity between the national poverty line and the minimum subsistence level (MSL), consisting of both food and non-food items. While the average size of pensions is 124 percent of the MSL, the number of pensioners who receive pensions below the MSL is 36 percent.⁴⁹ In fact, those receiving social benefits may receive only 15–30 percent of the MSL. Moreover, the national social protection system does not cover all categories of vulnerable. Among the urban poor and vulnerable (bottom 40 percent) only 2.3 percent receive the monthly child benefit for low-income

44 WFP (2021), Poverty analysis based on the Kyrgyz Integrated Household Survey (KIHS 2019), Bishkek

45 NSC (2021), Data on Standards of Living <http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/uroven-zhizni-naseleniya/>

46 <https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/ru/53961-nacionalnyy-dobrovolnyy-obzor-dostizheniya-celey-ustoychivogo-razvitiya-v-kyrgyzskoy>

47 See: <http://www.stat.kg/ru/news/v-2020-godu-kazhdyy-chetvertiy-zhitel-kyrgyzstana-prozhival-v-usloviyah-bednosti/>

48 WFP (2021). Food Security Situation in the Kyrgyz Republic

49 Social fund of the Kyrgyz Republic (2021). data

families (ui-buloogo komok).⁵⁰ More than half of all poor and vulnerable urban households do not receive any type of social transfers.⁵¹ This group is not currently visible to the government targeting system. Despite growing unemployment and poverty, there are very limited active labour market programmes in the country, representing only 0.9 percent of total government spending, with a caseload of approximately 40,000 people. Provision of productive employment opportunities is important to decrease household dependency on remittances and to take into account the 14 percent of poor and vulnerable households that have at least one family member with disabilities.⁵² The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the lack of social protection mechanisms, such as paid sick leave in case of illness, and unemployment pushed many to work despite COVID-19 positive status, which may have contributed to the spread of the disease.

The social benefits provided by the health system do not provide adequate financial protection to individuals and families. Health coverage is regulated by the state guaranteed benefit package (SGBP) and the additional drug package (ADP). Expanded services are covered by contributions to a mandatory health insurance fund through mandatory health insurance contributions (around 66% of the population in 2018). People who pay the contribution are entitled to 61 outpatient medicines at reduced prices under the ADP and to reduced SGBP co-payments for inpatient care. Thirty-four per cent of the population, comprising relatively vulnerable groups of people, have access only to the SGBP and are not able to benefit from lower co-payments

for hospital care or from access to the subsidized outpatient medicines covered by the ADP that come with mandatory insurance coverage. Despite the fact the Government provided free services for the COVID-19 patients, medicines were not introduced to ADP and the cost was not shared.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Early childhood, which spans the period up to eight years of age, is critical for cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. Optimal early childhood development requires a stimulating and nurturing environment, access to books and learning materials, interactions with responsive and attentive caregivers, adequate nutrients, access to good quality early childhood education, and safety and protection. All these aspects of the environment contribute to developmental outcomes for children^v.

There are also significant differences in education coverage depending on the level of household income. Coverage of households in the wealthiest quintile is 50 percent as compared to 11.7 percent in the poorest quintile. The coverage of children from better-off families is four times higher than that of children from low-income families. There is still a significant variation in the pre-school education coverage between urban and rural areas: in 2018, pre-school education covered 17.5 percent of children in rural areas, as compared to 34.4 percent of children in urban areas.

Children are further confronted by a broad range of risk factors related to ongoing inequalities and thus may fail to reach their developmental potential.

50 Ui-buloogo komok chronically suffers from very limited coverage, low transfer value and targeting errors emerging both in the design and implementation stages. The UBK utilizes a hybrid targeting method, consisting of a categorical element (the presence of a child under the age of 16), a filter and a means-test. Such design comes with high administrative costs due to the capacity required to carry out individual assessments. Families also bear costs during the application process (e.g. collecting required documentation for verification), which in turn contribute to exclusion errors.

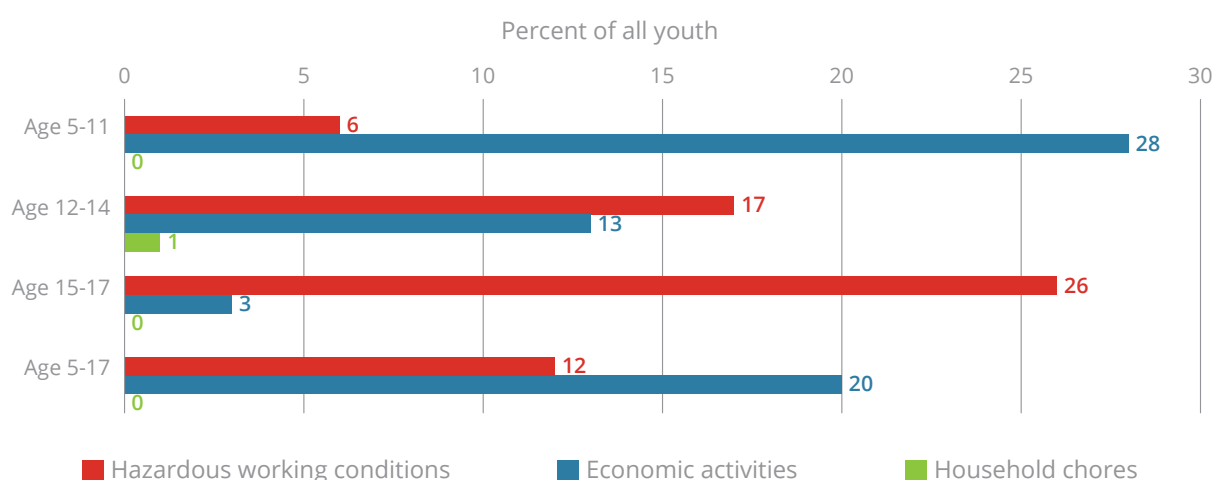
51 WFP (2021). Poverty analysis based on the Kyrgyz Integrated Household Survey (KIHS 2019), Bishkek

52 Ibid.

These factors include poverty, poor health, violence,⁵³ abuse and exploitation (in particular, affecting children left behind by migrant parents⁵⁴), and inadequate learning opportunities. In 2020, the World Bank estimated that 40 percent of the productivity of the next generation of workers is already lost relative to the benchmark of complete education and full health.⁵⁵ Investing in the early years is one of the most critical and cost-effective ways countries can reduce gaps that often place children with low social and economic status at a disadvantage. Poor nutrition, combined with lack of quality education and vocational training, deprives many children of opportunities to attain sustainable livelihoods, contributing to inequality and increasing the risk of social and political instability, as well as religious

extremism. According to the 2018 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 26.7 percent of children are engaged in child labour. The prevalence of child labour is higher among boys as compared to girls (33.6 percent vs 19.0 percent). In 2019, the Kyrgyz Republic made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government passed a policy package that established a National Referral Mechanism for victims of human trafficking and drafted a new National Action Plan for 2020–2024 on the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor. However, despite new initiatives to address child labor, the Kyrgyz Republic has received an assessment of minimal advancement because it delayed passage of laws eliminating the worst forms of child labor.⁵⁶

Figure 3. Snapshot of child labour conditions



Source: UNICEF, MICS, 2018

53 <https://www.facebook.com/LigaZasitnikovPravRebenka/posts/4783720478309531>: On 27 August, NGOs reported that according to the Prosecutor General's Office, the number of cases of violence and ill-treatment of children and suicides in Kyrgyzstan have increased in the past two years. The amount of suicides doubled from 2019 to 2020, 48 to 98. In the entire year of 2019, 1756 crimes were registered against children. In the first quarter of 2021, 1463 crimes were registered.

54 <https://www.gov.kg/ru/post/s/20362-v-kabmine-obsudili-algoritm-podderzhki-trudovoykh-migrantov-okazavshikhsya-v-trudnoy-zhiznennoy-situatsii>: On 26 August, the Government shared official statistics indicating that 84 thousand children live separately from their parents. While parents migrate for work, children are left behind with relatives. Such children often become victims of violence.

55 World Bank (2020). Human Capital Index (HCI)

56 ILO (2019). See <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/kyrgyz-republic>

CHILD MORTALITY AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Child mortality and reproductive health and rights are other indicators of the social context within the Kyrgyz Republic. In the first instance, total health expenditures of the state budget in relative and absolute terms are very low at 10 percent of government expenditures.⁵⁷ This is reflected in the relatively high maternal mortality rate compared to other countries^{vi}. The mortality rate among children under 5 years – while declining – is 20 children per 1000 live births. Among children who die before 5 years of age, 85 percent die before the age of one year.⁵⁸ The child mortality rate is higher for boys than for girls under the age of five (22 vs 16 deaths per 1,000 births).⁵⁹ With respect to reproductive health and reproductive rights, each year about 200,000 pregnant women in the Kyrgyz Republic are seen in health care facilities. Of those under medical supervision, annually more than 140,000 pregnancies end in term births; about 5,000 pregnancies end in premature births and 7,000 to 9,000 in induced abortions.⁶⁰ The country has made some progress in reducing maternal mortality in recent years, but the maternal mortality ratio is still high compared to ratios in the European region and is the highest among Central Asian countries.⁶¹ The maternal mortality ratio increased from 24.8 in 2019 to 44.1 per 100,000 live births in 2020, while antenatal care and skilled attendance at birth are almost universal, these rates reveal gaps in the quality of such services, as well as in post-partum care. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted on increase of maternal mortality rates more

than one-third of maternal deaths – 39.7 percent were attributed to COVID-19 and/or community-acquired pneumonia.⁶² Despite attempts to increase the use of modern contraception, contraceptive prevalence rate has decreased from 30 percent in 2012 to 20.1 percent in 2020. Total Fertility Rate remains high at 3.9 children per woman⁶³ with birth spacing having been reduced to less than two years for about 30 percent of women.

NUTRITION

The Kyrgyz Republic is facing a triple burden of malnutrition. Although the country has made significant progress in reducing stunting since 1990, the levels of both stunting and anemia among children and women of reproductive age remain high.⁶⁴ While there are multiple underlying determinants of malnutrition, poor diets are a common denominator for undernutrition, malnutrition, and obesity. The high consumption of starchy, rather than nutritious, foods and the rise in the consumption of processed foods – that are energy-dense and rich in fats, sugar and salt – are among the factors affecting the nutritional status of the population. In many cases, this has led to increased rates of malnutrition and diet-related non-communicable diseases. Despite significant improvements in the overall nutritional status of children, 12 percent of children under 5 suffer from stunting, and 38.3 percent of children in the same age group are estimated to be affected by anemia.⁶⁵ The highest rates of stunting are among rural children (13.1 percent) and children in the poorest households (14 percent). The proportion of children

57 See: <http://stat.kg/ru/statistics/finansy/> and NSC Brief Statistical Yearbook 2020, p. 45

58 UNICEF (2018). Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS). Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/6066/file/MICS%20Statistical%20Snapshots.pdf>

59 Ibid.

60 Health information Center (2020).

61 NSC (2021), Data on maternal mortality. Available at: <http://www.stat.kg/en/opendata/category/142/>

62 <http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/zdravooohranenie/>

63 <http://www.track20.org/download/pdf/2019%20FP2020%20CI%20Handouts/english/Kyrgyz%20Republic%202019%20CI%20Handout.pdf>

64 See <https://www.spring-nutrition.org/publications/reports/endline-nutrition-survey-kyrgyz-republic>

65 MICS (2018)

suffering from stunting is higher for boys than for girls (12.5 percent vs 10.9 percent).⁶⁶ A high prevalence of anemia is also estimated among women of reproductive age (36.2 percent, 2016) and pregnant women (39.8 percent, 2018).⁶⁷ An increase in the prevalence of being overweight has been observed nationally for both women (from 38.8 percent in 2000 to 48.8 percent in 2016) and men (from 37.5 percent in 2000 to 47.4 percent in 2016), with an estimated percent of obesity reaching 18.6 percent for female and 14 percent for male in 2016. The increasing threat of overweight and obesity has also been observed among children and adolescents aged 5–19 years with a prevalence of overweight estimated at 16 percent for both.

HEALTH CHALLENGES

Over the past three decades, the Kyrgyz Republic has made importance strides in improving health care services throughout the country, as captured by available data on improvements in health outcomes. For example, higher life expectancy for both men and women is just one indicator of this positive trend. At the same time, the health sector faces significant challenges that were exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis, most notably in health care financing. Measures to combat the pandemic have been deployed against a backdrop of pre-existing funding deficits and inefficiencies. Public spending on health per capita in real terms has remained at 2009 levels. The health share of government spending has decreased from its highest 14 percent in 2006 to 6 percent in 2017 to 8 percent in 2018. Low public spending has led to increased out-of-pocket spending and informal payments. Between 2009 and 2014, out-of-pocket spending grew substantially from 39 percent to 52

percent, with the most vulnerable carrying the largest burden.⁶⁸ Health coverage is regulated by the State Guaranteed Benefit Package (SGBP) and the Additional Drug Package (ADP). Under the SGBP, all citizens are entitled to: free emergency care; a free basic package of primary care services (which includes a limited selection of medicines); free outpatient specialist care with referral; and inpatient care with referral and co-payments. Yet costing and financing gaps in the SGBP and ADP leave patients with either unmet health needs or out-of-pocket payments (OOP) for health services. OOP payments grew substantially between 2000 and 2014. They currently account for more than 50 percent of total spending on health.⁶⁹ The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the consequences of chronic underinvestment in the health workforce. Low salaries of the health workforce result in the lack of prestige of the profession and significant emigration abroad of physicians trained in Kyrgyzstan, effectively subsidizing better funded health systems in wealthier countries. Planning of healthcare workforce needs is based on outdated input models which means that the country lacks an accurate picture of what demand for healthcare workforce will look like in 10 years. This shortage too has an inequitable effect on access to healthcare as remote and rural areas have fewer family doctors.

EDUCATION

The education sector has been going through a number of reforms with varying success in implementation. One of the positive trends is increasing participation of children in pre-primary education in the past decade, reaching approximately 90 percent in 2018.⁷⁰ At the same time, gross enrollment ratio at pre-primary education

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Estimates from <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/asia/central-asia/kyrgyzstan>

⁶⁸

⁶⁹ For an overview prepared by WHO of health care financing, see: <https://www.euro.who.int/en/countries/kyrgyzstan/publications/health-financing-in-kyrgyzstan-obstacles-and-opportunities-in-the-response-to-covid-19-2021>

⁷⁰ UIS

remains low (40 percent, 2018).⁷¹ The quality of education, however, remains to be one of the key problems. Almost 60 percent of children in grade 4 demonstrate “below basic” level in academic achievements.⁷² Significantly, children with disabilities lag behind their peers in fundamental learning and lack access to education in mainstream schools; 40 to 60 percent of children aged up to the age of 14 have basic functional difficulties in learning and are unable to achieve fundamental skills in reading.⁷³ The COVID-19 pandemic worsened both quality and access to education due to the existing digital divide and skills gap among students and teachers.⁷⁴ Teacher ICT skills remain a challenge when it comes to development and delivery of education at the TVET level, although lesser in professional education programmes. For the latter, issues around quality assurance and international recognition are among top priorities as the country strives to make progress in terms of international rankings.

having fallen from 99th place in 2018. The current practice of national environmental governance is the result of multiple unconnected environmental programmes, often duplicating or contradicting each other, mostly to fulfill the agendas of donor organizations and not supported by the national budget due to environment’s relatively low priority. Environmental policy is dominated by administrative measures and enforcement mechanisms causing disincentives (environmental taxes, pollution charges, administrative fines) over incentives giving positive motivation (grants for green solutions, preferential lending for environmental initiatives). Decision-making on environmental issues is generally not based on scientifically sound principles and without quality and deep expertise. The available environmental data are often incomplete, inaccurate or outdated, which is partially due to the lack of appropriate national infrastructure (monitoring, data base, laboratories, experts, etc.).⁷⁶

2.4 Environmental context

ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC: QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

Over the past decades, both geophysical and anthropogenic factors have led to the worsening environmental condition in the Kyrgyz Republic. The country’s decreasing quality and effectiveness of environmental governance is considered a main determinant factor of the environment deterioration, distinguishable in key environmental indicators. In 2020, the Kyrgyz Republic ranked 105th in the Environmental Performance Index,⁷⁵

The new Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Technical Supervision was established in 2021 which has been delegated wide mandates for policy-setting, policy implementation, and control. The new Ministry has the potential for setting a comprehensive vision of the country’s environmental security and increasing national ownership. This will require the creation of well-functioning structures within the Ministry built on a comprehensive strategic diagnostic of the environmental sector. This must be complemented by meeting the need for recruiting more qualified staff and local experts with an adequate level of professional skills.

⁷¹ Ibid

⁷² National Assessment of Educational Attainments of Students in Kyrgyzstan (2017)

⁷³ UNESCO (2020). Global Education Monitoring Report 2017-2019

⁷⁴ UNESCO (2020). ICT Teacher Readiness Report

⁷⁵ Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy - YCELP - Yale University, and Center for International Earth Science Information Network - CIESIN - Columbia University. 2020. 2020 Environmental Performance Index (EPI). Palisades, NY: NASA Socioeconomic Data and Applications Center

⁷⁶ UNDP BIOFIN (2019). Environmental Finance Policy and Institutional Review in the Kyrgyz Republic

The Government should scale up its activities under the Aarhus Convention, to include promoting access to environmental information, strengthening capacities of public authorities to carry out effective and inclusive public participation procedures related to the environment, and building capacity, and raising awareness among the judiciary, review bodies and law enforcement about the Convention's obligations.

Additionally, effective Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) systems need to be implemented to support the Government's efforts to achieve the SDGs, transition to a green economy, and enhance the legitimacy of planning and decision-making processes. The Kyrgyz Republic has been a party to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context but has not yet ratified its Protocol on SEA. The Government needs to finalize and adopt EIA and SEA legislation, build capacity, and raise awareness on EIA and SEA among decision-makers.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Kyrgyz Republic is very vulnerable to climate change risks due to its mountainous terrain, the high occurrence of climate-related disasters, and the country's dependency on climate-sensitive economic sectors.⁷⁷ The scale and frequency of natural disasters associated with climate change has increased 1.5 times over the past 12 years with cascading impacts on society and the economy. In 2019, direct losses from mudflows and floods amounted to 323 million som.⁷⁸ For the period 1976–2019, there is a statistically

significant increase in average annual air temperature by 0.23 °C every 10 years in Kyrgyz Republic, and a trend for annual precipitation to increase by 1.6 percent in 10 years.⁷⁹ Extreme climatic events such as heatwaves, hurricanes/storms, floods, and droughts cause negative health effects. Gradual climate change affecting the quality of water, food, and air also has a negative impact on the health of people around the world. In addition to physical effects, there are also issues related to mental health.⁸⁰ A warming climate will negatively affect human health and increase mortality due to poor nutrition, heat, and infectious diseases.⁸¹

The Government allocates limited resources to climate activities^{vii}, including the development of climate policy and legislative frameworks. The authorities continue the extensive practice of subsidies negatively affecting the environment and hindering the advancement of the green economy. According to the draft of *4th National Communication on Climate Change in Kyrgyzstan*, a trend of sharp growth in net GHG emissions was identified in 2007–2017.⁸² The country was one of the last countries to ratify the Paris Agreement in 2020. This lag indicates that climate issues have not been a high priority for the country's political leaders. In the last year alone, the institutional structure of the agencies responsible for climate policy was changed four times. The legislative framework and budget allocation for measures to respond and mitigate climate change remain insensitive to some groups, such as women at risk of vulnerability/exclusion, pensioners and citizens with disabilities, youth and children, and migrants.

77 Based on: 'Climate Investment Programme. Operational Framework for Managing and Accessing Climate Finance in the Kyrgyz Republic', 2018.

78 WFP (2021). Op. cit.

79 SIC ICWC. Climate Change: Some Aspects of the Problem (Part 4) [in Russian].

80 UNDP (2021). Assessment of Risks and Vulnerability to Climate Change. National Report to Update the NDC of the Kyrgyz Republic. [in Russian].

81 World Bank and Asian Development Bank (2021). Climate Risk Profile: Kyrgyz Republic.

82 To be published in 2021.

The Government intends to submit a new revised Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) with clear quantifiable mitigation and adaptation targets and a financial plan for implementation committed to reduce GHG emissions by 16.63 percent of GHG emission levels by 2025 unconditionally, and by 36.61 percent with international support.⁸³ In his message to the UN General Assembly in September 2021, President Japarov stated the country's intention to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. The Government further intends to increase efforts in mitigation through implementation of renewable energy sources, e-mobility, energy efficiency and gasification. Investments in training to support the growth of a new green sector are planned. The updated NDC includes integrated provisions facilitating the achievement of gender equality, as well as an improvement in the protection of vulnerable groups such as youth, low mobility groups and those living below the poverty line. The adaptation component is further enhanced with qualitative targets and elaborated implementation plans, including 15 adaptation measures in 6 sectors vulnerable to climate change.

Recent research confirms the disproportionate impact of climate change on the poor, especially rural women and children from marginalized communities living in areas particularly vulnerable to climate change (burden of unpaid home labor, physical and social violence, low incidence of paid work, perpetual cycle of poverty,⁸⁴ high rate of non-communicable diseases.⁸⁵ Women also face high levels of discrimination and underrepresentation in decision-making, which also has a negative impact on their participation

in environmental decision-making and disproportionate exposure to risk from climate-induced phenomena, such as floods.

BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEMS

The Kyrgyz Republic is distinguished by a high concentration of plant and animal species. Ecosystems (26 classes) and landscapes (160 types) are inhabited by more than 50,000 species of living organisms. The Red Book of the Kyrgyz Republic includes 57 species of birds, 23 mammal, 2 amphibians, 8 reptiles, 7 species of fish, 18 arthropods, 83 higher plant species and 4 mushrooms. As a result of human activity, some species have disappeared altogether, while others are endangered,⁸⁶ among which are iconic and culturally relevant species such as the snow leopard. Less than 40 percent of biodiversity areas are protected officially, and the populations of threatened species in more than 90 percent of these areas are under high to medium threat levels.⁸⁷ Climate change and anthropogenic activities put ecosystem functions under pressure, leading to shifting fragmentation and shrinking of habitat and reduced biodiversity. In addition, the mountain ecosystems are among the most vulnerable to climate change in Central Asia, with impacts on glaciers, snow and water availability.⁸⁸ Forest loss is of particular concern, as forests are home to at least half of the country's species diversity. The lack of smart and environmentally friendly economic policies and natural resource use pricing mechanisms leads to the overuse of natural resources and the further degradation of habitats. The dependency of the population on natural

83 Unpublished report from the NDC.

84 ESCAP (2018). Population dynamics, vulnerable groups and resilience to climate change and disasters.

85 UN Women, UNEP, EmPower: Women for Climate-Resilient Societies (2020). Gender and climate Change in the context of COVID-19.

86 Biodiversity conservation priorities of the Kyrgyz Republic till 2024. Available at: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/kg/kg-nbsap-v3-en.pdf> [in Russian].

87 Available at: https://www.ibat-alliance.org/country_profiles/KGZ.

88 GRID-Arendal (2017). Outlook on Climate Change Adaptation in the Central Asian Mountains [in Russian].

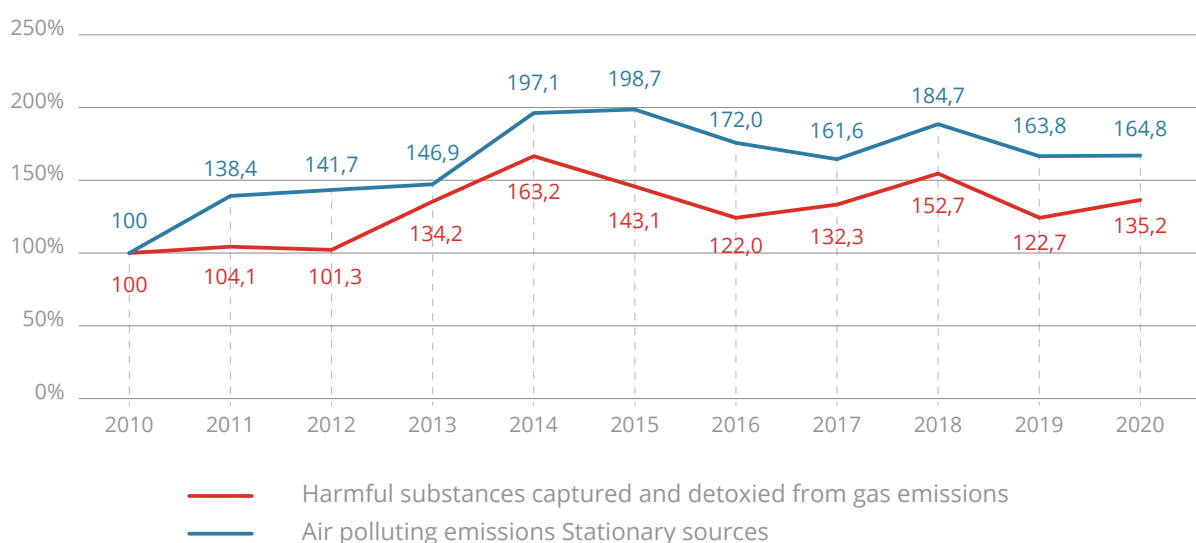
resources is still high. Thus, more than half of the country's population depends on meadow ecosystems (pastures), and about 18 percent depend on forest ecosystems.⁸⁹

AIR POLLUTION

Air pollution has rapidly become a key health, environmental, social, and political issue in the country. Without adequate mitigation measures, pollution levels are set to rise in the future. Sources of emissions include the wide use of coal for heating (more than 70 percent of the population uses coal)⁹⁰ and electricity generation, burning of waste, and motor transport. The household and ambient air pollution contributes to a large number of premature deaths each year – 11.7 percent of all deaths in 2016.⁹¹ This means that more than 4,500 Kyrgyz citizens die each year due to pollution, more than from tobacco smoking or alcohol and drug use. To assess the social, environmental and health impact of air pollution and

the magnitude of the problem, the Kyrgyz Republic needs improved capacity as well as a robust monitoring network over the entire country. Official statistics of air pollution emissions, which are available only for stationary sources, show that emissions over the 2010–2020 period increased by almost 65 percent.⁹² [See Figure 4] Low energy efficiency of buildings also contributes to increased pollution, encouraged by the 60–80 percent heating subsidy by the state and municipalities which creates negative incentives to save thermal energy.⁹³ Civil society supports improved air quality tracking and promotes transparent and participatory urban planning and alternative heating technologies. However, state institutions lack the capacity and resources to effectively address the challenges of air pollution. The ratification and implementation of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and its protocols is an essential step towards reducing air pollution from various sources.

