



UNITED NATIONS  
KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

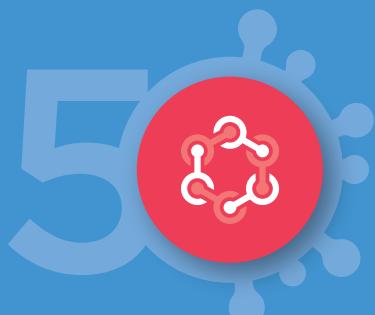


COVID-19  
RESPONSE



# UNITED NATIONS COVID-19 SOCIOECONOMIC RESPONSE FRAMEWORK FOR THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

April 2021





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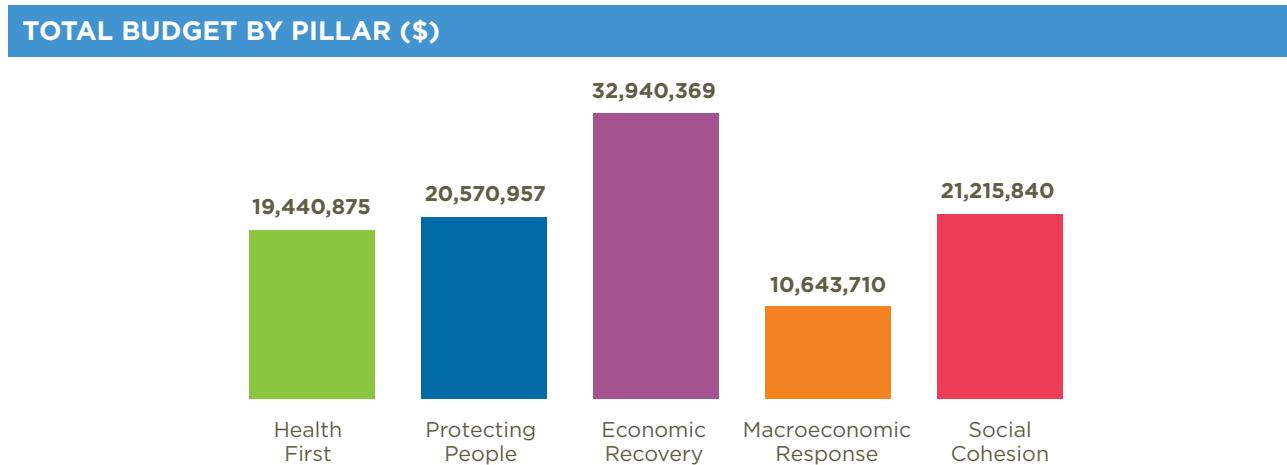
## ACRONYMS

<b>ADB</b>	Asian Development Bank
<b>CSO</b>	Civil society organization
<b>EBRD</b>	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
<b>EUD</b>	European Union Delegation
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
<b>FCDO</b>	UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based violence
<b>GDP</b>	Gross domestic product
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>IFC</b>	International Finance Corporation
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>IPC</b>	Infection prevention and control
<b>ITC</b>	International Trade Centre
<b>KGS</b>	Kyrgyz som
<b>LGBTQI</b>	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual/transgender, queer and intersex
<b>MBPFC</b>	Monthly Benefit for Poor Families with Children
<b>MHIF</b>	Ministry of Health Insurance Fund
<b>MLSD</b>	Ministry of Labour and Social Development
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>PPE</b>	Personal protective equipment
<b>PPP</b>	Purchasing power parity
<b>PWDs</b>	Persons with disabilities
<b>SDC</b>	Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>TB</b>	Tuberculosis
<b>TVET</b>	Technical and vocational education and training
<b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
<b>UNDAF</b>	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNDRR</b>	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UN Women</b>	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VAT</b>	Value-added tax
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

## AT A GLANCE

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	TOTAL BUDGET
17	33	\$104,811,751
RE-PURPOSED	FUNDED	UNFUNDED
\$11,364,724	\$36,221,105	\$57,225,922

BUDGET BY PILLAR (\$)			
	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
 1. HEALTH FIRST	672,915	6,611,460	12,156,500
 2. PROTECTING PEOPLE	2,438,809	3,062,500	15,069,648
 3. ECONOMIC RECOVERY	7,293,000	6,790,595	18,856,774
 4. MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE AND MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION	109,000	6,143,710	4,391,000
 5. SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE	851,000	13,612,840	6,752,000



# INTRODUCTION

## Context and purpose

The global crisis sparked by COVID-19 is a health crisis, and far more. It is threatening the stability of economies and countries, and increasing poverty and inequality on a global scale. In the Kyrgyz Republic, as in other countries, the first-order priority is preventing the loss of life, treating the infected, and minimizing contagion. However, responding to the pandemic's socioeconomic consequences is equally urgent, as the resultant income and job losses, interruptions to economic activities, as well as disruptions in access to public services, are having a severe impact on the country's people and economy. This is a 'development crisis' and, if it is not urgently and adequately addressed, will have long-term negative consequences for the country's development, putting at risk or reversing many development gains made in recent years. A safe and equitable recovery – reaching first those who have been left furthest behind – must be set in motion as soon as possible.

The purpose of this document is to set out the framework for the United Nations' urgent support to the Kyrgyz Republic to address the socioeconomic impact of the crisis. The framework also takes into account the fact that the country's development trajectory over the longer-term will be affected by the choices that the country makes now, and by the support it receives in the recovery period. The United Nations system is therefore responding to a dual imperative: to provide and leverage a fast response to mitigate the immediate socioeconomic impact of the crisis, and to help pave the way for a sustainable, and longer-term recovery. This requires a reinforced focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), leaving no one behind, and actively seeking opportunities for a more sustainable and inclusive future development path. With this in mind, the framework includes all dimensions of sustainable development and cuts across all of the SDGs. Moreover, in line with the imperative of the Agenda 2030 to leave no one behind, it focuses on identifying and finding ways to protect the vulnerable while ensuring that human rights are protected.

## United Nations programming context

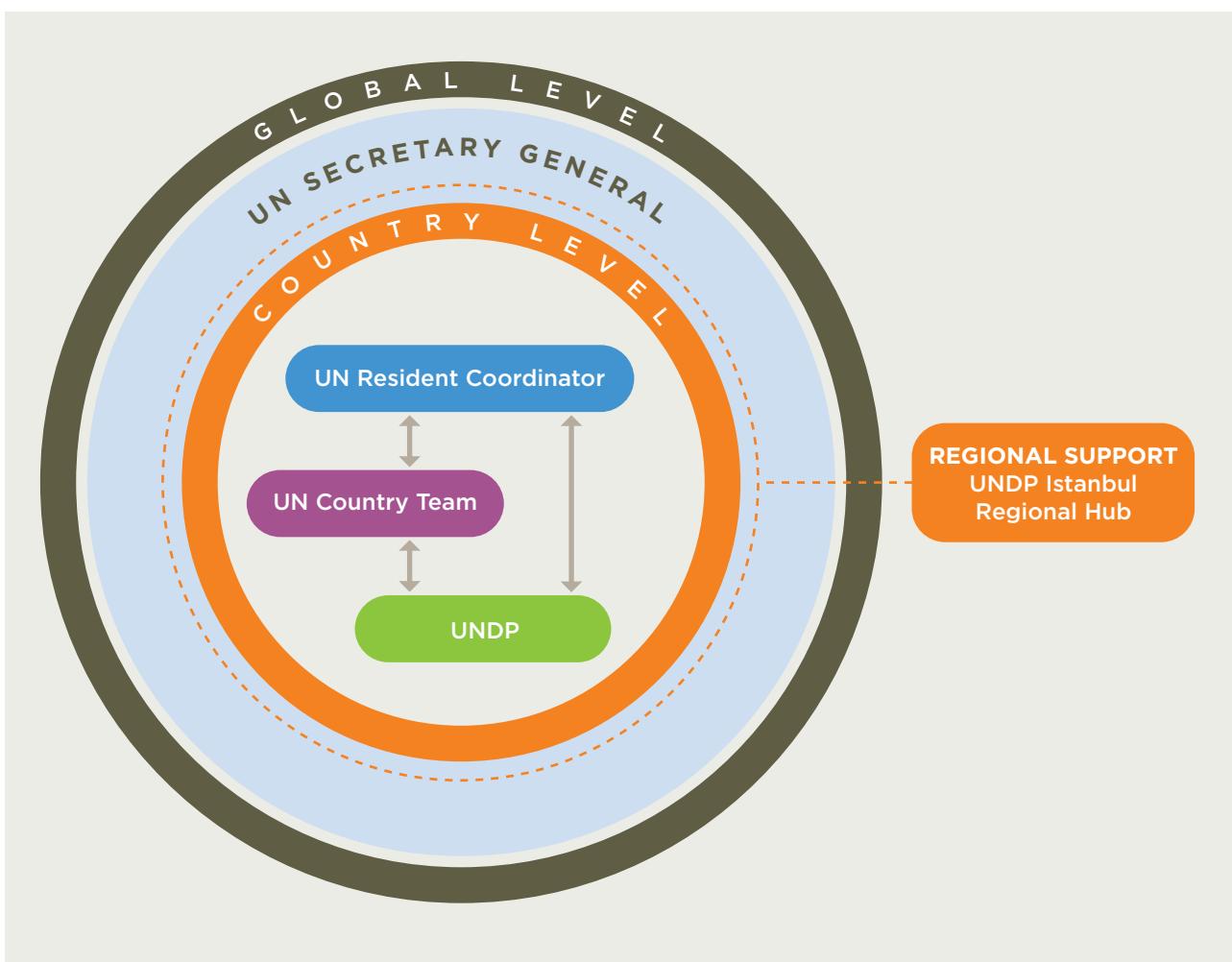
The United Nations' COVID-19 socioeconomic response is one part of the United Nations' three-part response to COVID-19, alongside the immediate health response and the humanitarian response. This framework complements and builds on the health response, as articulated in the National Contingency Plan (prepared by the Ministry of Health with support from the World Health Organization (WHO) and other development partners) and the humanitarian response (as detailed in the Disaster Response Coordination Unit Plan developed with several ministries under the coordination of the Ministry of Emergency Services). The rapid implementation of these three responses together will form a coherent United Nations emergency package.

The present socioeconomic response framework will inform the Joint Workplan for the United Nations system for 2020–2022, and the formulation of the next United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework<sup>1</sup> in 2021.

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<sup>1</sup> The new global United Nations system country programming framework is the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which will be gradually rolled out to programme countries as part of progressive United Nations reform when planning for the next cycle. The current UNDAF is valid from 2018 to 2022, and therefore the new Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework will take effect in 2022 and will encompass the entire country programme of the United Nations system in the Kyrgyz Republic.

## THE UN SOCIOECONOMIC RESPONSE TO COVID-19



### Alignment with the national COVID-19 anti-crisis and recovery plans

This COVID-19 socioeconomic response framework has been informed by dialogue and collaboration with Government partners through the four working groups – on budget, on food security, on health, and on economic recovery. It aligns, supports and extends the Government's consecutive anti-crisis plans, as set out in: the March 2020 “Priority Action Plan of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic to Ensure Economic and Social Stability for 2020 in Connection with COVID-19”; the “Action Plan of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2020 to Restore Economic Activities and Support Business Entities’ Operations”, announced on 6 May 2020; and the “Action Plan of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2020 to Ensure Social Stability, Sustainability of the Economy and Maintenance of the Population’s Incomes”, announced on 13 August 2020. The framework encompasses efforts of the United Nations system to counter potential setbacks in progressing towards the SDGs in the country, and to identify opportunities to accelerate the structural changes needed for ensuring progress towards sustainable development. In this sense, it supports the implementation of the National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018–2040 and the medium-term strategy Unity Trust Creation for 2018–2022, and it informs the formulation of future government policies. It is also aligned with other major national policy documents, including the country’s Digital Transformation Programme, and the Green Economy Policy.

## The United Nations offer

Through this framework, the United Nations development system will put in place relevant assets to support the development response to the COVID-19 crisis, complemented by ongoing humanitarian and emergency health interventions. The collective capacity of the United Nations country team will be mobilized to implement this framework over the next 18 months. The relevant assets can be summarized as follows:

**A wide and deep presence.** The United Nations has knowledge of the country context and well-established relationships with a range of partners. Its support is not restricted to the capital Bishkek, but reaches local communities in oblasts, cities and villages.

**The required knowledge.** The United Nations development system can offer the breadth of technical skills needed to help the country address the multidimensional socioeconomic aspect of the crisis. It can connect the country to relevant expertise, in-house and beyond, in all areas of the response.

**A broad mandate.** The United Nations is the only global organization with mandates reaching from development to humanitarian assistance, and from human rights to peace and security. This informs our assessments, analysis and integrated support.

**A large development portfolio to build on.** The United Nations' existing development portfolio across all SDGs can be adjusted and expanded for COVID-19-related needs. Such repurposing efforts have already started. They can be accelerated: for example, to expand social protection coverage, to implement emergency job support measures, or to support the implementation of infection prevention and control measures in the public and private sectors.

**A wide and flexible range of support modalities.** This means that support can be tailored to the needs of the country and can shift over time according to the situation.

**The ability to deliver integrated, coordinated support.** The United Nations' support is integrated, connecting analyses and responses across sectors, and building continuity between immediate measures and longer-term recovery. The United Nations' support includes resident in-country capacities and draws on global and regional expertise.

**Established funding modalities for rapid disbursements.** The United Nations development system can make use of several funding modalities to quickly channel funds to programmatic interventions such as from multi-partner trust funds at the global level.

**Strong partnerships for greater reach and impact.** Beyond its own expertise and resources, the United Nations can use its significant reach to contribute to and mobilize the vast network of partnerships required for a whole-of-society and whole-of-world response. In the Kyrgyz context, the existing Development Partners' Coordination Council, and its network of established sectoral working groups, are key platforms. The United Nations will use these existing mechanisms to foster strong partnerships, coordinate priorities and leverage its resources from other development actors for greater impact and synergy across sectors. In addition, the United Nations system has collective partnerships with other multilateral organizations and global trust funds, which will help mobilize funds for critical shared objectives. The United Nations has extensive connections with civil society organizations (CSOs), women's groups and volunteer groups.

These can play an indispensable role in the response, notably in reaching out to vulnerable people, and in getting to remote places. They can thus help amplify responses. The United Nations has also established close relations with the private sector, which will be instrumental in the economic recovery towards sustainable development, within a whole-of-society approach. The partnerships that the United Nations has with international financial institutions (IFIs), which are of particular value in the areas of impact assessments and analysis, financing and resource mobilization, policy advocacy on urgent macroeconomic measures, and planning for the longer-term, are of great importance.<sup>2</sup>

**An impartial, normative approach.** The United Nations will work to ensure that all responses to COVID-19 and its impacts are implemented with a sense of humanity, and protect human rights and the dignity of all people, without discrimination. The integration of international norms and standards in the design and implementation of socioeconomic responses will be critical. The application of a gender lens in designing socioeconomic responses will be especially important, given the role that women are playing as frontline healthcare workers, including as healthcare providers and caregivers, as community leaders, and in the informal economy.

**An operational infrastructure that is fit for purpose.** The United Nations development system has robust operational infrastructure that can be fully mobilized and expanded quickly to support this offer.

OUR PURPOSE	GUIDING QUESTIONS
<b>Tackling the immediate emergency</b>	<p>Who has been targeted by the Government's health and socioeconomic response?</p> <p>Which are the most vulnerable groups?</p> <p>Where are the gaps in the response?</p>
<b>Focusing on the socioeconomic impact and response</b>	<p>What is the level of impact faced by the most vulnerable groups and sectors?</p> <p>What barriers keep people beyond the reach of socioeconomic response measures?</p>
<b>Building forward better</b>	<p>How can the most vulnerable population groups and sectors become more resilient to future shocks and crises?</p> <p>How can the response help remove and avoid exacerbating structural drivers of exclusion, combat inequalities and discrimination, and strengthen social cohesion?</p> <p>How can the response support the creation of a more inclusive, resilient and sustainable society?</p>

2 Refer to the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) COVID-19 Socioeconomic Impact and Vulnerability Assessment, 2020.

## Structure and content of the United Nations COVID-19 socioeconomic response framework

This medium-term United Nations COVID-19 socioeconomic response framework is an integrated support package consisting of five work streams (or pillars), which will guide support as follows:

1. Ensuring that essential health services are still available, and protecting health systems.
2. Helping people cope with adversity through ensuring social protection and basic services.
3. Protecting jobs, supporting small and medium-sized enterprises and informal sector workers through economic response and recovery programmes.
4. Guiding the necessary surge in fiscal and financial stimuli to make macroeconomic policies work for the most vulnerable, and strengthening multilateral and regional responses.
5. Promoting social cohesion and investing in community-led resilience and response systems.

These five work streams will be connected by actions to ensure strong environmental sustainability and “build forward better” to underscore the importance of gender equality as part of the imperative to “build back better”. Under each pillar, the United Nations will offer a series of interventions intended to support a comprehensive approach towards addressing the socioeconomic challenges arising from the pandemic. In order to implement such a comprehensive approach, the United Nations will reach out to its vast network of partners (outlined in the paragraph on “strong partnerships” above).

This framework document begins with a brief situation analysis, which is informed by the United Nations’ assessments and evidence gathered so far on the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19, including from the comprehensive joint UNDP-ADB Socioeconomic Impact and Vulnerability Assessment, and several underpinning thematic assessments carried out by United Nations agencies. This is followed by an overview of the population sections identified as particularly at risk during the crisis. The following chapter then sets out the challenges and the main elements of the United Nations joint response for each of the pillars outlined above. The document ends with a matrix summarizing the response, setting out the resources already made available to implement the response, and indicative funding gaps.

**Annex 1** provides a list of the monitoring indicators which will be used by the United Nations system to monitor the human rights impact during the response period. The COVID-19 pandemic has many human rights implications for civil, economic, political, social and cultural rights. Responses to the pandemic should be consistent with international human rights standards and address key human rights concerns. The list of 10 thematic indicators has been developed to support national efforts towards a human rights-based policy response to the crisis, as well as to feed into an early warning tool. These indicators are derived from global standards and adapted to the specific country context.

## THE FIVE PILLARS OF THE UNITED NATIONS COVID-19 SOCIOECONOMIC RESPONSE FRAMEWORK



### PARTNERSHIPS FOR ANALYTICAL, POLICY AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Support to rapid expansion of surge capacity • Support to restore essential health services	Support scaling up of social assistance • Maintain food and nutrition services • WASH in health and education facilities • Safe re-opening of schools and sustained learning for all • Social services and support to victims of GBV	Support to microenterprises • Support to job searches • Integrating returning migrants • Support to formalization • Facilitating transition to digital solutions	Support for social expenditure impact monitoring • Technical support for evidence-based recovery policies	Strengthening early warning and response capacities • Addressing intolerance • Enabling participation of women and youth in the crisis response • Upholding human rights in the response and recovery phase
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### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSION IMPERATIVES

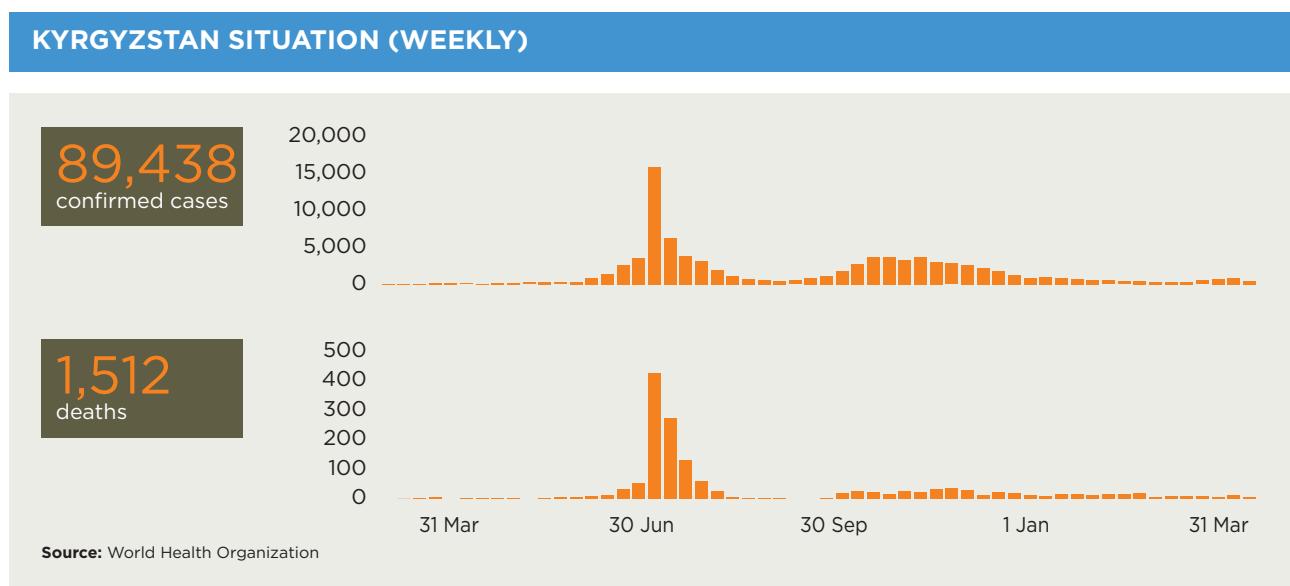


# SITUATION ANALYSIS

## Epidemiological situation

Following the detection of three COVID-19 cases on 18 March 2020 in the Kyrgyz Republic, the Government declared an emergency situation throughout the country. It then declared a state of emergency in Bishkek, Nookat and Kara-Suy in Osh, and Suzak in Jalal-Abad. On 15 April 2020 the state of emergency was further extended to Naryn and At-Bashi districts. The state of emergency was lifted in May. A surge in new cases was then registered in June and July. By mid-July, the situation was severely straining the health system's capacity to respond. During this period, 15–25% of confirmed cases were among health workers, highlighting the gravity of the pandemic's threat to those working in the country's health system, and the limited ability of the system to implement infection prevention and control measures.

On 7 April 2021, at the time of finalizing this framework, there have been 89,438 confirmed cases of and 1,512 deaths from COVID-19.<sup>3</sup> Current global evidence suggests that the pandemic is most likely to feature recurring epidemic waves, interspersed with periods of low-level transmission.<sup>4</sup>



## Macroeconomic impact

The COVID-19 pandemic's impact on the Kyrgyz Republic's economy has both external and internal triggers.<sup>5</sup> External triggers consist of border closures, export restrictions and bans, reduced demand for Kyrgyzstani migrant labour in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan, fluctuations in food prices and availability, and international financial market contagion, which has impacted both the exchange rate and domestic prices. Internal triggers include the limitations on economic activities and mobility arising from the lockdown and physical distancing requirements, increased uncertainty and risk perceptions, and also difficulties in making the transition to remote work, in part because of gaps in broadband infrastructure and computer technology access, and in part because the country's economic and employment structure are such that the possibilities for functioning in remote mode are limited.

3 <https://covid19.who.int/region/euro/country/kg>

4 WHO, Considerations in adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19 Interim guidance, 2020.

5 See analysis in UNDP-ADB, Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment, 2020.

The macroeconomic impacts are wide-ranging and include drops in private consumption, falling budget revenues (tax revenues were down 17% in January–April 2020 compared to the same period in 2019), and a series of export and import shocks, all of which are reducing aggregate demand. On the other hand, the closure or reduced functioning of many businesses, and disruptions in supplies of raw materials and intermediate goods due to restrictions in border crossings (especially with the People's Republic of China) have reduced aggregate supply. Despite increased revenue from gold exports (which represent 37% of the country's export basket), declines in remittances inflows, exports (and re-exports) of other goods and services, and capital inflows, have all put downward pressures on the exchange rate, leading to a depreciation of the national currency by more than 10%. During the first quarter of the year, imports of goods decreased by 9.7% compared to the same period in 2019. There was a decrease in the volume of production of oil products (by 56.7%), rubber and plastic products (by 14.3%), wood and paper products (by 6.8%), and also industrial production (by 5.7%). Moreover, the prospect of higher inflation rates and increases in non-performing loans<sup>6</sup> are key concerns in the financial sector. While UNDP and ADB project a decline of 10% in GDP, the latest available International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecast suggests that the Kyrgyz Republic's GDP will decline by 12% in 2020.