Figure 4. Air pollution growth rate in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2010–2020, % change (2010 = 100%)



Source: NSC

89 Available at: <https://chm.cbd.int/database/record?documentID=243111>.
 90 NSC and UNICEF (2019). Kyrgyzstan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2018.
 91 UNIDO (2019). Health and Pollution Action Plan. Kyrgyz Republic.
 92 NSC (2020). Environment in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2015–2019 [in Russian].
 93 UNDP BIOFIN (2019). Op. cit.

WATER USE

Water is one of the most important natural resources of the country^{viii}. The volume of water resources is about 2,458 km³, including 650 km³ of water in glaciers. Water is mainly used for irrigation and agricultural purpose – from 94.2 to 95.1 percent of all water used. Some 3.7 percent is used for domestic and drinking needs, and the rest for production and other needs⁹⁴. Approximately 94 percent (2019) of the population has access to clean drinking water, while 31.4 percent use piped water. About 6 percent of the population uses water from springs, rivers and ditches. The country has an acute wastewater problem: only 31.5 percent of the population uses a sewage system. The rest release wastewater into the environment.

The irrigation infrastructure mostly built more than 30 years ago, is dilapidated. According to official data, water losses in irrigation systems due to their poor condition amount to 25–28 percent⁹⁵ of water withdrawal, or as much as 40 percent according to other sources.⁹⁶ The irrigation sector is underfunded, as the applied water supply tariff is up to 7–8 times lower than the production cost, according to independent experts.⁹⁷ Energy security is another conflict risk. The declining natural water flow reduces the accumulation of required amounts of water in national reservoirs for production of electricity and irrigation, which can result in problems for industry, the social sector, food security and electricity production.

The National Development Strategy 2018–2040 envisages reform of the

water sector to create an economically sustainable, market-based, affordable service for safe and high-quality water supply, water disposal, and sanitation in every settlement. Government policy aims to focus on resource conservation and rational use of water resources.⁹⁸

WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Kyrgyz Republic does not have a developed system of waste recycling and reuse. There is a real and huge problem in waste management. In 2018, there were only 107 sanctioned landfill sites out of the 406 in the country.⁹⁹ Many landfills operate without complying with technical, sanitary and environmental safety standards. Only 67.1 percent of households used organized waste collection services in 2019, while the rest of households incinerated or buried their waste.¹⁰⁰ Plastic makes up about 21 percent of the waste disposed of in landfills in urban areas of the country and 8 percent in rural areas.¹⁰¹ Plastic is either incinerated or left to decompose naturally. Both methods have a negative impact on the environment. Industrial waste – the main sources of pollution in the country – contains radionuclides, heavy metals and toxic substances. Due to the lack of infrastructure for storage and processing of industrial waste, enterprises generally store it on their property. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Regional Development, a large volume of obsolete pesticides – more than 5.4 thousand tons¹⁰² – remain in the country. These pesticides are contained in burial sites for toxic substances (more than 88 percent), warehouses, and contaminated soil.

94 NSC (2020). Environment in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2015-2019 [in Russian].

95 Ibid.

96 ADB (2018). Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment.

97 UNDP BIOFIN (2019). Op. cit.

98 National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040.

99 A package of measures to modernize waste management. Available at: <http://eco-expertise.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/06/201805251451523.pdf> [in Russian].

100 NSC (2020). Standard of Living in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2015-2019 [in Russian].

101 SAEPF (2020). National Report on the State of the Environment of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2015-2018 [in Russian].

102 Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/ToxicWaste/PesticidesRtoFood/Kyrgyzstan.pdf> [in Russian].

Numerous tailings management facilities in the country store large amounts of mining waste. In the event of a failure, environmental catastrophes could occur, such as water pollution which poses a high risk to water security in the Kyrgyz Republic and neighboring countries via the transboundary rivers. Climatic and geographic conditions aggravate these risks. The Government should become a party of the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents to use all benefits the Convention provides for enhanced prevention, preparedness, and response to industrial accidents.

2.5 Demographic context

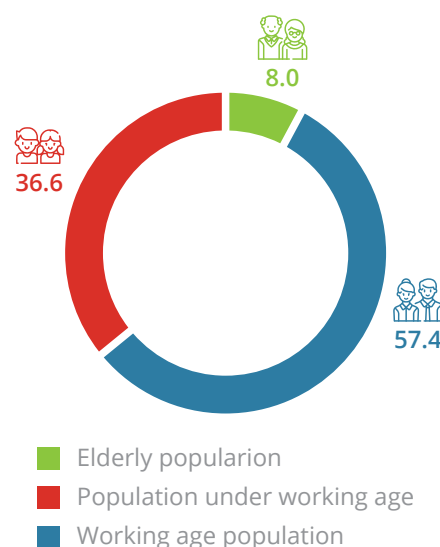
The Kyrgyz Republic is a multi-ethnic nation with more than 80 different indigenous ethnic groups. The main groups include: Kyrgyz (72.3 percent), Russians (5.6 percent), Uzbeks (14.7 percent), Dungans (1.1 percent), Uyghurs (1.1 percent), Tajiks (1.1 percent), Kazakhs (0.7 percent), Ukrainians (0.5 percent) and other ethnicities. According to the latest census data and Population Situation Analysis report for 2017, current demographic trends are contributing to an increase in ethnic homogeneity with the growth of the population, which increased from 40 percent in 1959 to 73 percent by the beginning of 2017.¹⁰³

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The population of the Kyrgyz Republic is “young.” Half of the country’s residents are under the age of 24, and, as of January 2021, the median age was 24.06 years. Preschool children (under 7 years of age) make up 17 percent of the population, and about 21 percent are school-age children (7–17 years old)¹⁰⁴ with specific nutritional,

healthy transition and infrastructure needs. Over a third of the country’s population is between 15 and 25 years old (49 percent women and 51 percent men), representing a great opportunity to benefit from a demographic dividend. According to the NSC as of January 2020, 57.4 percent constitute the working age population (Figure 5). Approximately 34.6 percent of the population were persons under the working age (children and adolescents), and 8.0 percent were persons older than working age (61 percent women and 39 percent men).¹⁰⁵ More than 774,300 nationals of the country are migrant workers abroad.¹⁰⁶

Figure 5. Composition of population by work category (%)



Source: NSC

POPULATION DYNAMICS AND FERTILITY

Over the past decade, the birth rate in the Kyrgyz Republic has varied with small fluctuations averaging around 3.14 births per woman aged 15–49 years. This translates into an increase in the population of more than 1.1 million people

103 A. Avdeev (2021). Population Situation Analysis in Kyrgyzstan: 2020 update: Demographic Challenges for the Development of the Kyrgyz Republic

104 Ibid.

105 M. Denissenko (2020). Policy brief: Young population and high population growth rates

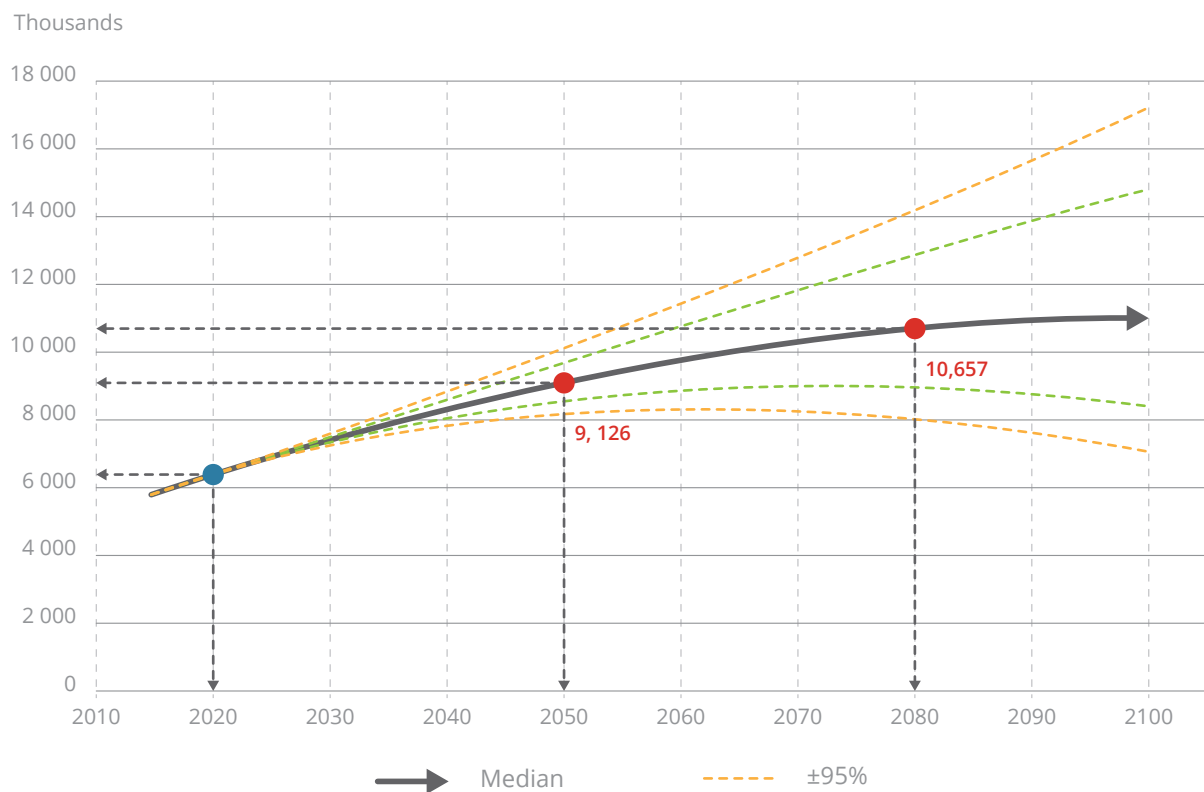
106 UN Migration (worlddata.io)

over the past decade, representing the largest population increase in the country's history. In the coming decades, population growth will also remain very significant. In 2020, according to the estimates of the NSC, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the population of the country increased by at least 130,000 people. Today's high growth rates are explained by high fertility and low mortality, as well as the relatively small contribution played by changing migration patterns.¹⁰⁷

According to the latest UN forecasts, the fastest growth period will be in the next 30 years, and by 2050 the population will

exceed 9 million people, i.e., an increase of 50 percent compared to 2020. Then, in 2050, the growth rate is projected to slow down, and in the next 30 years thereafter the population of the country will increase by only 1.5 million people. As part of this trend, the number of school-age population in the next decade will inevitably increase – from 1.35 million in 2020 to 1.67 million in 2029. This growth will obviously lead to an increase in the burden on the general compulsory education system and healthy transition of adolescents, which will require additional investments in school infrastructure, teachers and support staff, and the healthcare system.

Figure 6. Prospects for population growth in the Kyrgyz Republic until the end of the 21st century



Source: UNDESA Population Division, 2019

Note: The dashed lines outline the intervals within which the expected population size will be, with a given probability. So, with the probability of 95 percent, it can be expected that in 2080 the population will be in the range from 7.9 to 14.2 million people, with the probability of 80 percent it will be in the range from 8.8 to 12.8 million. The wider the interval, the more likely it is that the expected population size will fall within this interval.

¹⁰⁷ A. Avdeev (2021). Population Situation Analysis in Kyrgyzstan: 2020 update: Demographic Challenges for the Development of the Kyrgyz Republic

MIGRATION IMPACTS

Migration^{ix} poses a significant challenge to the country's demography due to the especially high emigration rates of young people, people of reproductive age, and qualified professionals. The majority of migrant workers outside of the country represent the economically active population, and many of them are young people under 29, who tend to go to the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, and Turkey because of the lack of employment opportunities or other reasons. Among them, women migrants account for 40 percent and are especially vulnerable in their inability to secure decent work opportunities and social protection, as the majority work in the informal sector. Although the high mobility of youth generates gains in terms of remittances, improved prospects for professional growth, and extended horizons, extensive emigration is likely to have long-term negative effects as it depletes the country of its human capital and socio-economic development potential.

Both external and internal migration plays a crucial role in shaping the population dynamics of the districts and regions of the Kyrgyz Republic. Over the past 5 years, a positive migration balance was observed only in the cities of Bishkek and Osh, as well as in the Alamudun, Sokoluk, Moscow and Jayilk districts of the Chui region adjacent to Bishkek. The highest external outflow is observed in the central cities. The largest number of citizens going abroad come from Bishkek, Chui and Osh regions.

Recent UNDP-IOM data show that 54 percent of returned migrants (because of COVID-19, etc.) plan to go back to the same country of destination as soon as

the situation will allow, while 35 percent will stay if there is a job or investment opportunity for them at home.¹⁰⁸ It is worth noting that the Kyrgyz Republic is among the top five countries with the highest share of remittances in their GDP. Remittance inflows hovered around 30 percent of the country's GDP in 2012–2019, (around 9 times more than FDI flows), with USD2.5 billion in remittances in 2019.¹⁰⁹ Most macroeconomic studies come to the conclusion the bulk of remittances are used for current consumption and invested in trade, services, agriculture, as well as housing and construction.¹¹⁰

2.6 Peace and conflict analysis

OVERVIEW

Although largely peaceful, the Kyrgyz Republic had witnessed major upheavals and conflicts over the last 30 years. These have included violent [extra-legal] change of power in 2005, 2010 and 2020, incursion of terrorist fighters in 1999, and inter-ethnic conflicts in 1990 and 2010, in which some 470 people died.¹¹¹ Border conflicts over natural resources between the Kyrgyz Republic and neighboring Tajikistan are recurrent and their scale intensified in April 2021, resulting in 55 people killed, hundreds wounded on both sides, and the displacement of more than 52,000 people. Sporadic, small-scale conflicts also take place on the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border. Public protests are a common feature, with no less than 120 protests rallies in Bishkek in January-May 2021 alone, providing an important avenue for individuals to voice their opinions and air their grievances.¹¹² The risk of a relapse of conflict and violence

108 UNDP-IOM (2021). Assessment of local authorities' perceptions towards returned migrants and their readiness to reintegrate them. (not published yet)

109 World Bank (2021). Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=KG>

110 Murzakulova A., Rural Migration in Kyrgyzstan: Drivers, Impact and Governance, 2020, Mountain Societies Research Institute, Research Paper No.7

111 Report of the independent International Commission of Inquiry into the Events in Southern Kyrgyzstan in June 2010.

112 <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/03/11/kyrgyzstan-womens-activists-detained>

has been exacerbated by COVID-19 and the perceived failure of the Government to ensure fairness and justice, as well as economic and social rights.

DRIVERS

The drivers of the risks of conflict in the Kyrgyz Republic are numerous. These include the following:

Polarization^x. The gap between the conservative and liberal values and groups, as well as the gap between the legal framework and the practices followed by people is widening within the country. In a context of the growing role of traditional, nationalistic values, multiple cleavages appear that divide people around the role of state, the role of ethnicity and religion in the state, political affiliations, regional and clan loyalties, and other factors. The increasing conflict between adherents of different streams of Islam is also noted. Conservative and nationalist groups accuse the liberal civil society of venality and of acting against the interests of the country^{xi}. Growing conservative groups pose risks, among others, to the advancement of women rights, and clashes over values are likely to continue^{xii}. The situation is also expected to exacerbate harmful gender stereotypes and expand the prism around conservative gender norms that hinder gender equality, reflecting the polarization over national values based on conservative and masculine images of the society.

Ethnic and language discrimination. Ethnic minorities make up 26.5 percent of the population, with nearly 15 percent of Uzbeks living in the southern part of the country. The narrative around ethnic inclusion^{xiii}, ensuring their economic, cultural and civic rights and opportunities are areas of concern. Human rights observers and minorities argue that the state does not provide opportunities for equal participation in senior public employment. State officials emphasize

that the state service is open to all people that meet the official criteria for public service. Human right defenders also criticize the Government for not implementing the recommendations of the International Commission of Inquiry on the 2010 events. They further allege that state responses to those events have been skewed against minority ethnic groups as if they are solely to blame for those events. It is hoped that the introduction of Kyrgyz Zharany – the concept of civic citizenship and civic identity – will provide a framework for addressing past injustices and grievances.

Religion and religious policies^{xiv}. While the constitution and state policy are clear that the Kyrgyz Republic is a secular state, comments by some leading state officials promote a return to Islamic values, creating confusion over the boundaries between the secular state and religion. The efforts by Islamic religious leaders during the discussion on the draft Constitution to take out the secular principles from the Constitution only served to deepen the confusion. While the National Commission on Religious Affairs serves to regulate the conduct and practice of religious institutions, the lack of clarity on many issues, together with the lack of broad public discussions with all interested stakeholders, have contributed to disquiet in some sections of society about emerging state attitudes toward religion and the role of religion in governance. Such issues include the debate around headscarves for girls in schools, the growing number of religious schools that do not follow the state-approved curriculum; the official tolerance for the conflation of civil rights of groups such as women with western values, police tolerance of violent actions against peaceful events promoting gender equality and countering GBV, and a general rise in traditionalist views and sentiments and active promotion of these views by state media. All this contributes to the polarization and growing values

divisions in the country. Experts also note competition between various religious groups and affiliations.

Violent extremism^{xv}. With exception of the 1999 Batken events¹¹³ and three terrorist acts in 2010, 2015 and 2016,¹¹⁴ the country has not witnessed any active terrorist attacks, although the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported on multiple foiled attacks in recent years.¹¹⁵ There were some 863 Kyrgyz citizens (188 were women) who joined ISIS in 2013–2018, but this group has been effectively diminished and their organized return to destabilize the situation is unlikely.¹¹⁶ The repatriation and reintegration of families of foreign terrorist fighters is an additional challenge for the Government. The first cohort of children was successfully repatriated in March 2021 and since then reintegrated into families. Despite the Government's efforts, the risk of violent extremism^{xvi} remains at least moderately high due to a number of economic and social issues as well as recent developments in Afghanistan.

Disputes over natural resources in border areas. There were 177 border incidents between the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan between 2015 and 2019.¹¹⁷ In 2020 and 2021 the overall number has relatively decreased (also due to COVID-19); however, the intensity and duration of conflicts has been exacerbated since 2019, culminating in the most severe incident in April 2021 that resulted in 39 people dead, 189 wounded, and tens of thousands temporarily displaced on the Kyrgyz side. Conflicts around natural resources (land, water, pastures) have multiple root

causes including incomplete demarcation of national boundaries, demographic imbalances, interconnectedness of infrastructure (which was built mainly in Soviet times without regard to borders), inadequate water management and distribution, patchwork settlements, stricter enforcement of border regimes, climate change and others. Poverty further exacerbates conditions that prompt tensions. The Kyrgyz government has made efforts to finalize border delimitation issues, but the process has proven to be protracted. Also, women representation continues to be mostly absent in the peace-building processes, however the Government recognizes that women participation is vital in peace-building and has ratified several international principles such as UN Security Council Resolution 1325.¹¹⁸ In all likelihood, conflicts will continue to occur, triggered by multiple events, until the borders are fully demarcated and mechanisms for amicably resolving all disputes are agreed. It is worth mentioning that the number and intensity of conflicts with Uzbekistan are much lower, and demarcation progress is more advanced (85 percent of the border demarcated), although disputes exist around at least three locations.¹¹⁹

Protest activities of various groups due to perceived injustices and economic policies of the state. More episodic conflicts have occurred in recent years due to a range of different issues. These include electoral irregularities, corruption, tariff increases, disputes over land and natural resources, economic impoverishment, and grievances over judicial decisions. In fact,

113 Incursion of Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan fighters, who wanted to pass through Kyrgyzstan to attack Uzbekistan. https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%91%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%BA%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%B5_%D1%81%D0%BE%D0%B1%D1%8B%D1%82%D0%B8%D1%8F

114 See: <https://knews.kg/2017/08/31/terakty-v-bishkeke-skolko-popytok-destabilizirovat-situatsiyu-predprinyato-terroristami-v-poslednie-gody/>

115 17 incidences in 2016 (<http://kabar.kg/news/17-teraktov-predotvratili-v-kyrgyzstane-v-2016-godu/>), 2 in 2020, See: (<https://svodka.akipress.org/news/1670622?from=svodka&place=newstopic>)

116 See: https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/UN%20PBF_UNW_ECA_KYRG%20chapter%20FINAL%20%281%29.pdf

117 TRACTION - Database of incidents development within the Cross-border cooperation for Sustainable Peace and Development project.

118 'Report on United Nations Security Council's Resolution 1325 and its Implementation in Kyrgyzstan'; UN Women Profiles 2021

119 Kempir-Abad, Gavasay and Chashma (Chechme). The notable conflict with dozens of severely wounded people took place in Sokh on 31 May 2020 (Uzbek enclave in Kyrgyzstan, inhabited mainly by Tajiks)

there are hundreds of protest actions in the Kyrgyz Republic every year, including 269 protests in 2020, and more than 120 in January-May 2021. Some of them, like those against the Parliamentary elections in October 2020, led to the change of the Government and subsequent introduction of a new constitution. Protest activities against foreign companies, especially in extractive industries^{xvii} as well as against Chinese investments, are also an important feature of grievance expression in the country. Mines are especially targeted during these periods of protest. While peaceful protests are a feature of democracy, and the preferred mechanism for expressing grievances, in the Kyrgyz context, they are often reactions to perceived inability or unwillingness of state institutions to respond. The risk includes the increasing perception that it is only through protests that state institutions are forced to respond to public grievances, and therefore potentially encourages resort to extra-legal means in resolving public grievances.

2.7 Commitments under international norms and standards

OVERVIEW

Over the last five years, some progress has been recorded in the human rights situation. Since 2016, the Kyrgyz Republic

has strengthened the national legal framework to prevent gender-based violence and forced marriages, ratified the Convention^{xviii} on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities¹²⁰ and the Protocol 2014 to ILO Convention 29 on Forced Labour.¹²¹ At the same time, the Government has yet to implement recommendations from different human rights mechanisms on several issues, including: fair administration of justice; independence of the judiciary^{xix}; ¹²² elimination of torture and gender-based violence;¹²³ non-discrimination and equality, including discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity;¹²⁴ freedom of expression and access to information;¹²⁵ freedom of the media;¹²⁶ protection of human rights defenders and journalists;¹²⁷ freedom of peaceful assembly; as well as addressing compliance with labour standards in the field of occupational safety and health, child labour, forced labour and others.¹²⁸ Ten years after, the authorities are still reluctant to take any steps to provide justice for the victims of interethnic violence in 2010. The Office of Ombudsperson has strengthened its capacity to monitor and report human rights violations^{xx} and could deepen its effectiveness by fully complying with the Paris Principles.¹²⁹ Full independence of the National Center for the Prevention of Torture (NCPT) should be maintained in acting as the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OP-CAT) and its preventive monitoring of all

120 Ratified by the country in May 2019 and started developing national action plans, <https://mlsp.gov.kg/2020/12/21/proekt-gosprogram-my-dostupnaya-strana-dlya-licz-s-invalidnostyu-i-drugih-malomobilnyh-grupp-naseleniya-v-kr-na-2021-2040-gody/>

121 Ratified by the country in February 2020.

122 Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: "Continue measures on strengthening the independence of the judiciary and protecting the rights of accused persons in legal proceedings..."

123 See: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCEDAW%2fCSS%2fKG-Z%2f44124&Lang=en

124 See: <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/44/4>

125 See standards on access to information: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374369>

126 See standards on safety of journalists covering protests: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374206>

127 See: HRCtee, Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Kyrgyzstan, CCPR/C/KGZ/CO/2, <https://uhri.ohchr.org/Documents/File/03e27d7f-7591-4a6b-8d22-b3509183c737/575954B3-6A60-443C-A91E-3481F8467DFB>

128 See: https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:14000:0::NO:14000:P14000_COUNTRY_ID:103529

129 In April 2018, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination recommended to accelerate the legal process to ensure independence of the Ombudsperson Office and provide the Office with the necessary resources to discharge its role efficiently. See: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CERD%2fC%2fKGZ%2fCO%2f8-10&Lang=en. It is important to include here what else is remaining to be done to fully comply with the Paris principles. If the additional issues are discretionary, then this is an unnecessary point and should be removed. The UN cannot tell a state how to exercise its discretionary power

places of detention should be maintained^{xxi}. Article 70 of the new Constitution states that the President appoints and dismisses the Children's Rights' Ombudsperson. The COVID-19 related restrictions imposed by the Government have impacted the human rights situation in the Kyrgyz Republic and restricted space for civil society and independent media.¹³⁰ For the coming years, there will be a need to strengthen the role of civil society and independent media as impartial watchdogs^{xxii} of government's implementation of its human rights obligations. Preservation of an enabling civic and democratic space will be possible only if legislation and practices related to fundamental freedoms are aligned with international human rights standards. The journey to the fullest enjoyment and expression of individual rights remains a work in progress and could benefit from an environment that encourages dialogue, discussion and consensus-seeking based on international human rights obligations on the ways forward towards realizing the rights of the individual.

ACCESSION TO HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES

The Kyrgyz Republic has ratified or acceded to eight of the nine core UN human rights treaties.¹³¹ It has also ratified all eight fundamental human rights Conventions of the ILO.¹³² The country has yet to accede to the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED). In 2019, the Kyrgyz Republic eliminated statelessness by granting or confirming nationality to all the remaining persons in its territory without statehood, for which it received global acknowledgement and award by the High Commissioner for Refugees in 2019.¹³³ To prevent a re-occurrence

of statelessness, the Kyrgyz Republic has not yet become a party to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, the 1961 Convention on Reduction of Statelessness, enact full safeguards against statelessness at birth and in the process of change of nationality, and introduce statelessness status determination procedures. Government authorities maintain an active dialogue with the UN human rights mechanisms, including the Treaty Bodies¹³⁴, the Universal Periodic Review, and Special Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council. This dynamic relationship could be enhanced further^{xxiii}, if the Government were to boost capacity and ensure sustainability of national machinery responsible for reporting obligations and implementation of recommendations made by the UN human rights mechanisms. Another set of recommendations that requires rigorous attention are those made by the ILO Committee of Experts on Application of Conventions and Recommendations. The country has accepted two individual complaints procedures: the First Optional Protocol to the Convention on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. To date, the Treaty Bodies adopted 38 Views and found violations concerning arbitrary arrest, torture, unfair trial, inhuman treatment of detainees, non-refoulement, and gender-based discrimination, including sexual harassment.¹³⁵ Still, there is a lack of effective mechanisms and legal procedures for the full implementation of the adopted Views. A recent agreement between the Government and the UN to establish a regular dialogue on human rights issues may provide a framework for continued progress on these issues and for encouraging their full implementation.

130 Refer to: <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kyrgyzstan/freedom-world/2021>

131 See: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx

132 Ratifications of ILO conventions: Ratifications for Kyrgyzstan

133 At the same time, the Kyrgyz Republic acceded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol in 1996

134

135 Refer to: <https://juris.ohchr.org>

SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), sexual exploitation and violence against children remain a continuing human rights concern in the Kyrgyz Republic, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, despite the significant progress that has been made in addressing SGBV issues. The Ministry of Internal Affairs received 65 percent more referrals dealing with domestic violence because of the pandemic related lockdown.¹³⁶ However, this represents only the 'tip of the iceberg' as most GBV cases remain unreported due to lack of pre-existing data, lack of safe, ethical and quality response services as well as fear of stigmatization, reprisal, lack of access to information and economic dependence on their partner. Hence, it is of utmost importance to strengthen and provide high quality accessible GBV support services to women and girls. According to a 2020 UNFPA survey, 32 percent of respondents heard about an increase in domestic violence or experienced it themselves.¹³⁷ The typical portrait of a victim is a young woman aged 31–40 years (32.9 percent) and 21–30 years old (31.8 percent). Main contributing factors to violence are economic dependence on their husbands/partners, lack of resources to pay for an apartment and food; fear of social pressure and condemnation, and prevalent social norms that place women in a subservient role in the family.¹³⁸

There were positive steps taken in introducing protection orders and establishing helplines for reporting domestic violence cases. The crisis centers and shelters for survivors of violence (especially in rural areas) could benefit from more funding allocations, and local authorities need to be encouraged

to facilitate reporting of incidents of domestic violence to the law enforcement bodies rather than to aksakal courts which generally promote out of court settlement based on traditional norms, a process which often leads to injustice for the victims.¹³⁹ Regrettably, the abduction of women for forced marriage still continues to be a socially supported practice while the local authorities, police and courts do not have unified protocols for investigations and victim support^{xxiv}.

This early engagement in motherhood and marital life as well as the widespread physical and sexual violence against women and girls, are major impediments to women's participation in the economic, social and democratic life of Kyrgyzstan. This situation can for a large part be attributed to the traditional stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in society and, in particular, in the family, and the persistence of patriarchal norms that reinforce male dominance, especially among rural communities. The number of perpetrators of domestic violence (with a temporary protection order) increased from 2,000 in 2009 to over 8,500 in 2020. However, the number of people who have applied to medical institutions, forensic medical examinations and treatment for illnesses (injuries) caused by domestic violence is around 1,000 and there is insufficient administrative data available on sexual violence which remains an extremely sensitive issue.¹⁴⁰

LEGISLATIVE REFORMS

Changes in the Law on Refugees made in 2020 and the introduction of inadmissibility criteria, which are not in line with international law, have negatively impacted the refugee protection

¹³⁶ UN Women (2020). Gender Rapid Assessment 2020.

¹³⁷ See: https://kyrgyzstan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/eng_gender_rapid_assessment_of_covid-19_impact_june_2020_final_0.pdf

¹³⁸ UN Women (2020). Op. cit.

¹³⁹ Consult: <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/press-releases/unicef-un-women-and-ohchr-joint-statement-impunity-violence-against-girls>

¹⁴⁰ <http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/gendernaya-statistika/>

environment and led to questions about the state's compliance with its international obligations.

Following the constitution referendum of January 2021 and coming into force of the new constitution in May, the Government has started a complex legal revision process aimed at revising, aligning and eventually terminating 356 laws, including important human rights legislation, in line with the new constitutional provisions and a number of additional criteria such as cost-effectiveness, and impact on business and legal consistency. In parallel, the Government has started again revising the criminal justice codes, which came into force only in 2019.¹⁴¹ Both these two legal reform processes could have benefited from increased measures to enhance transparency, inclusivity, and participation of all interested parties so as to strengthen public and stakeholder confidence in the processes and their outcomes. All legislative reforms require ample time in order to have meaningful and effective public consultations.

On 26 June 2021, the President of the Kyrgyz Republic signed a law that establishes additional reporting procedures for non-commercial organizations. Civil society has criticized the provisions of this law for imposing onerous obligations on non-commercial organizations. The UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Association and the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders have offered their expert opinions against these new requirements

as these could be detrimental to the functioning of non-commercial organizations and could contribute to the shrinking of civic space. On 30 June 2021, the Parliament adopted the new Trade Union Law, which introduces a trade union monopoly system that has been criticized by the ILO as being in contravention of ILO Conventions 87 and 98 concerning freedom of association.¹⁴² On 24 August 2021 the President again vetoed the draft law due to incompatibility with international human rights standards.¹⁴³ In addition, in September 2021, the Parliament approved the Child Code, and it is now awaiting signature by the President.

MEDIA FREEDOM

In 2020, the Kyrgyz Republic was ranked 82nd out of 180 countries on Reporters Without Borders' press freedom ranking.¹⁴⁴ Independent journalists and bloggers face challenges in accessing information and have made complaints of harassment (online and offline), including threats, physical violence, cyber-attacks and interrogations by security agencies in the performance of their professional functions as well as legal defamation suits^{xxv}. Accepted in 2021, the Law on Protection from Inaccurate (false) information, created additional pressure on media outlets. The Law violates freedom of expression and creates an administrative procedure for dealing with online defamation appeals in avoidance of the justice system.

141 The Development Partners have supported the development of these Codes with considerable funding since 2012.

142 ILO Convention 87 concerns the freedom of association and the right to organize. Convention 98 concerns the right to organize and the right to collective bargaining.

143 In May 2021, the draft law "On Trade Unions" was vetoed by the President due to violations of the international standards and returned to the Parliament for the revision.

144 See: <https://rsf.org/en/kyrgyzstan>



National vision for sustainable development

The National Sustainable Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic 2018-2040 is the overarching framework that provides the strategic long-term visioning for the trajectory of the country's socio-economic development. It is based on the following four priority dimensions:

1 Human Development: recognizing the importance of access to, and engagement in, society through equal access to health, education, decent work, culture, science and civil integration.

2 Economic Well-being and Promotion of Business and Finance: recognizing the importance of developing a competitive economy, making the most of human capital and formal labor markets, improving investment potential and regional development with quality infrastructure. This priority also seeks to develop key sectors of the economy, such as the agro-industry, light industry, and sustainable tourism. Ensuring environmental sustainability and adaptation to climate change will underpin long-term growth of the economy.

3 Public Administration: ensuring a strong and stable public administration through a balanced system of state power, fair judicial system, development of local self-governance, strengthening national and regional security, economic and diplomatic integration, and promotion of a digital economy.

4 Transformation of the Development System: reforming management of development system by reviewing all previous development policies prior to the National Development Strategy 2040, strengthening the capacity for coordination in development through reorganizing the National Council for Sustainable Development and improved capacities and use of technologies as well as monitoring and evaluation.

Since the preparation of Common Country Analysis began, the President's Administration has begun the preparation of the National Development Strategy until 2026 (NDS), which has now been endorsed by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic. The NDS is built on a series of measures across seven priority areas as shown in the figure below.

Figure 7. Overview of National Development Strategy





Progress toward the 2030 Agenda

OVERVIEW

Over the last few years, the Kyrgyz government has committed itself to achieving the 2030 Agenda and integrating the SDGs into the country's national development efforts. The SDGs have been reflected in the national development framework through gap analysis and priority-setting undertaken in the 2040 National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic, through the “Unity, Trust, Creation” Programme (2018–2022), and through various programmes and strategies on healthcare, education, gender, youth, green economy, digitalization, regional development, and other sectors.

Following the January 2021 elections, the new leadership has also fully committed itself to assuring that the 2030 Agenda remains an integral part of overall development planning. President Japarov has now endorsed the National Development Programme until 2026, which will continue a strong focus on integrating the SDGs into the new mid-term plan. Since 2018, the Government has internalized the SDG indicators and is improving its capacity to report on the

SDGs. According to the UN Women Gender Statistics Assessment, the analysis of the accessibility of global indicators revealed that out of 85 gender-specific indicators from the two priority frameworks (UN minimum set of gender indicators and framework on SDG indicators), 55 indicators (65 percent) are available within the NSC of the Kyrgyz Republic.

In 2020, the official national reporting portal¹⁴⁵ on the SDGs was launched under the auspices of the National Statistical Committee. These efforts were seen as a pioneer to set up the national data platform for the SDGs, allowing to better meet the needs of a wide range of data users. (See the recent SDG Report 2021 in the section Investing in Data.)¹⁴⁶

POLICY COMMITMENTS

As discussed in the Kyrgyz Republic's first Voluntary National Review,¹⁴⁷ the 2030 Agenda has been at the center of policy setting, and in 2020 UNDP's Rapid Integrated Assessment¹⁴⁸ assessed the overall alignment of the SDGs and the country's national policy development planning at 82 percent. Figure 8 shows the alignment for each Goal.

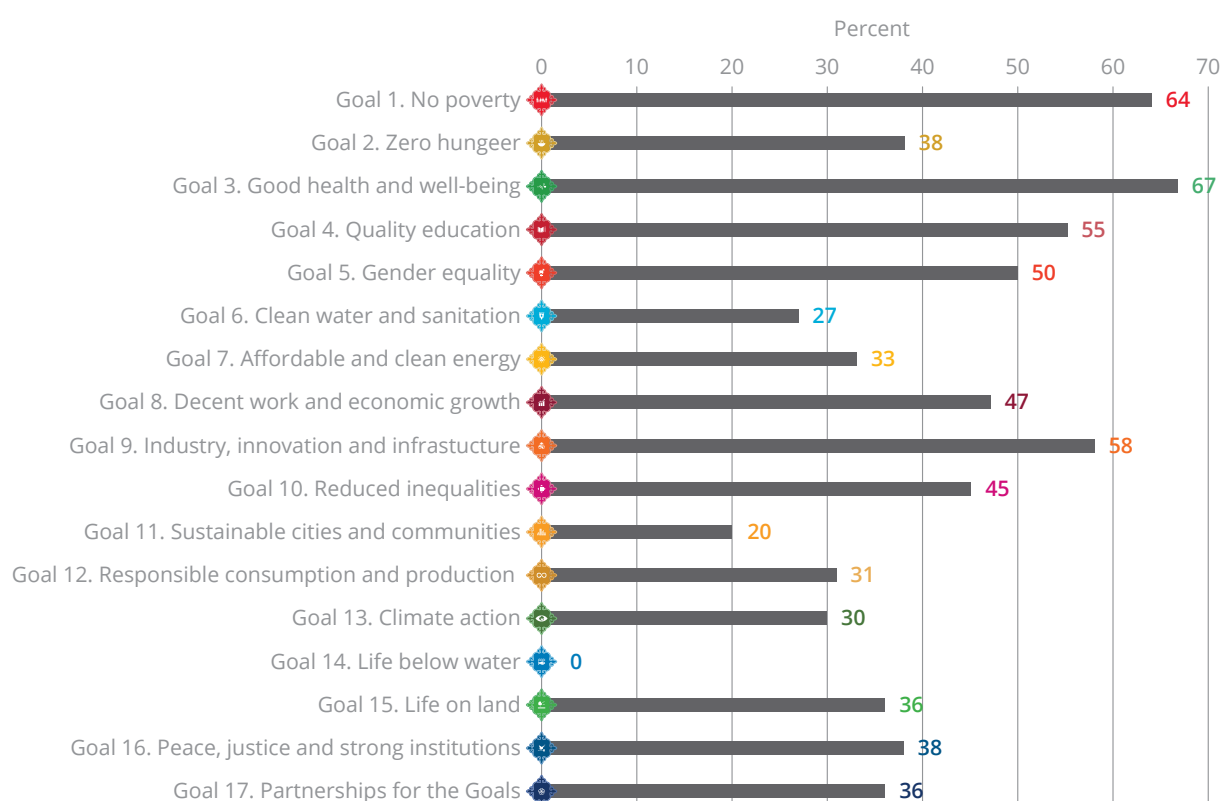
¹⁴⁵ Available at: <https://sustainabledevelopment-kyrgyzstan.github.io/en/>

¹⁴⁶ United Nations (2021). The Sustainable Development Goals Report, 2021. Available at: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2021/>

¹⁴⁷ The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic (2020). Voluntary National Review of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic, (VNR)

¹⁴⁸ See: <https://www.kg.undp.org/content/kyrgyzstan/en/home/library/poverty/implementing-sustainable-development-goals--rapid-integrated-ass.html>

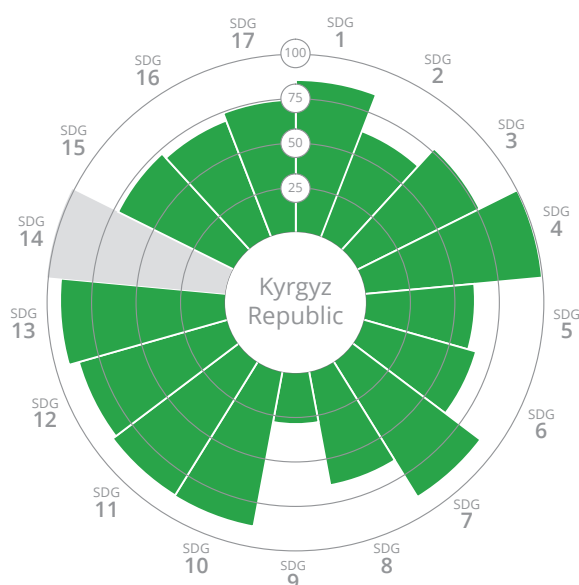
Figure 8. Alignment of Kyrgyz national development planning and SDGs by Goal



Source: Rapid Integrated Assessment, 2020

A second set of indicators is found in the global Sustainable Development Report for the Kyrgyz Republic that offers country comparisons and arrives at slightly different calculations of the country's performance.¹⁴⁹ According to this analysis, comparatively the country ranks 44th out of 165 countries surveyed and has a country score of 74.0, slightly higher than the regional average of 71.4. The average performance by individual Goal is shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Average performance by SDG



Source: <https://dashboards.sdindex.org/profiles/kyrgyz-republic>

149 Sachs et al. (2021). The Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable Development Report 2021. Found at: <https://dashboards.sdindex.org/profiles/kyrgyz-republic>

The figures above should be interpreted by understanding that each estimate offers two different aspects for examining overall country progress. The first captures alignment between the Goals and national development plans (82 percent), whereas the second figure estimates performance progress for achieving that particular SDG by 2030. The key message is that from a policy perspective, the Kyrgyz Republic is doing reasonably well. The second figure would suggest that, again, the country – at the time of analysis – is doing fairly well on the path to meeting many of the SDGs. However, this latter analysis does not take into account the full socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on SDG performance, nor does it capture at this aggregated level many of the development and governance challenges still confronting the country that are discussed elsewhere in this report.

SDG FINANCING

Despite doing reasonably well in reflecting SDGs in national development policies, there are weaknesses to effectively link planning, budgeting and financing opportunities to address the SDG-aligned development aspirations. UNDP's Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) has shown misalignment between national planning objectives, budgeting and financing processes, thereby preventing a more integrated approach to deliver development results. There remains a lack of coordination between line ministries, and low levels of trust among key actors of society – the government, civil society, citizens, and parliament. Supporting multistakeholder approaches to improving this situation remains critical for success. The new leadership has expressed a strong desire to undertake a comprehensive review of the challenges, opportunities and priorities for financing the NDS and the SDGs, and to seek support in implementing reforms in key aspects of financing policy, with a gender-sensitive approach in mind. The RCO, UNDP and UNICEF are supporting

the building of the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) to address these challenges. However, SDG financing issues will require a high level of attention in the years to come.

SDG INTER-SECTIONALITY ANALYSIS

Understanding and addressing the inter-relationships of the economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development has yet to be put into practice in the Kyrgyz Republic, which is needed in order to more rapidly and effectively achieve the nation's development agenda and leave no one behind. The analysis of the complex inter-linkages of SDGs requires capacitating involved national partners with the support of the UN and other development partners. Figure 10 below shows the SDG mutual influences matrix that was prepared as a part of the Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support for SDGs (MAPS) mission in 2019. It serves as a practical tool to identify the complexity of the SDG agenda. First, it helps to demonstrate the inter-linkages among all SDGs in a meaningful way. It allows identifying crucial interlinkages for the country, revealing acceleration points and formulating related policy packages. For instance, a policy package addressing climate change adaptation (SDG 13) could be envisioned, while promoting sustainable agriculture (SDG 2), utilizing agricultural wastes for renewable energy (SDG 7) and ultimately supporting sustainable livelihoods (SDG 1). Second, the matrix stresses the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration on achieving SDGs, by understanding and applying the reinforcing, enabling, and constraining mutual interlinkages of all SDGs. For instance, achieving economic growth and productive employment (SDG 8) is not possible without addressing education (SDG 4) and sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11).

Figure 10. SDG mutual influences matrix

		1 NO POVERTY	2 ZERO HUNGER	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	4 QUALITY EDUCATION	5 GENDER EQUALITY	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	13 CLIMATE ACTION	14 LIFE BELOW WATER	15 LIFE ON LAND	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
1 NO POVERTY	→	10	4	7	8	5	4	4	4	0	6	6	0	0	0	0	8	0
2 ZERO HUNGER	→	13	3	13	1	19	7	9	3	0	1	2	3	6	1	10	0	0
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	→	4	1	45	2	2	0	0	28	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
4 QUALITY EDUCATION	→	3	3	3	16	11	3	1	15	7	6	3	6	1	0	5	6	0
5 GENDER EQUALITY	→	6	17	12	8	12	0	0	7	0	7	1	0	0	0	0	11	0
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	→	4	9	9	4	0	24	6	9	3	0	13	4	2	3	7	0	0
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	→	3	8	5	4	0	10	4	16	4	0	9	4	11	1	1	0	0
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	→	11	5	14	7	6	0	9	24	9	12	2	3	1	2	4	11	0
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	→	1	8	2	6	1	7	5	18	10	1	4	12	4	2	1	2	0
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	→	9	1	7	13	9	5	3	5	0	8	2	0	0	0	0	9	0
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	→	6	2	12	7	0	3	1	7	0	4	9	1	1	3	3	2	0
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	→	1	6	7	0	0	14	6	7	1	0	8	14	2	12	19	1	0
13 CLIMATE ACTION	→	5	8	2	0	0	6	7	3	1	0	5	0	3	4	4	0	0
14 LIFE BELOW WATER	→	6	4	3	0	0	2	0	5	0	0	3	8	2	0	4	0	0
15 LIFE ON LAND	→	6	4	3	0	0	2	0	5	0	0	3	8	2	0	4	0	0
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	→	8	1	7	14	11	12	5	20	8	9	14	9	0	3	7	28	6
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	→	6	2	6	6	1	2	2	2	6	2	0	2	2	0	0	2	0



Leave no one behind

The concept of “leave no one behind” is an analytical tool that goes beyond simple data disaggregation by providing assessments on the intersectionality of circumstances that create groups that are left further behind compared to other groups or cohorts of people. The Five Factor Framework (FFF) was used to identify the following most vulnerable groups. (See Annex B for more information on the ‘Five Factor Framework’ used for the analysis and other vulnerable groups.) Particular groups of those left behind are outlined below.

POOR RURAL HOUSEHOLDS WITH HIGH DEPENDENCY RATIO

According to the FFF, poor rural households, including smallholder farmers, are among the groups of people who face the highest degree of intersectional deprivations. Agriculture accounted for only 12 percent of GDP in 2019. However, the agricultural sector is crucial as a source of employment, income, and food security for the large rural population as over 700,000 rural households derive their livelihoods from this sector.¹⁵⁰ The share of those families is more significant in the southern provinces, facing the challenges of low access to land and smaller land plots. Within this category, particularly vulnerable are poor households with a high dependency ratio living in rural areas prone to climate-related shocks due to poor access to services and limited economic opportunities. Indeed, around 28 percent of poor households have a high dependency ratio, one third (30 percent) of which are headed by women.¹⁵¹ These poor households have more than five dependents per working member, including children, persons with disabilities, elderly and economically inactive working age family members. These households

have been extremely vulnerable to the health risks and economic shocks caused by the pandemic as the loss of employment by the breadwinner leaves the whole family without any means of subsistence and entirely reliant on the social protection system that is unable to cope with the growing needs of the population. Rural areas underserved by health services with fewer family doctors serving these communities. Health facilities in rural areas tend to be underequipped and have fewer physical and human resources to serve rural populations. This leaves rural populations to travel to more urban areas to seek healthcare with the additional time and financial cost that entails.

RURAL WOMEN AND POOR FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

The high intersectional vulnerability faced by rural women is widely recognized in the country, which placed supporting their economic activities as a key priority in the national gender agenda. Unpaid care makes it difficult for rural women to take advantage of on- and off-farm employment opportunities. In 2019, the share of employed rural women was

¹⁵⁰ FAO (2020). Smallholders and family farms in Kyrgyzstan. Country study report 2019. Budapest
¹⁵¹ WFP (2020). Poverty Analysis based on KIHS 2019

only 40 percent in comparison with 71.9 percent of employed rural men. The lowest employment rate among rural women is in Naryn (25.7 percent) and Jalal-Abad (29.9 percent).¹⁵² Moreover, when employed, women are mostly engaged in low paid sectors as the salary ratio of women to men salary is 77 percent. Female employment is particularly crucial if one considers that 38.9 percent of households are women-led,¹⁵³ exacerbated by high internal and external migration. Female-headed households are thus among those most susceptible to poverty. Women of reproductive age are especially prone to poor and monotonous diets in the most vulnerable communities of the country. In surveys, only 43 percent of women of reproductive age (18–49) were found to have the minimum diet diversity in the last 24-hour reporting period.¹⁵⁴

Rural women also face unequal access to productive assets, including the lack of protection of their rights to ownership of land and other resources, limited access to financial capital, a lower level of technical agricultural knowledge, which, in return, limits the growth of their agricultural output.¹⁵⁵ Likewise, women in general are unequally represented in decision-making, being particularly true in rural areas. In 2019, for example, 39.2 percent of women worked in state administration bodies compared to 34.1 percent in local self-government bodies.

Women are also more dependent on social assistance and social services than men, and they make up the majority of low-income people who apply for state social benefits. In 2019, 308,770 people were covered by such benefits, among which 52 percent were women coming mainly from female-headed households.¹⁵⁵

Particularly disadvantaged within this group are rural women with intersecting forms of discrimination. For example, rural women with disabilities face double stigmatization – not only on the basis of gender, but also due to their disability, with limitations hindering their access to legal, social, health, police and other type of services.

Rural women employed in the informal sector are unlikely to contribute to the mandatory health insurance fund, leaving them covered by the SGBP alone, susceptible to higher out of pocket payments for health services. This lack of financial protection couples with the generally lower quality of basic services provided in rural and remote areas puts them at higher risk of worse health outcomes than their urban counterparts. Safe abortion services during COVID-19 pandemic undertaken by the MoHSD, Association of Obstetricians and Neonatologists, Kyrgyz Alliance of Family Planning found that safe abortion services decreased to 25–28 percent in public facilities, whereas increased in private facilities up to 68–85 percent. This has clear equity implications as women who cannot afford to seek care in private facilities are left behind to carry out unwanted pregnancies.

CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

With over a fifth of the population of school age,¹⁵⁷ children and adolescents face multiple challenges, notably food and nutrition insecurity, as well as unequal access to health and education services, that, taken together, create lifelong consequences that contribute to reduced human capital. In short, they experience shortfalls in the necessary skills, knowledge and experience, which ultimately affects

152 NSC (2020). Report on Women and Men: 2015-2019

153 Ibid.

154 WFP Food Security Outcome Monitoring, 2021

155 FAO (2016). National Gender Profile of Agricultural and Rural Livelihoods - Kyrgyzstan, 2016

156 NSC (2020). Report on Women and Men: 2015-2019

157 See chapter 2.5 on Demographic context

a country's productivity and economic prospects.

More than half of children (53.9 percent) are deprived of health and nutrition, decent living standards, early development, social inclusion and protection.¹⁵⁸ Although enrolment and attendance rates are relatively high, the quality of education provided is problematic. Approximately 50 percent of children 7–14 years old and 60 percent of primary school students did not have minimal acceptable reading and comprehension skills.¹⁵⁹ While the prevalence of stunting, wasting and undernutrition has fallen among children under 5 and children from 5–19 years, overweight and obesity have increased in both categories. Among children aged 5–19, the prevalence of being overweight increased from 8.1 percent for boys and 10.6 percent for girls to 16.0 percent and 16.1 percent, respectively. For obesity, the prevalence increased from 1.7 percent to 4.8 percent for boys and 0.8 percent to 2.6 percent for girls between 2000 and 2016.¹⁶⁰ Given this and the growing concerns around prevalence of the overweight population (48.8 percent female, 47.4 percent male), obesity (18.6 percent female, 14.0 percent male), diabetes (10.8 percent female, 9.9 percent male), and diet-related non communicable diseases (NCDs) among adults,¹⁶¹ there is a need to take appropriate measures targeting children. In fact, the onset of many NCDs can be prevented or delayed by addressing risk factors earlier in life.

Almost three quarters of children and adolescents experience some form of violence. Over one quarter of children are engaged in child labour with ILO

Supervisory Bodies raising concerns, especially in regard to children engaged in hazardous work (agriculture).¹⁶² One in 11 girls aged 15–19 was estimated to be currently married¹⁶³ and 13 percent of young women aged 20–24 were married or in a union before the age of 18.