The pandemic has put the country's public finances under considerable strain. The overall decline in economic activity has led to a massive drop in public revenues: revenues from trade tax, social security contributions and value-added tax (VAT) have all but vanished, and are expected to remain low as the crisis unfolds.<sup>7</sup> While the Government has launched a series of emergency schemes, including the provision of loans, guarantees, benefits and subsidies,<sup>8</sup> these are unlikely to offset the pandemic's negative impacts. Combined with the essential increase in health expenditures,<sup>9</sup> national responses to the pandemic have already significantly raised levels of public expenditure. Expenditure requirements, not least for the health response in light of the recent surge in confirmed COVID-19 cases, are still rising. In January–April 2020, the state budget balance deteriorated by Kyrgyz som (KGS) 14.0 billion (US dollars (USD) 180 million), compared to the same period in 2019, and further budget deficits and an increase in debt levels are expected. All of this is affecting the capacity and the fiscal space available to the Government to maintain development gains and drive a sustainable and inclusive recovery. While this pattern is visible in most affected economies, the Kyrgyz Republic is particularly susceptible to the negative crisis, in light of the structure of its undiversified economy, excess in import payments and dependence on exports as a major source of financing for development

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has been successful in mitigating the tremendous gap in fiscal space by mobilizing budget support and concessional lending from IFIs and donor countries. These are expected to reach some USD 500 million in 2020 (about 7% of GDP), and should help balance the country's external payments in 2020. However, further lending is only viable in the short-term, in view of the need to keep sustainable debt levels for macroeconomic stability, and will not provide sufficient funds to respond vigorously with social protection measures for the population at the levels necessary to hinder a rise in poverty.

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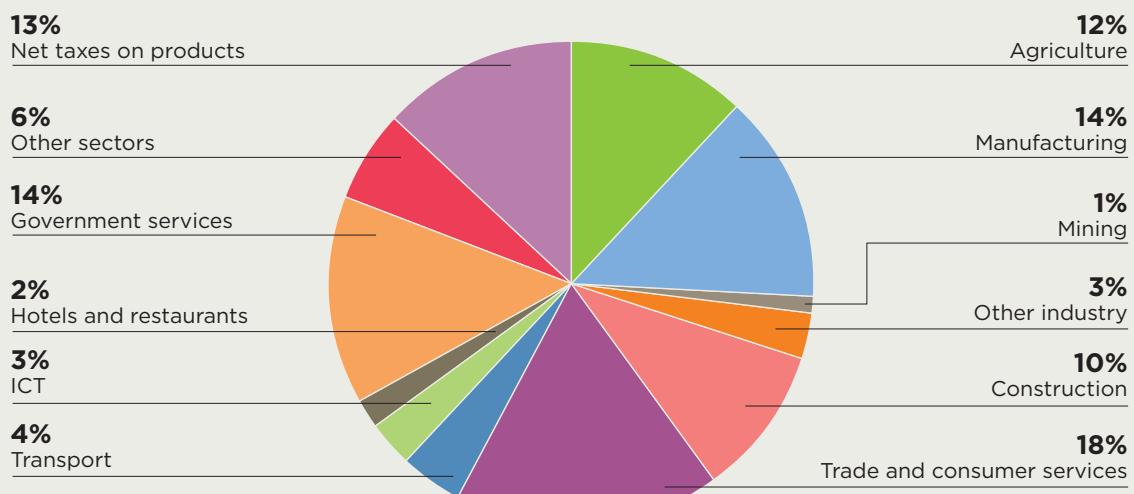
6 A May 2020 UNDP/Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement assessment of the pandemic's impact on micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the Kyrgyz Republic found that two-thirds were unable to service their loans.

7 According to the Ministry of Finance, in comparison to the same period in 2019, state budget revenues fell by KGS 9.0 billion (81% of 2019 level). Almost 50% of all revenue losses are associated with just two tax streams: VAT on imports from non-Eurasian Economic Union countries and taxes on international trade. Both include imports from China as a key component of their tax base, but imports from the People's Republic of China fell dramatically in early 2020, and consequently so did the taxes on these imports.

8 State budget expenditures increased by KGS 5 billion in January–April 2020.

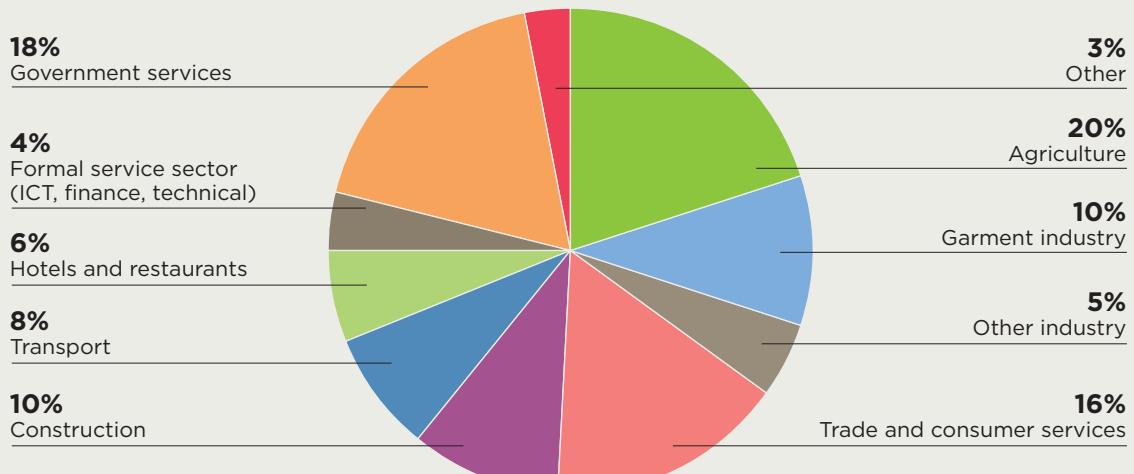
9 Including possible debt relief from the People's Republic of China.

### GDP BY SECTOR (2019)



**Source:** National Statistical Committee.

### EMPLOYMENT STRUCTURE BY SECTOR (2018)



**Source:** National Statistical Committee.

## Socioeconomic impact

The socioeconomic impact of the pandemic is being transmitted through the following channels: (i) lost income due to lockdowns, disruptions in commercial activities, the loss of jobs and reductions in remittances from the large shares of the labour force working abroad; (ii) higher consumer, and especially food, price inflation rates (which were running at annual rates of 9% and 16% respectively in April 2020); (iii) reduced access to quality healthcare and other essential social services; and (iv) increases in the incidence of domestic and other forms of violence.

### Poor-quality employment and lack of decent jobs

A large section of the population was either poor or vulnerable to poverty before the crisis. Nationally, approximately 22.4% of the population (1,429,621 people) in the Kyrgyz Republic live below the country's poverty line, and 54.8% are considered vulnerable to poverty (with per capita incomes below the international poverty line of USD 5.50 per day in 2011 purchasing power parity (PPP)).<sup>10</sup> A major factor contributing to this widespread vulnerability is the prevalence of poor-quality employment and a lack of decent jobs. Overall, it is estimated that around 70% of the workforce in the country in the pre-crisis period was employed in the informal or semi-informal sector. Approximately 96% of employment in the agricultural sector, 94% in the garment industry, 95% in trade and services, 87% in construction and transport and 89% in hotels and restaurants is informal or semi-informal.<sup>11</sup> A large proportion of these workers are either self-employed or work in micro-enterprises. Only 11% of all employment in Kyrgyzstan before the crisis was in formal sector private sector jobs. These large shares of the workforce in the informal sector have limited access to social protection (social assistance and social insurance rights), and the enterprises for in which they work have also not been the focus of government response packages. According to the results of a survey carried out by UNDP/Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement in May 2020, 94% of the over 600 micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) surveyed had already experienced a negative impact due to the COVID-19 crisis. Approximately 67% had experienced a drop in sales, 66% had to close temporarily and 50% could not deliver their produce due to transport disruption. Most had put their staff on unpaid leave, rather than firing them. 65% could not repay loans, and only 6% had received some form of support.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> World Bank data. <https://databank.worldbank.org/Poverty-in-Kyrgyzstan-/id/44c60e2>

<sup>11</sup> According to national statistics for 2018, 70.8% of the workforce, or 1.69 million workers, were employed in the informal sector in that year (61% of female employment and 76.9% of male employment), and informality represented 61.8% of all employment in urban areas and 76.0% in rural areas. In 2018, the estimated number of people informally employed in manufacturing (mostly garment production) was 219,000 (of whom 44% were women). Similarly, the hotel and restaurant sector (a proxy for tourism) employed 143,000 people (of whom 49% were women and 89% informal).

<sup>12</sup> Similar results were found through a survey of 1,053 entrepreneurs (of whom 45% were individual entrepreneurs and 39% had less than 50 employees) commissioned by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe: 89% had experienced a negative impact, including a drop in revenue ranging from 75 to 100% in April. The service and trade sectors were most affected. The main form of support received was the postponement of loan payments or tax holidays. 63% had enough financial and other reserves to keep going for another two weeks to one month.

## Fall in remittances

Another key channel of socioeconomic impact has been the fall in remittances from the up to 1 million Kyrgyz citizens working abroad. Due to the informal nature of much of the external migration, it is difficult to provide exact figures on the numbers of migrant workers. However, since 2016, remittances have accounted for a stable 30% of GDP annually. Data from the National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic suggest that remittance flows already decreased by 28% in the first quarter of 2020 (compared to the first quarter of 2019). The social impact of this drop in remittances is potentially enormous, as remittances have had a fundamental impact on improving poverty rates over the last decade, especially in the southern regions of the country, from where a large share of migrant labour stems. It is estimated that in 2019, the national poverty rate was just over 20% with remittances included, but that this would rise to 31.2% if remittances were excluded from household incomes. Overall, an estimated 715,000 people were lifted out of poverty due to the receipt of remittances in 2019. However, given that remittance incomes are tied to the economic health of the hosting countries, and that the negative effect of the pandemic in remittance-originating countries, especially in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan, is expected to continue (not least because of the drop in international oil prices), the decline in remittances is projected to amount to at least 4-5% of GDP in 2020 (a conservative estimate).<sup>13</sup> This will have a direct impact on poverty and on local economies, as purchasing power and liquidity in the economy decreases. It will also have a potentially negative impact on social cohesion at the national and local levels, as local economies struggle to absorb the additional labour supply due to returning migrants, in a situation where employment and income-earning opportunities were already scarce.

## Migrant labour

Apart from migrant labour abroad, many low-paid informal sector workers in Bishkek and Osh are internal migrants who have moved from rural to urban areas in search of better economic opportunities. They represent a large group of the vulnerable urban population (estimates vary from 500,000 to 1 million people in Bishkek alone). Many of them live in substandard accommodation on the outskirts of these cities, and large shares work in the country's re-export market, which is the lifeblood of the country's two major retail markets, Dordoi and Karasuu. In the pre-crisis period, these markets employed around 54,000 and 16,000 people respectively. However, they were closed during the state of emergency, and are likely to face future waves of temporary closure as the pandemic continues. Moreover, supply and demand in re-export markets are also unlikely to fully recover in the immediate future, meaning that the sources of income for this section of the workforce are likely to remain curtailed.

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<sup>13</sup> UNDP-ADB, Socioeconomic Impact and Vulnerability Assessment, 2020.

## Youth unemployment

The country's employment challenges are being compounded by its demographics. Over a third of the population of the Kyrgyz Republic is between 15 and 25 years old, and the number of youth entering the labour market is very high and is increasing (by more than 350,000 a year).<sup>14</sup> Youth unemployment is higher than the national average and the lack of decent employment opportunities mean that young men (between 15 and 34) make up the largest group of labour migrants. There is some evidence that young people opt to work abroad, rather than completing secondary or higher levels of education at home.<sup>15</sup> A further reduction in employment opportunities, coupled with the reduced options for working abroad, has the potential to increase the discontent among the young population, unless support is provided for their economic and social engagement in the pandemic response.

## Women's labour participation

Women's participation rate in the labour market is lower than men's, and has been falling over the last decade, as remittances have increased the reservation wage and have led to the further withdrawal of women from the labour force. In 2019, the paid labour force participation rate for women was 47.7% (75.7% for men).<sup>16</sup> Women outside of the labour force account for 72% of the total working-age population living below the poverty line.<sup>17</sup> Rural women in Kyrgyzstan (more than 64% of Kyrgyzstani women) work longer hours than men, in both paid and unpaid work. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) data also suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a tripling of the work burden for women, especially in domestic tasks that are less visible and unpaid. This burden of unpaid care work on women and girls imposes considerable restrictions on their time and mobility, with negative implications for women's economic empowerment, and their ability to actively participate in, influence and contribute to the country's response to the pandemic.

## Prices and inflation

According to World Bank simulations, the fluctuations in food prices and inflation during the pandemic has been a major factor influencing poverty rates: price hikes of 10–15% could lead to an increase in the poverty rate by 7–11 percentage points. The World Food Programme's (WFP's) rapid assessment (based on a survey of 1,253 households in five regions, as well as Bishkek and Osh) suggests that poor households are suffering from high food prices, combined with decreases in income. Some 70% of survey respondents had taken on new loans to cover essential consumption over the previous month, and 29% had used savings. Over 80% had used some form of negative coping strategy (e.g. selling productive assets or reducing expenses on health and education), leading to a reduction in resilience to future shocks and a decrease in their opportunities for exiting poverty.

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<sup>14</sup> United Nations, Common Country Assessment for the Kyrgyz Republic, 2019.

<sup>15</sup> World Bank, Transitioning to Better Jobs in the Kyrgyz Republic: a jobs diagnostic, 2015.

<sup>16</sup> World Bank Gender Database, ILO modelled estimates. Women's labour participation rate has fallen since 2000, when it was circa 62% (World Bank, Transitioning to Better Jobs in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2015).

<sup>17</sup> From UNDAF.

## Disruptions in health and other social services

The impact of the pandemic has also been felt through disruptions in essential health services, and the closure of schools. The safe resumption and re-opening of the latter will require considerable improvements in the implementation of infection prevention and control measures, and innovations in the ways in which health and education services are delivered. There is an increased risk of dropouts among children from vulnerable groups, and a risk that inequalities in learning outcomes, and related opportunities, will be further exacerbated. The crisis has also drawn attention to the digital divide in the country, which is re-enforcing inequities in access to services due to the transition to online application and delivery mechanisms. Finally, the crisis has increased the care burden placed on women, who have taken on most of the additional childcare, and care for the elderly and for family members with disabilities during the disruption of health, education and local social services.

The country started the crisis with a well-developed social protection system, albeit biased towards pension coverage. There were already considerable exclusion gaps in social protection for children and their families, and for working-age adults. This has caused an absence of cash transfers that have the ability to cushion the impact of the crisis for the most vulnerable households. Moreover, the small size of pensions and benefits means that even those in receipt of transfers have had little protection against the increase in prices of essential goods. The fact that there has been little investment in local social support services in recent years is also leading to difficulties in identifying (and addressing) the special needs of all vulnerable groups in the country, including victims of domestic violence, children with disabilities, children or families of migrant workers, children in institutional care returned to their families, vulnerable internal and external/returning migrants, and victims of human trafficking.

Digitalization can help improve citizens' access to rights, and also transparency in efforts to realize their rights. In particular, it can help in delivering social services to underserved rural areas. However, the country currently suffers from a digital divide between urban and rural areas.<sup>18</sup> Efforts will have to be made to bridge this divide, otherwise existing inequalities in accessing services and job opportunities will be exacerbated. For example, inequalities in access to distance learning, particularly for children and adolescents from economically challenging households, of ethnic and language minorities and with disabilities, will contribute to marginalization rather than help to address it, and can contribute to the intergenerational transfer of disadvantage. The United Nations will support the implementation of the country's digitalization strategies, retaining a focus on ensuring that no one is left behind, and also help to ensure that the digital transformation is accompanied by proper mechanisms to guarantee privacy and data protection. While digitalization can support efforts to cope with the health emergency and to provide continuous services, it is critical that the fundamental rights to privacy and to data protection are enforced and observed.

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<sup>18</sup> <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/233891521770539859/text/Kyrgyz-Digital-PAD-03012018.txt>

## **Increases in social tensions leading to domestic and other forms of violence, and threatening political stability**

Domestic violence was widespread and was increasing in the country before the crisis, affecting nearly one-third of women and girls aged 15 to 49 years. The number of registered domestic violence cases had increased to 7,333 in 2017.<sup>19</sup> The lockdown period saw a further increase due to the heightened risk of intimate partner violence at home as dwindling family resources, combined with lockdown restrictions, placed women and girls at a greater risk of violence. In March 2020, 2,319 cases of domestic violence were reported with 1,425 involving physical violence, 65% more than in the same period in 2019.<sup>20</sup>

Tensions in border communities were documented before and during the crisis, and increased social tensions due to the socioeconomic crisis threaten to fuel this further, especially if efforts to contain stigmatization and hate speech are not undertaken. The October 2020 parliamentary elections were held amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which has seriously deepened polarization and socioeconomic inequalities in the country, within the already fragile rule-of-law setting. Since early 2020, there have been episodes of increased authoritarianism, shrinking civic space (including freedom of media and expression) and disruptions of existing political processes (with continuous reshuffles of the Government's structure). These developments have contributed to a retrogression in regard to the ongoing legal and parliamentary democracy reform agenda. This has generated widespread expressions of discontent with the national emergency and recovery efforts, and has reduced public trust in the Government and the Parliament. Overall, there has been a weakening of the social contract between the state and society. Weak governance and low participation in politics increase the risk of destabilization, particularly against the backdrop of cross-border tensions, a drop in diaspora remittances to vulnerable communities, political changes, and growing income inequality. The creation of more inclusive development processes is a critical condition for social cohesion and resilience at the community level, both in the short term and the long term.

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19 United Nations, Common Country Assessment for the Kyrgyz Republic, 2019.

20 [https://24.kg/obschestvo/150800\\_faktov\\_semeynogo\\_nasiliya\\_vkyirgyizstane\\_stalo\\_na65prosentov\\_bolshe/](https://24.kg/obschestvo/150800_faktov_semeynogo_nasiliya_vkyirgyizstane_stalo_na65prosentov_bolshe/)

## Opportunities for a more sustainable future

The COVID-19 health, social and economic crisis is unprecedented. Global estimates suggest that the current crisis may cost six years of progress towards the SDGs. But the pandemic also offers opportunities to make progress in tackling some of the country's sustainable development challenges: by greening its economic growth patterns, making them more inclusive, and exploiting digital developments.

The pandemic has shown how the country's vulnerability to shocks has been increased due to an economic growth pattern which relies heavily on migration and remittances, a limited number of capital-intensive large enterprises, and the dependency of large sections of the workforce on the re-export market, as well as other semi-formal forms of unprotected employment. This growth model has come with significant social costs. A whole-of-government approach to making growth more inclusive is required, involving less reliance on the migration-led growth model, and more focus on not just employment, but also on decent and future-proof employment. This is essential not only to ensure more inclusive and equitable growth, but also to lessen the potential for polarization and promote greater resilience.

The Kyrgyz Republic ratified the Paris agreement on climate change at the end of 2019, and has begun taking policy steps towards a greener and low-carbon future. The Green Economy Policy was adopted in late 2019, and a pollution action plan was adopted in 2020. However, considerable challenges remain. For example, electricity consumption over the last eight years has increased by 83%,<sup>21</sup> and the country's growing energy needs have increasingly been met by coal, the consumption of which nearly tripled in 2006–2018. In addition to contributing to the country's growing carbon footprint, this has led to rising air pollution and associated health costs and annual deaths associated with air pollution in the Kyrgyz Republic are increasing.<sup>22</sup> More sustainable energy policies could mean new opportunities for private sector employment, new green jobs, access to concessional "green" global finance, and reduced reliance on energy imports.

Moreover, subsidies financed from the state budget currently incentivize unsustainable natural resource management in both energy and agriculture. Regarding the latter, water losses in agriculture are estimated at 2.1 billion cubic metres annually,<sup>23</sup> or about one-quarter of total water extraction. Smart investments to reduce water losses could lead to considerable boosts in agricultural production and productivity.<sup>24</sup> Overall, dedicated studies have shown that there are considerable cost-saving opportunities to be obtained from using energy and water resources more efficiently, and from having better alignment of state subsidies with the Green Economy Policy. Policies aimed at slowing biodiversity loss and warming temperatures can also contribute to making the emergence and spread of future pandemics less likely.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, Fuel and energy balance of the Kyrgyz Republic 2018, <http://stat.kg/ru/publications/toplivno-energeticheskij-balans/>

<sup>22</sup> [www.pureearth.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Krygyzstan-Pollution-Health-and-Economic-Impacts-The-Lancet-Report.pdf](http://www.pureearth.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Krygyzstan-Pollution-Health-and-Economic-Impacts-The-Lancet-Report.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> [www.water.gov.kg/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=228&Itemid=1274&lang=ru](http://www.water.gov.kg/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=228&Itemid=1274&lang=ru)

<sup>24</sup> [www.water.gov.kg/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=228:vodnye-resursy-i-vodokhozyajstvennaya-infrastruktura-kyrgyzstana&catid=99&lang=ru&Itemid=1274](http://www.water.gov.kg/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=228:vodnye-resursy-i-vodokhozyajstvennaya-infrastruktura-kyrgyzstana&catid=99&lang=ru&Itemid=1274)

<sup>25</sup> See, for example, Abraham Lustgarten, "How Climate Change is Contributing to Skyrocketing Rates of Infectious Disease", *ProPublica* (7 May 2020); and UNEP, Working with the Environment to Protect People: UNEP's COVID-19 response.

A theme running through this framework is the opportunity to support accelerated digitalization in the country. Support for timely investment in digitalization is essential for preventing and containing future COVID-19 outbreaks, and for ensuring the resumption and continuity of essential public services. Moreover, in a situation where there is still uncertainty surrounding the possibility of a safe return to “normal” school and other education structures, urgent support is needed to develop the capacity of the entire education system (from preschool to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) facilities) to operate in distance learning modes in case of continued school and preschool closure. The working-age population also needs support to acquire digital skills and access digital technology so they can access new jobs in the labour market. Finally, industries and services, particularly micro-enterprises, need to be supported to exploit the new opportunities arising from e-commerce.

In short, with appropriate policies and investment, the Kyrgyz Republic has the opportunity to use the economic recovery period to make affordable shifts towards a more socially and environmentally sustainable future, to benefit from digitalization, while also increasing the country’s resilience to future shocks.

## THE PEOPLE WE MUST REACH

The guiding reference for the United Nations socioeconomic response to the COVID-19 crisis will remain the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its central promise to “leave no one behind”. It is essential that no one remains invisible during response and recovery efforts, that pervasive gender inequality is not ignored or aggravated, and that the crisis does not contribute to the further exclusion or discrimination of marginalized groups. With this in mind, the United Nations system, with its partners, has been undertaking a series of vulnerability assessments in the country, to help inform this socioeconomic response framework.

Vulnerability can mean different things to different people and in different contexts. While the health risk has risen for the entire population due to widespread COVID-19 infections, the crisis has increased specific economic and social vulnerabilities, which significantly threaten people’s safety and dignity, as well as their ability to manage health risks. Many people are also subject to multiple risks and insecurities, making them even more vulnerable. The aim of this chapter is therefore to provide an outline of key groups that experience socioeconomic vulnerability: these are the groups that the United Nations will target throughout the response. However, it should be recognized that the people we serve could be vulnerable at multiple levels.

As indicated above, despite positive trends in poverty reduction over the last few years,<sup>26</sup> more than half of the population before the crisis could be considered vulnerable to poverty. A United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)-World Bank assessment suggests that the number of the “new poor” could range from 384,800 to 1.5 million, and that the number of children living in poverty could increase by 160,000 to 570,000, depending on how the crisis plays out.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Between 2013 and 2018, the proportion of the population living below the national poverty line decreased from 37% to 22.4%, and the extreme poverty level fell from 2.8% to 0.6%. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2020.

<sup>27</sup> UNICEF study carried out by experts from the University of Maastricht, in collaboration with the World Bank, based on World Bank data from the Kyrgyzstan Integrated Household Survey.