Kyrgyzstan has a good routine immunization coverage without significant socioeconomic differences in vaccine uptake. Nonetheless routine immunization coverage decreased due to the COVID-19 pandemic with immunization services interrupted in March-May 2020. Kyrgyzstan was one of four countries in the EURO region who interrupted routine immunization due to COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the burden of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health system, the country continued routine immunization activities according to identified Regional Measles elimination and Poliomyelitis eradication goals.

URBAN AND PERI-URBAN POOR HOUSEHOLDS

Urban and peri-urban poor households have been generally excluded from government targeted programmes. Over the last 15 years, the gap between rural and urban poverty rates has shrunk from 21 percentage points in 2006 to 11 percentage points in 2020, meaning that more consideration should be given to the urban poor as well. This is also true in regard to food security and nutrition as undernutrition is more severe in urban areas (51 percent) compared to rural areas (44 percent).¹⁶⁴ Among the urban poor and vulnerable (bottom 40 percent), only 2.3 percent receive *ui-buloogo komok*, which is considerably low in comparison with

158 NSC In 2020 at <http://stat.kg/ru/news/v-2020-godu-kazhdyy-chetvertyj-zhitel-kyrgyzstana-prozhival-v-usloviyah-bednosti/>

159 National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic & UNICEF, 2019

160 NSC and UNICEF (2019). Kyrgyzstan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2018, Survey Findings Report

161 Available at: <https://staging.globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/asia/central-asia/kyrgyzstan/>

162 ILO (2016). Kyrgyzstan Child Labour Survey

163 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2018 available at <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/reports/multiple-indicator-cluster-survey-mics-situation-children-and-women-kyrgyzstan>

164 Proportion of the population consuming less than 2,100 kcal per day: <https://sustainabledevelopment-kyrgyzstan.github.io/2-1-1/>

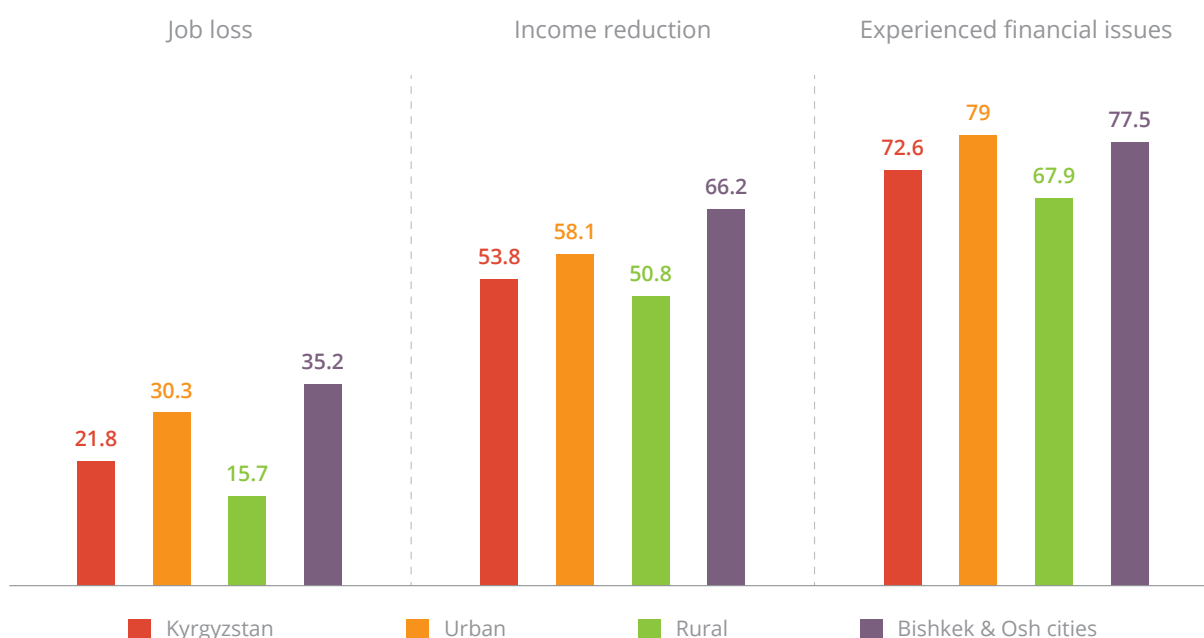
the national indicator (14.1 percent).¹⁶⁵ More than half of all poor and vulnerable urban households do not receive any type of social transfers. In effect, this group is not visible to the government targeting system.

The COVID-19 crisis further deteriorated urban livelihoods. One- third of urban households reported loss of a job (30.3 percent), while in rural area this share was half (15.7 percent). Two-thirds of urban households reported a reduction in income (58.1 percent). The regional breakdown provides even more evidence of growing urban vulnerability in the two major cities with Bishkek and Osh cities suffering the most from job loss (35.2 percent compared to 21.8 percent nationally), income reduction (66.2 percent compared to 53.8 percent nationally) and a higher percentage of households

experiencing financial issues (77.5 percent compared to 72.6 percent nationally).¹⁶⁶

Disparities in investment, infrastructure and staffing of health services across the country results in people in underserve areas being left behind. PHC offers the most affordable services to the population, nonetheless, it more accessible in urban areas than in the rest of the country, leaving those living in deprived regions behind. The two city regions are relatively over-staffed with PHC health workers (in particular Bishkek City) while other regions are 'understaffed' (in particular Osh, Chui and Jalal-Abad Oblasts). PHC staff/population ratios by region tell the same story: only Bishkek and Osh have cities have adequate ratios of PHC to population. These ratios are particularly low in Osh, Chui and Jalal-Abad Oblasts.

Figure 11. COVID-19 impact (% of households)



Source: NSC, 2020

¹⁶⁵ WFP (2019). Op.cit.

¹⁶⁶ NSC (2020). On the results of the sample survey "Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on households

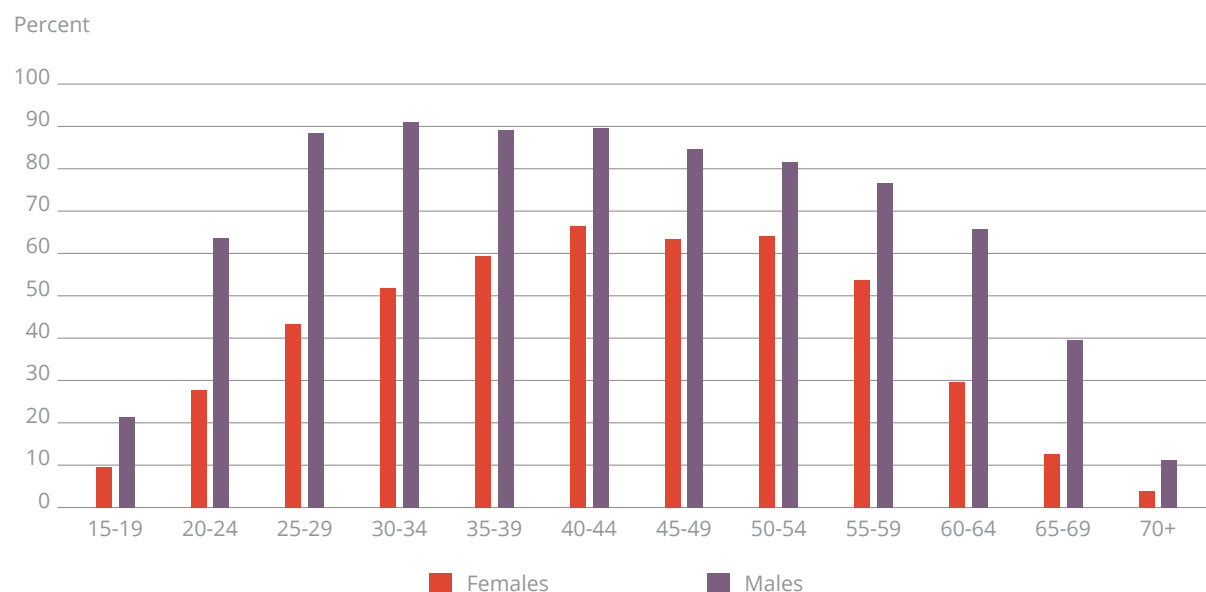
UNEMPLOYED YOUTH, YOUTH WORKING INFORMALLY AND YOUNG HOUSEHOLDS

Young people, especially from poor, rural, marginalized, excluded and high-risk groups, represent a greater challenge in order for them to be fully engaged in the social, economic and political life of the country. Approximately 15.4 percent of the population is between 15 and 24 years old,¹⁶⁷ which implies that the number of youths entering the labor market every year is very high. Active participation of ethnically diverse youth in the labor sector is critical to achieve the 2030 Agenda and other related frameworks, which requires the healthy transition of young people into adulthood. In 2018, 77 percent of youth were working in the informal sector,¹⁶⁸ making this group one of the most vulnerable to the current pandemic-

driven economic crisis. It also makes them less likely to forgo seeking medical care or paying out of pocket when they do need medical help because informal workers are not eligible for copayments for a wide range of health services and products. Youth employed in the informal sector are not covered by sick leave and thus more likely to continue working even when sick, with consequences for disease control in the context of a pandemic.

The employment rate of young men in the Kyrgyz Republic remains higher than that of young women.¹⁶⁹ The most significant gap is observed in the 20–34 age group, which is due to the fact that young women leave work due to childbirth, as reflected in the shortage of kindergartens and the low coverage of children in preschool education throughout the country (25 percent).¹⁷⁰

Figure 12. Employment by gender and age group in 2019 (%)



Source: NSC, 2020, *Report on Women and Men: 2015-2019*

167 NSC, Resident population of the Kyrgyz Republic as of January 1, 2021. Available at: <http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/naselenie/>

168 ILO (2018). Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/shinyapps/bulkexplorer32/>

169 NSC (2020). Op. cit.

170 A. Avdeev (2021). Op. cit.

During the community level consultations conducted by WFP in April-May 2021, young households with infants who are not supported by their parents emerged to be another category particularly at risk to be left behind, given the high unemployment and informality youth are subjected to and the high rate of teenage/early pregnancies.

RETURNED AND INTERNAL MIGRANTS, MIGRANT WORKERS, AND HOUSEHOLDS DEPENDENT ON REMITTANCES

According to the *Joint Report on Migration in Kyrgyzstan* of the Kyrgyz State Department on Migration,¹⁷¹ more than 50,000 people leave the country as labor migrants annually and the total number of Kyrgyz citizens living abroad is more than 750,000. It is estimated that about 76 percent of migrants are under 35 years old and about 53 percent of labor migrants are women.¹⁷² Most labor migrants (over 95 percent) work within member-countries of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). Economic migrants and their families typically face multiple vulnerabilities and deprivations, including poverty. The COVID-19 crisis has triggered the return of labour migrants due to shrinking employment and labour market opportunities in the countries of destination.

Both migrants remaining abroad and returning home are at risk of becoming food insecure.¹⁷³ As a coping mechanism, 86 percent of interviewed returning migrants had to reduce food intake during the pandemic.¹⁷⁴ Households dependent on remittances are very often made

up of people who, even if working, rely on remittances as their main source of income. With remittances needed primarily to cover basic consumption needs, many families have limited or no savings to cushion the shocks triggered by a fall in or the cessation of remittances. This will in its turn affect consumption patterns and households' capacities to meet food, health, and education needs. Return migration also puts additional pressure on an already strained health system. Their access to health and social services is also hampered by the registration system, propiska, requiring migrants to be registered to access urban public services such as healthcare, water, education, energy, etc. To obtain the city registration, migrants need to legalize their residences and complete additional paperwork, which is an expensive and time-consuming process especially in the light of unsteady, seasonal or part-time employment.

More than 277,000 children have one migrant worker parent and 99,000 have both parents working overseas.¹⁷⁵ In these cases, children are left in the care of relatives, in residential institutions, or in informal foster care with friends or neighbours – sometimes without formalized guardianship arrangements. Lack of parental care can lead to detrimental effects on the psycho-social development and academic performance of children¹⁷⁶ and children staying with family members are at increased risk of experiencing violence and abuse. Children who remain behind while their parents are in migration are at higher risk of child labour.¹⁷⁷

171 Joint Report on Migration in Republic of Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Armenia, Republic of Tajikistan, and the Russian Federation. Bishkek, 2018, available at: <http://rce.kg/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Edinyj-doklad-final.pdf>

172 Joint Report on Migration in Republic of Kyrgyzstan. Bishkek, 2015, available at: <http://rce.kg/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Edinyj-doklad-final.pdf>

173 WFP (2021). Food Security Situation in the Kyrgyz Republic

174 IOM (2021) Kyrgyzstan: Study on the Socioeconomic Effects of COVID-19 on Returnees. Vienna.

175 MICS 2018

176 Quoted in Izidool + Situation Analysis on Adolescent and Youth Suicides and Attempted Suicides in Kyrgyzstan UNICEF (2020) Bishkek

177 2020 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor: Kyrgyz Republic, Bureau of International Labor Affairs



Global, cross-boundary, regional and sub-regional perspectives

OVERVIEW

Global and regional interactions significantly shape the development pathways of countries in the modern world. Peace and security, economic growth, and even political stability depend on partnerships with global and regional partners, military alliances, and economic unions, including relationships with neighbouring countries. The Kyrgyz Republic's international cooperation frameworks were redefined and adapted following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The Kyrgyz Republic has been an active member in the UN since 1992 and WTO since 1998, with open and diverse international partnerships and diplomatic relations. Globally, Russia, China, the EU and US have been key international partners of the Kyrgyz Republic, and the country engages with Central Asian states, especially Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, on security, as well as economic and political issues.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The Russian Federation has remained the key geostrategic, military, economic and political partner of the Kyrgyz Republic over the last 30 years contributing to its development. Russia is a key security guarantor, with a unified military base present in the country (including an airbase in Kant), and provides military equipment

(both donated and purchased) as well as training for personnel and exchange of experience, including joint military exercises. The Kyrgyz Republic is part of the Russia-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (the CSTO), which guarantees support of members in case of external invasion. The Kyrgyz Republic is also part of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The country has joined the Russia-initiated Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in 2014 – an important step towards integration of trade cooperation, which includes a Custom Union with some of key trading partners (Russia, Kazakhstan). Russia has remained the largest trading partner over the years, with imports of USD 1.3 billion, and USD 241 million of exports in 2020.¹⁷⁸ Russia is the third largest investor with over USD 1.5 billion of investments between 1995 and 2020.¹⁷⁹

Russia does not provide large bilateral loans, but the Eurasian Development Bank (in which Russia holds 66 percent of shares) holds 14 percent of Kyrgyz sovereign debt. Russia continues to provide budget support (e.g., USD20 million in December 2020) and humanitarian assistance, and both countries established the Russian-Kyrgyz Development Fund which will enhance modernization of the Kyrgyz economy and country's integration into the EAEU, with disbursed funding of USD 433 million between 1995–2020.¹⁸⁰

178 All trade data in this chapter are based on preliminary 2020 data provided by the Statistics Office of the Kyrgyz Republic (<http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/download/dynamic/527/>; and <http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/download/dynamic/525/>)

179 Inbound foreign direct investments by country 1995-2020 Available at: (<http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/download/dynamic/395/>). Statistics Office of the Kyrgyz Republic. All data on FDI in this chapter refer to this source.

180 See: https://www.rkdf.org/ru/o_nas; <https://ru.sputnik.kg/economy/20210322/1051853697/rkfr-kolichestvo-kreditov.html>

Russian language is the official language in the Kyrgyz Republic, and widely spoken, with most online and traditional media having a Russian-language version. Historic cultural ties remain strong. Russia is also a destination for 85 percent of Kyrgyz emigrants. Considering the close partnership, the Government takes into account the position of the Russian Federation in diplomatic affairs, international alliances, economic and investment policies, security and military partnerships, and some domestic issues.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The People's Republic of China is an increasingly important partner of the Kyrgyz Republic contributing to its development. A 1063 km. shared border demarcation was completed in 2009. China is the largest bilateral lender,¹⁸¹ holding 42.6 percent of the country's overall sovereign debt, a portion of which went to finance key infrastructure within the Belt and Road Initiative.¹⁸² It is also the largest investor in the country, investing USD 3.1 billion in 1995–2020, and an important trade partner – second largest importer (USD 736.8 million) in 2020 [sixth export partner with USD 43.2 million]. With growing economic cooperation, the countries also cooperate in political and military fields. China provided military equipment valued at for over USD 28 million¹⁸³ in the period of 1992–2013, and joint military (mostly anti-terrorist) exercises were held. The Government likewise cooperates with China on cybersecurity and counter-terrorism using the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Friendly and close relationships between China and the Kyrgyz Republic are marred with some community protests against

Chinese investments (e.g., in January 2019 and February 2020).

OTHER KEY PARTNERSHIPS

Western countries, including the European Union and the United States, have been important investment partners for the Kyrgyz Republic, with limited military, political and trade cooperation. Political dialogue takes place through a number of platforms, including C5+1 (Central Asian countries and the US), the EU-Kyrgyz Republic Cooperation Council, and EU-Kyrgyz Republic human rights dialogue. Trade levels between the West and the Kyrgyz republic are limited, The EU collectively was the fourth largest trading partner in 2020 with USD 259 million in exports and USD 50 million in imports. Canada is the second largest investor in the country with USD 2.4 billion invested in the 1995–2020 period – mostly for mining. And Great Britain invested approximately USD 1 billion in the same period. Western countries bilaterally do not hold large shares of Kyrgyz sovereign debt, but multilateral banks, including the World Bank Group, EBRD and EIB hold around 28 percent of it. Western countries are vocal on issues of the democratic space and rule of law in the country. Many of them remain important development partners for the country by providing funding to a wide range of socio-economic development projects, as well as by supporting democratic institutions, rule of law, media and human rights. Their support has been crucial for enabling civil society to work on sensitive issues and promoting compliance with human rights.

The Kyrgyz Republic actively engages in the activities of the United Nations platforms, including the UN Economic

181 All information on sovereign debt in this chapter is as of September 2020. Source: World Bank https://cfr.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/Country%20Presentation%20_KYRGYZ%20REPUBLIC_KR%20public%20debt%20%282020-2023%29%20RUSS.pdf

182 Projects financed within the Belt and Road Initiative are presented in: Roman Mogilevskii, Kyrgyzstan and the Belt and Road Initiative, UCA WORKING PAPER #50, 2019. See: <https://ucentralasia.org/Content/Downloads/UCA-IPPA-Wp50%20-%20ENG.pdf>

183 Kozhemyakin S.V. Foreign policy of Kyrgyzstan in the mirror of integration processes in Central Asia // Post-Soviet continent. — 2014. — № 1 (1). — С. 112; Mikhnevich S.V. Promoting the development of trade and the PRC's approaches to the provision of international assistance // Russia and China: problems of strategic interaction: collection of the Eastern Center. — 2014. — № 15. — С. 53

Commission for Europe (UNECE), UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP) and UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA). Within these organizations, the Kyrgyz Republic engages in cooperation in the areas of water, energy and environment, sustainable transport, transit and connectivity, trade, statistics, innovation and technology for sustainable development, as well as gender issues.

CENTRAL ASIAN STATES AND OTHER PARTNERS

Sharing common history and cultural similarities, the Kyrgyz Republic engages in close cooperation with Central Asian states, especially its neighbors – Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Both bilateral and multilateral meetings of the highest Central Asian decision-makers take place regularly. Yet regional integration and connectivity and ‘horizontal integration’ (as opposed to ‘vertical integration’ through large players such as Russia and China) in Central Asia have not been fully harnessed, despite continuing opportunities to expand. Kazakhstan is the fourth largest investment partner with USD1.35 billion invested in 1995–2020, as well as being an important trade partner (USD 500 million in imports, USD 293.8 million in exports in 2020). Likewise, Kazakhstan is an important provider of humanitarian support, and a key partner for the transit of goods. Notable trade volumes also exist with Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan’s cooperation and role in the Kyrgyz Republic is growing under the greater regional cooperation policies adopted by the two countries, including humanitarian support, joint enterprises, and investments.

Trading relationships are uneven in other Central Asian countries, especially with Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, partly because Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and

Uzbekistan are not part of the EAEU, but also because of the similarities of their economies.¹⁸⁴ The Kyrgyz government has been appealing to abolish (reduce) trade barriers between Central Asian countries. The Government has also been supporting the peace process and cooperation with Afghanistan within the Heart of Asia process, and the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA). In addition, the Government cooperates with other Central Asian states on economic cooperation, security, cybersecurity, counter-terrorism, military cooperation (including joint exercises), and many other areas both bilaterally as well as through CIS, CSTO, SCO, OSCE, CoE and other organizations.

The close cooperation notwithstanding, there are several issues that mar the overall friendly relationships of the Kyrgyz Republic with other Central Asian states. As discussed earlier, incomplete delimitation of the border with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan triggers intermittent border conflicts that contribute to political tensions especially between the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. Water resources remain an important issue of concern and dialogue in Central Asia. The Interstate Water Use Coordination Commission was established in 1992 and regulates water quotas annually, with the 1998 agreement on Naryn-Syrdarya basin water based on the “water for fuel and electricity” principle. The agreement stopped operating effectively in 2006, raising negative reactions by various sides. The Kyrgyz Government has been proposing to reestablish the Naryn-Syrdarya basin agreement between four Central Asian states that envisages the use of a compensatory mechanism. The Government has also effectively resigned from the participation in the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea. The Kyrgyz government claims that 45 percent of all water resources of the

¹⁸⁴ Uzbekistan became an EAEU observer at the end of 2020.

region are formed in Kyrgyz mountains.¹⁸⁵ Climate and demographic changes and changing economic policies (e.g., intensive agriculture development), as well as ineffective water management pose a risk of long-term tensions over water resources in the region.¹⁸⁶

Recent developments in Afghanistan indicate growing risks to regional stability and security that could impact the Kyrgyz Republic, including transport and connectivity, regional energy projects (CASA-1000), as well as drug trafficking, and violent extremism. The domestic and foreign policies of the Taliban government and its ability to control various groups inside the country, as well as the position of key global and regional players to the new Afghan government are yet to define future ramifications for Central Asian countries, including the Kyrgyz Republic. The Kyrgyz government has been supportive in establishing contacts with the Taliban government, and provided humanitarian support in September and October 2021, advocating for continued humanitarian support to the people of Afghanistan.

GEOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS

To overcome landlocked geographical isolation, the Kyrgyz Republic is part of several regional infrastructure initiatives in transport connectivity and energy,¹⁸⁷ financed and implemented through multiple mechanisms.¹⁸⁸ The geographic location of the Kyrgyz Republic creates considerable opportunities to use existing corridors for international transport and transit traffic. At the same time, international transport corridors provide practically the only way for the country to access regional markets for goods and services. The country has high transport costs due to the inadequate development of its transport infrastructure, existing non-physical barriers to cross-border transport, and difficult climatic and geographic conditions, especially in winter. In addition, the Kyrgyz Republic has a heavily road-centric transport system with road transport providing annually an average of more than 95 percent of freight and about 99 percent of passenger traffic. Achieving a more balanced modal split between road and rail transport would help to increase the sustainability and effectiveness of the transport networks. In addition, strengthening inter-modality through interfaces – such as dry ports which serve as an efficient crossover point where freight can switch modes without delays or damage – would increase the effectiveness of transport systems.

185 <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2019/11/30/ca-partnership/>

186 <https://asiaplustj.info/ru/news/tajikistan/society/20201127/fao-strani-tsentralnoi-azii-neekonomno-ispolzuyut-vodu-dlya-orosheniya>

187 Refer to: <https://www.carecprogram.org/uploads/CAREC-Regional-Cooperation-Strategy-in-Energy-ru.pdf>

188 These include: CAREC, ADB, Belt and Road Initiative, TRACECA, EAEU and others. Some notable projects include CASA-1000 (electricity powerline to South Asia), and currently being discussed China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railroad.



Financing for development of the Kyrgyz Republic: challenges and opportunities

OVERVIEW

The COVID-19 crisis and the recent political turmoil have resulted in economic contraction, leading to additional challenges to achieve the SDGs in the Kyrgyz Republic. To make matters worse, financial flows needed to accelerate progress are small relative to SDG investment needs. And there is limited room to take on more debt. The fall in GDP growth (–8.6 percent) in 2020 was the worst since the early 1990s. Given the large financing gap, it is obvious that all financing sources, including public, private, domestic and international, will be needed, within the respective roles of these financing sources. Nevertheless, the country has been facing challenges in terms of financing for development, such as a relatively small domestic financial system and a narrow capital market, constrained public resources, a small domestic market, a weak investment climate, and limited capacity to mobilize domestic sources of financing coupled with high development needs.¹⁸⁹

PUBLIC FINANCING

Challenges. The majority of financing for development needs are obtained from the public sector, particularly the state budget. Fiscal and balance of payments deficits, public debt issues, inefficient tax administrations, and the lack of efficacy in relation to public spending are all major challenges in financing the SDGs for the public sector. Capital expenditures accounted for 6.2 percent of GDP that are not enough despite considerable need for SDGs investment. The main source of public funding is tax revenue which is likewise insufficient to cover state expenditures due to the often-inefficient tax administration systems in place and the relatively large informal sector. In addition, tax avoidance and evasion are also a problem. In 2015, the IMF estimated that around 30 percent of potential gains from public investment are lost due to inefficiencies in public investment processes.

Table 2. Fiscal revenues, grants and expenditures, % of GDP

Revenues	Revenues, excluding grants	Grants	Tax revenue	Current expenditures	Capital expenditures	Net lending (+) / net borrowing (-)
32.4	30.1	2.3	16.8	27.2	6.2	-1.0

Source: World Development Indicators 2019

¹⁸⁹ Usabaliev, Ulukbek (2020). Infrastructure Financing in Asian Landlocked Developing Countries: Challenges, Opportunities and Modalities. ESCAP.

Opportunities. There is an opportunity provided by the United Nations, specifically, through the Joint SDG Trust Fund Joint Programme for an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF). This Framework was launched in 2020 to enable the Government to create a holistic, comprehensive and integrated financing strategy. The INFF will support the authorities to develop equitable, SDG-costed and gender-responsive budgets and enhance the effective, transparent and efficient use of public budgets aligned with the National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic and SDG plans. Currently, work is underway with the participation of international organizations on a new tax code in order to optimize tax administration.