**POVERTY LEVELS USING INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL POVERTY LINES  
(% OF POPULATION, 2018)**

<b>USD 1.90 PPP/day</b>	<b>USD 3.20 PPP/day</b>	<b>USD 5.50 PPP/day</b>	<b>USD 10.00 PPP/day</b>	<b>USD 3.79 PPP/day</b>
International poverty level for low-income countries	International poverty line for lower middle-income countries	International poverty line for upper middle-income countries	International poverty line for high-income countries	National poverty line
<b>0.6% (2018)</b>	<b>10.9% (2018)</b>	<b>54.8% (2018)</b>	<b>90.3% (2018)</b>	<b>22.4% (2018)</b>

**Source:** UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub Vulnerability Dataset, August 2020

The available evidence from this and other assessments carried out so far suggests that the following groups require particular attention:

**Urban informal workers and their household members.** Many of these people are internal migrants from rural areas and secondary towns looking for jobs in Bishkek and Osh. Due to the informality of their activities it is difficult to estimate their total numbers. The UNDP-ADB Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment estimates that around 420,000 people (6.8% of the total population) live in households with internal migrants working in the informal sector, mainly in Bishkek and Osh. Many live in non-standard housing on the outskirts of Bishkek, without official registration of residence, and therefore without the right to access public services, including medical services, during the COVID-19 crisis. Large shares of this urban informal workforce have lost their main source of income and are particularly vulnerable to the effects of the pandemic because they have little, if any, access to social protection (due to the low coverage of both social assistance and social insurance for this group). Moreover, their urban location precludes their engagement in subsistence agriculture, and they are therefore vulnerable to rising rates of food price inflation.

**The rural poor and self-employed.** Rural households, particularly in the south of the country, are being more affected by reductions in remittances, as well as reduced access to health and other social services, particularly in remote rural areas. Rural populations are more dependent on household agricultural production, and thus are also vulnerable to interruptions in sales and planting, as well as in the supply of agricultural inputs, the full impact of which may only be felt in the autumn. A rapid assessment carried out by UN Women/the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) points to major income losses for men and women engaged in agriculture-related work, farming and running a family business, and from paid jobs.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> UN Women, COVID-19 Impacts on Livelihoods of Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic: Gender Rapid Assessment, 2020, <https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/en/48888-gender-rapid-assessment-impact-covid-19-kyrgyz-republic>

**Returning migrants and their families.** Year-on-year data on remittances shows a significant decline of around 30% for March–April, suggesting that migrant workers either have not been able to depart for seasonal work, or are blocked and stranded without work in their country of destination.<sup>29</sup> Some migrant workers are also at greater risk of contracting COVID-19 infection, for example those who have lost or abandoned their jobs and residences, and/or are sharing cramped living quarters in transit to Kyrgyzstan.

**The food insecure.** Information from a survey carried out by WFP in May 2020 points to growing food security concerns. 70% of those surveyed had taken on new loans to cover essential consumption over the previous month, and 29% had used savings. Over 80% had used some form of negative coping strategy (e.g. selling productive assets or reducing expenses on health and education), leading to a reduction in resilience to future shocks and a decrease in their opportunities for exiting poverty. A countrywide survey carried out by the Economic Policy Research Institute of the Ministry of Economy (supported by the ADB and UNDP) in April–June 2020 showed that 44% of poor respondents reported an increase in their spending on food and 34% reported an increase in their spending on medicines. These spending increases were mostly due to inflation.

**The elderly.** Pension coverage for the elderly is virtually universal, and according to Kyrgyz law, the Government must pay public sector salaries, social benefits and pensions regardless of the budget situation and other expenditure cuts. However, pension size remains a concern, as high inflation is reducing pensioners' purchasing power. The recent survey carried out by the Economic Policy Research Institute of the Ministry of Economy showed that 43% of pensioners reported a deterioration in their financial situation. They also suffered from food inflation, especially increases in the price of flour, vegetable oil, potatoes, vegetables and fruits, and meat. As a result, they had to switch to cheaper/less nutritious foods (44% of pensioners). Virtually all respondents with chronic diseases reported a deterioration in their access to specialized healthcare due to higher costs, physical access limitations, healthcare facilities being at full capacity because of the number of COVID-19 patients.

**Children.** Statistical data shows that poverty in the country is positively correlated with the number of children in a household. The poverty rate among children 0–17 years old was 25.7% in 2019, significantly higher than among the total population (20.1%).<sup>30</sup> Poor families with children can apply for the main social assistance benefit available in the country, the Monthly Benefit for Poor Families with Children (MBPFC).<sup>31</sup> However, due to the design of this benefit, its recipients are predominantly rural residents (more than 90% of all recipients). Taking into account its relatively small size (32% of the poverty line) and modest coverage (less than 20% of rural children and less than 5% of urban children), the MBPFC in its current form will not be able to provide meaningful protection to children affected by the crisis, especially those in urban areas. Children have also been affected by the transition of schools to distance learning regimes via television and other broadcast channels for the last quarter of the school year.

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29 National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic data shows a sharp drop in remittances for January–February of 2020 by 10%, reaching a 28% decline in March compared with the previous year's level.

30 National Statistical Committee 2019.

31 The nominal recipients of this benefit are children, but the benefit is managed by parents (usually mothers). The title of the benefit used in this report is a heritage one – it is currently called Uiy-Bologo Komok (UBK).

As the education system (especially public schools) was not ready for this change, and bandwidth constraints limit household access to fast internet, sharp declines in the quality of education are expected, while working parents in particular are also struggling to monitor and ensure their children's participation. Children in remote and poor households might not have access to quality distance learning. The preparation of a television-based curriculum for the autumn semester may offer some improvement in quality, but a sustained online format of delivery could lead to dropouts in rural remote areas, risking a deterioration in human development for those regions.

**Young people.** The COVID-19 crisis has had a negative impact on the income, employment, mental health and education of young people. A recent survey shows that 60% of young respondents are experiencing high levels of anxiety due to the crisis.<sup>32</sup> Young people make up 50% of the country's unemployed, and the economic depression will further aggravate the lack of opportunities for young graduates.

Around two-thirds of young people in the country live in rural areas, where off-farm employment opportunities are particularly limited, leading to widespread internal and external labour migration. A recent assessment<sup>33</sup> shows that more than half of respondents among young people had experienced a decrease in income since the beginning of the crisis. Most did not register as unemployed but instead looked for additional side-work in the informal sector.

**Women.** Women are typically more economically vulnerable than men due to the large gender gaps in employment, wages and income. Moreover, women have been the main victims of the rise in domestic violence that has been recorded since the beginning of the crisis.<sup>34</sup> Assessments have also pointed to a significant increase in women's care burden during the lockdown.<sup>35</sup> In households with male migrant members, children are usually left with their mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers. The recent gender assessment<sup>36</sup> carried out in the country shows that some women, particularly women with disabilities, have faced multiple forms of discrimination. Involuntary or violent practices, such as forced or arranged marriages and bride kidnapping, remain common. The vulnerability assessment carried out by the Economic Policy Research Institute of the Ministry of Economy also suggests that the crisis has disproportionately affected single women-headed families, where women are the only breadwinners. Their family situations have been further aggravated by quarantined kindergartens and the closing of small businesses, sewing industries and bazaars where they have been traditionally engaged and where they could earn a small amount of money for daily expenses.

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32 UNFPA and UNICEF, COVID Impact and Needs Assessment Among Youth, 2020.

33 *Ibid.*

34 A draft (May 2020) UN Women survey found that the number of domestic violence incidents reported during the first quarter of 2020 was nearly two-thirds higher than the number of such incidents reported during the first quarter of 2019 (2,319 versus 1,404).

35 The draft (May 2020) UN Women survey also found that after the onset of lockdowns, women were spending nearly three-quarters of their non-working time on child and elderly care and cooking. Men were spending roughly similar amounts of non-working time on cleaning and other forms of housework, the management of household finances, and shopping.

36 UN Women, COVID-19 Impacts on Livelihoods of Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic: Gender Rapid Assessment, 2020 <https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/en/48888-gender-rapid-assessment-impact-covid-19-kyrgyz-republic>

**People living in border communities.** The demarcation of the country's borders with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan has not been completed and contributes to tensions between communities on the different sides of the border. Residents in border communities often rely on cross-border trade for incomes, but these activities have either been suspended or severely curtailed due to border closures. The situation has become more fragile due to the return of labour migrants and increases in unemployment, as frustrations can sometimes be funnelled into border clashes.

**Persons with disabilities.** Persons with disabilities (PWDs) are particularly at risk of being disproportionately impacted by the pandemic crisis itself, and also by many other compounded factors. The disruption of essential services and support, as well as pre-existing health conditions, have in some cases left PWDs at higher risk of developing serious health conditions. Furthermore, PWDs are sometimes excluded from health information and mainstream health provision, and face limited accessibility in relation to goods and services. The COVID-19 crisis is exposing these underlying inequalities and exacerbates risk situations. For PWDs, everyday barriers, such as physical inaccessibility, barriers to implementing basic hygiene measures, the unaffordability of healthcare, limitations in health insurance, and potential discriminatory laws and stigma, can be life-threatening in the midst of a pandemic.

**People in institutions or detention.** People living in institutions and prisoners also constitute smaller but very vulnerable groups. Even prior to the onset of the pandemic, service standards in these institutions were not high; residents (and staff) must now face the fear of COVID-19 outbreaks in their facilities.

**Groups that are particularly vulnerable and marginalized because laws, policies and practices do not protect them from discrimination and exclusion.** Certain vulnerable groups have been identified as being at risk of discrimination when it comes to accessing resources or enjoying rights. These include ethnic minorities, migrants, the elderly, people living with HIV/AIDS, people with tuberculosis (TB), lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual/transgender and intersex (LGBTQI) people, people in penal institutions, refugees and stateless people, and victims of human trafficking.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2020.

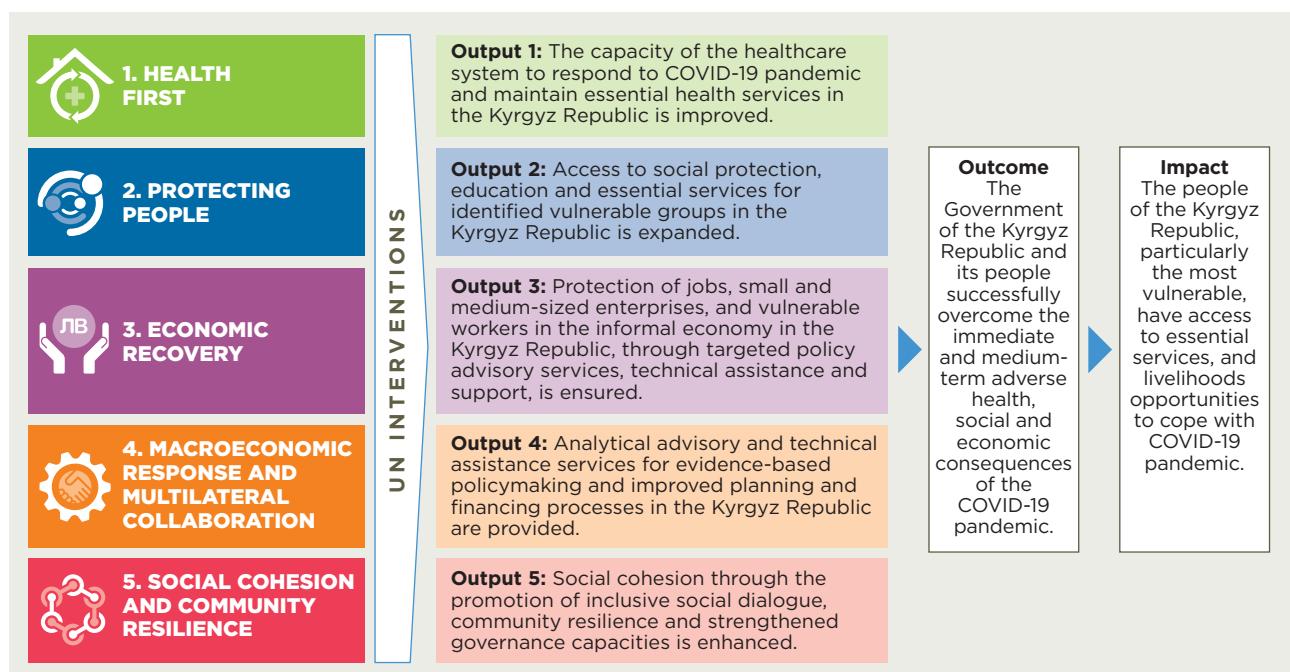
# THEORY OF CHANGE

The Theory of Change is aimed at supporting the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic in addressing the medium-term socioeconomic response to the COVID-19 pandemic and in driving an inclusive and sustainable recovery. It is based on the Socioeconomic Impact and Vulnerability Assessment conducted by UNDP and ADB, as well as on other key thematic assessments, which provide critical evidence on the overall impact of COVID-19 across sectors and population groups in the country. It relies on the collaborative work of the UNCT, in consultation with development partners, and is framed around the comparative advantage of the UN system in tackling the adverse effects of the pandemic.

The UN response is an integrated and coherent response package consisting of five work streams (or pillars) which will guide support in:

1. Ensuring that essential health services are still available and protecting health systems.
2. Helping people cope with adversity through ensuring social protection and basic services.
3. Protecting jobs, supporting small and medium-sized enterprises and informal sector workers through economic response and recovery programmes.
4. Guiding the necessary surge in fiscal and financial stimuli to make macroeconomic policies work for the most vulnerable and strengthening multilateral and regional responses.
5. Promoting social cohesion and investing in community-led resilience and response systems.

The underpinning strategic interventions aim to reduce the country's vulnerability to the pandemic through a more transparent, human rights-compliant and gender-sensitive response and recovery process, by putting the most vulnerable at the centre in order to ensure that *no one is left behind*. The response will support a more inclusive, resilient and sustainable recovery to *build forward better*, by bringing the potential of a green transition, financing reforms, digitalization, and e-government solutions into a broader scale, with the overall objective to support national development objectives and the implementation of the SDGs.



## THE FIVE PILLARS OF RESPONSE





**HEALTH FIRST:  
PROTECTING HEALTH  
SERVICES AND SYSTEMS  
DURING THE CRISIS**

## Key priority areas

**Support to the rapid expansion of the surge capacity of public health services.**

**Support to the resumption and maintenance of essential health services.**

## Contributing United Nations agencies

International Organization for Migration (IOM), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UNDP, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNFPA, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), WFP, WHO.

## Introduction

There are still many uncertainties regarding the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic, but based on current evidence, the most plausible scenario foresees recurring epidemic waves interspersed with periods of low-level transmission.<sup>38</sup> In such a scenario, the national health system has to be able to (i) provide the full range of services needed to prevent, diagnose, isolate and treat COVID-19 patients, while (ii) addressing accumulated demand for other health services that may have been crowded out during COVID-19 outbreak peaks.<sup>39</sup> The overall challenge is thus to design and implement a **dual-track health system response**, while retaining a focus on reducing health inequities.

The Kyrgyz Government's efforts to ensure this dual-track response are anchored in the country's National Contingency Plan for COVID-19, which was prepared by the Ministry of Health, with support from the WHO and other development partners. This plan presents a risk-based differentiated outbreak control strategy, which was approved by the Parliament on 18 March 2020 and has an outlay of USD 15.67 million for the first year. Its five focus areas are surveillance, infection prevention and control (IPC), case management, risk communication and community engagement, and coordination.

## The underlying challenges that the United Nations response will negotiate

The United Nations response under this pillar of the framework will take into account the following **four underlying longer-term challenges** facing the public health system, which require ongoing attention in order to ensure the successful implementation of the planned dual-track health system response:

<sup>38</sup> WHO, Considerations in adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19 Interim guidance 2020.

<sup>39</sup> [www.euro.who.int/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/440037/Strength-AdjustingMeasuresCOVID19-transition-phases.pdf?ua=1](http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/440037/Strength-AdjustingMeasuresCOVID19-transition-phases.pdf?ua=1)

**Health system under-funding**, as apparent in the decline of government health expenditures from 10% to 6% of total government expenditures in 2013–2017.<sup>40</sup> Much of the health infrastructure is also in poor condition, or is not appropriately designed, meaning that service provision cannot be organized in accordance with IPC standards, and clinical standards cannot be regularly updated based on the latest WHO evidence. Under-funding is also reflected in the chronic shortages of skilled health personnel (especially in rural and remote mountainous areas). Under-funding also leads to corruption and reduces the efficiency of qualified healthcare professionals.

**Insufficient primary health service delivery capacity**, which has both led to and been aggravated by disproportionate numbers of COVID-19 infections among healthcare workers (20% of all registered cases as of May 2020). The effectiveness of the response to the pandemic depends on the ability of the country to adapt primary healthcare systems to specifically address the needs created by COVID-19. Primary healthcare can play a vital role both in slowing the spread of the virus and managing patients with mild or moderate cases of COVID-19, and, ultimately in reducing the risk of saturation and the eventual collapse of the healthcare infrastructure, particularly hospitals. Incorporating primary healthcare officials and experts into the national pandemic response team and enabling primary healthcare professionals to provide care for mild COVID-19 patients will take pressure off hospitals and allow them to deal with more severe and critically ill COVID-19 patients. In addition, primary healthcare units need support to sustain non-COVID-19 essential healthcare services.

At the same time, supporting wider health services to continue to provide services to other patients, particularly high-risk groups, such as those suffering from HIV and TB, is key. Actions such as providing access to quality personal protective equipment (PPE) and helping upgrade other health protocols and waste management systems across the health system, are essential.

**Gaps in public health systems governance.** This relates to (*inter alia*) coordination and an effective referral system between primary and hospital levels, between private and public healthcare services, and between various government ministries and agencies, social partners and stakeholder groups at both national and community levels.

**Inadequate health information systems.** The health data landscape remains highly fragmented, with no overall health data strategy, governance or standards. Timely investment in digitalization is essential for preventing and containing future COVID-19 waves, and for ensuring the resumption and continuity of essential services.

## **How the United Nations will help: Expanding surge capacity, supporting information campaigns and IPC, restoring essential health services, and ensuring equitable outcomes**

### **Expansion of surge capacity**

The United Nations response under the health pillar will complement ongoing efforts in support of the implementation of the National Contingency Plan for responding to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic (the first track of the health response). It will particularly focus on scaling up measures that can disrupt chains of COVID-19 transmission through identifying, isolating and testing cases, as well as by tracing and quarantining contacts. Here, the aim is to support the rapid expansion of the surge capacity of public health services to cope with COVID-19. This will involve providing support to: strengthening the current approach to testing and tracing, expanding laboratory testing capacity, epidemiological analysis, and surveillance mechanisms, including at points of entry. It will also involve support for the further recruitment, training and protection of frontline staff, including through measures for preventing and controlling infection, and initiating notification systems, as well as for establishing and maintaining a mobile pool of resources (e.g. ventilators, PPE, key staff) at the national level, and protocols for its rapid deployment (see Pillar 3 below).

### **Support for public information campaigns**

Efforts to strengthen public health communications will also be a key part of this pillar. The United Nations will provide support to the Government to conduct public information risk communication campaigns covering basic information on COVID-19 to educate the public on how COVID-19 is transmitted, how to identify symptoms, and where to go and what to do if they are sick, that will also help dispel misinformation and myths. There is a need to improve how critical messages are conveyed to the public in order to improve the practice of infection control measures and understandings on how to use PPE. At the same time, the country needs professional journalism and reliable information to adapt its response to the spread of COVID-19, to learn from other countries' experiences and to counter the increase in rumours and disinformation. In that context, the United Nations will: mobilize media outlets to play their part in the fight against COVID-19, promote media and information literacy resources to counter the spread of disinformation, and promote facts via training resources and webinars, as well as information campaigns, to stop the spread of conspiracy theories and fast-growing COVID-19-related disinformation that are impeding access to trustworthy sources and reliable information.

### **IPC assistance**

The United Nations will also provide IPC assistance to health and other public facilities such as schools. It will provide support for conducting water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) assessments in healthcare and education facilities. This will help inform government policy and donor support, including by addressing the current lack of sufficient data on WASH in health and school facilities, which are needed to support infrastructure rehabilitation and the improvement of WASH standards. The further scaling up of support for infection control in health facilities will be provided, including efforts to address the shortfall in supplies. Training for public and health workers on IPC and waste management, and the importance of adhering to protocols, will be provided.

## Restoring essential health services

For the second track of the health response, the United Nations will provide support to restoring essential services, while strengthening health information systems. Certain essential services, such as immunization and oncological care, have been disrupted by the pandemic. It will be necessary not only to ensure their resumption, but to continue to explore alternative ways of providing consultations. The United Nations will provide support to ensure that this is done in such a way as to ensure that groups with traditionally lower levels of access to services are not left worse off during and after the crisis. Support to strengthening health information systems will include expanding and improving the digitalization of health records, expediting the online registration of cases (especially of diseases covered by the International Health Regulations), and improving the interoperability of existing health information systems. Improvements in health information systems will outlive the COVID-19 crisis and will allow for a better targeting of resources to areas and communities with greater need. They will also contribute to improving payment systems and the epidemiological monitoring of infectious and non-communicable diseases.

## Ensuring equitable outcomes

The United Nations response will also retain a focus on tackling health inequities throughout its work. This will include joint efforts with the Government to reduce or abolish financial and administrative barriers in accessing quality health services. A considerable barrier is posed by the mismatch between the increased spending on COVID-19 incurred by service providers and the lack of additional funding for the MHIF. Moreover, the extreme shortage of medical and protective equipment has also exposed inequities and inefficiencies in distribution systems that should be addressed, in order to ensure that people everywhere have access to affordable and appropriate healthcare services.

## Other areas of support

As the respiratory problems caused by COVID-19 are made worse by high levels of air pollution, the United Nations will also step up efforts to improve air quality and address the drivers of pollution in the context of climate change mitigation and public health. It will also provide support for building the resilience of the health system in the face of challenging climatic conditions, and managing medical waste more sustainably and effectively. In addition, the United Nations response effort will also support the Government in addressing the following:

- **Reducing inequities in access to the WHO's essential package of health services for migrants** and their families, and for other vulnerable groups suffering from a crisis-related loss of income. This covers access to TB and HIV services, essential health services for other acute and chronic conditions, as well as mental health services. Support will also be provided for addressing gaps in legislation, which mean that vulnerable refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons are not covered by the guaranteed minimum package of health services.
- **Shortcomings in health infrastructure** that prevent the organization of service provision according to IPC standards, for example a separation of green and red zones with separate exits and entrances, hygiene facilities, kitchens, access to clean running water 24/7, and waste management facilities that are in accordance with IPC standards.

- **Further training of healthcare personnel to implement preventive measures and resume essential services**, particularly for those working at points of entry and in rural and remote areas, as well as efforts focused on incentivizing, retaining and protecting health workers to improve the health system's capacity for response.
- **Promoting intersectoral coordination** within the Government to ensure links between the health response and other sectors (e.g. the enforcement of the lockdown that at the same time ensures special permissions for health staff to move within and outside Bishkek).
- **Activities to tackle the population's low awareness of**, and mistrust of, COVID-19 preventive measures, and to tackle myths and rumours, all of which undermine the health system's efforts to detect, trace and isolate suspected and positive patients in a timely manner.
- **Supporting the quality assurance and certification process for local producers of PPE** to ensure that domestic producers meet Ministry of Health, WHO and international standards, and thus provide healthcare professionals and the public with safe products.
- **Increasing the capacity to provide e-health services to the public**, which will help the Government manage the provision of services to patients suffering from COVID-19 and other illnesses, while ensuring equitable and effective support that upholds the principle of leaving no one behind.
- **Supporting the Government's efforts to define and address COVID-19's impact alongside air pollution** during the winter season.

## Working with partners

Throughout its work under this pillar, the United Nations will coordinate its efforts with development partners that have worked to strengthen the health system and services in the Kyrgyz Republic. In particular, we will leverage the two established coordination platforms for the health response: the Health Disaster Response Coordination Council (led by the Ministry of Health and WHO) and the Development Partner Coordination Council (led by WHO and the World Bank).



**PROTECTING PEOPLE:  
SOCIAL PROTECTION AND  
BASIC SERVICES**

## Key priority areas

**Expanding social protection programmes to mitigate the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable groups of the population.**

**Maintaining essential food and nutrition services.**

**Ensuring the continuity and quality of water and sanitation services.**

**Securing sustained learning for all children and adolescents.**

**Supporting the continuity of social services.**

**Supporting victims of GBV.**

## Contributing United Nations agencies

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), IOM, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UN WOMEN, WFP, WHO, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

## Introduction

Worldwide, the COVID-19 crisis is impacting the poorest and most vulnerable populations the hardest. In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, people living in countries with strong social protection systems and basic services suffered the least and recovered the fastest. Since the beginning of the pandemic, most governments around the world have been scaling up cash transfers, food assistance programmes and other initiatives to support families and individuals.

The COVID-19 socioeconomic response framework developed jointly by the United Nations agencies in the Kyrgyz Republic will support the scaling up and adaptation of relevant programmes in the country. The response will be organized around six main priorities:

1. Scaling up the existing social assistance cash transfer programme for low-income families with children.
2. Ensuring food security and preventing deterioration in nutritional status during the crisis response period.
3. Upholding hygiene standards to allow public services to resume.
4. Supporting safe re-opening of schools, coupled with improving the access and quality of remote learning.
5. Expanding access to community-level services for vulnerable groups with special and urgent needs.
6. Preventing gender-based violence (GBV) and ensuring access to support services for victims.

The following subsections set out the challenges in, and the United Nations' response for, each of these six priority areas.

## Scaling up and expanding resilient and pro-poor social protection systems

The COVID-19 crisis and the related loss of jobs and incomes is increasing the **demand for social assistance and unemployment support** but the initial Government response did not envisage any scaling up of the existing social assistance or unemployment benefits. In the first crisis response package, Kyrgyzstan extended the assistance entitlement to those already receiving targeted cash transfers (the MBPFC and the Monthly Social Benefit), which covers only a very small section of the poor. The Government did not envisage any expansion of the cash transfer program or unemployment benefits and relied instead on private individual and company donations to support the temporarily unemployed. In the second round of the government crisis response, an increase in pensions was announced starting from 1 September 2020 but this was already envisaged before the crisis. Although pensions and cash transfers are being paid regularly, they are insufficient to address the growing income insecurity.

Eligibility criteria for social assistance are extremely restrictive. Pre-crisis coverage was already very low and both the old and the new poor are unlikely to qualify for support, especially the new poor in urban areas. There is a need to make the eligibility criteria less restrictive and more transparent, as well as simplify the application procedures] by making it more user-friendly and compatible with physical distancing requirements, notably through digitalization. Although the Government has recently removed the requirement that applicants provide proof of residence, it will still be necessary to improve outreach to those who may remain invisible, for example internal migrants in the informal sector or returning migrants, vulnerable migrants and victims of trafficking.

The United Nations will support the adaptation and scaling up of the existing social assistance benefits and expand the coverage and inclusiveness of MBPFC through providing advisory support to selection criteria and strengthening access mechanisms and by assisting the Government in exploring and leveraging alternative financing. The joint UNDP-ADB Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment has showed that extending support to 500,000 new recipients over six months can be attained at the cost of 0.6% of GDP.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> The UNDP-ADB Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment estimates that setting both the MBPFC and unemployment benefits at KGS 1,000 per recipient per month, and extending payment of these benefits for six months to 500,000 new recipients, would cost KGS 3.35 billion (0.6% of GDP) in 2020. Budget capacity for social protection could also be expanded if subsidies for fossil fuels and chemical fertilizers were reduced, and more ambitious efforts were undertaken to reduce illicit financial flows.

The crisis has drawn attention to the need to revise and expand social protection systems and to ensure social protection floors exist for everyone, across the lifecycle. In this regard, expanding social assistance and unemployment support in Kyrgyzstan should be seen as priority first steps for filling the gaps in the national social protection floor, particularly for children and the working-age population. The United Nations will continue to advocate for a revision of the national social protection strategy and for implementing a systems approach to address fragmentation in the social protection system. This will include efforts to scale up and diversify active labour market programmes, which are currently underdeveloped. It will also include policy and technical support to expand the coverage of social insurance (pension, sick leave, maternity rights) to those in the informal sector who are currently not covered and addressing gender inequalities in pension size/eligibility. The United Nations will highlight examples from other parts of the world to show how social assistance and unemployment support can be much more targeted and effective in addressing poverty and vulnerability in a sustainable way if cash transfers are combined with measures such as employment activation. As part of building forward better, there are opportunities for adapting these examples to the Kyrgyz context and for making links to other (greener) employment policies, as well as policies for promoting formalization, upgrading infrastructure, improving food security, nutrition and dietary patterns and supporting rural communities in transitioning to more climate smart agriculture and sustainable natural resource management practices.

The expansion of social assistance and unemployment support will require a strategy for creating an adequate fiscal space and a careful examination of intra-budget allocations. The United Nations will work together with the Government and multilateral institutions to support the development of a stronger budget planning and fiscal management process by engaging stakeholders from the outset and building capacities so that different actors are better informed and can engage with cross-sector issues, complement ongoing national fiscal policy reform efforts and implement a financing strategy in a coordinated way. Moreover, the United Nations will provide support to put in place a more risk-informed and shock-responsive social protection system in Kyrgyzstan. The current crisis has shown that the social protection system needs to be better prepared for future shocks. In particular, the social protection system needs to be able to respond to crises affecting large numbers of individuals/households simultaneously across the country, including in urban areas, cross-border regions and isolated communities. This can be achieved by putting in place mechanisms for delivering humanitarian cash transfers, adjusting funding and delivery mechanisms to scale up existing benefits (at least horizontally and, if possible, also vertically, to take into account rising food prices), as well as providing non-cash support. Designing and implementing shock-responsive social protection will require greater inter-agency/inter-ministerial coordination to ensure the integration of social protection in the country's emergency response programmes.

The crisis response has shown that the Ministry of Labour and Social Development's (MLSD) current database of vulnerable groups has become outdated since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, and does not provide an adequate basis for informing the distribution of humanitarian aid. The United Nations will provide support to improve the technology and data collection methods used by the MLSD to ensure quality and timely data collection and identification of beneficiaries.

## Maintaining essential food and nutrition services

The inflation of food prices, which results from growing import prices and currency devaluation, could continue to negatively impact the access of the poorest part of the population to essential food items and increase their reliance on cheap processed foods that lack necessary nutrients. The initial crisis response package from the Government included the distribution of essential food packages to vulnerable households.<sup>42</sup> The Government has also taken measures to ensure regular and affordable supply of food products by imposing price controls, creating green corridors to ensure the movement of food and agricultural inputs, introducing export bans and import tariff cuts, pre-purchasing essential inputs, and releasing public grain stocks. Ensuring that farmers have access to inputs for the next planting season is a key concern. In a context of uncertainty, a comprehensive response that includes monitoring and addressing interruptions to planting and sowing will be central.

In the recovery period, the poorest communities will continue to be the most affected by food inflation and income shocks and will need support to eat healthily. The United Nations will support a regular food supply and food price monitoring mechanism to inform decision-making and programming. This will include a “safety net alert system”, as well as a review of trade and taxation policy measures and their potential contribution to the creation of a favourable environment for food trade. Taken together, these monitoring measures will provide the basis for early warning analysis to inform policy actions.

The United Nations will also provide support to ensure that the production, distribution and, most importantly, the consumption of fortified foods do not falter. Attention will be given to preventing the deterioration in the nutritional status of women and children and ensuring that the crisis does not undermine the ongoing efforts to promote breastfeeding or lead to an increase in the number of undernourished children due to misinformed breastfeeding practices, poor diets, increased morbidity, and disruptions in the provision of services through the primary healthcare system. The United Nations will support the Government to put in place mechanisms for the early detection and treatment of children and adults impacted by malnutrition.

The United Nations will also support the Ministry of Education and Science in providing nutritious meals in all primary schools in the country, as prescribed by the national legislation. In the case of online education, home rations may be organized to substitute school meals. This will be accompanied by clear nutrition information and guidance to school children, teachers, parents and caregivers to ensure the adequate nutrition in the face of rising food prices.

The United Nations will also continue to provide technical support for integrating approaches to food insecurity that combine cash transfers for vulnerable households with measures to promote access to productive employment to facilitate long-term reductions in poverty and food insecurity (in line with joint United Nations support to less fragmented social protection systems, as discussed above).

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<sup>42</sup> Food packages worth KGS 800 each were distributed to 225,000 vulnerable households, targeted through local commissions made up of representatives of the local authorities, in parallel to the existing social protection system (ADB-UNDP, Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment, 2020).

The United Nations will also provide technical advisory support to rural smallholders and government stakeholders to promote the adaptation of the best agricultural practices, such as drip irrigation systems, mini-greenhouses, toolkits for family poultry farms, soil protection technologies, the development of seed production and resource conservation, and provide trainings and consultations on various aspects of agricultural production. An effort will be made to reduce harmful agricultural subsidies.

## **Improving hygiene controls – particularly in schools, to allow them to reopen**

Infection control remains a considerable challenge in the country, due to the poor understanding of the use of PPE, misconceptions around its use among certain groups (especially men), poor implementation of IPC protocols, and inadequate wash facilities in healthcare centres. Public schools in particular are not prepared for safe reopening since infection control plans for schools are not yet in place and school infrastructure is ill-equipped to implement physical distancing. 25.7% of schools do not have access to clean drinking water, 74.4% of schools do not have internal sanitary facilities (toilets) and 68.2% of schools are not connected to the hot water supply. The vast majority of schools also have a shortage of soap, detergents, disinfectants, rags, brushes, etc. This threatens the ability to reopen schools as health services are already overstretched and cannot accommodate any rise of infection rates in children and their families.

At the community level, the United Nations will provide support for improving hygiene through ensuring the continuity of water supply and creating additional hygiene and hand washing facilities, as well as promoting related messaging. The United Nations will also help ensure the provision of hygiene kits to families of returning migrants and COVID-19 positive women with children in observation and quarantine areas.

Support for the safe reopening of schools will be provided through the development of guidelines in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Health, as well as the development of a communication strategy. The United Nations will provide support to the training of school management and teachers to fully implement safe schooling whilst ensuring infection control and adherence to academic standards. In case of a second wave of COVID-19 infections during the winter, the United Nations will provide support on air-vent upgrades in schools and back efforts to design and finance new vents, which would reduce the likelihood of transmission in closed spaces.

## Securing sustained learning for all children and adolescents

During the lockdown, preschools and schools transitioned to distance learning regimes via television, online platforms and other broadcasting channels. Sharp declines in the education quality resulted from the unpreparedness of public preschools and schools for remote learning.<sup>43</sup> Children in remote and poor households do not always have access even to distance learning via television or computers/laptops. Access to the affordable internet is very low in the country<sup>44</sup> and the cost of bandwidth varies across regions and cities, reducing equitable access to essential public services, such as education and health, through digital channels. In that context, it will be critical to ensure a safe return to schools and preschools (see above on infection control in schools); develop the capacity of the education system (preschool, primary and secondary schools, as well as TVET facilities) to operate in distance learning modes in case of continued school and preschool closure; address inequalities in physical access to distance learning and access costs, particularly for children and adolescents from economically disadvantaged households, ethnic and language minorities, and with disabilities; provide training for teachers in alternative teaching methods; and introduce blended learning approaches.

The United Nations response will support the Government to ensure safe re-opening of educational facilities, while also facilitating the expansion in the availability and quality of online and remote education. The focus will also be on ensuring that the crisis does not heighten inequalities in access to quality education. Specifically, technical support will be provided to the Ministry of Education and Science in regard to improving the content and availability of distance learning at all levels of the education system, including the development of instructions and video training materials for preschool and school teachers. These materials will provide information on how to create, adapt, and implement remote learning activities with children and adolescents. There will be an immediate focus on addressing the shortfall in quality remote learning content (e.g. video lessons that will be saved online and aired through TV broadcasts) for the academic year 2020/21, coupled with the support for improving the capacity of teachers to run quality remote learning activities. Support to improve the information and communication technology competencies of teachers in all subjects of the secondary level will be provided in order to ensure the delivery of distance learning and the ability to teach children basic digital skills. Support will also be provided to ensure the availability of online remote learning platforms and content in local languages for all levels of education, including TVET.

The United Nations will also develop tailored support to address inequities in access and risk of dropouts among the more disadvantaged groups. This will include support for the data collection on groups/students at risk of dropout and targeted programmes for school return campaigns. Support will also be provided to the Ministry of Education and Science in regard to developing and implementing a strategy for catch-up learning programmes for children and adolescents who have had no access to remote learning. Monitoring and assessment mechanisms will be developed to identify whether all children and adolescents have access to quality learning activities during school closure.

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<sup>43</sup> From UNDP-ADB, Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment, 2020.

<sup>44</sup> <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/233891521770539859/text/Kyrgyz-Digital-PAD-03012018.txt>

The COVID-19 pandemic and the recent spike in confirmed cases create uncertainty about the resumption of “normal” learning activities. With this in mind, the United Nations will start developing technical proposals and support for the longer-term design and development of flexible modalities of teaching during and after the COVID-19 crisis. Finally, as the closure of schools has placed a considerable burden on home caregivers, particularly women, the United Nations will also provide support for the development of TV, video/paper gender-responsive instructions for mothers, fathers and other caregivers on different kinds of learning and play activities for children to support their home-based learning.

## **Expanding the reach and supporting the continuity of social services**

In the Kyrgyz Republic, only a very small proportion of vulnerable individuals and households have **access to local social services**, due to the lack of resources, low capacity at the local level and the absence of a clear statutory framework for social services, as well as the lack of decentralization of service provision, especially family support services. As a result, residential institutions remain the foremost modality for the provision of social services to vulnerable individuals and households.<sup>45</sup> The extremely low provision of community social services represents a major gap in the social protection system and severely constrains the impact of other social protection interventions. It will be difficult to enhance the impact of state benefits without enhancing the capacity of social workers at the local government level, since they are responsible for identifying poor households and addressing and monitoring their concerns. Lack of qualified staff at the local level hinders the identification of (and the ability to address) the special needs of all vulnerable groups, including victims of domestic violence, children with disabilities, children or families of migrant workers, vulnerable internal and external/returning migrants and victims of human trafficking.<sup>46</sup>

During the COVID-19 crisis, large numbers of children in residential care have been reunited with their families. While this is a positive development in that it contributes to meeting the child’s right to grow up in a family environment, it is essential that local social services are capable of following up on the situation of these children in order to ensure that the family environment is indeed safe and protective.

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45 In 2019, there were over 10,000 children in residential care in 137 institutions ( Data base on children in residential care institutions, MoLSD).

46 UN Women's mapping of service providers offering support during the emergency situation showed that women with disabilities and women who have children with disabilities are more dependent on support from other family members, more exposed to poverty due to inability to engage in full-time paid work, and have additional needs in medicines and medical care, yet no sustainable support is provided for this vulnerable group: UN Women, Assessment of CSO engagement in responding to the needs of the emergency situation in Kyrgyz Republic, 2020.

The social infrastructure and the **care economy** remain underdeveloped. UN Women's rapid assessment showed that during the lockdown women spent 3.6 times more time on unpaid work than men and two times more on childcare. The United Nations will provide support to address the short- to medium-term issue of scaling up local support services, while addressing the long-term challenge of increasing investment in the care economy and improving the availability and quality of community care services. The United Nations will support the scaling up of psychological and other support services to provide support to families with members with disabilities and special needs, people living with HIV/AIDS, children with migrant parents, returning migrants and stateless persons, and children recently released from institutional care and returned to their families due to the risk of the spread of COVID-19 in institutions.

In line with their mandates, United Nations agencies will provide tailored support for improving local services for specific sections of the population. For example, support will be provided to migrants in vulnerable situations and victims of trafficking through the provision of food and non-food items, temporary shelter, return transportation assistance by land or by air, and medical assistance coupled with targeted services for returning migrants and victims of trafficking at the local level. Rapid assessments on the impact of COVID-19 on youth migrants and the children of migrants will be carried out along with a dedicated multi-cluster survey in order to inform the design of a set of systemic actions to prevent and mitigate the emerging risk factors that will be identified through these surveys. In this context, a specific assessment of children who have left residential institutions after the onset of the emergency will be used to advocate for a longer-term reduction in the number of institutionalized children. Support will be extended to the MLSD for the operationalization of a case management database along with the provision of training for the social services workforce. The United Nations will also provide support to address the shortcomings in data collection and database management to provide centralized information on the situation of vulnerable groups, including children, women, the elderly and PWDs in order to inform the introduction and development of social services based on individual case management approaches.

## **Support to victims of GBV**

Beyond the rise in the incidence of GBV during the crisis period, many cases of GBV remain unreported due to the lack of available, safe, ethical and quality response services – a problem that is now compounded by the pressures on health services to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak, restrictions on the use of public transport, as well as fears of stigmatization, reprisal and lack of access to appropriate information on how to seek help. In the period of the immediate response to the outbreak, United Nations efforts were concentrated on addressing the additional difficulties in accessing support caused by physical distancing requirements (inability to leave home, to use public transport, and to report to the police etc.). This included working with local authorities and CSOs to ensure safe spaces for victims of GBV. This work will be continued as heightened tensions that lead to the risk of domestic violence are likely to continue in the recovery period. Support efforts will include helping crisis centres to adapt their regular services during the COVID-19 crisis and arrange alternative premises (safe spaces) to continue their support to GBV survivors; support to the provision of continuous online provision of legal, medical, social and psychosocial services to GBV survivors; and support to the Government and key service providers to establish emergency GBV mobile groups to provide services to sexual violence and GBV survivors.

The United Nations will provide support for the implementation of a multisectoral response to GBV in alignment with the Spotlight Initiative.<sup>47</sup> This will include support for improving the legislative framework and policies regarding domestic violence in cooperation with the prosecutorial and judicial authorities, as well as the relevant social services. Support will be provided for the development of a long-term strategy for crisis centres based on the establishment of sustainable linkages with the Government and private sector to ensure guaranteed access to legal, health and social protection and support for sexual violence and GBV survivors.

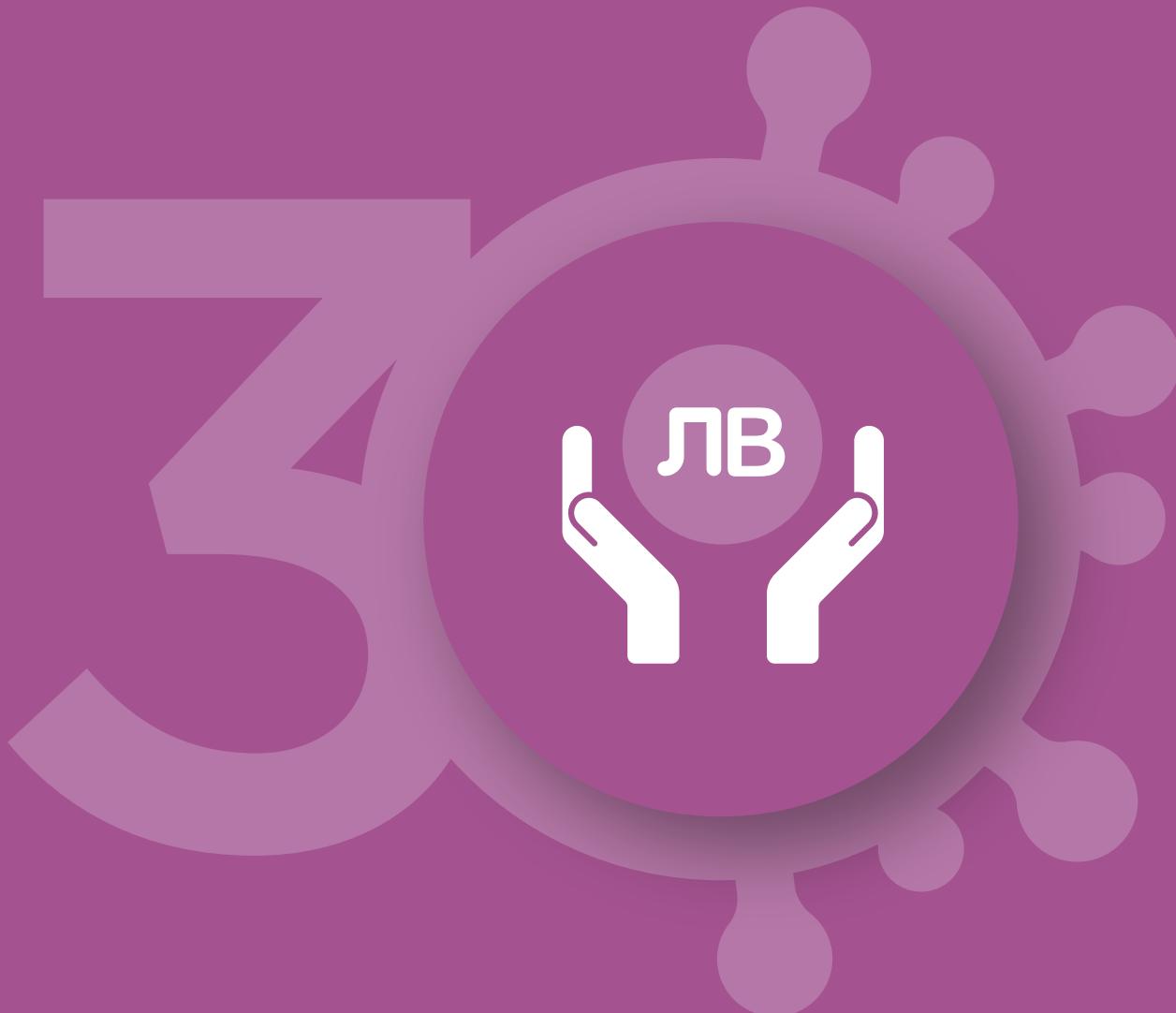
The United Nations' immediate response will be complemented by providing support to addressing the underlying societal attitudes through longer-term behavioural change work to shift social norms around gender and the value of women and girls in society, including during emergencies, among the overall population and service providers. Support will include community mobilization on the role of women using adaptive leadership and scenarios.

## **Working with partners**

In its work under this pillar, the United Nations will leverage initiatives and support from development partners, such as the ADB, the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) and the World Bank in the water sector; Mercy Corps in the hygiene sector; and the Korea International Cooperation Agency, Mercy Corps, the Russian Federation and the World Bank in the area of food security and nutrition.

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<sup>47</sup> The Spotlight Initiative is a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. See <https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/>



**ECONOMIC RECOVERY:  
PROTECTING JOBS,  
ENTERPRISES, AND INFORMAL  
SECTOR WORKERS**

## Key priority areas

**Support to entrepreneurship and the re-profiling of micro/small enterprises.**

**Employment support to vulnerable groups, including migrants and informal sector workers.**

**Support to improve work conditions in the informal sector.**

**More equal opportunities to benefit from the digital revolution/digitalization.**

**Boosting the private sector's contribution to healthcare response and recovery.**

## Contributing United Nations agencies

FAO, International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), ILO, IOM, International Trade Centre (ITC) UNDP, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNESCO, UNODC, UN WOMEN, WFP, WHO.

## Introduction

MSMEs, farm workers, the self-employed, workers from the cultural and creative industries, daily wage earners, refugees and migrant workers are being hit the hardest by the COVID-19 crisis. The most vulnerable workers are often found in the informal economy, which constitutes 60% of the global workforce,<sup>48</sup> and these are among the least protected and least equipped to deal with the restrictions and disruptions in business activities. Because of pre-existing gender-based inequalities women often experience more difficulty finding new jobs or entrepreneurship opportunities for their economic recovery, not least because they bear a disproportionate burden in providing home-based care, and this burden has increased during school closures and with the disruption of social services due to COVID. Ensuring the continued or improved functioning of small producers, informal workers and MSMEs across sectors will be essential in the COVID-19 response, as will supporting women's economic activity. Such efforts also represent an opportunity to "build forward better" by incentivizing measures that can support a transition to a resource-efficient green and circular economy, founded on sustainable consumption and production patterns and anchored in sustainable value chains.

## Inclusive labour markets and decent work: Challenges in Kyrgyzstan

Over the past decades the domestic economy in Kyrgyzstan has struggled to generate sufficient decent and future-proof employment opportunities for a growing working-age population, resulting in the migration of large sections of the workforce abroad. Moreover, a large share of employment is concentrated in low-productivity sectors, mainly in agriculture and services. As a result, a majority of the workforce – up to 70% – is employed in precarious, low-wage, and informal or semi-informal jobs and many are informal migrants (internal and external). These employees – from both urban and rural areas – were vulnerable before the crisis, but the COVID-19 disruptions to economic activity have exacerbated this vulnerability.