PRIVATE FINANCING

Challenges. Geographical and climate conditions adversely affect the investment climate in Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), including the Kyrgyz Republic. Many LLDCs in Asia have mountainous terrain, with inhospitable climates, unfavourable topography, and low population densities. These conditions make the cost of investment expensive and investment opportunities for foreign investors relatively unattractive. The Kyrgyz Republic, as a landlocked country without access to the seaports, is not an exception. Thus, the business environment is one of the main challenges for the country and plays a substantial role in attracting (or not attracting) investment for the SDGs and other development priorities.

Transparency and predictability of the public procurement regime is another challenge for foreign investors. This has a strong impact on whether private and foreign investors can operate in the various markets on a competitive basis with state-

owned operators for different projects. State-owned enterprises (SOEs) and the competitive regime with the private sector can significantly influence how much space is left for private domestic and foreign investment in the markets. The dominant position of SOEs creates market distortions, thus affecting the potential for foreign and private participation. The majority of SOEs are not commercially viable because they are often inefficiently operated. Their recurring financial losses worsen government budget deficits, increase debt levels and result in poor infrastructure maintenance, service quality and network coverage which can also deter foreign and private participation.

The financial sector is a bank-dominated system and is mostly exposed to asset-liability maturity mismatch. The banking sector has mostly substantial short-term resources, while financing the SDGs and other development priorities require predominantly long-term investments. Even though the financial sector is stable and growing, the level of financial intermediation is still lower than the economy needs. Also, the financial sector is unable to provide sufficient long-term financing. In 2020, loans (of the financial sector to the Kyrgyz economy) to GDP ratio was 31.0 percent.¹⁹⁰ Pension funds and insurance companies would be well suited to fund development needs because of their long-term liabilities, but they still represent a small source of financing. The biggest constraint to the development of a strong domestic private equity industry is the narrow base of domestic investors.

As of 2020, an unprecedented net outflow of foreign direct investment in the amount of USD 511.6 million was recorded.¹⁹¹ The outflow of capital is clearly a significant challenge for the private sector.

¹⁹⁰ Source: National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

Opportunities. The private sector and foreign direct investment (FDI), including public-private partnerships (PPPs), are increasingly considered as a viable solution to meeting the investment needs of the country. The private sector is involved in investment projects through PPPs (joint

ventures, concessions, etc.) and direct investment. There are six PPP projects in the Kyrgyz Republic with a total investment of USD 140 million since 1990. PPP projects are invested in sectors such as ICT, energy, water supply and sanitation.

Table 3. PPP Investment Projects in Central Asia (1990–2020)

Host country	Total PPP Projects	Total Investment in PPP (millions of US dollars)
Kazakhstan	48	5,481
Kyrgyz Republic	6	140
Tajikistan	5	961
Uzbekistan	10	765

Source: PPP Knowledge Lab, <https://pppknowledgelab.org/countries>

International experience suggests that the following factors are important for foreign direct investments: socio-political stability, stable macroeconomic environment, access to global markets as well as sufficient and accessible resources, including the presence of relevant human capital.

The Kyrgyz Republic has made notable progress towards achieving macroeconomic stability during the past decade. Also, the authorities made significant efforts to protect public health and the economy during the pandemic. The immediate objective is to restore macroeconomic stability by finding a balance between supporting the economy and inclusive growth and starting to rebuild buffers to strengthen resilience. Structural reforms to increase investment, exports and competitiveness, will be essential to raise growth and private investment in the medium term and create jobs for the young and growing population. On the other hand, the presence of relevant human capital in the Kyrgyz Republic is reflected through strong social capital and other assets, such as a high demographic dividend that still needs to be reaped and

the high educational attainment of its population, which has the potential to be transformed into quality skills.

INTERNATIONAL FINANCING

Challenges. Public debt as a potential source for financing the SDGs has limited room to take on more debt. As of 2020, the public debt to GDP ratio reached 63.6 percent, limiting the Government's ability for additional borrowing. The Kyrgyz authorities have been working on restructuring and optimizing the public external debt structure; however, debt sustainability also depends on the effective use of borrowed resources. There is merit to exploring options that better identify fiscal space for productive SDG investments. A balance sheet approach that clarifies how borrowed resources are used, taking into account public assets created, can lead to better understanding of the impact of investment on fiscal revenue and GDP.

Opportunities. International financing is a main element for the Kyrgyz Republic and a great opportunity to supplement the country's domestic resources. Remittances,

ODA, multilateral development banks (MDBs) and bilateral development partners remain the main source of external funding and opportunity for the country. In the meantime, international innovative private financing opportunities have been increasing globally and can also be seen as a viable supplementary opportunity for the country to diversify its funding sources.

International official funding through ODA and the MDBs,¹⁹² which is available to the country, are mostly concessional – with long-term maturity, low interest rates, and often including grant elements. Some of the funding opportunities include:

- **The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)** will play a crucial role in Central Asia and have placed economic connectivity as its core agenda. During the last decade China has become the largest bilateral investor and one of the largest trade partners for the country. Additionally, investment projects under China's Belt and Road Initiative can boost foreign direct investment.
- Many of the regional development agencies such as the **Eurasian Development Fund**, **Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC)**, **Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA)** have

also regional funding sources that can help with project preparation, including project funding.

- **The Russian-Kyrgyz Development Fund** is another source of financing with the participation of Russian capital to modernize the Kyrgyz economy and adapt to Eurasian economic integration.

- **The Climate Finance** framework provides a great opportunity for the Kyrgyz Republic, especially when the country promotes green economy, low-carbon growth, and energy efficiency as its national priorities (Annex D).

- **Islamic finance** is another potential source of financing for the SDGs, due the ample pool of capital available. The main principles of Islamic finance are suitable for long-term investment. Islamic principles of financing are defined based on asset-oriented systems and the principles of risk-sharing and profit-sharing. However, they prohibit charging and paying interest.

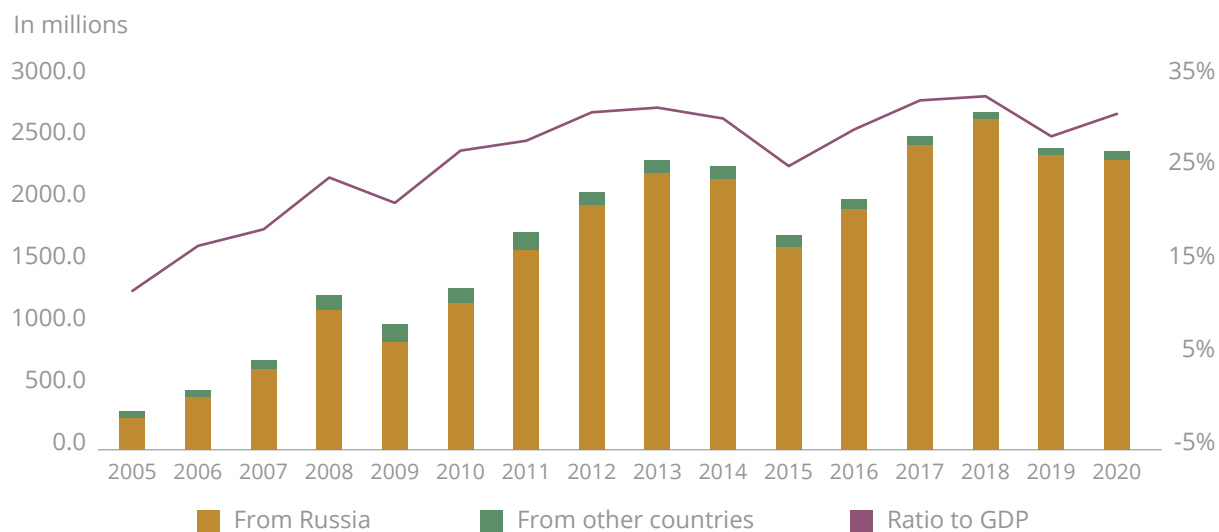
- **Global pension funds** are another viable potential source of funding. Large pools of financial assets are held in global pension funds and insurance funds. According to the OECD, the total pension fund assets held in OECD countries in both public and private sector funds amounted to around USD 35 trillion at the end of 2020.

Figure 13. International flows (+ net inflow/- net outflow) in US dollars



Source: NBKR, World Bank. Data on ODA in 2020 are not yet available

¹⁹² World Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Eurasian Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, and others development partners.

Figure 14. Remittances to the Kyrgyz Republic (net inflow)

Source: NBKR, World Bank. Data on ODA in 2020 is not yet available

To finance the large development needs, there is a clear need to efficiently mobilize domestic and international resources, increase expenditure efficiency, improve public debt management, reduce illicit financial flows, increase transparency and predictability of the procurement regime, take advantages of public-private partnerships, promote FDI fiscal and financial incentives, and improve the investment climate. Towards this end, the Government should take full advantage of the technical assistance in capacity building from the international community to increase domestic resource mobilization and enhance the composition, effectiveness and efficiency of public

spending. This can be done in line with the SDGs and the country's other development aspirations, while considering all relevant global potential sources of financing and exploring new sources of international funding.

The United Nations, through the Integrated National Financing Framework, is positioned to support the country in developing its transformation potential as well as catalyze and use its convening power for supporting change within the sustainable development framework and ensuring "Leave no one behind" is not Left Behind in financing for development.



Partnerships for the SDGs

The history of partnerships between the United Nations and the Kyrgyz Republic are based on trust, national ownership and leadership, transparency and accountability. The UN's partners in the Kyrgyz Republic include the Government, international financial institutions, academia and research think-tanks, workers' and employers' and business membership organizations, as well as various NGOs and CSOs.

Among government ministries and agencies, partnerships have been developed and strengthened with a wide range of government counterparts. These include, but are not limited to the Parliament, the Central Election Commission, the Office of the President, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry and Melioration; the Ministry of Economy; the Ministry of Finance; the Ministry of Emergency Situations, the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs; the Mandatory Health Insurance Fund; the Ministry of Education and Science; the Ministry of Internal Affairs; the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, the National Statistics Committee, the National Bank, the Investment Promotion and Protection Agency, the State Personnel Service, the Department of External Migration, as well as the State Agency for Local Self-Governance and Interethnic Relations. Other partnerships have been created with the State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry; the Supreme Court, the State Committee on Informational Technologies and Communication; the State Committee on

Industry, Energy, and Subsoil Management, the State Committee for National Security, the State Agency for Youth, Physical Culture and Sports, as well as the Osh and Batken provincial governments and LSGs.

The UN family also has extensive connections with civil society organizations, human rights advocates, lawyers, workers' and employers' and business membership organizations, women's groups, diaspora, and migrant associations abroad, and volunteer groups. Many of these organizations and civic activists are facing significant challenges, and the UN continues to help address their specific fragility. Most recently, many of these civil society actors and organizations have been playing an indispensable leadership role in the COVID-19 response, notably in reaching out to vulnerable people, often in remote places.

One of successful examples of partnerships was the joint socioeconomic assessment "COVID-19 in the Kyrgyz Republic: Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment and Policy Response" prepared by the United Nations and led by UNDP, the Asian Development Bank, and the Economic Policy Research Institute in the Kyrgyz Republic's Ministry of Economy, in support of national efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The report described how the global, regional and national macroeconomic shocks arising from the COVID-19 pandemic affected the Kyrgyz population, and laid out policy recommendations to mitigate these negative socioeconomic effects.¹⁹³

193 The Report can be found at: <https://www.adb.org/documents/covid-19-kyrgyz-republic-socioeconomic-vulnerability-impact>

During the pandemic, the UN provided numerous policy recommendations to the Government. One of the innovative recommendations called for the creation of a “green corridor” between neighboring countries for the uninterrupted supply of essential goods. Based on the UN’s recommendation, the President called for the members of the Eurasian Economic Union to work together to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 health crisis. Specifically, the countries initiated a “green corridor” for the import of food and medical supplies among the concerned countries. Building on this, the UN Resident Coordinators in the region held joint discussions to explore how the UN could best support authorities to learn lessons from the impact of COVID-19 and design efficient transport corridors to enable more effective responses to future crises. Based on this approach, the UN Resident Coordinator invited the UNECE and the UN-OHRLS, together with the UN Development Coordination Office, to lead a dialogue with governments in the region on transport corridors.

The UN’s partnerships with international financial institutions (IFIs), and the Development Partners Coordination Council (DPCC) have been particularly crucial.¹⁹⁴ These partnerships facilitated impact assessments and analysis, financing and resource-mobilization, policy advocacy on urgent macroeconomic measures in order to provide relief, effective programme design and delivery, and planning for the longer term. For example, the fiscal authorities in partnership with the DPCC, including the United Nations, launched the first critical steps for enhancing the composition, effectiveness and efficiency of public spending in line with the National Development Strategy and the Sustainable Development Goals. Despite this progress, there is still considerable room to utilize development financing in a more consistent and strategic way.

Turning to the challenges for improved partnerships, several points are worth highlighting, which, if addressed forcefully, could have a significant impact on improving development cooperation.

a. In the last four years, the Government has rolled out three-medium term strategies: Taza Koom (or 40 steps), Unity Trust and Creation Strategy, and now the new medium-term plan that is currently being developed. This creates uncertainty with development partners and impacts long term development programming. It also leads to policy inconsistencies and somersaults by the Government that requires the development partners to constantly revise their programming priorities and commitments

b. The absence of a law on strategic planning means that every new government needs to present its own programming priorities. The sense of continuity in government programming is therefore missing. This forces each new government to focus on short term goals which makes it impossible for long term planning for sustainable development results.

c. Development cooperation between government and development partners is often transactional, with state institutions wanting funding for short term immediate activities prioritized by the minister in charge, rather than to focus on strategic priorities that would have impact on the overall development situation.

d. Development dialogue between the Government and the development partners has slipped in recent years. Cooperation started quite well in 2018 with the creation of a coordination council co-chaired by the Prime Minister and other co-chairs from the DPCC. Since then, the quality of the dialogue has deteriorated and the focus of state institutions has been mostly with a view to receiving commitments

194 For a description of the Development Partners’ Coordination Council, see: <http://www.donors.kg/en/about-us>

for funding, rather than maintaining a dialogue on strategic development priorities. The development partners are eager to support and complement the national development discourse, and it would be important for the state to create and sustain the environment to make this happen. Two key chances for enhanced development dialogue that were missed were the inability of the state to take forward the outcomes from the high-level development conference of 2019 and the reluctance to organize a reflection discussion on the lessons learned from development cooperation during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

e. On the development partner side, many development partners still do not appreciate the importance of government ownership and leadership of development cooperation. Opportunities to strengthen and support national ownership and leadership of development coordination need to be supported by all development partners. This may include dissolving the current coordination architecture in favor of a new coordination architecture that may be agreed with the Government.

f. While the DPCC has remained an important platform for information exchange and discussion, its potential needs to be fully explored, in order for it to become a platform where the narratives on the SDGs are fully shared by all its members and the SDGs become the abiding foundation for their respective agency programming. In this regard, the possibilities for joint and complementary programming by the members need to be more fully explored as well.

g. It is important that the Government shows a stronger appreciation for the role of civil society in development implementation. There is a strong bias within state institutions against civil society actors and media working on

civil and political rights issues. Political transformation in the Kyrgyz Republic has been championed by active civil society and independent media; and their members and leaders are as patriotic and committed to the social and economic transformation of their country as the political leadership. The challenge for civil society in the country is to appreciate that while there may be several areas of disagreement and contestation with state institutions, there are also areas of potential agreement and joint action. It is therefore incumbent to use these areas of potential agreement as foundations for constructive dialogue and complementary partnership between government and civil society.

h. On the UN side, the reform of the UN Development System imposes new expectations on UN agencies to transition from being inwardly focused to an outward facing agenda, with the priorities being the national development agenda, and the UN role being expanded to focus more on brokering, convening and facilitating dialogues and partnerships to support the national development agenda, rather than on project financing that will come to respective UN agencies. With the new Cooperation Framework for 2023–26 to be developed by the UNCT, the UN will seek to elaborate how it plans to play this role. The starting point will be the development of the INFF and its follow-on processes.

i. One of the positives of the UNDS reform is the fact that the distinction between resident and non-resident agencies has been abolished. The UN Resident Coordinator can now draw on all of the assets and resources of the UN System to provide high quality policy and other support to the Government. The challenge for the UN is to demonstrate that it can mobilize its best efforts in coherent, complementary, strategic ways to support the Kyrgyz Republic in its development agenda.



Multidimensional risk analysis

OVERVIEW

Risks to sustainable development in the Kyrgyz Republic are diverse, and, if not mitigated, the development gains achieved in recent years could be reversed in such areas as poverty reduction, maternal and child health, rule of law, human rights, and attainment of the SDGs. Risks are fundamentally interconnected, reinforcing each other. This chapter provides analysis of risks based on data from the Regional Monthly Review conducted in February 2021, Conflict and Peace Analysis, SERF and COVID-19 specific analyses, and uses the SDGs risks framework which identifies 11 key risk areas.¹⁹⁵ The Kyrgyz Republic has undergone multiple crises in its history, including economic collapse after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, three extra-constitutional changes of power in 2005, 2010, and 2020, the COVID-19 epidemic, border clashes with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, in addition to multiple natural disasters.

The RMR identified three multidimensional risks with high likelihood and highest impact that go along with relatively limited national capacity to address them: economic stability, democratic space, and political stability. Social cohesion, justice and rule of law, and regional and internal security risks are moderately likely but have very high potential impact on the country's development trajectory. Public health risks are very high considering the COVID-19 pandemic and the considerable

scale of the third wave in the summer 2021. The pandemic's long-term impacts on health, nutrition and other areas are yet to be seen. Other risks that threaten the development pathway of the Kyrgyz Republic are briefly reviewed below. Annex C provides a further summary of the many elements that constitute the multidimensional risk analysis framework.

POLITICAL STABILITY

With over 30 governments in 30 years, frequent internal government reshuffling, and three extra-constitutional changes of Presidential power, political instability remains an important risk for sustainable development in the Kyrgyz Republic. Underlying factors for instability are multiple. They include weak political institutions, suboptimal economic development and public services, as well as rule of law and human rights challenges that create public grievances and dissatisfaction. The risk is assessed as high by experts and the RMR. The developmental impact of political instability is significant – creating overall unpredictability, making it harder to carry out sustainable and consistent policies to overcome development challenges. This creates lack of confidence among government civil servants and recipients and various rights-holders. The scenario of larger and/or protracted political crises, with possible narrowing of political diversity and pluralism could be a major threat. This scenario sees

¹⁹⁵ See: https://unitednations.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/UNSDCF_CP/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B-374DEE75-E84A-4859-BB05-EA606E8AF84B%7D&file=Annex%204_Multidimensional%20SDG%20Risk%20Analysis%20Framework.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true

divisions among various groups of people under growing polarization over values, popular resentment over failures of the government, including the failure to deliver on electoral promises or frequent rotations of the government. Such a scenario could derail achievement of the SDGs and other development aspirations. Positive triggers to mitigate negative scenarios include peaceful, fair and transparent elections, reforms that improve effectiveness, transparency and accountability of government policies and programmes, and inclusive economic growth based on more participatory governance.

DEMOCRATIC SPACE

The Kyrgyz Republic has been characterized as an ‘island of democracy’ in Central Asia. Even though there have been regular challenges posed by various legislative initiatives aimed at curtailing freedoms, the country has retained a vibrant civil society, space for the democratic protest, and relatively free media. It is important to emphasize that most organizations and civic activism are located in Bishkek. Over the years, however, different political forces have been trying to curb the democratic space through restrictive legislative initiatives, e.g., the June 2021 law on non-commercial organizations or laws that limit access by users to data over the internet and block websites without court decisions.¹⁹⁶ The adoption of laws that may potentially restrict civic space are often criticized for the lack of proper, inclusive public consultations. Some political and public actors persistently use rhetoric accusing civil society and independent media of acting in conflict with national traditions and spreading a culture alien to the nation’s values, operating on foreign (US and European) grants or advocating for

the rights of minority groups. Some CSOs, human rights advocates, and mass media are especially vulnerable to increasing hostility, and smear campaigns, especially those who work on civil and political rights issues^{xxvi}.¹⁹⁷

ECONOMIC STABILITY

The country has made significant progress in eradicating poverty and promoting economic growth, reaching middle-income status in 2014. At the same time, the “doing business” environment, investment climate, as well as external shocks, including the COVID-19 pandemic, are factors that increase the risk of economic downturn, which, in turn, could slow economic prosperity for all. Geographical isolation, and dependency on extractive industries and remittances open the Kyrgyz economy to other shocks. These fundamental constraints are exacerbated by inconsistent economic policies. Government activities around the Kumtor gold mine (introducing external management with the potential of nationalization) as well as reported pressure on businesses through arbitrary fiscal policies and the state’s control may contribute to creating an environment that limits investments and innovation in the country. The weak Kyrgyz judicial system often fails to protect the interests of business and investors and to act as an independent arbiter in the resolution of legal disputes. If reforms are not undertaken, the worst-case scenario is that the country will not be able to address its balance of payment and budget deficit problems, that the economy will not be innovative, and that the country could remain on the economic periphery of global markets. While the risk is moderate, the developmental impact could be very high.

196 <https://cabar.asia/ru/popravki-v-zakon-ob-nko-v-kyrgyzstane-suzhayut-grazhdanskoe-prostranstvo>; <https://rus.azattyk.org/a/31382305.html>

197 Supported recommendation during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Ensure that everyone, including human rights defenders and journalists, can exercise their right to freedom of expression, including online, without fear of reprisals, in compliance with international law and standards”

SOCIAL COHESION

Ethnic and other forms of discrimination and exclusion^{xxvii}, especially in the south of the country, inadequate human rights protection, regional divisions, and growing polarization over values are the key drivers of risks to social cohesion. The Government adopted and now implements multiple policies to mitigate such risks, including the Kyrgyz Jarany (civic identity) concept, and the Religious Policy concept^{xxviii}, Prevention of Violent Extremism and others. Tensions between ethnic groups nonetheless persist^{xxix}, although such tensions seem to have faded in recent years. As for polarization, antagonisms between religious and secular groups have increased in recent years. The tensions are manifested, among other ways, through cleavages around the roles of women^{xxx} and the role of religion in society. The tensions may affect the fundamental aspirations of the country as the issue of secularization reappeared during the constitutional reform discussions. In the best-case scenario, the Government will be able to balance various views and narratives, and regulate identity spheres and diversity. In the worst-case scenario, contradictions will become irreconcilable and may lead to identity-based politics and civil conflicts in the long-term. These risks are moderate, but their potential impact is high.

GENDER EQUALITY AND EXCLUSION FROM PARTICIPATION

The growing role of conservative beliefs and practices impacts the gender equality agenda. The risk of further deterioration of women's rights (and their protection) remains high in the country. Traditional, often religion-based norms increasingly permeate societal structures, in conjunction with strong patriarchal values. These pose a risk of keeping women in a subordinate role within family and society, rendering women

dependent and limiting their decision-making power in determining their own life pathways in such areas as education, professional aspirations, participation in economic activities, communication and physical mobility, family planning and reproductive rights. This situation has led to an increased scale of gender-based violence, multiple and intersectional discrimination, social and economic dependence of women, and diminishing participation of women in decision making and politics^{xxxi}, thereby making advancement of women rights more difficult.

There are ongoing challenges for women, youth, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities and other groups' low representation in political decision-making fora. Hearing voices and solutions from women, youth, and minority groups from 'left behind' constituencies is a missing opportunity from the agenda for political stability and inclusive development. The political crisis in 2020 was accompanied by aggressive rhetoric, threatening statements and hate speech in social media platforms and discriminatory messages that stigmatized and dehumanized minorities, women, journalists and civil society activists. These were accompanied by threats of violence, in addition to physical and verbal abuse in public and private spaces and in social media networks.

JUSTICE AND THE RULE OF LAW

The rule of law, corruption, and judicial independence remains a concern in the Kyrgyz Republic. The judiciary has been criticized as remaining under political influence involving illegal practices within the system. There have been ongoing efforts to reform the judiciary and the police so as to root out corruption within its ranks. The public's perception of corruption within the judiciary and other state institutions remains high.¹⁹⁸ Current

198 See, for example, https://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/iri_poll_presentation-kyrgyzstan_july_2021-public_rus_final.pdf

risks to the rule of law are moderate, while the development impact is high. In the best-case scenario, the country carries out strong and consistent anti-corruption reform, strengthens institutions, impedes human rights violations, and upholds judicial independence and impartiality in line with international human rights standards^{xxxii}. Such measures would lead to improved trust and confidence in the state and its institutions and would rebound positively on economic growth. In the worst-case scenario, lack of reforms will lead to an imbalance between the branches of government (with a dominating role for the executive), erosion of democratic institutions, and capture of the state by various oligarchic groups, thereby limiting economic growth.

REGIONAL AND INTERNAL SECURITY RISKS

The risk of border conflicts with neighbouring countries remains high, with the possibility of escalation. The development impact of those conflicts is high, especially in areas directly affected by tensions, which could see reversals of development gains. In the best-case scenario, the countries concerned will be able to agree on delimitation of the border, and gradually settle disputes around natural resources,¹⁹⁹ and re-build trust and confidence between communities. In the worst-case scenario, localized conflicts may escalate into military actions between countries. Violent extremism risks are currently considered low, with limited number of terrorist attacks. But the risk remains and could be exacerbated with the growing role of political-religious movements, and if social issues are not addressed, especially among youth. The potential impact of radicalization and

violent extremism should be seen as very high, since it is directly linked to the risk of civil conflict between liberal and conservative groups. And certainly, the recent events in Afghanistan could have major – if still unforeseen – impacts on regional and internal security.

NATURAL DISASTER AND CLIMATE CHANGE RISKS

The Kyrgyz Republic is vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change. There have been 412 different natural disasters between 2015 and 2020.²⁰⁰ More than 3,000 earthquakes occur in the country each year with the latest having an over-5 magnitude that struck the Osh region in 2015 and 2017. There is a risk of a devastating earthquake of a magnitude of 8–9 on the Richter scale in most parts of the country. The country is facing increasingly frequent mudslides and seasonal flooding resulting in significant human and financial losses (33 percent of all registered emergencies). Droughts are becoming more regular. With respect to epidemics, human brucellosis is widespread and measles outbreaks are recurrent. The country is also exposed to technological hazards such as dam breaches or industrial contamination accidents. Climate change risks are multidimensional affecting livelihoods and economic activities, access to drinking water, food security, and peace and stability, notably along borders.

The Government has established a system of the multi-faceted emergency preparedness and response, led by the Ministry of Emergency Situations. The disaster risk reduction activities include legislation, policies, risk monitoring and mitigation of risks. Key challenges identified in this area are planning, budgeting, and

199 Such disputes may be further exacerbated by reported negative impact of climate change resulting in the scarcity of water. <https://www.bellingcat.com/resources/case-studies/2021/08/02/is-climate-change-heating-up-central-asias-border-disputes-clues-from-satellite-imagery/>

200 Annual Statistics from Ministry of Emergency Situations

implementation at the local level, along with issues related to the inter-sectoral coordination, governance, including building resilience of communities, disaster preparedness, and capacities for multi-hazard risk assessment and damage and loss data management.²⁰¹

PUBLIC HEALTH RISKS

Covid 19 showed that a weak health system is a liability for society at large, including the economy. The underfunded health system poses a risk at multiple levels. Primary Healthcare is underdeveloped which means that there is no effective means to contain mild cases of a future disease at this level and prevent hospital collapse. Moreover, high numbers of

underpaid doctors leave the country to seek better working conditions elsewhere, which means the country may not have the numbers and skills in the health workforce to prevent and tackle the next pandemic. Furthermore, a low level of digitalization poses a threat to disease surveillance which means that Kyrgyzstan may not be equipped to detect the early cases of an incipient outbreak. Lastly, suboptimal capacity to counter misinformation about health may lead to social unrest in response to health measures and low levels of vaccination. In sum, the health sector itself may pose a risk to the extent that it may not have the human and material resources to contain an incipient outbreak or epidemic in the future.

201 CADRI Scoping mission findings, 1-4 June 2021, Kyrgyz Republic



Strategic entry points for UN programming

The diagnostic in the preceding chapters has sought to give a snapshot of the development challenges and concerns facing the Kyrgyz Republic, as seen from the UN family's perspective. Those chapters laid out what are the challenges; this chapter now turns to how those challenges can be addressed with the support of the UN system.

As the preceding chapters discussed, the Kyrgyz Republic has made great strides in its development efforts over the last two decades, but still faces significant challenges. Prior to the pandemic, the economy was growing at an acceptable rate and the number of people living in poverty was trending downward, although pockets of poverty remain unacceptably high, such as among children, female-headed households, pensioners, certain ethnic groups, and individuals or families with household family members with disabilities. In short, the Kyrgyz Republic was on track to meet many of its national development goals and the SDGs and move toward the goal of becoming an upper middle-income country by 2030. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 crisis reversed or halted many of the gains being made and exposed some underlying structural issues that present significant hurdles going forward. These structural issues will remain even after the pandemic subsides and the economy resumes a positive trajectory.

In line with the Joint Report on Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) for Achieving Progress on the SDGs,²⁰² the structural issues include:

1 Exclusion and inequalities, defined to include multiple and intersecting discriminations, deprivations and injustices, are key development challenges facing the country in its journey to achieving its national development priorities and realization of the 2030 Agenda.

2 Reestablishing trust between government and society remains a critical lynchpin in achieving development aspirations. This will require concerted efforts among a wide range of stakeholders and constituencies that will be conducive only if there is an enabling democratic and civic space in place. Economic transformation cannot proceed without respect for human rights and the rule of law, and the resulting increase in social cohesion and reduction in potential political and social flashpoints.

3 There is a clear need for stronger integration of ongoing reforms, national development strategies, and sectoral programs, calling for stronger national coordination capacities.

202 Report on Kyrgyzstan's Progress on Sustainable Development Goals: A Review of Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support for Achieving Progress on Sustainable Development Goals (2019). See: https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/MAPS%20Report_ENG_Final_15May2019.pdf

4 Ensuring policy coherence, fixing statistical gaps, and addressing administrative and civil society capacities will be vital enabling factors for further progress towards achievement of the nationally defined development goals;

It is not an exaggeration to say that these factors are significant challenges that must be addressed if the Kyrgyz Republic is to reach its full potential for sustainable and equitable growth, while ensuring full respect, protection and fulfillment of the country's human rights commitments.

10.1 Strategic planning, budgeting and implementation

To address these structural issues, it will be important for policy-makers to give increasing attention to the quality and effectiveness of the planning and budget prioritization process in the near term, so as to lay the foundation for longer-term budgeting and programming. At present, there is no shortage of policy advice and recommendations put forward by governments, partner agencies, civil society, think tanks, and advocacy groups that lay out a whole range of options for encouraging and promoting human development and the 2030 Agenda. These different policy and program recommendations certainly warrant careful consideration, but, ultimately, the Government will need to identify and then implement a strategic set of policy and program choices that:

- are deemed priorities in their national context and that are in alignment with international norms;
- have the highest likelihood of generating significant improvements;
- can work synergistically; and
- have the best chance of being successfully implemented.

The task does not necessarily entail

selecting and implementing a wide range of policy options, but rather, following an orderly, participatory and transparent process of prioritizing among multiple (and often contending) policy options, all of which place competing demands on scarce public resources. To achieve this kind of transformation, the Government will need to link short-term priorities to their long-term development aspirations. Linking the short to the long term requires the Government to forego short-term politically and economically expedient decision-making in favour of making the tough political and economic choices that are involved in seeking long-term benefits.

Closely related to the notion of linking the short- to the long-term view is the understanding that COVID-19 has shown that “business as usual” cannot be sustained as an implicit governing model. If this model is maintained, then all social and economic classes will continue to be negatively affected, not just the poor and marginalized, further diminishing the likelihood of progress toward the Kyrgyz Republic's development aspirations.

The importance of linking short- and medium-term targets to longer-term priorities cannot be overstated, but how does the process of prioritizing multiple demands manifest itself in governmental decision-making? While the priorities chosen are ultimately decided by the Government, four guidelines are suggested to inform the policy and implementation debate that is required to make these decisions:

- Which policies and programs are most likely to improve the lives of those living on the margin and bring them into the economic mainstream through productive employment opportunities and improved social welfare and participation, in particular for women, youth and people with disabilities?
- Are there opportunities to exploit multiplier effects where one intervention

can have an impact on multiple objectives for improved human development and human security?

- In which ways are the views and concerns of stakeholders, particularly those lacking human security, being effectively and meaningfully factored into the decision-making process?
- In situations where resources are shifted from one program or initiative to another, can the shift be justified in terms of improved economic and social outcomes for the poor and marginalized?

10.2 Strengthening adaptive policies and institutional capacities

Jumpstarting and accelerating efforts to forcefully address sustainable development goals will require the Government to incorporate a commitment to strong, proactive and accountable governance frameworks that develop policies for both the public and private sectors. Such a commitment must be based on a long-term vision and leadership, shared norms and values, and rules and institutions that build trust and cohesion in line with the principles of non-discrimination and equality. At the same time, an important ingredient will be the capacity for flexibility and adaptation. In a complex society such as that in the Kyrgyz Republic, the outcome of any particular policy is inevitably uncertain. Policy-makers will need to follow a governance framework that is pragmatic and able to problem-solve and adapt collectively and rapidly.

From the UN Country Team's perspective, some of the characteristics of a highly flexible and adaptive government would include the following:

- **Government is consistent and committed in its pursuit of developmental objectives, including rule of law, human rights and gender**

equality. Failing to achieve certain developmental objectives may, in fact, always be a bad thing, but may in fact be an opportunity to learn, adapt, and then to re-engage with fresh insights.

- **Government is proactive.** Government institutions are not relegated to the role of overseer, but, rather, they actively participate in the development process, often serving as an entrepreneur of first (or last) resort.

- **Government evolves its policy framework according to the changing needs of all groups in society, leaving no one behind.** Change is welcomed provided that it does not detract from the overall development objectives that the nation as a whole has set for itself.

- **Government actively promotes a socially legitimate, competent, and non-discriminatory bureaucracy that is performance- and outcome-oriented** to ensure implementation and that actively engages with other stakeholders.

- **Government values the presence and contribution of viable and vocal stakeholders** including the private sector, civil society, minority groups and local communities.

- **Government is committed to protecting the rule of law, in addition to reducing corruption and rent-seeking** because of their detrimental effects on inclusive growth and human development.

10.3 UN strategic entry points: identifying and implementing accelerators

For the Government and its development partners, the challenge of accelerating SDG implementation is not a new concern. In light of the COVID-19 experience, four underlying principles are proving to be of critical importance in 2021. They are:

- Easing bottlenecks and blockages in moving from policy articulation to actual implementation;

- Helping to reach critical mass of supporting reforms in order to generate tipping points;
- Helping to contain or manage key “derailing” risks (such as the pandemic demonstrated, but applicable in other economic, social and governance domains); and
- Putting in motion constructive governance dynamics, rooted in democracy and rule of law, that generate welling-functioning and positive feedback loops.

In looking to put development goals back on track, government policymakers face the complex task of deciding which actions to undertake first in what amounts to a whole complex of policy and program options. In other words, what is the “optimal sequencing” of choosing which policy measures are more important than others. Invariably, the challenge will also require not simply choosing a series of individual policy measures but choosing instead a bundle of policy interventions – or accelerators – that are both synergistic and actionable in terms of available human and funding resources.

In this regard, the UN Country Team has identified five strategic entry points, or accelerators, that will form the building blocks of support that the UN family will incorporate into the next Cooperation Framework with due attention to those left behind. They are outlined below. These accelerators encompass a functional approach, rather than a traditional sectorial approach, with the goal of simultaneously impacting multiple sectors in ways that could have medium- and longer-term benefits for sustainable and inclusive development. Needless to say, the functional entry-point approach implies increased investment in the chosen entry points, but with the highest likelihood of positive outcomes for the greatest number of people.

1. DIGITALIZATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES FOR IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY

An important lesson of COVID-19 is that the Government should redouble its efforts to ‘digitize’ economic and social services in order to bring the country in line with the digital infrastructure found in many parts of the Global South, not just in developed countries. As the pandemic demonstrated, online access is critical for improving the quality and reach of government services and for allowing the business community to become more productive and efficient. As an example, lack of access to technology was considered to be one of the biggest barriers for learning during the current pandemic in the aftermath of school closures. Early childhood and primary level students were seen to be the most likely to be disadvantaged by the crisis and least likely to be able to access the technologies required for learning. Similarly, improved management in the health sector and digitization of health records, with adequate safeguards to protect privacy rights, are examples of ways that information technologies could make health services more inclusive, equitable, responsive and effective.

Improving the information management through data digitization and automation of processes for improved coordination, informed and timely decision-making in all development areas should be a cross-cutting priority and key to achieving Agenda 2030. And expanded access to digitization and information technologies could have tremendous benefits for the private sector, notably for small businesses and the informal sector in ways that could allow entrepreneurs and farmers to make better and more informed business decisions. The rapid pace in which mobile phone technologies were adopted in the Kyrgyz Republic demonstrates that there are viable opportunities for the public

and private sectors to collaborate to bring about rapid rollout of expanded digital technologies with a focus on reducing urban/rural disparities. Digitalization of criminal justice, administration of justice and equal access to judicial processes are other crucial areas that can promote the rule of law and due process guarantees in the country.

2. PROMOTING SOCIETAL INNOVATION

Observers of successful companies have noted that crises and rapid change give rise to remarkable innovations and insights for dynamic and forward-looking enterprises. Such alacrity should also be the case for the Kyrgyz Republic as it addresses ongoing COVID challenges and looks to the future on the other side of the pandemic. While digitalization and information technologies are important tools for innovation, societal innovation encompasses a broader spectrum of facilitating requirements. Such innovation will first require an honest and thorough examination of the foundational nature of improved governance institutions, services, laws, and regulations. Innovation is more likely to happen when the rule of law is protected and when the enabling environment presented by the Government is seen as responsive, accountable, and inclusive.

Some of the indicators for measuring good governance that encourage innovation would include metrics related to control of corruption, regulatory quality, economic freedom, controlling rent-seeking behavior and nepotism by economic elites, promoting gender equality, and protecting civil and political rights and freedoms. Under these circumstances, innovative approaches are likely to flourish for solving all kinds of development challenges, be they at the household, community, or national level. With respect to innovation, the Kyrgyz Republic has much to learn

from other countries, both about the common challenges to be confronted and about what has and has not worked to date. The focus of such cooperation should be on sharing tools, strategies and experiences across sectors, from large infrastructure projects to community-based interventions, all of which need to drive innovation, as well as learning and upscaling of successes. In short, an environment that promotes innovation and risk-taking is one that is best suited to give renewed attention to the country's development agenda and the SDGs.

3. APPLYING GREEN SOLUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

The Kyrgyz Republic is well recognized for its rich natural resource endowments, including minerals, forests, arable land, and pastures, and has significant potential for the expansion of its agriculture sector, hydroelectricity production, and tourism industry. Yet by any measure, many of these natural resources are under threat from over exploitation and misuse. Long-term sustainable growth will require giving much greater attention to the stewardship of these resources and ensuring that they are exploited in an environmentally viable manner, with the participation of affected communities. A clear example of this challenge can be seen in the country's food systems that are using agricultural models and farming techniques that are outdated and disincentivize sustainable farming and land use practices. Used in conjunction with effective market signals, the transition to such new techniques could deliver a higher quality of foods, create value-chain employment opportunities, and generate other economic and social benefits, including better health outcomes.

Other examples can be found in the efforts of other countries to ramp up renewable energy solutions, more forcefully encourage natural resource

management and biodiversity protection, address environmental pollution and waste management, and incentivize sustainability and recycling in business and government operations. Placing much greater emphasis on green solutions to economic, social and environmental challenges will entail deploying solutions that require a long-term perspective and downplay short-term political and economic costs.

4. CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR A RESILIENT KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

A number of factors have demonstrated the importance of the Kyrgyz Republic becoming a more resilient and agile economy in order to address the kinds of external shocks that have confronted the country. The heavy dependence on remittances and gold are but two examples of the kinds of risks that place the country at potential jeopardy. And, of course, the pandemic has made more apparent the kinds of vulnerabilities facing Kyrgyz society. Creating a resilient national social and economic fabric calls for special attention to the kinds of adaptive institutions discussed above that can strengthen the private sector, spur international trade, and encourage fiscally sustainable energy production. Natural and climate shocks also pose an increasingly high risk to human development and human security. Resiliency is critical at the family and community level and for reducing poverty and food insecurity and safeguarding access to health, education and social protection. Adaptation measures must take into account the complex relationships between natural processes and the economy. For example, melting glaciers lead to long-term fluctuations in hydropower production that is needed for a growing economy. In this regard, investing in early warning and climate prediction systems will be key for making informed decisions about natural

resources management, for strengthening national policy frameworks, and for ensuring that the population is equipped to cope with shocks at the local level, in line with international frameworks.

Needless to say, a resilient Kyrgyz Republic will also require a concerted effort to maintain enduring peace and minimize conflict situations so that society has fertile ground to successfully address other potential shocks and challenges.

5. YOUTH, WOMEN, AND HUMAN RIGHTS AT THE CENTER OF DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

With half of the population under 24, the Kyrgyz Republic is at a unique demographic juncture. With the right investments, today's children and youth can take the country to the next stage of socio-economic development in the future. The country's youth and women are both the promise and the peril of the country, and how they are assimilated into the economy and society can have enormous generational spillover effects, whether positive or negative. As a strategic entry point, focusing on children, youth and women in the context of human protections would be manifested across multiple sectors: jobs creation and skills training, gender equality in educational access and employment, improved and more accessible health services for girls and young women, expanded access to financial services, and a greater role in public consensus-building and decision-making processes. Ignoring or downplaying the importance of children, youth and women in development – and the human rights foundation which is required – could likely lead to greater numbers of youth not completing their education, not finding productive employment in an increasingly global economy, not seeing greater gender equality, and not feeling a part of the more vibrant parts of society. A greater attention

to this segment of society would also hopefully dampen the kinds of alienation and discontent that lead to conflict and civil unrest.

These five entry points highlighted above are seen by the UN Country Team as a way of leveraging efforts that transcend specific sectors and that can be applied both for addressing a pandemic of indefinite duration and jumpstarting long-term development efforts. Accordingly, UN country programming will be focused

heavily towards these five entry points. Needless to say, based on discussions with the Government, these entry points proposed by the UN Country Team may be adapted to meet shifting needs or opportunities, but it is believed that such an approach for policy design and implementation can meet the much-needed objective of bringing synergies and greater resource efficiencies to the development challenges confronting the Kyrgyz Republic in the foreseeable future.



Summary observations

The preceding chapters have presented an analysis of the Kyrgyz Republic as a middle-income country that has made great strides over the last two decades yet still faces significant challenges. And like many other developing countries, these challenges were further exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuring economic and social disruptions that affected large portions of Kyrgyz society.

At the center of the development challenge facing the country is the disparity – the growing gap – between the rich and the poor, between the advantaged and the disadvantaged and their access to both economic opportunities and social services. While the Kyrgyz Republic has made significant progress in several social indicators, there are still major problems related to the health and well-being of the poor, near poor and their food security – all of which were exacerbated by COVID-19. Thus, as the previous analysis demonstrated, it is fair to say that the current constellation of government institutions and programmes is not meeting the needs of far too many people, whether in the area of jobs creation, access to affordable health care and quality education, food security, social protection for those left behind, or mitigating environmental factors that put people at risk. How the Government effectively tackles these vulnerabilities will be a fundamental concern in the near- and medium-term at the same time that the Government must address the macroeconomic goals of restoring the economy to a sustainable growth trajectory. This ‘tension’ between using government revenues to meet both short-term and long-term policy objectives was discussed in chapter 10 and is a challenge

facing virtually every country – developed or developing – including the Kyrgyz Republic.

Another area of concern discussed in the preceding chapters is the disruptive potential from public discontent that remains an ongoing and smoldering problem. Despite the new constitution and changes in the form of government, institutional inefficiencies, lack of capacity, and corruption remain major problems in the delivery of government services, further eroding public confidence in the state. At the same time, considerable efforts are still needed to improve the legal system and the rule of law so that all citizens feel that the laws and protections afforded them by the judicial system are serving their best interests, including such concerns as addressing gender inequality and discrimination faced by many ethnic and social groups.

Against this backdrop, the UN family of organizations sees its principal task in formulating the next UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework as effectively supporting the Government and other Kyrgyz institutions in meeting these critical development challenges. The objective will be to use the UN’s collective experience and comparative advantages

in a coordinated and targeted manner that leverages the resources available in the most cost-effective manner. The five strategic entry points outlined in chapter 10 are therefore seen as a way of seeking to support the Government and other stakeholders in ways that transcend any one development challenge or sector, but rather have cross-cutting benefits applicable to a range of issues. In this approach, the measure of success for the UN will not be as much the dollar value of resources generated, as it will be the UN's role in channeling resources and assistance to the range of institutions and stakeholders who are best capable or who have the potential to maximize the UN support in a scalable and sustainable manner.

Another lesson of the COVID crisis is that the Government and other Kyrgyz institutions, as well as UN agencies, must give priority to developing an institutional foresight capability that can alert policy- and decision-makers to possible risks on the horizon that could potentially side-track or delay the country's development goals. Foresight analysis is not about

projecting a specific outcome. Instead, foresight practices explore a range of possible future scenarios that might emerge. Foresight capacity in the planning process allows organizations to be more agile and pivot – to anticipate possible events, not be caught off guard by them, and to identify potential risks before development initiatives and programmes are derailed by them. The spillover effect of recent events in Afghanistan is just one example of such potential risks. For this reason, including foresight analysis will be one of the elements that the UN family intends to incorporate into the next Cooperation Framework in order for the UN's support to the Kyrgyz Republic to be able to adapt in times of rapid change and uncertainty.

The UN family looks forward to working with the Government and other Kyrgyz stakeholders, as well as other development partners, in developing the new Cooperation Framework so that the Kyrgyz Republic can regain the momentum toward achieving its development objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals.



ANNEXES

Annex A. Key socioeconomic data trends related to the SDGs

Note: Data source: National Statistical Committee. See: <https://sustainabledevelopment-kyrgyzstan.github.io/1-2-1/>

Indicator	Unit of measure	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Proportion of population living below the official poverty line by sex and age	%	37	30.6	32.1	2.4	2.6	22.4	20.1	
By sex:	%								
men	%	37.5	31.5	32.7	25.7	26.3	22.2	20.2	
women	%	36.5	29.7	31.5	25.0	25.0	22.5	20.1	
Poverty rate among the employed population according to the official poverty line	%			23.0	18.3	18.0	15.5	13.2	
Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	%				50.2	50.5	45.8	42.3	
By sex:									
men					50.3	50.3	45.8	42.7	
women					50.1	50.6	45.9	41.9	
By age:									
children (below 18 years old)					59.7	60.0	56.0	52.0	
adults (18–64 years old)					43.7	44.1	39.3	35.9	
elderly e (65 years old and older)					49.2	46.4	38.6	37.0	
By location:									
urban					36.9	38.7	33.8	31.1	
rural					57.4	56.8	52.4	48.5	
Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems. disaggregated by sex. distinguishing children. unemployed persons. elderly. persons with disabilities. pregnant women. newborns. work-injury victims and poor and vulnerable persons									

The proportion of the population receiving pensions and benefits of the total population. percentage	%	17.9	17.3	17.1	16.6	16.8	16.6	17.1	
Including the proportion of the population receiving pensions of the total population	%	10.8	10.8	10.7	10.8	10.8	10.9	11.0	
Proportion of population receiving monthly social allowance for low-income families with children of the total population	%	5.8	5.3	5.1	4.5	4.7	4.5	4.7	
Percentage of population receiving social benefits of the total population	%	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	
Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health, and social protection)	%								
Education		20.8	18.5	18.9	20.0	19.4	21.1	49.2	53.2
Health		11.3	9.9	9.5	8.8	9.7	8.6	21.4	23.2
Social protection		19.5	19.2	18.4	16.5	16.2	19.1	8.3	10.0
Prevalence of undernourishment	%	48.6	47.9	51.0	45.6	50.0	46.4	46.3	
Consumer price index for food products in the Kyrgyz Republic and oblasts	% to December of previous year	101.8	113.9	95.8	95.0	102.7	97.4	105.7	
Maternal mortality rate	per 100,000 live births	36.0	50.1	38.5	30.3	31.9	24.5	24.8	38.6
Neonatal mortality rate	per 1,000 live births	14.9	15.6	14.0	12.7	11.8	12.0	11.8	11.7
By sex: men		16.5	16.9	15.4	13.4	13.1	13.2	12.9	12.5
women		13.1	14.3	12.5	11.9	10.4	10.7	10.7	11.0
Tuberculosis incidence per 100,000 population	Per 100,000 persons	102.4	101.1	98.2	93.4	90.6	83.0	78.9	53.5
By sex: men		117.4	113.7	113.1	105.3	103.8	97.2	91.2	60.8
women		87.8	88.7	83.7	81.7	77.7	69.0	66.9	46.1
Mortality attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, or chronic respiratory disease	per 10,000 persons								
Including: circulatory system		308.2	307.0	297.0	279.7	276.0	265.7	266.2	
Neoplasms		61.0	64.3	64.5	64.4	62.2	65.6	64.1	

diabetes mellitus		6.9	7.2	6.0	6.7	6.8	7.3	7.0	
chronic respiratory diseases		21.2	21.6	18.9	19.0	17.6	16.3	16.4	
Number of health workers per capita and their distribution	per 1.000 persons								
Including: doctors		2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.0	
dentists		0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	
pharmacists		0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	
nursing and midwifery personnel		4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.3	4.5	4.3	
Percentage of youth enrollment in primary vocational education (of the population aged 15-17)		9.4	9.3	9.5	10.4	10.9	10.1	10.0	
By sex: girls		6.0	5.6	5.8	6.3	6.9	6.2	6.2	
boys		12.6	12.9	13.1	14.3	14.7	13.9	13.7	
Percentage of youth coverage with higher vocational education (of the population aged 17-24)		20.3	21.8	21.1	22.0	22.8	23.1	23.1	
By sex: young women		23.8	24.3	24.2	25.2	26.4	26.4	26.5	
young men		16.8	18.0	18.0	18.8	19.3	19.9	19.8	
Percentage of youth coverage with higher vocational education (of the population aged 17-24)		24.3	23.8	22.6	20.2	19.1	19.8	22.1	
By sex: young women		26.7	26.5	24.6	22.2	20.6	21.3	23.5	
young men		21.8	21.2	20.6	18.3	17.4	18.3	20.8	
Number of domestic violence survivors by sex, age group, education level and occupation	persons	2,339	2,629	3,333	7,005	7,323	7,178	6,145	
By sex: women		2,269	2,531	3,229	6,795	6,966	6,562	5,659	
men		70	98	104	210	357	616	486	
By age: under 20		73	100	134	533	394	250	561	
21-30 years old		678	837	1,054	2,085	1,888	2,108	1,879	
31-40 years old		957	904	1,264	2,422	2,531	2,385	1,974	
41-50 years old		463	482	625	1,435	1,496	1,550	1,121	
51 years old and older		168	296	256	530	1 014	885	610	
By education level: higher professional		174	246	276	559	650	818	728	
incomplete higher professional		87	173	159	576	585	685	407	

secondary vocational		483	318	563	1226	1 035	1 223	1 177	
secondary general		1,588	1,839	2,195	4,436	4,793	4,228	3,381	
other		7	42	140	208	260	224	452	
Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments	%	22.5	21.7	21.7	15.8	16.7	15.8	16.7	16.7
Proportion of women in managerial positions	% of the total number of managers	27.5	33.4	36.1	34.9	36.2	37.9	40.9	47.4
Proportion of population with sustainable access to sanitation facilities	%	28.0	28.1	28.6	30.2	31.3	31.5	31.5	
Proportion of renewable energy sources in total energy consumption	%	33.3	36.7	30.6	31.6	36.5	33.9	35.7	
Employment in the informal sector by sex, age, urban-rural and economic sectors, including agriculture	thousand people	1,629.1	1,653.0	1,686.4	1,683.0	1,611.3	1,686.9	1,754.2	
By sex: male		1,044.3	1,040.6	1,077.9	1,095.7	1,074.4	1,131.7	1,161.7	
female		584.8	612.3	608.5	587.3	536.9	555.2	592.5	
By age: 15-19 years old		126.1	108.0	101.7	85.0	71.1	76.5	75.3	
20-29 years old		523.0	516.5	516.1	518.7	499.3	500.7	503.5	
30-39 years old		411.3	437.4	449.1	446.8	447.3	463.0	487.0	
40-49 years old		348.4	352.0	361.7	371.4	344.5	367.3	373.4	
50-59 years old		181.4	197.0	207.4	209.4	204.3	222.7	240.8	
60-69 years old		31.5	35.3	43.5	45.4	40.5	52.6	66.3	
70 years old and older		7.5	6.9	7	6.3	4.3	4.1	7.9	
By location: urban		418.6	433.7	460.0	489.0	526.3	541.6	572.0	
rural		1,210.5	1,219.3	1,226.5	1,194.0	1,085.0	1,145.3	1,182.2	
by sector of economy: agriculture		731.6	749.0	710.1	656.5	497.7	463.0	444.5	
industry		102.2	108.5	117.7	117.1	160.5	225.0	237.8	
construction		210.0	209.3	222.7	250.3	221.8	217.0	261.7	
service sector		585.2	586.2	635.7	659.1	731.3	781.9	810.2	
Proportion of employed in small and medium-sized enterprises of the total employed population in the economy	%								
Small enterprises		2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.2	3.0	
Medium-sized enterprises		1.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	