48 United Nations, A United Nations Framework for the Immediate Socioeconomic Response to COVID-19, 2020.

Overall, the employment challenges pre-crisis were considerable and they were compounded by the country's demographics (with over 350,000 young people entering the labour market each year). Young workers were not always fully reflected in unemployment rates but instead moved into under-employment or low-quality, low-paid, low-productivity and unprotected jobs. In addition, the participation of women in quality paid employment is strikingly low. These employment challenges are intricately linked to the lack of diversification of the economy and the country's export basket (37% of which is accounted for by gold exports from one enterprise). This is compounded by the lack of a favourable environment for private sector development (only 11% of all employment was in the formal private sector before the crisis) and investment, and the resulting reliance on migration and remittances. International development support was working to address these issues prior to the pandemic but these efforts require augmentation in light of the current crisis.

To ease the situation with employment, the European Investment Bank provides support to generate incomes and employment for the population of the Kyrgyz Republic through the strengthening of sustainable agricultural production and competitive post-harvest practices. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has been very instrumental in supporting MSME development in the country. The European Union Delegation (EUD) supports rural income-generating activities to stimulate the innovative local economy and social development initiatives focusing on Jalal-Abad Oblast. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) fosters private investments and job creation and the Japan International Cooperation Agency develops human resources to diversify economic sectors. The SDC develops the self employment of women and youth in the south of the country and fosters winter tourism growth.

Moreover, returning migrants – from the up to 1 million Kyrgyz citizens working abroad – are putting further strains on local labour markets, and in the absence of support, face the prospect of inactivity, or joining the low-productivity informal or agricultural sectors. Internal migrants, as well as the estimated 54,000 and 16,000 people working in the two major retail markets, Dordoi and Karasuu, are also likely to face future waves of temporary closure as the pandemic continues. The supply and demand in the re-export market, which is the lifeblood of these markets, are also unlikely to fully recover in the immediate future.

The UNDP-ADB Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment has shown that the self employed and micro-enterprises in sectors such as textiles, tourism, hotels and restaurants, trade and consumer services, construction and transport are most likely to be negatively impacted by the pandemic. Together, these currently account for approximately 40% of GDP and 42% of all employment in Kyrgyzstan, much of which is informal. Limited revenue and low profit margins make it not only difficult for micro and small firms to maintain liquidity in order to survive and operate in the crisis situation, they also limit their ability to adjust and pursue business diversification, while the lack of collateral also remains a barrier for these firms in regard to accessing finance.

Agriculture contributes 12.1 % of GDP but accounts for around 21.2% of total employment.<sup>49</sup> However, farm sizes are small, and productivity is low.<sup>50</sup> Pre-crisis, the majority of the poor lived in rural areas. Since the onset of the crisis, vulnerability among this group has been heightened due to the decrease in remittances, on which many rural households (particularly in the south of the country) depend to supplement income from family farms.

Moreover, domestic agricultural producers face a reduction in demand from local restaurants, retail outlets and tourist resorts; reduced access to traditional export markets due to border closures, coupled with declining purchasing power among households in Russia and Kazakhstan; and reduced access to imports of vital agricultural inputs.

In addition, the fact that the overwhelming focus of productive sectors in the country is on the low-value segments of value chains makes it difficult for the private sector to generate jobs that allow for upward mobility or that meet the demands of a growing working-age population. If the focus on low-value segments remains, the recovery process is likely to be difficult. Investments are needed to help shift the focus to productive capacities that can help Kyrgyzstan to emerge from its reliance on low-value segments.

The challenge in the crisis response is not only to ensure that jobs are protected but also to help transition to a more inclusive, creative and sustainable economy. Given the global context, many jobs/MSMEs may not be tenable or sustainable due to changes in demand patterns and spending priorities, or changes in supply chains. The challenge is therefore to **identify sectors and enterprises that can exploit comparative advantages** and benefit from support to re-profile and/or expand.

In sectors where prospects are less promising, efforts to protect and invest in the workforce (rather than the enterprises) through a mix of social protection and support for upskilling and training, delivered through improved employment services, are required. “Building forward better” requires a focus on improving the quality and working conditions of jobs in the informal sector, while the leaving no one behind imperative requires a focus on ensuring that assistance is available to those facing additional barriers to accessing employment and jobs. In this context, the United Nations response will focus not just on protecting jobs but also on **transforming jobs into more decent, future-proof and greener jobs**; investing in the workforce; and addressing barriers faced by the more disadvantaged. In addition to this, the United Nations will provide assistance in relation to aligning the skills development system with labour market needs through analysing the demand of large/MSMEs for the skilled workforce. This will result in the knowledge based development of employment strategies and TVET institutions that can quickly respond to these needs (at least for two regions). The results of the analysis might be used to plan for quality, decent jobs in occupations that are in high demand in the labour market.

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49 Country facts (IFAD): <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/operations/country/id/kyrgyzstan>

50 Smallholder and family farms in Kyrgyzstan, 2019 (FAO): <http://www.fao.org/3/ca9826en/CA9826EN.pdf>

## How the United Nations will meet the challenges

Within the overall aim of stimulating large-scale job creation and broad-based, inclusive growth prospects, under this pillar of the socioeconomic response, the United Nations will work with its development partners to provide support in five areas:

1. Support to entrepreneurship, and particularly the re-profiling of promising MSMEs, with a focus on sustainable production and consumption (i.e. enterprises which use or transfer sustainable production methods, and/or those producing goods or services which contribute to more sustainable consumption patterns).
2. Employment support to vulnerable groups in the form of public works, retraining/upskilling, and improved access to employment information services to help direct the unemployed, especially women, to new emerging sectors to support them in restoring their economic activities and livelihoods.
3. Support to improve work conditions in the informal sector and the transformation of informal into decent and future-proof jobs.
4. Support to ensure more equal opportunities as regards benefiting from the digital revolution/digitalization and bridging the digital divide. Across these priorities, attention will be given to addressing particular barriers to employment opportunities faced by women, young people and returning migrants.
5. Support to boost the private sector's contribution to healthcare response and recovery.

These areas of support are discussed in the subsections below.

### Support to entrepreneurship and the re-profiling of micro/small enterprises

The agriculture sector continues to benefit from the support of development partners. The EBRD and SDC support MSMEs' access to financial and advisory services and facilitate the improvement of the business enabling environment. The Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development is instrumental in supplying agricultural machinery to all regions of the Kyrgyz Republic through leasing schemes, and in the development of service maintenance facilities for machinery. The EUD has implemented a project to increase the incomes of rural households through the promotion of innovative agricultural techniques that can facilitate sustainable all-year-round multi-product farming production and effective marketing in remote, isolated and mountainous villages in the Aksy and Ala-Buka districts of the Jalal-Abad region. The IFC provides assistance to improve financial institutions' capacity and to help farms and agribusinesses to become profitable through the provision of targeted training, support in supply chain development, and building links to markets and financial institutions. The Japan International Cooperation Agency has implemented a multi-year project to promote the export of seeds and milk. The United Nations plans to complement these efforts. The Russian-Kyrgyz Development Fund provides concessional lending for capital goods purchases.

The World Bank is implementing a project to increase agricultural productivity and the food and nutrition security of rural households in selected areas nationwide. The main components of this project are: 1) the rehabilitation and modernization of irrigation and drainage infrastructure; 2) agricultural advisory services; 3) nutrition improvements; and 4) project management. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is also working to improve access to finance for MSMEs.

The United Nations will provide additional advisory and technical support to the Government, in coordination with IFIs and development partners, to guide policy design targeting forward-looking sustainable and inclusive economic recovery.

The United Nations Partnership for Action on Green Economy provides **integrated policy support on green jobs, and economic and environmental issues**, to plan the early response to and recovery phase of the COVID-19 crisis, and will provide a platform to support peer learning and knowledge transfer on policies that stimulate growth and recovery in the wake of COVID-19.

The United Nations will mobilize **support for MSMEs to re-profile and access new technologies to increase productivity and restore or replace business linkages** which have been disrupted due to the crisis. This will involve support for viable MSMEs to transition to higher-productivity emerging sectors, with priority being given to supporting employment-rich and green productive capacities. A focus on fore-sighting markets (trade intelligence) will support the private sector to reorient itself towards better productive capacities, while ensuring climate change adaptation/mitigation.

As part of this support, the United Nations will establish an MSME Productive Asset Support Facility, the main aim of which will be to help stabilize and prepare businesses for the post-COVID-19 recovery. Attention will be paid to viable women-owned businesses, to help them to shore up liquidity and to access digital know-how and solutions. The United Nations will also support financial partners to revisit credit and loan schemes, to help avoid further deterioration of the financial status of micro-enterprises and the self-employed, and to make available schemes which are tailored for these types of business activities, such as bank guarantees, so that banks absorb some of the increased risks faced and indirectly soften the conditions for repayments to MSMEs. This support will also include technical assistance to the design of innovative financial instruments to help unlock the local market and access to export financing mechanisms. Credit and loan schemes will exclusively focus on economic sectors that are environmentally sustainable and employment-intensive, with high potential for increased value addition. This will build on existing best practices, such as those from the IFC's projects, which have provided secure access to finance for individuals, consumers and MSMEs by improving the credit infrastructure.

The United Nations will focus on supporting the transfer of knowledge and skills to MSMEs and the self-employed, targeting circular and green economic sectors, especially within the agricultural sector as a generator of jobs within rural areas. The United Nations will further provide **targeted support to export-oriented companies** to identify new markets and supply channels in economic sectors where the private sector faces supply chain disruptions. Trade intelligence in terms of new markets will be an important angle of this, as will the promotion of trade support institutions. In the short term, the tourism sector will suffer from the loss of international tourists. However, considering the global travel restrictions, local and regional consumers could be reoriented towards Kyrgyzstan tourism. The United Nations will support tourist operators to attract customers nationally and regionally by encouraging the establishment of regional business links and offering integrated touristic products and tours resulting from such international business cooperation, particularly in niche areas such as adventure tourism. The United Nations will also support communities in Kyrgyzstan to “build forward better” through the development of sustainable nature-based tourism. The United Nations will also aim to support the development and revision of management plans that include tourist destination planning and management for world cultural heritage sites, the development of Central Asian transboundary tourism routes, and capacity-building activities for experts on cultural and natural sites tourism. Such activities will aim to build more resilient societies by ensuring the sustainable use of the country’s common natural heritage, while at the same time supporting community-led sustainable and inclusive socioeconomic development.

The agricultural sector has so far been able to exceed its production volume from the previous year but continues to face problems around the degradation of natural resources (e.g. water scarcity, deforestation, overgrazing, arable land degradation, deforestation) and the exposure of rural smallholders to climate-related shocks.<sup>51</sup> Depending on the severity of future waves of the global pandemic, the risk of severe supply chain disruption for agricultural inputs poses a major threat to agricultural production in Kyrgyzstan.

The United Nations will provide **support to rural communities to acquire skills and better govern natural resources**, including in processing agriculture produce to obtain high-value products, and linking existing and newly established smallholders with the Kyrgyz diaspora for marketing. Target niche products (e.g. honey, mixed fruits and nuts, etc.) will also benefit from targeted upskilling and market linkages. Longer-term support will also be provided to introduce practices related to the sustainable management of forests and land.

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<sup>51</sup> FAO, Funding proposal for GCF – Feasibility study: Climate services and diversification of climate sensitive livelihoods to empower food insecure and vulnerable communities in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2017.

## Employment support to vulnerable groups, including migrants, informal sector workers and women

Over the medium to longer term, the United Nations will support the strengthening of employment services and the expansion of schemes that can offer shock-responsive employment and training mechanisms on a more sustainable basis. The United Nations will work with its development partners to ensure that a comprehensive shock-responsive employment mechanism is put in place, including through support to the MLSD and the public employment services to quickly put in place or scale up active and passive labour market programmes, which will be aligned with the support being provided for developing shock-responsive social protection (as outlined in Pillar 2). The United Nations, together with its development partners, will support the establishment of online job databases, digitalization of business registration, business information services, and online training facilities, involving both private and public sectors, to facilitate the transition of employees and the self-employed to new promising sectors. The United Nations will also support **online training and learning opportunities for youth** for skills development, with a focus on business skills, digital skills and green economy areas. The United Nations will also provide **training for young women in digital skills** (software coding and digital skills) in order to promote women's economic empowerment and labour market participation, through support for increasing their competitiveness in this rapidly developing sector.

Ongoing efforts to promote **decent work for rural women** will be continued to ensure that women are not further crowded out by the increase in labour supply due to returning migrants. Vulnerable rural populations, particularly women and youth, will receive support through capacity building for self-employment and income-generation, including training activities on vocational and lifelong skills and support for small income-generation initiatives, with additional support from donors, state partners and private sector, and with a parallel focus on support for climate smart investments. The United Nations will also support the creation of a **facility for supporting smallholders**, to be used to help improve production capacity through access to skills training, rehabilitation of community infrastructure and the creation of on-farm and off-farm employment opportunities, including through the establishment of micro agro-processing facilities to help reduce post-harvest losses and obtain higher-value products.

The United Nations will support national and local authorities to put in place services to **support the reintegration of returning migrants**, while also exploring options for local communities to benefit from the skills which migrants have acquired abroad through measures aimed at fostering and opening up opportunities for business and entrepreneurship among returning migrants. For example, support will help returning migrants to access training in new skills and specialties, and will assist businesses that are either run by migrants or that recruit migrants. The United Nations will also cooperate with the Kyrgyz diaspora in building longer-term business relations between the returning migrants and those who are operating businesses in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan.

More specifically, the United Nations' support will include assessing the trade and marketing opportunities of agricultural and other products produced by enterprises established by returning migrants and those operating businesses in other countries. The United Nations will provide support in relation to exploring such marketing opportunities, including through supporting the establishment of online systems to help newly established enterprises to gain access to regional markets.

## **Improving work conditions in the informal sector and creating decent and future-proof jobs**

The United Nations will support efforts by the Government to **improve the quality of employment** for the workforce employed in the informal sector. This will involve support for the development of a comprehensive strategy to make formalization work for microenterprises, their employees, and the economy. It will involve identifying and addressing factors that encourage MSMEs to remain in the semi-informal sector, with limited growth prospects and more restricted access to export markets, new technologies and management practices. Support for reforms in tax policy and administration that stimulate formalization will be prioritized. Formalization and support to microenterprises will be accompanied by support to establish more sustainable business ecosystems.

Efforts will also aim to support the Kyrgyz authorities in relation to **improving working conditions in micro and small firms** (in particular, but not only, for women working in the garment industry),<sup>52</sup> which are on the whole poor and characterized by low standards of work safety, few long-term labour contracts, and limited protection of workers' rights. This will be done through targeted sector-specific policy advisory support, including to improve the respective regulatory and legal framework. Some draft policy and regulation amendments will be prototyped in projects before endorsement, or to demonstrate their effective implementation after endorsement. This will also help to improve the standards for the production of goods and services.

Enabling the Kyrgyz Government to improve the investment climate in the country in order to incentivize direct foreign and domestic investments to increase the share of the formal economy and create decent and future-proof jobs will also be key. Assistance will be provided to bring in the best international and national expertise to introduce regulatory incentives, address corruption and strengthen economic justice.

**Formalization** of economic processes, which can contribute to better job quality, more transparency and increased tax revenue (through actions such as e-invoicing, goods labelling, mandatory use of online cash registers, etc.) is currently a precondition for receiving government crisis response support. The United Nations will advocate for this to be expanded to include: improving the quality of the fiscal services provided to taxpayers; building long-term and trusted partnerships with taxpayers; improving the capacity to manage big fiscal data; requiring companies to have standard labour contracts with employees; meeting job safety requirements (especially in sectors where female workers predominate, such as the garment industry and hotels, restaurants and catering); and complying with domestic and export markets' technical regulations and social protection system's measures. This should ideally include incentives to invest in the workforce through skills training and upgrading.

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52 See UNDP-ADB, Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment, 2020.

## More equal opportunities to benefit from the digital revolution/digitalization

The COVID-19 pandemic has exerted significant pressure on MSMEs across the Kyrgyz economy, and a long-term economic slowdown is guaranteed if the demand and supply sides of the economy are not supported in overcoming the restrictions imposed as a result of the crisis. A key challenge is how to ensure that the private sector can still sell products and services to consumers (be it end-consumers, local and international businesses, or even the Government). As demonstrated by successful pilots across the world, e-commerce holds immense potential to facilitate buyer-seller interactions, as well as actual transactions via marketplaces, and to accelerate the transition of offline small and medium-sized enterprises to the online model. Retailers, pharmacies, food outlets and a range of other sectors have proven to be key beneficiaries in ongoing initiatives aimed at e-commerce-led COVID-19 (economic recovery) responses. However, e-commerce is a complex area involving a range of technical components and stakeholders. E-commerce development requires introspection and a review of all the technical areas involved, examples being information and communications technology infrastructure, the regulatory framework, logistics, fintech and digital entrepreneurship. Without a thorough review being undertaken as part of a national e-commerce strategy exercise, the sustainability – and therefore the effectiveness – of e-commerce will remain limited. This is why an e-commerce strategy initiative is necessary to drive both the pandemic response as well as long-term economic growth. The United Nations will assist the Government in the development of the “E-commerce Development Programme in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2021–2025”.

The United Nations will work to support people to acquire and reinforce the **digital literacy skills and competencies, and access to digital technology** necessary to access new jobs in the labour market. It is important that industries and services, particularly micro-enterprises, are supported in the digital transition. More grocery and retail stores will have to shift to online ordering and delivery as their primary business; manufacturers will have to actively develop new plans to maintain production and supply chain using new technologies; financial services will operate more and more through online platforms; and new remote working models will also become more prevalent across industries and businesses, in order to protect employees. While some sectors have been able to shift rapidly, the changes to date might represent only the first phase of the changes that will be necessary in the recovery phase. The United Nations will work with the Government to improve access to the internet, mobile connectivity, and the capacity of people and workers to perform information and communications technology tasks. In addition, the United Nations will help to ensure that small and micro-enterprises have access to technology, as well as training, in order to make the transition to online business; and that they have access to and can use data and models to help understand consumer behaviour and trends, so that they can make adjustments to their way of operating, and of delivering services. It will provide practical support to MSMEs to develop their digital competencies, onboard platforms and expand their sales in the domestic, regional or international markets. In addition, the United Nations will provide support in relation to connecting the local IT ecosystem with regional and global value chains. This will include working with financial institutions to unlock the payment process between local providers and global buyers of IT services.

At the same time, the United Nations will work to ensure that the digital transformation is accompanied by digital resilience and the proper mechanisms to guarantee privacy and data protection. The United Nations will provide support to strengthen the capabilities of national authorities to ensure better investigation and prosecution of cybercrimes, as part of its work with national law enforcement agencies on the prevention, investigation and prosecution of crimes, and with the State Service for Combating Economic Crimes (FinPol) to improve the investigation of corruption-related cases.

## **Boosting the private sector's contribution to healthcare response and recovery**

Responding to the crisis requires inter-sectoral approaches that can mutually support and reinforce each other. The United Nations considers the role of the private sector in dealing with the pandemic as crucial. Private companies in the country have already stepped up their efforts, not only by taking care of their employees and ensuring physical distancing, but also by quickly turning around and helping to meet public demand for vital health supplies (PPE, healthcare equipment). The United Nations will work with its development partners to support the private sector in designing and implementing **COVID-19 business continuity plans** to enable businesses to cope with the future shocks that may arise due to the pandemic (e.g. COVID-19 sanitary certification). This may also include support to link smallholders as suppliers to national programmes, such as providing school meals or delivering meals to homes, should schools and education institutions be further impacted by lockdown measures. Further, the United Nations will provide assistance to national counterparts to put in place a programme that identifies key players in the local private sector ecosystem that are essential as regards helping businesses to pass through certification of their product in order to meet domestic standards and achieve export potential (e.g. for PPE); to support the production of PPE for the domestic market; and to provide support to initiating telehealth services. Apart from helping businesses to adapt to physical distancing requirements, the United Nations will work with the Government on studying the regulation (governance and transparency) of the local healthcare market, to ensure the local production meets the market needs, and that the rules are clear and evenly applied to all.

## Working with partners

In its work under this pillar, the United Nations will work closely with development partners that have been particularly involved with private sector-related initiatives, notably through the existing Development Partner Coordination Council working groups platforms. Examples include ADB, FCDO, EBRD, the Eurasian Development Bank, EUD, IFC, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Russian-Kyrgyz Development Fund, SDC and USAID, which have been very instrumental in supporting the development of MSMEs in the country, and Germany/Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, which has been active in strengthening the value-added chains for different products. In addition, EUD, Germany/Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, IFC, IMF and SDC have been very active in the development of the financial sector, and the EBRD has been active in the energy sector. The ADB, FCDO, Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development, European Investment Bank, EUD/Deutsche Gesellschaft für Zusammenarbeit, Finland, IFC, Japan International Cooperation Agency, Korea International Cooperation Agency, the Russian-Kyrgyz Development Fund, the Russian Federation, SDC, USAID and World Bank have been supporting projects in agriculture and in the water sector.



## **MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE AND MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION**

## Key priority areas

**Technical support for public expenditure planning, revenue generation, and monitoring.**

**Analytical and advisory support on the socioeconomic recovery.**

**Comprehensive impact assessments and analyses.**

**Multilateral collaboration and regional partnerships.**

## Contributing United Nations agencies

FAO, IOM, UNDP, UNECE, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), UNESCO, UNICEF, UN WOMEN, WFP, WHO

### Introduction

The demand and supply shocks resulting from the measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 have already produced a significant decline in economic activity in the country, affecting macroeconomic stability, fiscal sustainability, national output, business operations, jobs and livelihoods. According to the UNDP-ADB Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment, GDP is expected to contract by 10% in 2020.<sup>53</sup>

Further, policymakers are increasingly recognizing that the COVID-19 shock is not largely behind us but is instead something that will be a “new normal” for the foreseeable future. This is a reality until vaccines are widely distributed and/or the society develops herd immunity. Until then, the country will face the unpopular dilemma of “lockdowns” with devastating socioeconomic consequences or re-opening with devastating implications for the integrity of the health system. Policymakers will also likely grapple with questions such as: When “re-opening” leads to the second (or third, or fourth, etc.) wave of infection and mortality? How to weigh the risks of prematurely re-opening the economy and relaxing or ending the public health-driven pandemic suppression measures that may close schools, bazaars and conventional workplaces? In macroeconomic terms, this means that “recovery” scenarios based on V-shaped economic growth trajectories for Kyrgyzstan are unlikely. Pre-crisis levels of open borders, normal business operations, expanding tourist travel, and industry flow between Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and China are probably years away. Remittances exports are shrinking significantly and are unlikely to quickly bounce back. Businesses and middle-class households (with discretionary incomes) face tough future uncertainties that limit their current domestic spending.

The COVID-19 response will require a complex mix of countercyclical fiscal policy approaches and interventions. This implies increases in public expenditure and rationalizing existing budget spending priorities, while looking for new sources of financing and reviewing revenue generation strategies. All this needs to be done against the backdrop of balancing macroeconomic stability and debt sustainability. Moreover, in the context of limited resources and growing needs for expenditure, particularly for health, social protection and digitalization, the challenge is to ensure that the funds available or raised for response measures are targeted in support of the most impacted economic sectors and population groups, while also contributing to an inclusive and sustainable recovery.

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53 UNDP-ADB, Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment, 2020.

Designing and operationalizing the macroeconomic response requires a three-step approach. The first step involves an assessment of the potential impact of the crisis in order to quantify the spending necessary to contain it. Second, an assessment of the fiscal space available for increased spending is required, which will in large part determine the Government's capacity for action. Third, an analysis of policy priorities and available policy measures is required that considers the country's financing and implementation constraints. Moreover, the continuing uncertainties regarding the evolution of the pandemic at the global and national levels mean that this analysis will likely have to be revisited on a continual basis over the coming months.

The UNDP-ADB Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment and other assessments have provided the basis for the United Nations support for the first step in the three-step response.<sup>54</sup> There will also be a continuous roll-out of surveys targeting households and businesses to keep track of the impact of the pandemic on the social fabric and the economy. The second step will involve the Government's discussion with IFIs on accessing concessional loans and other forms of official development assistance, while also revisiting current expenditure allocations and priorities. In that context, the Development Finance Assessment that will be conducted as part of the approved programme under the Joint SDG Fund will not only support building a holistic analysis of the financing context and existing structures to help design a more integrated approach to development finance, but will also facilitate a process of dialogue among policymakers, the private sector, IFIs, and national actors as regards considering the challenges and identifying sound financing opportunities to "build forward better". The third step is complicated by the fact that the shortcomings in the current budget processes in the country make it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness and equity of response measures. It is difficult to cost many measures and to monitor the impact of public expenditure on achieving the desired effect of protecting vulnerable groups and sectors from the impact of the crisis. The public finance measures in the new COVID-19 context need to be informed by goals of a greener, smarter and sustainable recovery. The United Nations will work with IFIs and other development partners to provide joint support on improving budget planning and monitoring,<sup>55</sup> leveraging ongoing activities in this area, notably conducted by the IMF, SDC and the World Bank.

The United Nations support to informing, defining and implementing the macroeconomic response to the COVID-19 crisis in the Kyrgyz Republic will fall under four broad categories:

1. Technical support on rationalizing, planning and monitoring social expenditure and improvement of public finance management, including revenue generation, in order to guide and inform the rebalancing of public expenditure, while also contributing to improvements in debt management over the medium to long term.
2. Analytical, advisory and technical assistance services to support the Government in ensuring that resource allocations have the greatest possible impact on impacted sectors and groups, while contributing to overcoming the longer-term sustainable development challenges.

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<sup>54</sup> See IMF, Regional Economic Outlook: Confronting the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Middle East and Central Asia, Washington D.C., 2020.

<sup>55</sup> This work will take note of the analytical work World Bank Group, "Kyrgyz Republic – Joint World Bank-IMF Debt Sustainability Analysis: July 2019 (English). Debt Sustainability Analysis (DSA)".

3. Conducting comprehensive impact assessments at the household level to allow context-specific analysis of the impact of the crisis, and help to ensure that no one is left invisible in decisions regarding expenditure allocations to support the recovery process.
4. Leveraging multilateral collaboration and regional partnerships to facilitate a quick response and resilient recovery.

These categories of support are discussed in the subsections below.

## **Technical support for public expenditure planning, revenue generation, and monitoring**

As already planned before the pandemic outbreak, the United Nations will support the Government in undertaking a Development Finance Assessment and in formulating an integrated national financing framework, which will particularly strengthen the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of national budgets, enhance an understanding of the strategic opportunities for expanding the **development financing** of the National Development Strategy and support the Government to manage debt sustainability. In the context of COVID-19, the Development Finance Assessment will provide a strong opportunity to develop a stronger shared understanding among the Government, parliament and the development community on how existing resources are mobilized and allocated, and opportunities for tapping into new forms of financing, including SDG-aligned private investment, and respective tax incentives are harnessed, while strengthening accountability and the strategic use of existing categories of resources and expenditure. This work will be complemented by, and will build on, the IMF/World Bank Group debt sustainability analysis by spelling out the impact of policy choices in the COVID-19 context for specific sector programmes, social groups, etc. Considering the growing debate on the use of funds and accountability in the COVID-19 response, this support can also help strengthen knowledge building and communication efforts.

Further, the United Nations will complement the ongoing initiatives from development partners and IFIs by strengthening strategic planning and financing to support the implementation of the National Development Strategy 2018–2040 and the SDGs; by enhancing dialogue and evidence-based consultation; and by promoting coordinated policy reforms on development finance. This work will also build new capacities among key stakeholders on the use of tools and approaches for analysing financing trends, estimating costs and assessing gaps as regards to achieving development objectives. The establishment of a platform for dialogue on development financing at the highest political level, under the auspices of the National Council for Sustainable Development, will support the strengthened and financially informed coordination and collaboration of all peer initiatives among all players on development finance in the Kyrgyz Republic, with the aim of putting in place a government-led roadmap towards an integrated national financing framework for the implementation of the SDGs, which will take into account the impact of COVID-19.

The United Nations may also offer **support for reforms in how public budgets are managed**, elaborated, structured, optimized and re- allocated, including at decentralized levels, in order to strengthen the links between proposed policy responses on COVID-19 and budget planning. This is particularly urgent in light of the pressing need to reallocate expenditures towards health, social protection and employment promotion. The United Nations' support will also aim to ensure that budget processes are more transparent and contain mechanisms for civil society to monitor and hold government authorities accountable for spending decisions.

Currently, the **planning and budgeting systems** in Kyrgyzstan are poorly connected and not informed by the SDGs. Budgeting processes and frameworks remain weak, and programme-based budgeting approaches are still not well integrated. The Medium-Term Expenditure Framework in Kyrgyzstan is particularly underdeveloped and detached from budget decision-making processes. This poses a significant barrier to costing, tracking and measuring the impact of public investment for different social and environmental objectives. An **integrated costing of the SDGs** and a case study on fiscal decentralization will serve to remedy this. Further, the relevant Voluntary National Review recommendations will be integrated into the review process.

The United Nations, in partnership with other donors and IFIs, will also work with partners to review and monitor aggregate social expenditure through a review of the anti-crisis Republican Budget 2020 in relation to social spending in health, education and welfare COVID-19 budget needs in order to guide and improve the impact of future allocations. Support will also be provided to the Chamber of Accounts to improve budget oversight through the piloting of instruments for performance audits in one of the social sectors. Over the medium to longer term, this type of support will be developed further to establish mechanisms to enable transparency in the tracking of budget expenditure and to enhance development finance. This will enable the monitoring of the public expenditure's contribution to the implementation of Kyrgyzstan's National Development Strategy 2018–2040, which is the country's roadmap for achieving the SDGs.

Moreover, the United Nations will collaborate and complement the work done by IFIs to help the Government identify non-budget sources which can be used to expand fiscal space for response measures. Notably, joining the partner IFIs, the United Nations will draw on its strength and focus on identifying **new sources of development finance** – notably, debt for nature schemes, climate finance and looking at how reductions in unsustainable energy and agricultural subsidies (see below) could be redirected to meet social protection and health expenditure needs, and also efforts to reduce illicit financial outflows in order to increase tax revenues. Moreover, the United Nations will collaborate with, and complement the work done by IFIs to help the Government to identify non-budget sources that can be used to expand fiscal space **and generate additional revenue for response measures**. Notably, joining the partner IFIs, the United Nations will focus on identifying new sources of development finance and revenue generation – notably, climate and environmental finance – and on looking at how reductions in unsustainable energy, fossil fuel and agricultural subsidies (see below) could be used to meet social protection and health expenditure needs, as well as looking at efforts to reduce illicit financial outflows in order to increase tax revenues. The United Nations will continue to support positive reforms underway on digitalizing the tax administration system. In implementing these support measures, the United Nations, together with other donors and IFIs, will help the Kyrgyz Government to sustain those good fiscal management institutions and principles that are already in place in the country through providing better access to high-quality fiscal services and long-term partnership building with taxpayers and their associations.

The United Nations will also conduct studies on the efficiency of public spending in public education and expenditure on subsidies, support efficiency gains in key social sectors – for example, through streamlining public financial management processes – and the reallocation of funds to priority sectors and programmes to support those most affected by the crisis and to address vulnerability. Public-private partnership schemes will be also leveraged to help address urgent socioeconomic needs. A feasibility study of public-private partnerships in preschool and secondary projects will help to explore alternative sources of finance in the education sector. The United Nations will also provide technical assistance on using public-private partnership mechanisms to mobilize and align financing with national sustainable development priorities.

## Analytical and advisory support on socioeconomic recovery

The United Nations will provide a range of analytical and advisory support to help inform the country's macroeconomic response to the crisis:

**Migration and remittances.** Since 2016, remittances have accounted for a stable 30% of GDP, and have contributed towards improving poverty rates, especially in rural areas in the southern regions. However, because of the effect of the pandemic in remittance-originating countries, especially in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan, remittances are projected to decline by 4-5% of GDP (conservative estimate).<sup>56</sup> The United Nations will provide advice on adapting the migration policy to the crisis period, including technical assistance to government institutions on **increasing digital remittance transfers** by migrants and enhancing the development value of the remaining remittance flows. The United Nations will also provide technical support to help the Government to explore longer-term alternative options to diversify from the current growth model, which relies so heavily on external loans, migration and remittances, and official development assistance. The important missing link is cooperation with private investors.

**Resilience of the financial sector.** The United Nations will provide capacity building to improve the resilience of the financial sector to maintain services and support business continuity, as well as to contain further financial risks that might arise as a result of the economic shock of COVID-19. The crisis is testing the banking system in Kyrgyzstan and in the medium term, banks will most likely become very careful in issuing new loans. The United Nations will provide technical support on the extension of opportunities for citizens and businesses to access to finance, as they are likely to face defaults in the light of continued uncertainties. Support will focus on identifying business and regulatory bottlenecks that have slowed the disbursement of anti-crisis support funds from financial institutions to help people respond and recover better from the pandemic's fallout. Existing policy gaps relate to requirements to provide collateral, and the lack of affordable business advisory services to develop bankable projects that are in line with the specific requirements of IFIs and domestic banks. The Government does not have permanent platforms for consulting and partnering with both the private sector and IFIs, through which it could raise these issues publicly, and which they could use to find solutions together. The United Nations will continue to provide support to establish and maintain such platforms in the future. The United Nations will also make evidence-based policy recommendations to ensure that MSMEs do not face new constraints in accessing finance for moving into the new processes and technological transformations required to maintain business operations, develop activities to move up the value chain, access new markets and support employment creation. The United Nations will also offer its expertise to other donors and IFIs through providing technical assistance in the identification, preparation and implementation of investment projects that accelerate attainment of the SDGs, which are strategically important for the country's economy.

**Reducing unsustainable subsidies and allocating savings towards COVID-19 response and recovery efforts.** The macroeconomic response should be adequate to meet the immediate needs, but it should also help ensure that a bridge can be built between the medium-term recovery expenditure and policy priorities, and progress towards increased social and environmental sustainability within the framework of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. In particular, it is important not to lose sight of the **urgency of climate action**, not least because of the unprecedented opportunity which it provides to unlock massive economic and social benefits and accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development. Given its extensive hydro-power potential and the recent global advances in renewable energy technology and affordability, Kyrgyzstan has the potential to significantly reduce its emissions. The United Nations will support the country-initiated process to identify short- and medium-term actions for rapid up-scaling in potential renewables to cover existing gaps.

Building forward better rests on three main pillars of sustainable development: (i) sustainable economic recovery (prosperity); (ii) socially inclusive recovery (people); and (iii) green recovery (planet). Therefore, the United Nations will be guided by these strategic guideposts in providing technical support to keep the focus in the response and recovery period not just on recovering economic growth, but also on more long-term goals. These interventions will be geared towards strengthening the capacity of the national economy as regards a greener and more low-carbon growth trajectory, as reflected in the Nationally Determined Contribution commitments, and towards building the whole-of-society adaptive capacity in relation to climate change. The technical assistance will also cover more immediate support in evidence-based policymaking, through applying a green economy modelling framework to the key priority sectors of the economy in the context of COVID-19. Green economy approaches that reconcile welfare and nature will be part of the offer as well. Further, the United Nations will provide policymakers with tools to help mobilize private funds for green recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. Conservation of the environment and biodiversity will play a vital role in achieving the broader development targets that the country needs to meet.

As part of this, the United Nations will provide advisory support aimed at rebalancing government budgets away from the current unsustainable system of blanket subsidies in areas like fossil fuels and agriculture, which stifle sustainable growth. Such subsidies often benefit large companies and middle-class families the most, so there is a strong case for reform and for using the savings to fund urgent health, economic and social protection support for poorer households, who are the most affected by COVID-19. Working with national institutions, studies on the options for adjustments in current subsidies in agriculture and energy will be explored. Such measures will also be used to crowd-in new low-cost concessional finance for private and public sector investments in areas such as hydro-power, energy system upgrading and improving productivity in agriculture. United Nations assistance will also include analytical support and the promotion of the South-South cooperation exchanges to explore options for recovery and greener finance, including debt-for-nature, debt-for-climate swaps, small-scale green financing, and other tools.

## **Advocating for, and producing evidence to support and measure, investments in the care economy, early childhood development and other human development-related objectives.**

Kyrgyzstan's macroeconomic policy typically does not take into account economic and social rights, distributive outcomes or gender equality. As in many countries, it typically focuses on a set of narrower economic goals, such as increasing economic growth rates or maintaining the stability of the prices. As a result, the social return on investments is not usually factored into expenditure decisions. For example, the lack of investment in and availability of care services contributes to women's care burden, which in turn reduces women's participation and competitiveness in the labour market. Likewise, investment in early childhood development is difficult to cost and measure, although it represents a significant cross-sectoral investment in the country's future human capital and capacities.<sup>57</sup> In this connection, the United Nations will provide technical assistance for the development of a gender equality strategy, including costing of gender-responsive development results in different sectors. It will also provide technical inputs to ensure rights-based and gender-responsive policies and planning, as well as options for financing the scaling up of care facilities/systems. Overall, the United Nations will advocate for and support fundamental transformations in macroeconomic policymaking to make it more accountable, equitable and focused on meaningful outcomes in people's lives. This work will complement the activities conducted by development partners and IFIs.

## **Comprehensive impact assessments and analyses**

The United Nations will continue to work with partners to conduct gender-sensitive impact assessments, including at the household level, and will support updates of the UNDP-ADB Socioeconomic Impact and Vulnerability Assessment. For example, studies on the impact of the crisis on MSMEs and young people have been undertaken and the results were used to inform United Nations-wide interventions. An assessment of the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on the position of migrants and remittances is envisaged in order to inform programmes and policies aimed at providing support services to returning migrants, improving the use of remittances for local development and promoting the integration of migrants in local labour markets. A regional rapid survey of eight food supply chains (grains, roots, fruits and vegetables, livestock, fisheries, milk, feed, and agricultural inputs) is also being planned, the results of which will be used to inform policy responses to ensure uninterrupted food services. Periodic tracking of changes in key trends is also anticipated to track medium-term impacts on MSMEs revenues and other areas.

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57 See UN Women, Investing in Early Childhood Education and Care in Kyrgyz Republic: An Assessment of Care Deficits, Costs and Impact on Employment, Gender Equality and Fiscal Returns, 2019. The study made a policy simulation of a fiscal impact assessment of investment in early childhood education and care in comparison to investments in physical infrastructure and construction. The fiscal sustainability analysis shows that over a quarter (26%) of initial expenditures on early childhood education and care expansion would be recovered through increased tax revenues. Much of the revenue increase (23.1%) is through the direct employment impact, i.e. social contributions by employers and employees plus income tax by those newly employed in the early childhood education and care sector. In the case of construction, the ability to recover costs is much less, at 7.4%, due to lower employment and lower wage share.

## Multilateral collaboration and regional partnerships

The United Nations plays a unique role in leveraging multilateral collaboration and regional partnerships to facilitate quick responses and resilient recovery. The United Nations will continue to collaborate with other donors and IFIs in order to generate policy coherence and co-support for critical agendas and to build national capacity to tackle the challenges at hand. This work will involve close collaboration with already existing national platforms, such as the Development Partners Coordination Council and specific working groups on finance and budget and business and economic development.

**The United Nations will work through its subregional platform**, the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, which works on such issues as water, energy, environment, sustainable transport, transit and connectivity, trade, statistics, knowledge-based development and gender. The programme is coordinated jointly by the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions (UNECE and UNESCAP) and delivers subregional policy analysis, advisory services and capacity-building activities addressing transboundary and connectivity issues. To respond to the impact of COVID-19, the United Nations will use the Special Programme platform for subregional dialogue to ensure effective cooperation of the participating countries in order to tackle the impact of the pandemic, identify new ways to achieve sustainable economic recovery and learn from each other on successful strategies to tackle the pandemic.

Further, the United Nations will support, in partnership with other donors and IFIs, **policy response options** that balance both the short-term COVID-19 context and the long-term sustainable development. Such response options *inter alia* will help reduce the short-term “health versus re-opening the economy” trade-offs by allowing people to work or children to study from home, rather than being unemployed and cut off from the education system. These response options fall into three categories: health first, social protection, and digitalization. The United Nations will support the alignment of these response options with the macroeconomic policy goals of a more resilient recovery.

Given the position of Kyrgyzstan as a landlocked country, the United Nations sees **support in facilitating connectivity, transit and trade promotion** as one of the central points in its agenda. The United Nations will contribute to the restoration of supply chains that have been impacted by the COVID-19 fallout, through support for the development and implementation of a national trade facilitation roadmap to address the impact of COVID-19, and the development of an online portal for collecting, updating and sharing trade-related data among key government entities. The United Nations will provide specific support on updating the existing national export promotion programme (2019–22) to account for COVID-19-affected disruptions. The United Nations will also support the process of ratifying international agreements, treaties and instruments to help the Kyrgyz Republic to get access to additional resources and international support. The Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Countries, to which Kyrgyzstan is a signatory, will also be used actively to help unlock regional barriers and to find grounds for cooperation.

The United Nations will **support the process of learning from the COVID-19 whole-of society response** at the national level by bringing together a broad range of participants from the government, civil society, private sector, donor community, media and academia. Lessons learned from the national experience will be informed by similar dialogue platform insights at the regional and national levels. These discussions will be followed up with relevant policy advisory support to unlock the bottlenecks and to meet the needs of protecting the most vulnerable and ensuring a resilient recovery in the face of future waves of the pandemic. The recommendations from these discussions will serve as the basis for the United Nations' support to key stakeholders in regard to updating and shaping the new National Development Strategy, guided by the SDGs.

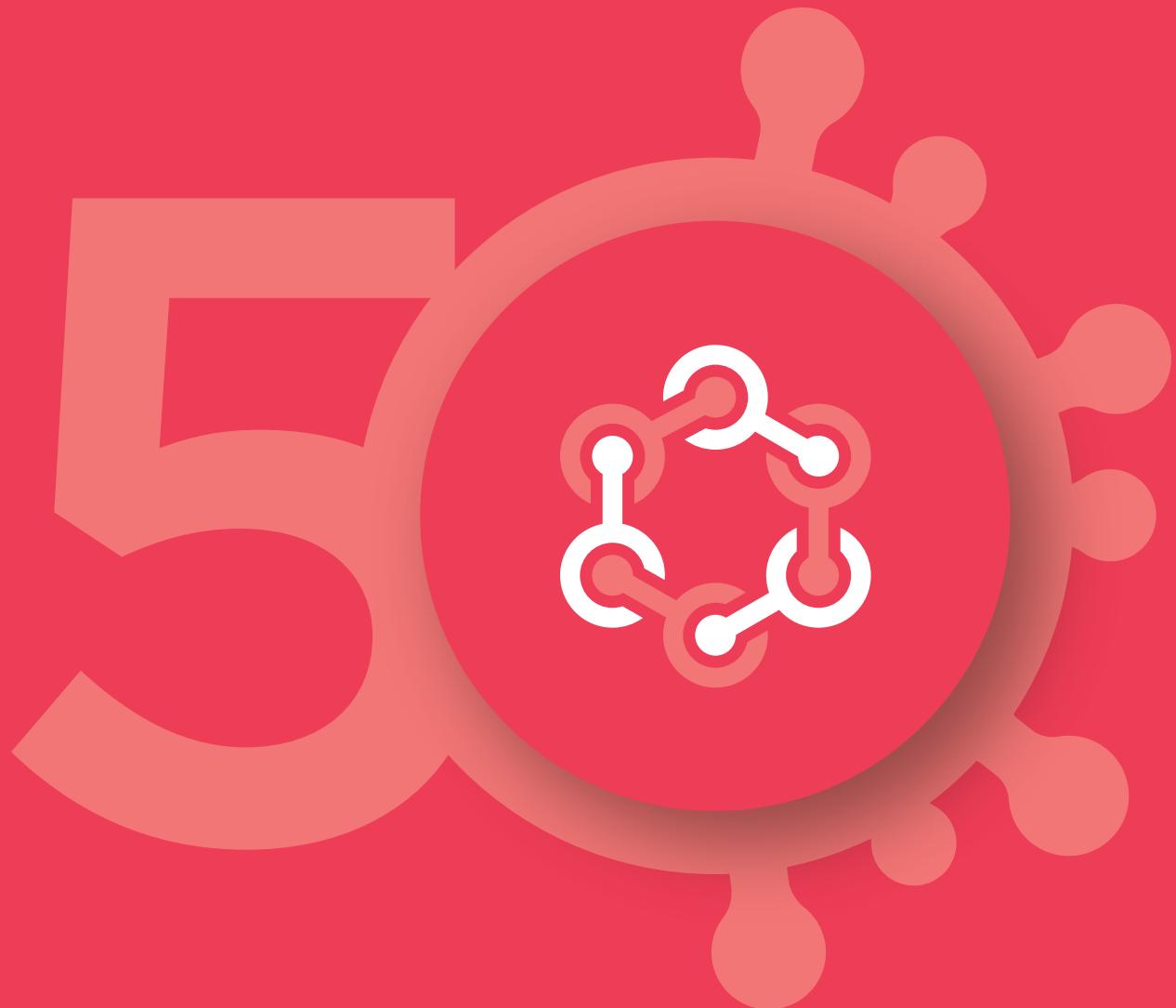
Moreover, to support recovery and to help reduce the impact of future crisis-related economic shocks on demand, supply and financing, the United Nations' regional commissions will continue to promote multilateral and regional platforms and measures that can promote collaboration in restoring supply chains, through coordination on trade (including through trade digitalization and exchange of electronic information), investment and transport, crisis preparedness, and environmental degradation.<sup>58</sup>

## Working with partners

The United Nations will draw on its role as public convener, its partnership with the Government, and its extensive connections with CSOs, the private sector, IFIs, donors, academia and other stakeholders in order to garner a whole-of-society perspective on addressing macroeconomic challenges. One such effort will be to conduct a stakeholder forum on resilient recovery, which will open the space for exploring the options for a sustainable and resilient socioeconomic recovery.

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58 See [www.unescap.org/covid19; www.unece.org/covid-19.html](http://www.unescap.org/covid19; www.unece.org/covid-19.html)



## SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

## Key priority areas

**Enhancing inclusive dialogue between the state and citizens, and within and across communities, and promoting participation.**

**Strengthening governance capacities for peace and inclusive responses to emerging crises.**

**Building resilience to environmental and biological risks that impact peace and social cohesion.**

## Contributing United Nations agencies

FAO, IOM, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNECE, UNICEF, UNODC, UN WOMEN, United Nations Volunteers (UNV), WFP, UNDRR.

## Introduction

**The COVID-19 crisis has put governance systems, and their effectiveness, under pressure, and has contributed to growing distrust among citizens in state institutions,** exacerbating fragilities and straining the cohesion between the state and citizens. The pandemic has disrupted the entire public service delivery system. The lockdown meant that citizens could not physically attend service providers' offices to receive services, limiting the service providers' ability to ensure the continuity of public service delivery. All this has happened in the context of job losses and disrupted businesses and social life due to the measures applied to contain the virus. This has undermined the trust in the protective function of the state and has increased the likelihood of contention in the long run. This is underlined by a recent public opinion poll carried out by the International Republic Institute: despite the Government's efforts in responding to the crisis, 40% of respondents were not satisfied at all with the Government's response, while 27% were "somewhat dissatisfied". At the same time, the response from civil society has compensated for some shortfalls in the government response, demonstrating the ability of Kyrgyz civil society to engage in service delivery. This is a positive factor for building future public-private partnerships in service delivery.

**The COVID-19 crisis is contributing to increased tensions between communities and regions, which is deepening divides between various social groups.** In the context of increased hardships, people may tend to blame other groups and become more prone to resorting to violence. The risk of community tensions and conflicts is therefore likely to increase as economic and social stresses due to COVID-19 are encountered by vulnerable communities. The pandemic itself has become a subject of inflammatory rhetoric, misinformation, fake news and hate speech among political rivals, social media users and different population groups. The increased mobilization of the society on social media seen during the crisis has initiated a new pattern of social protest through the digital space, which will most likely continue to grow and be used beyond the pandemic, with a risk that it will shape governmental decisions and spill over to electoral processes.<sup>59</sup>

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59 E.g. the law on "manipulation of information" was not approved by the President as a result of widespread public concerns.