Average monthly wages of women and men, by occupation	KGS		12,285	13,483	14,847	15,670	16,427	17,232	
By sex:									
male		12,440	13,695	14,743	15,592	16,802	17,556	18,724	
women		9,113	9,732	11,125	11,743	12,183	12,574	14,421	
Unemployment rate by sex, age, and disability	%	8.3	8.0	7.6	7.2	6.9	6.2	5.5	5.8
By sex:									
male		7.4	7.0	6.5	6.2	5.6	5.7	5.0	5.2
women		9.7	9.5	9.0	8.7	8.9	6.9	6.2	6.7
By age:									
15-19 years old		16.2	17.7	17.3	19.9	18.3	13.9	13.9	13.7
20-29 years old		10.4	10.2	10.5	10.4	10.2	9.5	9.3	8.9
30-39 years old		7.2	6.7	6.2	5.9	5.4	4.6	4.0	5.1
40-49 years old		6.4	6.7	5.8	5.3	5.3	4.3	3.6	4.4
50-59 years old		6.1	5.1	4.2	3.5	3.8	4.2	3.1	3.1
60-69 years old		3.2	2.6	2.8	1.3	1.6	2.7	1.1	1.8
70 years old and older		1.6	2.8	1.4	0.9	0.3	0.6
Proportion of youth who do not work, study, or acquire vocational skills	%	22.1	20.7	21.4	20.4	21	20.5	21.0	21.1
By sex:									
male		14.3	12.5	13.6	12.1	12.3	12.0	12.6	12.9
female		30.0	29.2	29.5	29.0	30.1	29.4	29.6	29.6
Direct contribution of tourism to GDP as a percentage of total GDP and by growth rate	%	4.6	4.3	4.7	4.6	5.0	5.0	5.1	
Proportion of adults (15+ years old) having an account with a bank or other financial institution or using the services of a mobile financial service provider	%						24.4	32.2	
By location:									
urban							28.1	36.80	
rural							22.2	29.42	
By sex:									
male							23.4	30.21	
female							25.2	33.81	
Protected areas as a proportion of the total area of the country	%	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.8	6.5	6.5	
Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP by source	%	28.7	29.8	29.8	27.4	28.2	26.6	28.4	
Tax revenues		20.5	20.6	19.7	19.7	19.5	20.5	20.6	
Contributions / deductions for social needs		-	-	-	0	0.5	-	-	

Official transfers received		2.6	2.5	2.2	2.1	2.5	1.6	2.3	
Non-tax revenues		5.6	6.7	8	5.6	5.7	4.5	5.5	
Income from the sale of non-financial assets		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Proportion of national budget financed by domestic taxes	% of total income	71.5	69.2	65.9	71.8	69.1	76.9	72.6	70.3
Proportion of people using the Internet	%						62.8	64.1	
Growth (decline) rate of GDP, as proportion of the previous year	%	110.9	104.0	103.9	104.3	104.7	103.8	104.6	
Consumer price index (all goods and services)	% of previous year	106.6	107.5	106.5	100.4	103.2	101.5	101.1	

Annex B. The Five Factor Framework for Leave No One Behind

The five-factor framework for determining those who run the risk of being left behind and why consists of analysing the following determinants within a country or social group: (i) discrimination; (ii) place of residence; (iii) socio-economic status; (iv) governance; and (v) vulnerability to shocks. In effect, people get left behind when they lack the choices and opportunities to participate in and benefit from development progress. All persons living in extreme poverty can thus be considered 'left behind', as can those who endure disadvantages or deprivations that limit their choices and opportunities relative to others in society.

Some of the key determinants and deprivations of those who risk being left behind are the following:

- Although some progress has been achieved in the past years, in 2020, 42 percent of the population was still multidimensionally deprived considering monetary poverty, health, housing, food security and education.²⁰³
- The contraction in economic growth has led to a decline in or loss of the population's income – experienced by 54 percent of the population²⁰⁴ – and to an increase in the unemployment rate, leaving a large number of people without sources of income. Decreasing incomes with the increasing food prices

have directly affected the food security of the vulnerable population, leaving them vulnerable to future shocks, perpetuating the cycle of poverty.

- Given the high share of informal employment in the country, the situation is particularly severe for those 'invisible' to the formal employment systems, by large, urban and semi-urban populations.
- Access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services is relatively high – 87 percent of households had at least basic drinking water, 97 percent had at least basic sanitation services, and 89 percent had at least basic hygiene facilities in 2017. Yet there was a large gap in access to at least basic drinking water services between urban (97 percent) and rural (82 percent) households.
- Although the country has a good routine immunization coverage, it decreased due to the COVID-19 pandemic with immunization services interrupted in March-May 2020. Disparities in investment, infrastructure and staffing of health services across the country results in people in underserved areas (mostly rural areas) being left behind. Safe abortion services decreased to 25–28 percent in public facilities, whereas increased in private facilities up to 68–85 percent. Women who cannot afford to seek care in private facilities are left behind to carry out unwanted pregnancies.

203 Available at: <https://sustainabledevelopment-kyrgyzstan.github.io/1-2-2/>

204 NSC (2020). On the results of the sample survey "Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on households"

- Beyond the geographic location, other circumstances known to shape inequality include ethnicity, age, gender, education level and a combination of these factors.

- Natural disasters and climate change cause loss of lives and livelihoods, damage productive assets and infrastructure, and disrupt critical services such as access to food, water and health services. The poorest people in communities are the most vulnerable to the impact of natural disasters since they lack the tools to be able to prevent their livelihoods being lost and the ability to then recover.

- The root causes for persistent gender inequalities can be found in the negative interpretation of some cultural and social practices over the roles of women and men, and in patriarchal attitudes, that increasingly restrict women's rights to control their lives, particularly in rural areas. Although the Kyrgyz Republic has ratified numerous human rights instruments, its legal framework governing the prohibition of discrimination against women and the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment have consistently fallen short of the requirements under these instruments²⁰⁵. Violence against women is widespread and takes many forms, including domestic violence, bride kidnapping, trafficking, child marriages and physical abuse. Gender inequalities are starkly evident in the key indicators of women's labor force participation (see figure 11), women's leadership, and maternal mortality ratio.

- Ethnic minorities remain underrepresented in public life and are subjected to discrimination including

stereotyping, stigmatization, ethnic profiling by law enforcement officers and the judiciary, and hate speech against them.²⁰⁶ Problems of inter-ethnic relations are exacerbated by lack of an effective and efficient language policy as the country did not produce a generation that could speak the state, official and foreign languages.²⁰⁷

- In 2019, 194,364 people with disabilities – about 3 percent of the population – were registered in the Kyrgyz Republic, receiving some form of pensions and disability benefits,²⁰⁸ 53 percent of which were women. Yet, more resources are needed to ensure persons with disabilities receive adequate access to health and social services. Discrimination of and stereotypes about them are detrimental to their rights, their social integration, and adaptation to society. Women with disabilities face intersecting forms of discrimination including limited access to reproductive health services. Children with disabilities experience obstacles in accessing inclusive education, thereby hampering their chances to play an active role in the society. Changing the way society perceives PwD would require time and protection of their rights in line with the ratified UN human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities^{xxxiii}.²⁰⁹

- The Kyrgyz Republic remains a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor, and for women and children^{xxxiv} subjected to sex trafficking. Destination countries for labor exploitation include Russia, Kazakhstan and Turkey. Sexual exploitation of Kyrgyz women and girls occurs in Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, India, Russia, Kazakhstan, South Korea, and

205 See the 2015 Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, Treaty bodies Down-load (ohchr.org) and the 2020 Direct Request of the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations concerning the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), Comments (ilo.org).

206

207 Available at: https://www.un-page.org/files/public/kyrgyz_national_sustainable_development_strategy.pdf

208 NSC data, Available at: <http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/zdravooohranenie/>

209 UNDP (2018). Report on the identification of negative stereotypes towards women and men with disabilities and rural women

within the country. Forced labor remains the predominant form of trafficking with 85 percent of registered cases and trafficking for sexual exploitation make up 15 percent of registered cases.^{xxxv}

- In the Kyrgyz Republic, another population at extreme risk is the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) community, which is among the most vulnerable group in all of Kyrgyz social system due to high stigma, discrimination, and intolerance^{xxxvi}. Alongside them, people living with HIV face a similar treatment. This group of citizens does not receive equal access to quality education as the enacting measures to protect and promote the rights of LGBT+ students in education institutions are missing. LGBTI+ women, like others, face the effects of gender inequality in economic, social and political domains;

- People with, or assumed to have, TB experience high levels of stigma and discrimination from health workers, community members and sometimes extended family. In addition, gender norms and practices and gender-based violence present a significant barrier to TB services.

- Survivors of GBV. A significant part of the domestic violence (DV) victims prefers not to apply to law enforcement and other bodies for the protection of their rights. Hence, the significant proportion of crimes is not reported. This is largely due to the mistrust of the victims in the justice system, the incompetence of law enforcement and judicial officials, their refusal to perceive gender-based violence as a serious crime, negative attitude of society towards the victims and social shaming of women and girls. Also, the current legislative framework stops women from reporting the incident for a second time since the

person who reports must pay a fine, and it is usually a victim who pays it. UNITE suggests that the trend could be reversed (that abusers get away with their violent actions) if the fine could be substituted with a detention measure (imprisonment of DV perpetrators). Moreover, the appeal also does not guarantee the punishment of the perpetrators. The persecutors are lenient towards men and neglectful to rights of victims to report DV or other forms of crimes like sexual harassment and sex exploitation and abuse. Official data on the latter incidents are rarely reported by the victims; hence, the real scope of the issue is missing.

- Statistical reporting on calls to System 112 run by the Ministry of Emergency Situations from citizens about domestic and gender-based violence against women and children has been maintained since 2016, in line with CEDAW recommendations. While there is a regulation on an intersectoral mechanism on response to GBV during crisis and emergencies, there is a need for strengthening the similar mechanism within the Civil Protection Act with the purpose to reduce the risks of violence against women and children within the civil protection sector. The lives and rights of workers protecting rights of sex-workers are becoming increasingly violated and this issue must be addressed to ensure their safety.

- People deprived of their liberty^{xxxvii} – around 9,000, mostly from low-income and working-class backgrounds – are subject to the power of an antiquated prison system.²¹⁰ If they were implemented, application of alternative measures to imprisonment and humanization of the criminal legislation^{xxxviii}, in line with the UN human rights treaties and UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of

210 As of January 2021, the number of prisoners was 8635 (as of January 2019 - 9,400 prisoners). Five hundred twenty-seven (527) sentences of the prisoners have been reconsidered based on the new Law on Amnesty that came into force in 2020.

Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules), should assist in decreasing the prison population and promote effective rehabilitation and social reintegration processes in the country, as well as implementation of HIV prevention and harm reduction strategies in prisons.

- With regard to refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons, as of end 2020,

there were 199 recognized Convention Refugees in the Kyrgyz Republic, 138 Mandate Refugees, 347 Asylum-seekers and 25 persons remaining stateless and/or at risk of statelessness. All these categories represent people who are largely jobless, out of the social protection scheme benefits and in a vulnerable situation as they do not have access to basic services and the right to work.

Annex C. Multidimensional SDG Risk Analysis Framework

Note: Data source: National Statistical Committee. See: <https://sustainabledevelopment-kyrgyzstan.github.io/1-2-1/>

SDG	Risk Area	Description	Scope
SDG 16, 17	Political Stability	Risks to the stability of established political and government structures in the territory resulting from politically-driven factor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges to political system/ government • Politically compromised government/ institutions • Irregular changes to governance structures or principles
SDG 16, 17	Democratic Space	Risks to democratic and human rights institutions, and to civil and political rights resulting from shrinking civic space, exclusion, repression, and intimidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undue limits on democratic rights or freedoms • Constraints on civil society, rights actors or rights institutions • Active repression of civil society, rights actors, and others
SDG 1, 5, 10, 17	Social cohesion, gender equality and non-discrimination	Risks to social unity and equality resulting from direct and indirect discrimination, horizontal inequalities and demographic trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discriminatory practices • Power imbalances within society • Gender based violence • Demographic pressures
SDG 16, 17	Regional and global influences	Risks to the integrity, stability, safety and prosperity of the territory and its people as a result of the actions of external actors or the influence of external events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International tensions • Fragility in neighboring countries • Sanctions, exploitation or dependencies
SDG 16, 17	Internal Security	Risks to the security of the territory, its people and infrastructure, and to the ability of the international community to operate effectively as a results of security issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal conflict and insecurity • Non-state armed groups and militia • Crime and terrorism • Cross border insecurity • Border management
SDG 16, 17	Justice and Rule of Law	Risk to the fair, effective and comprehensive implementation and application of the principles of justice, the rule of law and accountability from issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak or compromised institutions • Security forces who act outside of or do not respect the law • A culture of denial of rights or impunity
SDG 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 17	Infrastructure and access to social services	Risks to society and the population resulting from a lack of availability or limitation on access to physical infrastructure, and/or basic social services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate provision of basic services or technologies • Disruption to services, infrastructure, energy or transportation • Inequitable access to basic services or infrastructure

SDG 16, 17	Displacement and Migration	Risks to the population and to the stability of the territory resulting from pressures associated with displacement and/or migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement of people within, into or from the territory • Level of rights and protection afforded to migrants • Social economic, cultural, environmental impact of migration
SDG 3, 17	Public Health	Risk to the population, the economy and stability of the territory resulting from actual and emerging health emergencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in preventable or treatable health issues • Epidemics, pandemics and infectious disease • Chemical, radiological and other biological agents
SDG 2,17	Food security, agriculture and land	Risk to people, agriculture, and/or production in the territory resulting from crop, food production, livestock and related issues, as well as market price fluctuations, infrastructure affecting the availability and access to food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient arable land, crops or • Inadequate food supply. • Hindered access to food by all groups of population • Insufficient utilization of adequate food (Malnutrition in all its forms (undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity) • The use of and rights over land
SDG 12, 13, 14, 15, 17	Environment and climate	Risks to the ecology of the territory, its ecosystem and its people resulting from issues associated with the environment, climate and natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural hazards or extreme weather events • Ecological damage and climate impacts • Exploitation of natural resources • Climate change and conflict related insecurity

Annex D. Climate finance for low-carbon, climate-resilient infrastructure

The Kyrgyz Republic is one of the countries in Central Asia that is the most vulnerable to climate change due to the high occurrence of climate-related disasters, its dependency on climate-sensitive economic sectors and its ageing infrastructure. Climate finance is one of the potential sources of financing diversification for land-locked developing countries and can fit well to finance low-carbon, climate-resilient infrastructure. The Kyrgyz Republic has been attempting to tap into climate-related development finance for infrastructure.

The Kyrgyz Republic has taken significant measures towards creating a comprehensive national plan which includes various sectoral strategies and programmes that address climate resilience. Strategy development has focused on key climate-sensitive socio-economic sectors and infrastructure, such as energy, transport, water, agriculture, etc.

In 2015, the Climate Investment Fund (CIF) supported the initiative of the Kyrgyz Republic to participate in the Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR). This process has been supported by EBRD, WB and ADB. The Climate Investment Programme is a plan to mobilize and leverage finance for climate resilience and climate-resilient infrastructure in key sectors in the country, from all available relevant sources.

The Kyrgyz authorities, with the support from the CIF, have established the Climate Finance Centre (CFC) to coordinate climate finance issues in the country. The CFC is responsible for attracting financial resources from climate funds and international organizations as well as design and implementation of climate resilience investment projects in priority sectors.

Funding Options

Principal source	Relevant funds/donors
Dedicated global climate funds	Green Climate Fund (GCF) Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Adaptation Fund (AF) Investment Facility for Central Asia (IFCA) Climate Investment Funds (CIF) Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR)
MDBs	Asian Development Bank (ADB)* European Development Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)* World Bank (WB)* International Finance Corporation (IFC)*
Bilateral and multilateral donors	Department for International Development (DFID), United Kingdom Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)* Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) * United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)* World Food Programme (WFP)*

Source: The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Note: MDBs and donors marked with an asterisk (*) are GCF accredited

Annex E. UN 75 – The Future We Want: survey results

The survey conducted for the UN 75 commemorations provides a quantitative analysis of data collected between January 2, 2020 and January 2021. It reflects people's perspectives on the challenges and priorities for the future, as well as sentiments for global cooperation. More than 28,000 Kyrgyz citizens took part in the survey, with most of the data collected among people aged 31 to 45 (47.2 percent) and women (54 percent).

KEY CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS

1. Urgent priorities in the Kyrgyz Republic's post-pandemic recovery:

- As people around the world continue to suffer from the health, social and economic consequences of COVID-19, the immediate, short-term priority of most people around the world is to improve access to basic services: **health care, education, water and sanitation**.
- **Health** issues are currently a priority for the population. In order to recover from the pandemic crisis, 36 percent of respondents answered that ensuring universal access to health services should be a priority. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that countries need to devote resources to the development of health systems and systems for recording and processing data, the foundation of which is the primary health care system.
- The next immediate priority for respondents is to strengthen international solidarity and support for the countries and people most affected by COVID-19.

2. Long-term priorities for the future that Kyrgyz people want:

- In the long term, respondents want to see better access to **health care**, more emphasis on **education** and **youth development** and universal access to **safe drinking water and sewage and improve access to sanitation**.

- The issue of **increasing equality between men and women**, as well as the issue of **improving the regulation of international migration**, is not so prioritized among the Kyrgyz people. The least popular answer among women was the regulation of international migration, and among men the least number of respondents chose the issue of increasing equality between men and women.
- Respondents are most concerned about climate change and environmental issues, health risks and risks associated with new technologies.
- Respondents are generally optimistic about the risks associated with organized crime and cyber warfare.
- When it comes to the future, most of the population is optimistic, with women being more optimistic.

3. International cooperation:

- 58 percent of Kyrgyz people expressed that more international cooperation is needed to rebuild the country after recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.
- 41.3 percent of the respondents believe that international cooperation is vital for solving global problems.

The figure below shows respondents' priorities and aspirations for the country in the next 25 years.

Figure 15. Vision of Kyrgyz people in 25 years
 (% of respondents who chose an option as one of the three answer options)

Percentage of respondents who chose an option as one of the three answer options



Annex F. CCA multi-stakeholders' consultations

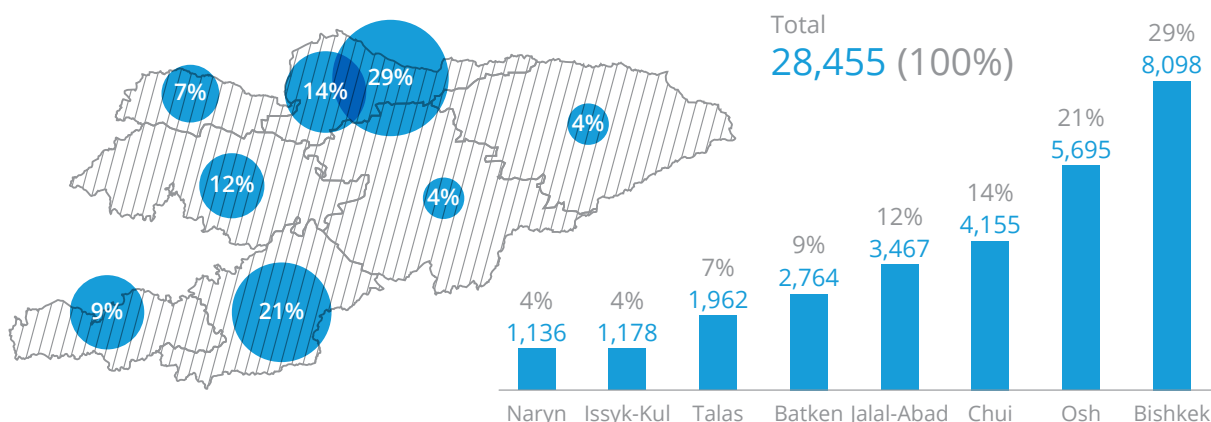
The preparation of the CCA in the Kyrgyz Republic included an extensive effort to engage multiple stakeholders, including, but not limited to, representatives of the state and municipal government, civil society and non-governmental organizations, business associations, trade unions, academia, research institutes, and development partners. The stakeholder consultations were undertaken during COVID-19 restrictions and consisted primarily of online participation methods for the majority of the participants. The online stakeholders were consulted during the data collection phase and after the first draft CCA was completed.

In addition, efforts were made to reach out to marginalized and vulnerable groups through various means, notably, online dialogues, face-to-face and phone interviews, as well as essays and video competitions as part of the UN 75 outreach. The key messages from the vulnerable groups were delivered through a network of interviewers and volunteers

who reached out during the pandemic to remote communities across the Kyrgyz Republic that do not have regular access to the internet, so as to allow their opinions to be heard. Social media influencers, including the SDGs Youth Ambassadors, also participated, resulting in several thousand people expressing their views on issues impacting the country as well as global issues.

In short, the survey conducted for the UN 75 commemorations provides a quantitative analysis of data collected between January 2, 2020 and January 2021. It reflects people's perspectives on the challenges and priorities for the future, as well as sentiments for global cooperation. More than 28,000 Kyrgyz citizens took part in the survey, with most of the data collected among people aged 31 to 45 (47.2 percent) and women (54 percent). The survey sample further consisted of 71 percent of respondents from rural areas and 29 percent from urban areas.

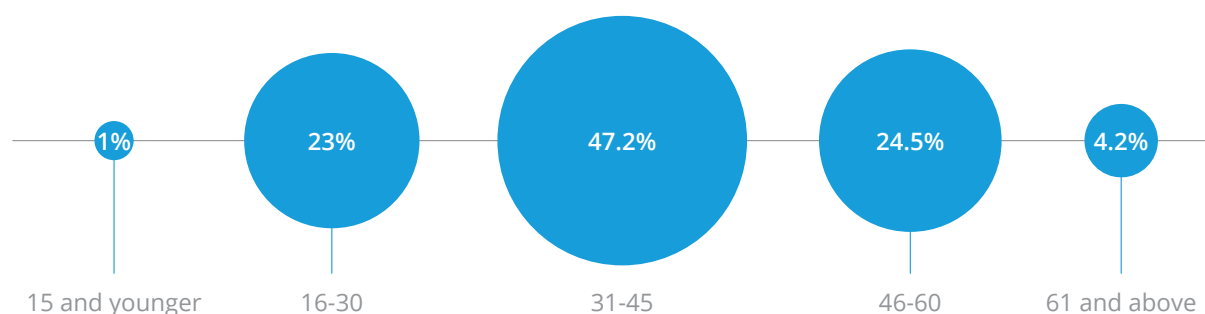
Figure 16. Distribution of respondents by regions



The largest percentage of respondents consisted of persons aged 31 to 45 years (47.2 percent). Persons aged 46 to 60 years represented 24.5 percent of respondents; persons aged 16–30 years 23 percent);

persons 61 and older 4.2 percent; and adolescents under 15 represented 1 percent. In addition, 445 people with disabilities took part in the survey, which was 1.6 percent of the total number of respondents.

Figure 17. Distribution of the population by gender and age

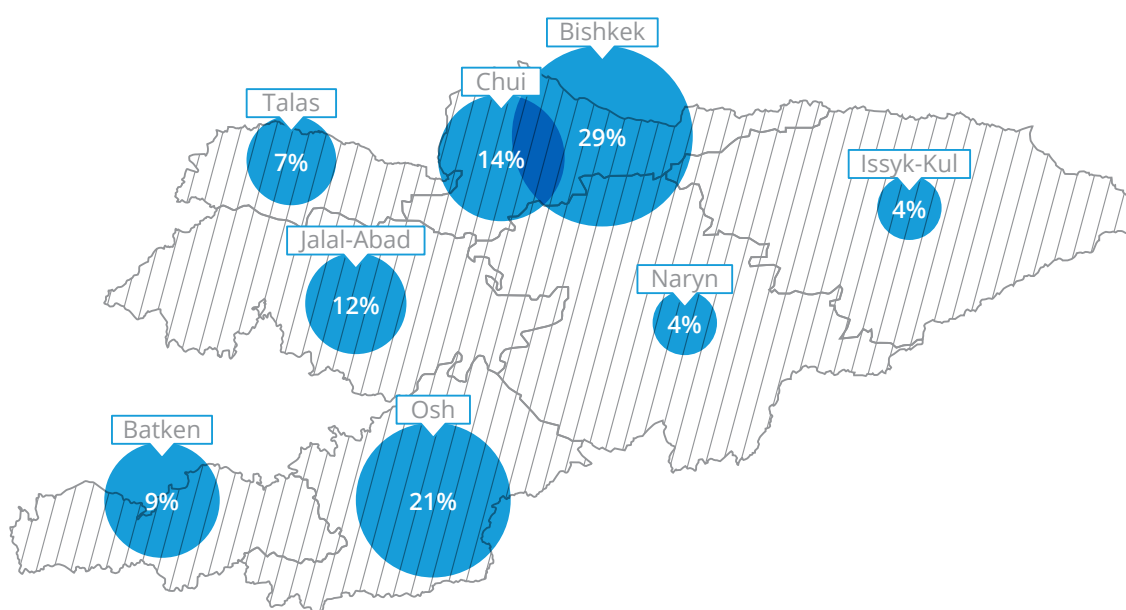


GENDER AND GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Out of the total number of respondents covered throughout the country (28,455), more than half (15,364 or 54 percent) of the total number were women. Broken down by region, there was a significant level of

participation in Bishkek – 29 percent, Osh – 21 percent, Chui oblast – 14 percent, Jalal-Abad oblast – 12 percent, Batken oblast – 9 percent, Talas oblast – 7 percent, Issyk-Kul oblast – 4 percent, and Naryn oblast – 4 percent.