It is worth noting, however, that along with the (potential) fuelling of existing inter-group grievances and divides, the COVID-19 crisis has also opened up new avenues for solidarity between people, mutual support, and civic action to cope with and fight against the pandemic. This solidarity can be further harnessed for recovery purposes and building forward better: inclusion and strengthening of the local civil society is one of the essential building blocks for creating pro-peace infrastructure at the community level.

**The COVID-19 crisis is contributing to growing security risks, and highlighting the need for cross-border cooperation.** The COVID-19 crisis has aggravated security risks, such as crime, violence and discrimination, including aggressive behaviour of citizens towards the security forces and vice versa; a rise in major crimes, including spikes in domestic violence and GBV; increased hate speech, inflammatory rhetoric and disinformation; and cross-border tensions and incidents. In relation to the latter, the pandemic has highlighted the importance of cross-border cooperation in the context of emergency response in border areas. This relates to transboundary transit, international freight turnover, institutional cooperation over border delimitation and demarcation processes, the fulfilment of bilateral and multilateral agreements on natural resources (e.g. water), access to transport corridors (including for returning labour migrants from abroad), and access to education, health and market facilities located on the other side of the border or requiring a transit through the territory of bordering countries.

**The COVID-19 pandemic has tested the country's capacity to respond to natural and human-made disasters and crises.** Disaster management in the Kyrgyz Republic has usually been heavily reliant on the specialized emergency management authority, Ministry of Emergency Situations, which has mainly been operational in the context of relatively localized disasters. The mandate and resources of this authority have been insufficient to address the complexity of the COVID-19 crisis or to leverage an integrated government response. The crisis has exposed the lack of readiness of the country's economic, social, health, political and other sectors to handle a nationwide crisis and its consequences in a coordinated and integrated way. This reaffirms the need to move from standalone disaster management towards preemptive and whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches. There is a need to integrate disaster and risk management into broader governance and sustainable development frameworks, as well as to strengthen the institutional foundations for anticipating, absorbing, responding to and recovering from the multidimensional impacts of future pandemics, crises and shocks.

In view of the challenges outlined above, and in the context of the triple crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the changed political context arising from the parliamentary elections of 4 October 2020 and the economic fallout of both, this pillar the United Nations will provide support to national and local authorities for a sustainable and peaceful stabilization and recovery. It will help prevent and contain the potential rise in social tensions and natural and man-made disaster risks by engaging at all levels to strengthen channels for dialogue and by providing technical support to accelerate disaster risk reduction efforts, while ensuring that the principles of the rule of law, human rights, inclusion and transparency remain central.

Support for this pillar will thus be organized around three main priority areas:

1. Facilitating the reinforcement of the social contract through inclusive dialogue between the state and citizens, within and across communities, and promoting participation.
2. Strengthening governance capacities for peace and security and inclusive response to emerging crises, with a specific focus on youth and women.
3. Building resilience to natural and man-made risks that have an impact on peace and social cohesion.

These priority areas are discussed in the subsections below.

## **Enhancing inclusive dialogue between the state and citizens, within and across communities, and promoting participation**

**Supporting dialogue, social cohesion and confidence building for an accountable and inclusive COVID-19 response and recovery.** An effective socioeconomic response to COVID-19 must be based on social dialogue and political engagement, and grounded in respect for fundamental rights and gender equality. With this in mind, the United Nations will support the Government in ensuring the participation of the population in framing and implementing the COVID-19 response through engaging communities, CSOs, local activists and leaders in volunteer initiatives; through strengthening the national volunteer enabling environment; participatory planning and implementation of local development, response and recovery plans; community based peacebuilding, conflict prevention and intercultural dialogue; as well as public and/or parliamentary hearings.

Social tensions can also arise when social, economic and cultural rights, including the right to health, to vote and to social protection, are not seen to be fulfilled in a transparent manner, and when there are limited mechanisms available to address grievances. Public services must be available to all on an equal footing. Digitalization can help improve access to rights and transparency in accessing them. It can help in the delivery of social services to underserved rural areas. CSOs can also participate in monitoring the situation and can meaningfully propel the digital revolution that has been put into motion due to COVID-19.

Some groups of the population face barriers to participation at all levels. Women in particular face exclusion and barriers to participation in COVID-19 response strategies and thus have fewer opportunities to communicate their needs and challenges. There are several underlying reasons for this lack of voice. One is their underrepresentation at all government levels.<sup>60</sup> Another is the unequal distribution of the care burden between men and women and the lack of investment in the care economy, which has become more visible due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Another is the prevalence of social norms, especially in rural areas, which represent a barrier to women's participation in different aspects of community and social life. Engaging women from various social groups in decision-making processes and community volunteer actions is essential for ensuring equal access to resources and services to cope with the impacts of COVID-19 in the country.

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60 See UN Women, COVID-19 impacts on livelihoods of women and men in the Kyrgyz Republic: Gender Rapid Assessment, 2020, <https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/en/48888-gender-rapid-assessment-impact-covid-19-kyrgyz-republic>. Women's participation in the decision-making process does not reach the 30% level recommended by the United Nation Economic and Social Council. In particular, as at March 2020, women's representation was less than 17% in the parliament, 9% in the Government (two women out of 22 government members), 20% in city councils, and 10% in ayil keneshes (village councils). Among heads of local self-governments and local councils, only 5% and 4% were women, respectively. Source: Central Election Commission and Referendums of the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://shailoo.gov.kg/ru/news/2863/> Gender gaps are also observed in political and special positions in public and municipal administrations, with men outnumbering women by almost seven times and 1.6 times, respectively. The situation is most critical with regard to political positions in municipalities: out of 513 positions, only 20 (or 3.8%) are held by women, <https://mkk.gov.kg/contents/view/id/87/pid/4>

**Strengthening social cohesion through improving community resilience and promoting volunteerism and inclusive social dialogue.** The United Nations will provide support to addressing intolerance and tensions in communities, which can threaten fundamental rights and freedoms through: i) undertaking conflict, violence and peace analysis; ii) enhancing and institutionalizing capacities for conflict prevention and resolution at local and national levels; iii) preventing hate speech, inflammatory rhetoric, fake news and disinformation and advocating for non-discrimination; iv) reducing inequalities, violence, domestic violence and GBV; v) strengthening early warning and early response capacities and complaints mechanisms; vi) providing legal aid and technical assistance for a human rights-based response to COVID-19, including for national human rights institutions and civil society; vii) enhancing civic competencies and inter-community and inter-faith dialogue; and viii) improving community policing mechanisms to better identify people's concerns and grievances at early stages and engaging community members in volunteerism for peace and development.

Tensions in the border and other communities have already been reported. There is a danger of a further escalation of tensions, which could spill over into inter-ethnic/inter-group violence, discriminatory acts against people living with HIV and LGBTQI people and stigmatization of those infected by COVID-19, especially if tensions are fuelled by hate speech on social media. Through fostering participation and inclusion, the United Nations will help combat discrimination. As part of this, the United Nations will support the Government in its efforts to combat fake news that lead to stigmatization of vulnerable groups, including returning migrants. This will include support for the introduction of media information literacy at school to help confront disinformation and hate speech related to COVID-19, including digital volunteer solutions. Activities will also be undertaken to help the civil society and the media to access accurate information and to counteract fake news and disinformation related to the pandemic. Support will also be provided in relation to discouraging the use of hate speech and inflammatory rhetoric. This will include capacity building for law enforcement, the Ombudsperson's office and journalists with regards to identifying and responding to hate speech, as well as an assessment of the legal framework in relation to hate speech.

Given the significant numbers of migrants who have already returned – or are planning to return – to the country, particular attention will be given to supporting migrant-receiving communities, especially those prone to conflict and characterized by high levels of unemployment and poverty. In such communities, the United Nations will help prevent potential tensions by working with local authorities to provide a broad spectrum of reintegration assistance for returning migrants and their families, including support to labour market integration.

Young people are among those most impacted by the current crisis in terms of mental and physical health, learning and professional development, civic engagement and respect for their rights.<sup>61</sup> At the same time, as the pandemic has expanded, young people have also been among those most mobilized to shape new forms of solidarity. The challenge is to put in place mechanisms to enable these positive forms of engagement to contribute in the response. The United Nations will provide support for various platforms through which young people can engage, including the creation of online spaces with e-learning materials and an “ideas laboratory” on how to respond to the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis.

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<sup>61</sup> See UNFPA AND UNICEF, Impact and Needs Assessment among Youth, 2020.

Other groups of young people, including those from vulnerable and marginalized minorities, will be included through working with a civil society coalition. Initiatives will also aim to step up civic education in religious and vocational schools aimed at promoting tolerance and social activism to contain the pandemic, as well as supporting youth businesses and start-up initiatives, including those involving returned young labour migrants. In border areas, which are characterized by heightened ethnic and cross-border tensions, the United Nations will help implement mentorship programmes for young people, and will help involve them in cross-border dialogues and peace-building activities.

## **Strengthening governance capacities for peace and security and an inclusive response to emerging crises**

**Increasing governance capacities for a coordinated, inclusive response and recovery.** The COVID-19 crisis necessitates greater investment in early warning and early response and in medium-term to long-term recovery efforts. This will ensure a fundamental shift from a post-crisis response and recovery towards comprehensive pre-emptive governance, prevention and response. The United Nations will explore possible solutions to further strengthen early warning and early response capacities that will be beneficial in supporting national and local multisectoral planning, coordination, programming and implementation support, including data/analytics for early warning and crisis management. The United Nations will also provide technical support to foster synergies, as well as governance and coordination mechanisms to build a comprehensive national peace infrastructure.

The October parliamentary elections and the events that followed served as a flashpoint for the surfacing of tensions, discontent and dissatisfaction with the current socioeconomic situation, the governance of the COVID-19 crisis, the polarization of society – and, not least, the democratic process itself. As can be learned from Kyrgyzstan's recent history, the deterioration of socioeconomic conditions, the pervasiveness of corruption, the weak rule of law and the low trust in the Parliament and the Government are drivers of contention that can cause tensions and divisions contributing directly to social unrest and conflict.

In the spring of 2020, the Parliament (Jogorku Kenesh), passed several policies and laws to alleviate the negative socioeconomic effects of the crisis but the level of public trust decreased due to the approval of several controversial pieces of legislation that were adopted without civic participation and transparency as a result of expedited legislative processes, as well as due to the prohibition of public hearings tie to social distancing norms. Deputies were also criticized for not exercising their oversight function to assess the performance of the Government in limiting the spread and the socioeconomic impact of the virus. The compatibility of the introduced measures with human rights obligations was also questioned. Indeed, the public health and socioeconomic crisis and the associated low levels of public trust in the national response to COVID-19 demand more accountable and transparent governance institutions, which would embody the words and spirit of SDG 16 and fully represent the public interest – during the recovery period and beyond. A new convocation of the Parliament will be required to strengthen its institutional effectiveness and engagement with the public in order to align different interest groups and drive the demand for change to steer the national socioeconomic and human rights response to COVID-19.

The election of a new convocation of Parliament to lead oversight of the national socioeconomic development and develop accountability mechanisms for the implementation of key policies will lay the ground for the United Nations' and the international community's strategic engagement and partnership on sustainable development, including for the COVID-19 response and recovery. Given the development challenges, it is pivotal that the next convocation of the Parliament is immediately fit for purpose to support mid- and long-term development responses and to forge the stability and resilience required to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country. The United Nations will support capacity-building of Parliament to foster a strong adoption and mainstreaming of the SDGs in government planning and to lead the COVID-19 socioeconomic recovery.

The United Nations will also provide technical support to human rights oversight institutions, such as the Ombudsman, CSOs and the media, to improve the institutional capacity and democratic accountability for the COVID-19 response and the overall, through their power of scrutiny, sustainable development agenda-setting, public engagement and outreach to ensure that the medium- and long-term recovery does not stray from the shared global compass of the 2030 Agenda, including the pledge to "leave no one behind" and to achieve all of the SDGs. The oversight capacities will be strengthened to support the accountability for laws, policies and actions to ensure the respect for the rule of law and human rights, enable the prevention of a disproportionate impact on women and children, and promote freedom of information, transparency of recovery efforts and accountability for financial aid and recovery spending. Likewise, stronger mechanisms for engagement of the civil society in legislative, representative and oversight work will be designed so that the general public will be able to participate in scrutinizing and monitoring the work of the Government and the Parliament.

**Guaranteeing fundamental rights and freedoms.** During the state of emergency, legislation was introduced resulting in the imposition of restrictions on the right of assembly, freedom of the press, freedom of movement, and access to justice, as well as the right to education, the right to work and the right to essential health services. This led, for example, to reports of criminal detainees being kept longer than usual in detention before being brought to trial and lawyers being prevented from visiting detainees due to physical distancing rules. Restrictions were also placed on the reporting activities of non-state media channels and on the activities of CSOs.

The challenge is to ensure public oversight of the lifting or lengthening of COVID-19 response measures and place mechanisms to monitor, report on, and address infringements of human rights. In this, the activities and engagement of CSOs are fundamental. The United Nations system will assist the state, national human rights institutions, and the civil society in relation to ensuring that measures taken during the response period are compliant with the best practices and international human rights obligations and standards, as defined by the United Nations guidance.<sup>62</sup> It will also be important to ensure that civil society representatives are legally and functionally enabled to play their essential role in promoting community cohesion and resilience and engaging in outreach to ensure the participation and inclusion of the most vulnerable sections of society. Measures undertaken by the Government during the emergency situation have also impacted citizens' privacy and data protection, as strong privacy and data protection legislative and institutional frameworks, adequate public oversight and control mechanisms, and legal and ethical norms for collecting, processing, using and storing personal data are lacking.

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62 [www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures\\_COVID19.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/EmergencyMeasures_COVID19.pdf)

The United Nations will provide technical support to state authorities in applying a human rights-based approach in their work in the form of assessing policies and drafting laws. Capacity building and technical support will also be provided for national human rights institutions and for civil society representatives to ensure that they are equipped for the challenges of monitoring the human rights compliance in the context of the pandemic and recovery, including in relation to elections. Through an analysis of the cases supported by CSOs and by working via a civil society coalition with the most vulnerable groups in society, the United Nations will help identify patterns of non-compliance with international human rights standards – in particular non-discrimination – in relation to specific areas of human rights and/or groups that require additional protection.

**Strengthening the rule of law.** The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the rule of law and the justice system across the country. This is a development area where the Kyrgyz Republic was already in need of significant improvements according to the 2020 World Justice Project Rule of Law Index. Indeed, the virus outbreak and the emergency response measures undertaken by the Government have affected the swift implementation of the legal reform process with the aim of promoting a general justice policy of humanization and de-penalization and greater adherence to fair trial standards. As indicated above, the state of emergency has imposed a number of very strict restrictions of constitutional, civil, social, economic and cultural rights and freedoms, including rights and freedoms in relation to liberty and movement, education, work and trade, health, respect for private and family life, religious expression, speech, press, assembly and association. The courts, legal aid and human rights monitoring mechanisms, including the Free Legal Aid Centres under the Ministry of Justice, the Ombudsman and the National Centre for the Prevention of Torture, as well as other important government services, such as crisis centres for victims of domestic violence, have closed, reduced or changed their operations. Public authorities, including law enforcement and justice agencies, have received limited instructions about the necessity and proportionality of the use of force and restrictions on their powers, while citizens have not been informed properly about their rights, responsibilities and duties as well as remedies in the case of legal and human rights violations. All this has happened against the backdrop of a significant increase in demand for legal aid, which has negatively affected access to justice, especially for vulnerable groups, such as women and children at risk of violence, detainees, migrant workers, PWDs, undocumented migrants, homeless people and refugees.

Going forward, the United Nations will provide technical assistance to integrate international best practices, guided by the right to legislative due process and human rights-based approach, into the national recovery laws, policies and development plans, as well as into the ongoing legal reform processes. In particular, legal and normative advice will be provided to ensure that human rights measures undertaken to combat the spread of COVID-19 and boost socioeconomic recovery efforts are not discriminatory, and are carried out in strict accordance with the rule of law, human rights standards and constitutional rights. In addition, the United Nations will provide technical assistance to continue to support the national efforts for a more sustainable and effective state funded legal aid system to meet the increased demand for legal aid among the vulnerable groups which has occurred during the emergency period and as a result of socioeconomic inequalities which have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

This will include support through the legal aid hotline 112 established in partnership with the Ministry of Emergency Situations and the Ministry of Justice in order to improve the access to legal services and information to empower people and communities to resolve their disputes, seek redress for rights violations, and counter discrimination on a range of issues, including housing, employment, legal/residency status, access to health benefits or other social protection mechanisms. These services will be adapted to the current context, including expanding advisory services providing consultations to small businesses on how to access government support packages and how to comply with new COVID-19-related regulations. In partnership with CSOs, support will also target increased public participation in rule of law-related policy and decision-making processes, inclusiveness, public outreach and civic engagement. It will do this in a manner that meets the justice needs of women, youth and other vulnerable populations, including children and PWDs. In addition, the United Nations will support ad hoc initiatives to strengthen the fair trial rights and public service delivery in the justice sector through providing technical support for the effective and human rights-compliant digitalization of justice and legal aid services in line with the Sanarip Digital Kyrgyzstan 2019–2023, the Information Technology Strategic Plan for the Development of the Judiciary 2019–2022 and the rule of law digitization process undertaken under the framework of the 2019 legal reforms.

**Supporting the mitigation of risks of violence.** The United Nations will continue to strengthen the capacities of local authorities and security institutions to be more responsive and accountable, to mitigate the risks of conflicts and community-level tensions within at-risk populations, especially in migrant-receiving communities. Moreover, the United Nations will support various groups, especially the youth, to prevent crime and drug and alcohol abuse, with a special emphasis on supporting the youth from vulnerable groups (children with disabilities, orphans). Special attention will be paid to internet security and positive parenting to prevent crimes among the youth. The United Nations will also continue to carry out confidence building between law enforcement and the people, by encouraging law enforcement to be more responsive to domestic violence and other crimes and by creating an online reporting and response facility and an online mechanism to enable the police to process citizens' requests.

## **Building resilience to natural and man-made risks that impact peace and social cohesion**

In order to reduce further impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including people's dissatisfaction, the United Nations will provide technical support to review the options for strengthening national whole-of-government crisis response and long-term recovery planning, capacities, frameworks and/or operational mechanisms to prepare for and ensure rapid and effective disaster/crisis prevention, response and recovery in situations that go beyond the disaster mandate or that exceed national coping capacities. This will aim to enhance disaster risk management of natural, man-made and biological hazards, some of which are compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, through the provision of technical and financial support to national and local-level climate change and disaster risk structures and resources, to enable them to tackle compound disaster or crisis situations simultaneously and preemptively. It is crucial that long-term climate-smart solutions remain a priority as climate change, environmental degradation and ecosystem decline, together with COVID-19-related vulnerabilities, pose a risk to the most vulnerable, to livelihoods and to economic stability. The United Nations will continue to provide support to build resilience to climate change in southern regions of the country, which are the most prone to climate-induced disasters.

## **Working with partners**

Under this pillar, the United Nations will work closely with development partners through the existing Development Partner Coordination Council working groups platforms as well as under Project Boards and Steering Committees of various projects and programmes. Good examples include EU, UK, SDC, USAID, FCDO, Finland, GIZ, ADB, WB, JICA, KOICA, OSCE, the Russian Federation, which have been very instrumental and continue to be, in addressing social cohesion and resilience from different angles and concerns such as those related to political (e.g. political participation, representation, rule of law, access to justice, human rights, corruption), governance (e.g. various public administration reforms, basic services, education, community resilience, local self-governance), economic (e.g. incomes and disparities, employment, self-employment, labor migration), security (e.g. law enforcement, conflicts, crime, cross-border cooperation), environmental (climate change, environmental degradation, disasters, natural resources management), socio-cultural and civic (e.g. social and economic inclusion, trust and confidence, identity and belonging, diversity and tolerance, child abuse, domestic and gender-based violence, media, hate speech) dimensions.

# THE RESPONSE: WHAT WE OFFER

## TOTAL BUDGET OF THE UNITED NATIONS OFFER

Pillars	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
<b>1. HEALTH FIRST</b>	19,440,875	672,915	6,611,460	12,156,500
<b>2. PROTECTING PEOPLE</b>	20,570,957	2,438,809	3,062,500	15,069,648
<b>3. ECONOMIC RECOVERY</b>	32,940,369	7,293,000	6,790,595	18,856,774
<b>4. MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE AND MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION</b>	10,643,710	109,000	6,143,710	4,391,000
<b>5. SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE</b>	21,215,840	851,000	13,612,840	6,752,000
<b>Total budget</b>	<b>104,811,751</b>	<b>11,364,724</b>	<b>36,221,105</b>	<b>57,225,922</b>

## BUDGET OF THE UNITED NATIONS OFFER BY KEY PRIORITY AREAS

<b>1. HEALTH FIRST: Protecting health services and systems during the crisis</b>				
Support to rapid expansion of the surge capacity of public health services	12,089,188	666,915	3,303,273	8,119,000
Support to the resumption and maintenance of essential health services	7,351,687	6,000	3,308,187	4,037,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,440,875</b>	<b>672,915</b>	<b>6,611,460</b>	<b>12,156,500</b>

## **2. PROTECTING PEOPLE: Social protection and basic services**

Expanding social protection programmes to mitigate the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable groups of the population	5,345,000	380,352	490,000	4,474,648
Maintaining essential food and nutrition services	7,221,000	1,220,000	1,576,000	4,425,000
Ensuring the continuity and quality of water and sanitation services	4,220,000	0	415,000	3,805,000
Securing sustained learning for all children and adolescents	1,786,500	225,000	304,500	1,257,000
Supporting the continuity of social services	900,000	100,000	97,000	703,000
Support to victims of GBV	1,098,457	513,457	180,000	405,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,570,957</b>	<b>2,438,809</b>	<b>3,062,500</b>	<b>15,069,648</b>

<b>3. ECONOMIC RECOVERY: Protecting jobs, small and medium enterprises and informal sector workers</b>				
Employment support to vulnerable groups, including migrants and informal sector workers	20,261,926	2,943,000	3,942,152	13,376,774
Support to entrepreneurship and the re-profiling of micro/small enterprises	9,018,443	4,350,000	2,468,443	2,200,000
More equal opportunities to benefit from the digital revolution/digitalization	3,660,000	0	380,000	3,280,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,940,369</b>	<b>7,293,000</b>	<b>6,790,595</b>	<b>18,856,774</b>

<b>4. MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE AND MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION</b>				
Technical support for public expenditure planning, revenue generation, and monitoring	3,570,160	0	1,070,160	2,500,000
Analytical and advisory support on the socioeconomic recovery	5,243,550	109,000	4,693,550	441,000
Multilateral collaboration and regional partnerships	1,830,000	0	380,000	1,450,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,643,710</b>	<b>109,000</b>	<b>6,143,710</b>	<b>4,391,000</b>

<b>5. SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE</b>				
Enhancing inclusive dialogue between the state and citizens, and within and across communities, and promoting participation	7,994,000	80,000	6,211,000	1,703,000
Strengthening governance capacities for peace and inclusive responses to emerging crises	11,755,000	541,000	6,760,000	4,454,000
Building resilience to environmental and biological risks that impact peace and social cohesion	1,466,840	230,000	641,840	595,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,215,840</b>	<b>851,000</b>	<b>13,612,840</b>	<b>6,752,000</b>