Figure 18. Distribution of the sample by regions



Gender: As evident from Figure 4, women took more active part in the survey – 54 percent. The situation with male respondents is slightly lower: 45.7 percent of men living in cities and villages

participated in the survey. It needs to be noted that 0.3 percent of the total number of respondents identified themselves as “others”.

Figure 19. Distribution of the sample by gender

Total respondents by gender

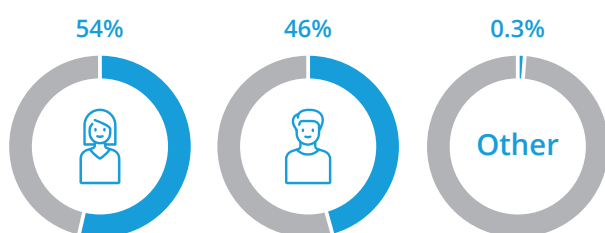
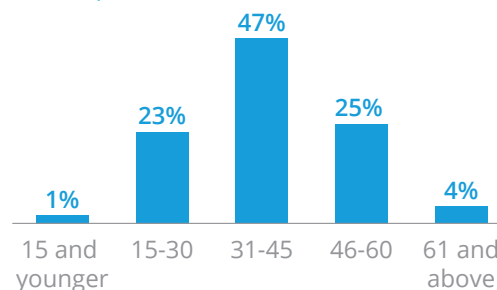


Figure 20. Demographic Distribution

Total respondents



Demographic distribution: The age category of 15 and under provided data whereby the gender ratio has significant differences: women – 74.1 percent, men – 24.3 percent, and the other – 1.5 percent. The age category of 46–60 years old demonstrated a different data: 50.4 percent for men and 49.4 percent for women. The respondents aged between 16 and 30 had the following distribution: women 60.5 percent, men 39.2 percent, other – 0.3 percent. Women respondents aged over 61 were 53.2 percent compared

to men of the same age group who equaled 46.3 percent. In the age group 31–45, 52.9 percent were female, 46.8 percent were men.

DATA PROCESSING

The survey data was processed in the SPSS program in compliance with all the necessary stages of data processing and cross checking to ensure the reliability of the statistical analysis and research finding.

Annex G. List of stakeholders consulted during CCA preparation

	Name	Organization/ Title
1.	Bazarbaev Kudaibergen	Head of the Department for Monitoring of Humanitarian Development and Interaction with Civil Society Institutions, Administration of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic
2.	Suyunov Daniyar	Expert in the Department for Interaction with Civil Society Institutions, Religious Affairs and Interethnic Relations, Administration of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic
3.	Sanzhar Tajimatov	Expert in the Department for Interaction with Civil Society Institutions, Religious Affairs and Interethnic Relations, Administration of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic
4.	Ainura Umetova	Expert in Strategic development policy and planning, Administration of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic
5.	Nurbaev Abdyvakhap	Member of the Parliament
6.	Suleimanov Bakhadyr	Member of the Parliament
7.	Lira Kasymbekova	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Regional Development
8.	Emilbek Kydykmanov	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Regional Development
9.	Aliza Soltonbekova	Deputy Minister for Health and Social Development
10.	Zuura Dolonbaeva	Sr. specialist of strategic planning and project implementation, Ministry of Health and Social Development
11.	Nurgul Ibraeva	Sr. specialist of the Health Service delivery and Public Health department, Ministry of Health and Social Development
12.	Munara Kojomkulova	Ministry of Health and Social Development
13.	Meder Ismailov	Head of strategic planning and project implementation, Ministry of Health and Social Development
14.	Gulmira Okoeva	Head of Gender Unit under the Ministry of Health and Social Development
15.	Gulmira Alkanova	Head of Employment Department, Ministry of Health and Social Development
16.	Mamatova Kalima	Head of Center for Development of health medical technologies, Ministry of Health and Social Development
17.	Altymysheva Nurila Almazbekovna	Head of Republican Centre of Health Promotion and Mass Communication under the Ministry of Health and Social Development
18.	Klara Oskonbaeva	MHIF, Deputy Head
19.	Timur Alkojoev	Director of E-Health Center under Ministry of Health and Social Development
20.	Almaz Alybaev	Deputy Director of Information Consultation Center under Department of External Migration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
21.	Ermek Turgunaliyev	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
22.	Marat Moldaliev	1 st Secretary of the 5 th Political Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
23.	Altynbek Kydyraliev	Ministry of the Interior
24.	Chynara Maatkerimova	Head of International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Education and Science

25.	Evgenia Boiko	Head, Strategic planning and monitoring department, Ministry of Education and Science
26.	Rysbekov Baktybek	Chief Specialist, Ministry of Education and Science
27.	Iskandarbek Mamatov	Ministry of Economy and Finance
28.	Rimma Chynybaeva	National Statistical Committee/Head of the Department of Statistical Census and GIS
29.	Gulhumar Abdullaeva	National Statistical Committee/Head of the Department of Demographic statistics
30.	Shakenova Ainura	National Statistical Committee/Chief Specialist of the department of Labor and employment
31.	Baimatova Lola	National Statistical Committee/Head of the Department of International Cooperation
32.	Mursabekova Guzeinep	National Statistical Committee, Head of agriculture statistics,
33.	Zakir Chotaev	Deputy Director of the State Commission for Religious Affairs
34.	Meder Omurbekov	Specialist of the State Commission for Religious Affairs
35.	Nurbek Sakyev	Inspector Secretariat of the Security Council
36.	Ularbek Sharshiev	State Border Service
37.	Almaz Kulmatov	State Forensic Service under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, Head of the Department of Linguistic, Religious Studies and Psychological Expertise.
38.	Kuban Nurlanov	State Forensic Service under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, Head of organizational support and control
39.	Mirlan Parkhanov	Ministry for Culture, Sports, Information and Youth Policy
40.	Laura Zhumanova	Ministry for Culture, Sports, Information and Youth Policy
41.	Iskender Eshimbekov	Ministry for Culture, Sports, Information and Youth Policy
42.	Soyuzbek Nadyrbekov	Deputy Head of the State Agency for Youth, Physical Culture and Sports
43.	Aiza Imankulova	Ministry for Culture, Sports, Information and Youth Policy
44.	Ruslan Ozubekov,	Institute of Ombudsman (Akyikatchy)
45.	Erlan Alimbaev	Institute of Ombudsman (Akyikatchy)
46.	Azamat Moldobaev	Director of the Training Centre, General Prosecutor's Office
47.	Tilek Murzakulov	Senior Prosecutor of the Office, General Prosecutor's Office
48.	Asel Kenjetaeva	Senior Assistant, Public Relations, Media and International Relations Department, Supreme Court
49.	Nazgul Rasheva	Supreme Court
50.	Kanimetova B.	Head of Environmental Conventions Division of Department of Environmental Conventions and External Relations of the State Committee on Ecology and Climate
51.	Kanayev T.	Head of External Relations Division Department of Environmental Conventions and External Relations of the State Committee on Ecology and Climate
52.	Jakypov A.	Leading specialist of Department of Environmental Conventions and External Relations of the State Committee on Ecology and Climate
53.	Abas kzy Janaiym	Expert of Department of Environmental Conventions and External Relations of the State Committee on Ecology and Climate
54.	Karataeva M.	Leading specialist of the Department of Analysis and Strategic Planning of the State Committee on Ecology and Climate
55.	Akparalyev D.	Leading specialist of Department of Nature Management of the State Committee on Ecology and Climate
56.	Dairova J.	Chief Specialist of the Climate and Sustainable Development Department of the State Committee on Ecology and Climate

57.	Nyshanbaeva L.	Head of Department for Observation of Environmental Pollution, Agency for Hydrometeorology, the State Committee on Ecology and Climate
58.	Mamatairov B.	Water Resources Division of the Industrial Ecology Department of the State Committee on Ecology and Climate
59.	Kyrgyzbaev T.	Chief inspector of the Environmental Safety Department of the State Environmental Control Inspectorate, State Committee on Ecology and Climate
60.	Kurmanaliev B.	Head of Organizational and Analytical Work Department of the State Environmental Control Inspectorate, the State Committee on Ecology and Climate
61.	Zhunushova G.	Chief specialist of Water Resources Division of Industrial Ecology Department, the State Committee on Ecology and Climate
62.	Myrzagalieva	Chief specialist of Ecological Monitoring Department of the State Committee on Ecology and Climate
63.	Djamalov E.	Deputy Director of the Center for Climate Finance
64.	Kalygulova R.	Chief specialist of the State Ecological Expertise Department of the State Committee on Ecology and Climate
65.	Madiev A.	Leading specialist of Bioresources Protection Department of the State Committee on Ecology and Climate
66.	Aitakhunova Ch.	Regional Coordinator, Central Asia Youth for Water
67.	Dairov O.	Public Association "Students of KR for Green Economy".
68.	Makhmudova G.	Department of Regulation and Industrial Safety of the Ministry of Energy and Industry
69.	Apasov R	Member of Environmental Expert Working Group on the UN BWC of Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Regional Development
70.	Aydaakeev A.	Head of the Secretariat of the KR National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, Ministry of Emergency Situations
71.	Zholdosheva U.	Director of the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) country office in Kyrgyzstan
72.	Amanova A.	Head of Strategic Planning Department, Ministry of Economy and Finance
73.	Sakhvaeva E.	Water Resources Management Expert, State Agency for Water Resources
74.	Asankulov B.	Agency for Tailings Management, Ministry of Emergency Situations
75.	Akmatov Mamasaly	The Authorized Representation of the Cabinet of the Kyrgyz Republic in Jalalabad Province, Deputy Head
76.	Jamalkan Mamytova	Deputy Head of the Municipal Administration of the Leninsky District for Social Issues, Bishkek City Hall
77.	Iskender Kakeev,	Expert, Adilet Legal Clinic
78.	Zhanabil Davletbaev	Expert, International Business Council
79.	Gulmira Mamatkerimova,	Director, Public Foundation "Strategic Solutions"
80.	Arsen Ambaryan,	Human Rights Defender
81.	Ainoura Omurova	Federation of Trade Unions
82.	Gulnara Uskenbaeva	President, Association of suppliers of the KR
83.	Zarina Chekirbaeva	Executive Director, Amcham Kyrgyzstan
84.	Farhad Pakyrov	CEO, Business Association "JIA"
85.	Seitek Kachkynbaev	Head of Bishkek Business Club
86.	Sanjar Toktomambetov	Legal Expert, International Business Council
87.	Elmira Nogoibaeva	Polis-Asia
88.	Nazgul Aldasheva	Institute of Peace and Development
89.	Kanykey Jailobaeva	Researcher, Empirika Research Company
90.	Frontbek kzyz Jamal	PA Mutakalim

91.	Jamal Frontbek kyzy	Mutakalim
92.	Amina Usenbaeva	Mutakalim
93.	Zamir kary Rakyev	Mufti deputy
94.	Abdygany Erkebaev	Head of Assembly of People of Kyrgyzstan
95.	Kaana Aidarkul	Chairperson of the Kyrgyz Association of women in the security, law and order and legality sectors
96.	Dinara Oshurahunova	Human rights activist, expert of the NGO "Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society"
97.	Elnura Kalybaeva	Institute for Youth Development
98.	Chinara Esengul	Regional Adviser on Central Asia, PeaceNexus Foundation
99.	Zarina Isakova	PeaceNexus Foundation
100.	Beksultan Rustamov	IDEA
101.	Kalmurzaeva Elvira	IDEA
102.	Elvira Kalmurzaeva	IDEA
103.	Anastasya Shevchenko	Assembly of the People of Kyrgyzstan
104.	Teshebaeva Akbermet	Assembly of the People of Kyrgyzstan
105.	Gulgaky Mamasalieva	Director of Osh Branch of International Center Interbilim
106.	Keneshbek Sainazarov	Search for Common Ground Central Asia Programme Director, Search for Common Ground
107.	Shakirat Toktosunova	Country Director for International Alert
108.	Asel Abdyramanova	Search for Common Ground
109.	Kadyrov Yakhyo	Foundation for Tolerance International
110.	Soorbekova Gulnur	Foundation for Tolerance International
111.	Anara Eginalieva	Foundation for Tolerance International
112.	Aida Umanova	Internews, Project "Strengthening Resilience to Radicalization and Disinformation in Central Asia Through Independent Media"
113.	Akmaral Satinbaeva	NGO "Youth of Osh"
114.	Kretova Z.	Ecology Movement "BIOM"
115.	Chinara Abdymomunova	NGO "Youth of Osh"
116.	Adele Sagyndykova	NGO "Youth of Osh"
117.	Akmaral Satinbaeva	NGO "Youth of Osh"
118.	Gulbarchyn Toialieva	Saferworld
119.	Anara Ismailova	Saferworld
120.	Kiyal Tilebaldieva	CARD Public Foundation
121.	Zulfiya Kochorbaeva	NGO AST
122.	Gulmira Rasulova	ECD Public Foundation
123.	Adyl Temirov	Head of Health Policy Analysis Centre
124.	Gulnara Derbisheva	Head of NGO Insan Leylek, Batken region
125.	Larisa Ilibezova	Director of public fund "Center for Research of Democratic Processes"
126.	Alybaeva Zhanyl	International Institute of Public Opinion
127.	Ramilya Almazbekova	NGO "Kyrgyz Indigo"
128.	Tkacheva Elena	Crisis center "Chance", Head
129.	Diana Imamidin kyzy	Crisis center "Chance", Lawyer
130.	Adinai Zhaparalieva	UNITE working group
131.	Kamil Ruziev	NGO "Ventus", Director
132.	Onola Umankulova	EdNet Agency
133.	Ulanbek Mambetakunov	Kyrgyz Academy of Education, Vice-Chairman
134.	Duishon Shamatov	Education expert, PhD in Education, professor at Nazarbaev University

135.	Tatiana Matokhina	Education expert, Center for Educational Assessment and Teaching methods
136.	Aida Tynychbekova	International Debate Education Association in Central Asia, Project Coordinator
137.	Aizat Ruslanova	International Debate Education Association in Central Asia, Programme Officer
138.	Zarina Turukmanova	Public Foundation/ Center for Women's Initiatives «Ayalzat», Director
139.	Shayirbek Djuraev	“Crossroads Central Asia” Research Institute
140.	Vladimir Kozlov	Researcher at the Vishnevsky Institute of Demography, Higher school of Economics
141.	Choro Seyitov	National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic, Center of Economic Research
142.	Nurlan Akmatov	Director of Mission of Eurasian Bank for Development in the Kyrgyz Republic
143.	Almaz Isanov	Director of Research, Institute on Economic Policy under the Ministry of Economy and Finance
144.	Nurlan Brimkulov	Head of the Department of Family Medicine of PGE, Kyrgyz State Medical Academy named after I.K. Akhunbaev
145.	Denisenko Mihail	Higher School of Economics, Director of Institute of Demography
146.	Vladimir Kozlov	Higher School of Economics, researcher of Institute of Demography
147.	Anzhela Nazarova	Higher School of Economics, researcher of Institute of Demography
148.	Emil Kaptagaev	Director of National Institute of Strategic Studies
149.	Medet Tiulegenov	Professor AUCA
150.	Temir Mamatisaev	Research officer, National Institute of Strategic Studies
151.	Ismailov Kubanychbek	Deputy director, National Institute of Strategic Studies
152.	Kurbanova Nazira	Dean of the Faculty of History and Social and Legal Education in Ishenaly Arabaev Kyrgyz State University, doctor of historical sciences, professor
153.	Mars Ibraev	Vice-Rector of the Islamic University of Kyrgyzstan
154.	Medet Tiulegenov	American University of Central Asia
155.	Emil Djuraev	OSCE Academy director
156.	Altynbek Zholdoshev	Teacher, Manas University
157.	Atyrkul Alisheva	Independent expert
158.	Mira Karybaeva	Independent expert
159.	Kubanychbek Oruzbaev	Independent expert
160.	Ikbajlan Mirsayitov	Independent expert
161.	Anara Niyazova	Independent expert
162.	Nurgul Esenomanova	Independent expert
163.	Indira Aslanova	Independent expert
164.	Altaaf Hasham	Aga Khan Development Network, Representation Office in the Kyrgyz Republic
165.	Guljan Ermekebaeva	OSCE
166.	Steven Lewis-Workman	Economist, Asian Development Bank
167.	David Rinnert	Deputy Development Director Central Asia & Governance Adviser, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
168.	Bakyt Dubashov	Senior Country Economist, World Bank Group
169.	Gulkayr J. Tentieva	Economics Officer, Asian Development Bank
170.	Nicola Scaramuzzo	EU Delegation
171.	Aida Bekturova	USAID project "Zhigerduu Zharandar", Manager for Gender Equality and Social Integration
172.	Altynai Abdylidaeva	USAID project "Zhigerduu Zharandar", Project associate

Endnotes

(UPR Recommendations)

ⁱ During the third cycle of the UPR in 2020, inter alia, supported the following recommendations “to continue efforts in promoting the representation and participation of women in the political, social and economic spheres” and “to take further steps to strengthen the gender mainstreaming strategy, including incorporating gender-responsive budgeting for government programmes and creating an environment which enables a higher number of women parliamentarians”.

ⁱⁱ In September 2020, during the third cycle of the UPR, Kyrgyzstan, inter alia, supported recommendations to “strengthen democratic institutions by protecting freedom of expression and media freedom, both online and offline, (...) and by protecting civil society’s role in promoting good governance and transparency”, “to take the steps necessary to ameliorate the right to freedom of expression and the right to access to information” and ‘to enhance protections for civil society, journalists and human rights defenders to ensure they are able to carry out their work in a safe environment free from intimidation, harassment and attacks”.

ⁱⁱⁱ During UPR in September 2020, Kyrgyzstan supported a recommendation to “continue all socioeconomic measures for ensuring access to health care, education and affordable housing and reducing poverty, particularly in rural areas”.

^{iv} In September 2020, during the third cycle of the UPR, Kyrgyzstan supported, among others, the following recommendations “to strengthen further the programmes for social protection for all the people of Kyrgyzstan, especially vulnerable groups” and “to continue all socioeconomic measures for ensuring access to health care, education and affordable housing and reducing poverty, particularly in rural areas”.

^v Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Continue prioritizing education for all, including by increasing budgetary allocations to ensure free access to quality education and providing poor families with support”, “Ensure that the right to education is offered effectively to all, especially to children in the context of labour migration”, “Address the challenges that restrict children from completing higher education and continue its efforts to ensure access to quality education for children of various socioeconomic status”, and “Expedite the implementation of legislative changes regarding the prohibition of child labour and build on previous efforts, as well as launch new initiatives to prevent and combat violence against children”, “Provide better social services to families and children in difficult situations and rehabilitation programmes for persons with disabilities”.

^{vi} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Reduce the maternal, infant and child mortality rates by ensuring funding for the relevant programmes, facilitating access to health-care institutions and to qualified medical staff and improving access to family planning”.

^{vii} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Adopt a comprehensive, gender-responsive and disability-inclusive approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation policies, consistent with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, to address the economic, cultural and social impacts and challenges that climate change represents, for the full and effective enjoyment of human rights for all”.

^{viii} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Take all measures necessary to ensure access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation throughout the country, particularly for marginalized groups” and “Continue to work on the effective realization of the human rights to drinking water and sanitation, such as by developing a comprehensive strategy to manage hydraulic resources”.

^{ix} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Develop a human rights-based national implementation plan for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration”.

^x Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Step up its efforts to promote tolerance and combat hate speech”.

^{xi} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Strengthen democratic institutions by protecting freedom of expression and media freedom, both online and offline, eliminating corruption at all levels by holding officials and non-State actors accountable and protecting civil society’s role in promoting good governance and transparency”.

^{xii} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Adopt further legislative and institutional measures to combat all types of discrimination”.

^{xiii} Supported UPR recommendations, September 2020: “Adopt measures to develop awareness-raising campaigns aimed at combating stigmatization and ethnic or racial stereotypes, with a view to promoting tolerance and understanding”, “Ensure the representation of persons belonging to ethnic minority groups in government bodies”, “Make further efforts to promote tolerance and combat hate speech and negative stereotyping against ethnic minorities”.

^{xiv} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Uphold its obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, particularly with respect to minorities, including by improving their economic livelihood opportunities, implementing best practices in policing and protecting the right of all individuals to practice their faith freely through the approval of all religious organizations seeking to register”.

^{xv} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Ensure that strategies for the prevention of violent extremism are based on international human rights standards and include a focus on social development, and not just security, which will contribute to social cohesion, and prevent divisions between communities and ethnic groups”.

^{xvi} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Take further measures to prevent the misuse of legislation on extremist activity and terrorism, incitement of ethnic hatred and defamation, in order to prevent the targeting of journalists, media organizations and human rights defenders”.

^{xvii} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Ensure that all mining activities on its territory contribute concretely to reducing the poverty rate”.

^{xviii} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Work towards fully incorporating the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into domestic law and policy, as appropriate, and in consultation with persons with disabilities and other relevant stakeholders”.

^{xix} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Continue measures on strengthening the independence of the judiciary and protecting the rights of accused persons in legal proceedings...”.

^{xx} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Make appropriate efforts towards realizing the human rights action plan, 2019–2021”.

^{xxi} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Ensure sufficient financing of the national preventive mechanism against torture to safeguard its independent functioning and to ensure compliance with international standards for the treatment of detainees in detention centres”. UN Sub-Committee on the Prevention of Torture (SPT) has visited Kyrgyzstan already twice, last time in 2019, and its reports contain a number of recommendations on OP-CAT implementation. Kyrgyzstan commendably made the 2nd report public.

^{xxii} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Strengthen democratic institutions by protecting freedom of expression and media freedom, both online and offline, eliminating corruption at all levels by holding officials and non-State actors accountable and protecting civil society’s role in promoting good governance and transparency”.

^{xxiii} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Request cooperation from OHCHR to establish a permanent national mechanism for implementation, reporting and follow-up with regard to recommendations on human rights, in accordance with Sustainable Development Goals 16 and 17.

^{xxiv} Supported UPR recommendation, September 2020: “Take all necessary action, including through awareness-raising campaigns and training, to effectively implement legislation on violence against women and girls and ensure that all reports of violence are thoroughly investigated and that perpetrators are brought to justice”.

^{xxv} Supported UPR recommendations, September 2020: “Ensure freedom of expression online and offline, including by instituting a cap on moral damages in all civil defamation cases”, “Enhance protections for civil society, journalists and human rights defenders to ensure they are able to carry out their work in a safe environment free from intimidation, harassment and attacks”.

^{xxvi} Supported recommendation during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Ensure that everyone, including human rights defenders and journalists, can exercise their right to freedom of expression, including online, without fear of reprisals, in compliance with international law and standards”.

xxvii Supported recommendation during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Amend legislation to comprehensively protect vulnerable groups, such as women and minorities, combat discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and remove barriers to access for vulnerable groups to State programming, justice and protection from violence”.

xxviii Supported recommendations during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Continue to carry forward the State policy for building peace and harmony among different religious faiths in the country”, “Ensure the freedom of religion or belief, both in law and in practice, and root out all cases of religious persecution and the exploitation of laws against members of religious minority groups”.

xxix Supported recommendation during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Ensure respect for fair trial and due process guarantees to all citizens, irrespective of their ethnicity”.

xxx Supported recommendation during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Continue its efforts to eliminate all forms of gender-based discrimination and to advocate gender equality by providing sufficient funds for the implementation of the national strategy on gender equality for the period 2012–2020 and its three national plans on gender equality”.

xxxi Supported recommendations during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Take further steps to strengthen the gender mainstreaming strategy, including incorporating gender-responsive budgeting for government programmes and creating an environment which enables a higher number of women parliamentarians”.

xxxii Supported recommendations during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Improve prison and detention conditions by strengthening monitoring, bringing perpetrators of human rights violations to justice and providing human rights training to members of the judiciary, prison officials and law enforcement authorities”.

xxxiii Supported recommendations during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Provide better social services to families and children in difficult situations and rehabilitation programmes for persons with disabilities”.

xxxiv Supported recommendations during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Expedite the implementation of legislative changes regarding the prohibition of child labour and build on previous efforts, as well as launch new initiatives to prevent and combat violence against children”.

xxxv Supported recommendations during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Continue taking efforts in the area of combating trafficking in persons, including under the national action plan, strive to address the root causes of trafficking and strengthen measures for the identification of victims of trafficking”, “Ensure the allocation of adequate resources to competent institutions to further strengthen the implementation of programmes on combating trafficking in persons”, “Strengthen assistance afforded to victims of trafficking in persons”.

xxxvi Supported recommendations during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Amend legislation to comprehensively protect vulnerable groups, such as women and minorities, combat discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and remove barriers to access for vulnerable groups to State programming, justice and protection from violence”.

xxxvii Supported recommendations during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Make further efforts to prevent acts of torture and ensure that allegations of torture and ill-treatment are investigated promptly and efficiently”.

xxxviii Supported recommendations during the 3rd UPR cycle, September 2020: “Credibly address allegations of arbitrary detention and torture by authorities and uphold obligations under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment to hold perpetrators accountable and prohibit the use of evidence obtained through torture”.