## 1. HEALTH FIRST: Protecting health services and systems during the crisis

Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
	<b>Support to rapid expansion of the surge capacity of public health services</b>	<b>12,089,188</b>	<b>666,915</b>	<b>3,303,273</b>	<b>8,119,000</b>	
<b>WHO, UNDP, UNIDO</b>	Priority health risks are addressed through the assessment of the extent of COVID-19 infection and the cumulative incidence of infection in the population, strengthening the surveillance mechanism and better medical waste management	Capacity building of health workers to apply case definition and case management, and IPC programmes according to the WHO COVID-19 guidelines – <i>WHO, with support from USAID (USD 62,100), Gavi (USD 30,000) and Germany (USD 10,000)</i>  Support to conducting a sero-epidemiological study on COVID-19 – <i>WHO, with support from USAID (USD 30,000)</i>  Capacity building and provision of reagents and consumables for laboratory-designated virologic labs to maintain disease surveillance and outbreak detection – <i>WHO and UNDP, with support from USAID (USD 67,675), GIZ (USD 200,000) and EU (USD 45,000)</i>  Support to upgrading the waste management protocols and waste management systems – <i>WHO, UNIDO and UNDP, with support from EU (USD 5,000)</i>	1,227,023	466,915	760,108	0
<b>WHO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA</b>	Procurement and delivery of essential COVID-19 medical supplies (medicines, PPEs and equipment) is organized, it benefits from the improved national regulatory framework that is aligned with International Health Regulations on medical supplies in emergency situations	Support to aligning national legislation with International Health Regulations to ensure the regulation of essential medicines and medical devices in emergency situations – <i>WHO, with support from EU (USD 15,000)</i>  Support to the Ministry of Health on improving the national regulations for clinical trials of medicines – <i>WHO</i>  Support to the Ministry of Health on the utilization of the WHO essential supplies forecasting tool for estimation of needs – <i>WHO</i>  Procurement and shipment of vital COVID-19 medical supplies – <i>UNDP and UNICEF, with support from the World Bank (USD 900,000), ADB (USD 200,000) and UK FCDO (USD 200,000)</i>	6,530,165	200,000	2,090,165	4,240,000
<b>WHO, IOM</b>	Capacities and mechanisms of public health emergency operations centres, points of entry and information management systems are strengthened for the pandemic influenza preparedness and response	Support to strengthening a public health emergency operations centre and information management system – <i>WHO, with support from USAID (USD 80,000)</i>  Testing pandemic influenza preparedness and response mechanisms at central level through simulation exercises – <i>WHO, with support from Germany (USD 10,000)</i>  Support to enhancing the preparedness of health and border staff at points of entry to respond to COVID-19 and other communicable diseases – <i>IOM</i>	722,000	0	353,000	369,000
<b>UNIDO</b>	Introduction of the best environmental practices and technologies for the environmentally sound management of healthcare waste (including COVID-19 waste)	Support to the Ministry of Health in analysing waste data from COVID and identifying the best technologies for managing the waste – <i>UNIDO</i>  Support to the assessment of current practices and infrastructure, enforcement mechanisms, and the institutional and technical capacities of healthcare waste facilities for the implementation of environmentally sound management of medical waste (including COVID-19 waste) – <i>UNIDO</i>  Support to the introduction of the best environmental practices (best available techniques and guidance on best environmental practices – BAT/BEP) with respect to medical waste in healthcare facilities and capacity building for all relevant stakeholders on environmentally sound management of medical waste (including COVID-19) – <i>UNIDO</i>	3,010,000			3,010,000

## 1. HEALTH FIRST: Protecting health services and systems during the crisis

Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
<b>UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP</b>	Effective crisis communications between and within state systems/institutions, and with the broader society and communities, established to deliver key COVID-19-related messages to the general population in a timely manner	Support to strengthening feedback mechanisms and public discussions; producing evidence-based, gender- and culture-sensitive communication materials; and engaging civil society and community actors to reach out to the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach population groups – UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, with support from FCDO (USD 30,000)	600,000	0	100,000	500,000
<b>WHO, UNFPA, UNESCO</b>	<b>Support to the resumption and maintenance of essential health services</b>	<b>7,351,687</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>3,308,187</b>	<b>4,037,500</b>	
	Strengthened evidence-based health policies and a strengthened regulatory framework to secure equitable access to the right to health for all	Capacity building and policy support on the formulation of evidence-based health policies – WHO  Advocacy and technical assistance to the Ministry of Health and the Mandatory Health Insurance Fund (MHIF) on improving equity and efficiency in health financing to ensure adequate public funding and alignment of different financing streams – WHO  Technical support to the Ministry of Health to deliver a data-driven, gender-responsive and human rights-based COVID-19 response through the analysis of megatrends in reproductive health and mapping of the science, technologies and innovation needs in the Central Asia region – UNFPA, UNESCO  Technical support to the Ministry of Health in the development of analysis and standard operating procedures/guidance for healthcare professionals to enhance the preparedness and response in respect to reproductive health actions impacted by COVID-19 – UNFPA  Conduct Multiple follow-up indicator cluster surveys and equity-based analysis on COVID-19 impact on the access of children and women to essential health services – UNICEF  Support to the Ministry of Health on the development and implementation of the HIV/TB services adaptation plan and support to the development of guidelines and protocols for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PreP), self-testing for vulnerable groups, and provision of continuous phyco-social services to HIV+ children – UNAIDS, UNDP, UNICEF  Support to designing and deploying an innovative and adaptive diagnostic to analyse the impact of air pollution on COVID-19 infection – UNDP, UNEP  Provision of essential medical supplies (including medications for non-communicable diseases) to support essential healthcare services – WHO	1,620,457	6,000	720,457	894,000

1. HEALTH FIRST: Protecting health services and systems during the crisis						
Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
<b>WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA</b>	Continuity of essential health services ensured to address the healthcare needs of the population	Support to the resumption of immunization and regular mother and child health (MCH), mental health, non-communicable diseases and oncology services - <i>WHO</i>	5,416,500	0	2,353,000	3,063,500
		Capacity building of primary healthcare providers on case detection, contact tracing, Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) and case referral/management of patients, including women, children and vulnerable populations, to ensure their access to emergency and essential health services - <i>WHO and UNICEF, with support from UK FCDO (USD 60,000)</i>				
		Capacity building of primary healthcare providers on delivering preventive home visiting services, COVID-19 identification and case referral services for children, and pregnant and breastfeeding women - <i>UNICEF</i>				
		Support to the Ministry of Health on developing a package of regulatory documents on telemedicine and on testing the access of vulnerable sick children and pregnant women to telemedicine, with recommendations for scaling up telemedicine - <i>UNICEF, UNFPA</i>				
		Support to the restoration of water supply systems, sanitation services and waste management services at health facilities that provide healthcare to women and children - <i>UNICEF, with support from ECHO (USD 120,000), Gavi (USD 66,000) and Multi-Partner Trust Fund (USD 170,000)</i>				
<b>UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, UNDP</b>	Massive countrywide communication campaign, outreach, protection, counselling, and monitoring from evidence-based advocacy, alliance building and cooperation to reach out to frontline healthcare providers and high-risk groups of the population	Conduct communication and advocacy activities with village health committees, frontline healthcare providers, women with disabilities and other high-risk groups of the population through online and media platforms - <i>UNFPA</i>  Ensure regular supply of accurate information on COVID-19 to internal and returning migrants - <i>IOM</i>  Support protection, counselling and monitoring of refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons through dedicated phone lines, evidence-based advocacy, alliance building, and cooperation with Mandatory Health Insurance Fund (MHIF) - <i>UNHCR</i>  Organization of social listening around immunization and COVID-19, and assisting the Government and partners in the development, implementation and assessment of evidence-based social media campaigns and interventions	314,730	0	234,730	80,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>19,440,875</b>	<b>672,915</b>	<b>6,611,460</b>	<b>12,156,500</b>

## 2. PROTECTING PEOPLE: Social protection and basic services

Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
	<b>Expanding social protection programmes to mitigate the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable groups of the population</b>		<b>5,345,000</b>	<b>380,352</b>	<b>490,000</b>	<b>4,474,648</b>
<b>UNICEF, WFP, ILO, FAO, UNECE</b>	The national partners are able to formulate, cost and implement integrated evidence-based shock-responsive and gender-sensitive social protection policies and programmes to effectively respond to the needs of the most vulnerable and impoverished households	<p>Policy advice and recommendations to make necessary revisions to the national social protection strategy to ensure shock-responsiveness, linkages among different social protection programmes and integration with other sectors - <i>UNICEF, WFP, ILO, FAO, UNDP, with support from with support from FAO Multilateral Fund (USD 700,000), WFP Multilateral Fund (USD 100,000)</i></p> <p>Technical and programmatic support to the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD) and other national partners to scale up social assistance, including extending coverage via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• setting/relaxing eligibility criteria and qualifying conditions</li> <li>• improving administration and delivery</li> <li>• information/communication for effective outreach</li> <li>• introduction of a self-application modality</li> <li>• digitalization of the social protection systems</li> </ul> <p>- <i>UNICEF</i></p> <p>Support to improve national capacity for producing timely and disaggregated poverty measures following the internationally agreed guidance - <i>UNECE</i></p> <p>Technical support in fiscal space analysis and identifying options for expanding social protection financing - <i>UNICEF, ILO</i></p> <p>Technical and programmatic support to identifying and piloting mechanisms to link agriculture/rural development and social protection sectors, expand and assess the impact of the "cash plus" approach on the rural poor and generate productive employment opportunities for urban and rural vulnerable households - <i>WFP, FAO, UNICEF, with support from the Government of Switzerland (USD 500,000)</i></p> <p>Technical support to the national partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to extend coverage of maternity benefits and to introduce maternity insurance schemes</li> <li>• to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on social insurance contributions and to extend the coverage of unemployment benefits</li> </ul> <p>- <i>ILO</i></p> <p>Design shock-responsive and gender-sensitive social protection programmes in response to COVID-19 and other future shocks, focused on the most vulnerable women and children - <i>UNICEF, WFP, ILO, FAO, with support from the Global Environment Facility (USD 165,000), the Government of the Russian Federation (USD 5,000 USD) and FAO Multilateral Fund (USD 130,000)</i></p>	3,375,000	20,352	460,000	2,894,648

## 2. PROTECTING PEOPLE: Social protection and basic services

Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
<b>UNICEF, WFP, UN Women</b>	Management information systems and delivery mechanisms for social protection programmes are enhanced to better target the most vulnerable groups, including poor children and families, and people who have lost their income due to the COVID-19 crisis	Capacity building to the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD) and other key stakeholders to align and improve existing databases and registries on vulnerable, poor children and their families – <i>UNICEF, WFP, UN Women</i>  Technical support to the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD) to improve the portal 1227.tunduk.kg to accept, process, and maintain applications from vulnerable groups for food assistance – <i>WFP</i>  Technical support for setting up mechanisms and funding modalities to deliver humanitarian cash transfers and their integration into the country's emergency response programme – <i>UNICEF</i>	1,970,000	360,000	30,000	1,580,000
<b>Maintaining essential food and nutrition services</b>			<b>7,221,000</b>	<b>1,220,000</b>	<b>1,576,000</b>	<b>4,425,000</b>
<b>WFP</b>	Social safety nets are enhanced and policy mix options are provided in support of vulnerable groups and poor households, through cash and food assistance	Provide cash/food assistance to vulnerable groups, including poor households, in exchange for participating in short-term community asset creation and restoration activities (e.g. manual works for restoration and construction of community-shared productive/mitigation assets), serving as a temporary safety net – <i>WFP</i> ( <i>source of funding: WFP internal funds, in the amount USD 2,000,000</i> )	4,400,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	2,400,000
<b>UNICEF, WFP, FAO</b>	Better access to nutritious and affordable food, essential nutrition services and practices ensured for vulnerable groups, with a particular focus on women, infants and primary school children, to mitigate the likely deterioration in their nutritional status due to the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19	Conduct data collection using the National Integrated Micronutrient Assessment – <i>UNICEF</i>  Technical support to ensure continued access to nutritious and affordable diets, essential nutrition services and an improved nutrition information system – <i>UNICEF</i>  Policy advice, awareness building and capacity development in nutrition-sensitive agricultural activities in response to COVID-19 to enhance analytical evidence on diet and nutrition challenges from food systems perspectives – <i>FAO, with the support of FAO Multilateral Fund (USD 500,000)</i>  Provide support to the Ministry of Health on the development of national guidelines on early detection and treatment of wasted children – <i>UNICEF</i>  Provide support through immediate emergency food assistance and PPE to vulnerable people residing in 22 social inpatient institutions: elderly, PWDs, children without caregivers – <i>WFP, with support from the Embassy of Switzerland (USD 200,000)</i>  Provide support to the Ministry of Education and Science by providing nutritious meals to all primary schools in the country, as prescribed by the national legislation. In case of online education, home rations will substitute school meals – <i>WFP, with the support of the Government of Russian Federation (USD 300,000)</i>				

## 2. PROTECTING PEOPLE: Social protection and basic services

Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
	<b>Ensuring the continuity and quality of water and sanitation services</b>	<b>4,220,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>415,000</b>	<b>3,805,000</b>	
<b>UNICEF, UNFPA</b>	Maintaining COVID-19-related hygiene and sanitation standards at healthcare/educational facilities and in communities through ensuring improved infrastructure, better infection control, supply of essential protection equipment and community-level hygiene practices	<p>Conduct a WASH assessment in selected healthcare facilities and in education facilities and support infrastructure rehabilitation and improvement of health and school facilities to meet WASH standards – <i>UNICEF, with support from UK/FCDO (USD 16,000)</i></p> <p>Provide IPC assistance to healthcare facilities, schools and other public institutions – <i>UNICEF, with support from UK/FCDO (USD 2,070)</i></p> <p>Support community-level hygiene to ensure continuity of water supply and facilitation of additional hygiene, as well as psychosocial messaging at community level – <i>UNICEF, UNFPA</i></p> <p>Provide 1,500 family hygiene kits to the families of returning migrants and COVID-19 positive women with children in observation and quarantine areas – <i>UNICEF, with support from EU (USD 2,000) and UK FCDO (USD 31,000)</i></p> <p>Provide support to expand the COVID-19 public information risk communication campaign, covering the basic information on COVID-19 to dispel misinformation and myths – <i>UNICEF, UNFPA, with support from UK FCDO (USD 60,000)</i></p>	4,220,000	0	415,000	3,805,000
	<b>Securing sustained learning for all children and adolescents</b>	<b>1,786,500</b>	<b>225,000</b>	<b>304,500</b>	<b>1,257,000</b>	
<b>UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP</b>	Resilient and gender-responsive education systems to effectively apply online/remote learning models, ensure quality education and uphold the principle of leaving no one behind	<p>Support to the Ministry of Education and Science in strengthening continued learning during school closures, including through the promotion of policy dialogue and best practices, technical support and training of teachers, and mechanisms to ensure all children and adolescents have access to quality learning – <i>UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, with support from the Government of Estonia</i></p> <p>Technical support to the Ministry of Education and Science to coordinate remote learning tools and to develop instructions and video training materials for preschool and schoolteachers on how to create and run remote teaching and learning with children and adolescents – <i>UNICEF, UNESCO</i></p> <p>Provide support to strengthening of information and communication technologies competencies of teachers of all subjects at the secondary level – <i>UNICEF, UNESCO, with support from Korean Funds-in-Trust</i></p> <p>Provide support to ensure that vulnerable groups – in particular, girls and children with special educational needs – are protected and benefit from home-based remote learning through phone counselling by teachers and counsellors – <i>UNICEF, with support from USAID (USD 120,000) and Global Alliance for Education (USD 70,000)</i></p>	694,500	175,000	249,500	270,000

## 2. PROTECTING PEOPLE: Social protection and basic services

Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
<b>UNICEF</b>	Re-opening of schools and preschools is supported by specific measures that aim to protect the health, safety and well-being of students, teachers and other school staff, and their families and communities	<p>Provide support to the Ministry of Education and Science in developing and implementing a strategy for catch-up learning programmes for children and adolescents who have had no access to remote learning - <i>UNICEF</i></p> <p>Provide support to the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Health to develop preschool and school re-opening guidelines, and to build the capacity of administrators and teachers to implement them - <i>UNICEF</i></p> <p>Provide support to the "Back to School/ Preschool" communication campaign - <i>UNICEF, with support from UK FCDO (USD 120,000)</i></p>	1,092,000	50,000	55,000	987,000
<b>Supporting the continuity of social services</b>			<b>900,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>97,000</b>	<b>703,000</b>
<b>UNICEF, ILO, UN Women</b>	Continuity of social service delivery to vulnerable groups is properly maintained and informed by the emerging risk factors identified through rapid vulnerability assessments on the impact of COVID-19	<p>Support to the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD) for the operationalization of a case management database, with the provision of training for the early identification of children at risk, including remotely during the pandemic - <i>UNICEF, with support from UK/FCDO (USD 17,242)</i></p> <p>Support to engagement of CSOs to address socioeconomic vulnerabilities of girls and women - <i>UN Women</i></p> <p>Support to developing a systemic prevention and response plan for the social service workforce based on the recommendations of the rapid assessments on the impact of COVID-19 on women and children (dedicated Multi-Cluster Survey on COVID-19 impact) - <i>UNICEF</i></p> <p>Support to the social workforce in the monitoring of de-institutionalized children and the provision of necessary social services, including through assessments of the children who left residential institutions after the onset of the crisis, and the development of individual plans to support families to keep children in a family environment through the provision of necessary support and social services - <i>UNICEF, with support from UK (USD 25,000)</i></p> <p>Provide support for children, including from migrants' families, and children with disabilities, by providing them with psychosocial counselling through the 111 hotline - <i>UNICEF, with support from UK, the Commission de Surveillance du Secteur Financier (CSSF) and FCDO (USD 35,000)</i></p> <p>Provide support in assessing and improving the responsiveness of the social protection system (and social services in particular) to the needs of PWDs, including children - <i>ILO, UNICEF, with support from EU (USD 10,000)</i></p> <p>Provide support for expanding social services, ongoing cash-for-work schemes and jobs training in selected cities and municipalities with a high concentration of returning migrants (beyond the 20,000 workers already targeted by these schemes) - <i>UNDP, WFP, IOM, with support from UK FCDO (USD 120,000 USD) and SDC (USD 29,000)</i></p>	900,000	100,000	97,000	703,000

## 2. PROTECTING PEOPLE: Social protection and basic services

Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
	<b>Support to victims of GBV</b>		<b>1,098,457</b>	<b>513,457</b>	<b>180,000</b>	<b>405,000</b>
<b>UNODC, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, UN Women</b>	Emerging GBV threats are addressed through improved policies, and multisectoral coordination and response	<p>Support for the improvement of the legislative framework and policies regarding domestic violence, in cooperation with the prosecutorial and judicial authorities, as well as the relevant social services (within the framework of the Spotlight Programme) – <i>UNICEF, UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, and UNODC, with the support of EU through the Spotlight Initiative</i></p> <p>Support to the MLSD to mainstream gender into sectoral plans and activities, including for enhancing the strategy of long-term institutional development support to crisis centres and creating one-stop centres – <i>UNDP, UNODC, UNICEF, UN Women, and UNFPA, with the support of EU through the Spotlight Initiative</i></p> <p>Support to improving services delivery of crisis centres to adapt and provide safe spaces to GBV survivors, including the continuous online support of legal, medical, social and psychosocial services and coordination of online psychosocial services (as a part of the multisectoral response to GBV) – <i>UNFPA, with the support of EU through the Spotlight Initiative</i></p> <p>Support to the MLSD in organizing continuous online legal, medical, social and psychosocial services to GBV survivors through the 117 hotline and rapid response mobile groups to emergency GBV cases – <i>UNFPA, UN Women, with the support of EU through the Spotlight Initiative</i></p> <p>Capacity building of healthcare workers on standard operating procedures to work on GBV among vulnerable groups of the population; and the development of recommendations on improving data collection, registering and sharing – <i>UNFPA</i></p> <p>Support to massive countrywide communication and outreach on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the implementation of the communication strategy of Unite (women's movement) to eliminate women's vulnerability to the consequences and impacts of COVID-19 – <i>UN Women, UNICEF, UNFPA</i></li> <li>• 16 days of activism against gender-based violence (GBV) in relation to eliminating gender discrimination and violence – <i>UNFPA</i></li> <li>• information campaign to increase COVID-19 safety measures, and access to essential services among faith-based organizations (FBOs) (with a focus on women and girls) – <i>UNFPA</i></li> </ul> <p>Enhance collaboration with IT labs, service providers and gender experts/activists to develop innovative solutions to address GBV and Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) – <i>UNICEF, UNODC, UNDP, with the support of EU through the Spotlight Initiative</i></p> <p>Support to the MLSD, in coordination with the police, to record all GBV cases according to international standards of data management and case management – <i>UNFPA, with the support of EU through the Spotlight Initiative</i></p> <p>Targeted legal support for sexual violence and GBV survivors through the existing pro-bono legal mechanisms established in partnership with the private sector, including free legal assistance, information, mentoring, counselling and representation in courts – <i>UNDP, with the support of EU through the Spotlight Initiative</i></p>	1,098,457	513,457	180,000	405,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>20,570,957</b>	<b>2,438,809</b>	<b>3,062,500</b>	<b>15,069,648</b>

<b>3. ECONOMIC RECOVERY: Protecting jobs, small and medium enterprises and informal sector workers</b>						
<b>Agencies</b>	<b>Intended outcome of the United Nations response</b>	<b>Contributing interventions</b>	<b>Total budget</b>	<b>Re-purposed</b>	<b>Funded</b>	<b>Unfunded</b>
	<b>Employment support to vulnerable groups, including migrants and informal sector workers</b>		<b>20,261,926</b>	<b>2,943,000</b>	<b>3,942,152</b>	<b>13,376,774</b>
<b>UNESCO, IFAD, FAO, IOM, OHCHR, UN Women</b>	Improved skills and advisory services help vulnerable groups and households leverage additional employment opportunities as part of the COVID-19 socioeconomic recovery	<p>Support on/through online trainings and learning opportunities for youth skills and capacity development in various professional fields to promote economic empowerment – <i>UNESCO, with support from EU</i></p> <p>Support in exploring sources of sustainable income and opportunities in the tourism sector through enhancing skills and increasing competencies in heritage-based tourism and building capacities in the planning, development and management of geodiversity, biodiversity and ecosystems, including for the development of sustainable nature-based tourism – <i>UNESCO</i></p> <p>Support to creative and cultural industries through awareness-raising initiatives to foster innovation for creating productive employment and decent work for all – <i>UNESCO</i></p> <p>Support in capacity building for the development/strengthening of existing online platforms for primary Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and digital content in local languages – <i>UNESCO</i></p> <p>Support to rural stakeholders affected by COVID-19 through training and on-farm demonstrations, the piloting of innovative and climate smart technologies, targeted advisory services and exposure to best international practices – <i>IFAD</i></p> <p>Support to COVID-19-affected Pasture Users Unions through awareness and training campaigns so that members understand the benefits of working together for the aggregation and joint marketing of their products – <i>IFAD</i></p> <p>Support in strengthening the resilience of rural women, migrants and other vulnerable groups for post-COVID-19 recovery through empowerment, knowledge management, information and participation – <i>FAO, IOM, OHCHR, UN Women</i></p> <p>Support for women and youth in new settlements of Bishkek and Osh for their economic integration into existing value chains/economic clusters (textiles/apparel, services etc.) through targeted training and upskilling, business advisory, and finance support – <i>UNDP</i></p> <p>Support in addressing inequalities faced by women and youth through the “adaptive leadership” and “scenario planning” concepts, and promoting a systemic approach for IT training/business planning etc., which will lead to the increased employability of women and youth, and their participation in economic development – <i>UN Women, WFP, UNDP, UNIDO</i></p>	4,470,000	8,000	253,000	4,209,000

### 3. ECONOMIC RECOVERY: Protecting jobs, small and medium enterprises and informal sector workers

Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
<b>WFP, UN Women, UNDP, FAO, ILO</b>	Scaling up livelihoods and employment-intensive opportunities leads to the strengthened resilience of vulnerable communities and marginalized groups, and ensures better COVID-19 recovery	<p>Provide support to vulnerable populations to enable their early recovery through the improvement of livelihoods, and the restoration and construction of community-shared productive/mitigation assets – <i>WFP, with the support of the Government of the Russian Federation (USD 4,200,000)</i></p> <p>Provide support to the promotion of decent work for rural women through accelerating progress towards their economic empowerment – <i>FAO, IFAD, WFP, UN Women, with the support from the Multi-Partner Trust Fund of the Norwegian Government (USD 900,000 for 2020)</i></p> <p>Support in improving the resilience of returning and internal labour migrants in Osh, Jalal-Abad and Batken, and increasing access to economic opportunities for returning migrant workers via economic inclusion activities – <i>IOM, UNDP, FAO</i></p> <p>Support in responding to the urgent needs of women and girls in marginalized and vulnerable situations exacerbated by COVID-19 in Europe and Central Asia – <i>UN Women, with the support of the Japanese Government (USD 270,000)</i></p> <p>Support for women and girls in migrant communities by improving access to economic opportunities, strengthening financial capabilities and enhancing access to financing and business and labour skills development – <i>ILO</i></p> <p>Support in expanding employment opportunities for women and youth through their engagement in the production of PPE and medical waste management – <i>UNDP</i></p> <p>Support for job creation in selected target communities through the creation of mini-processing workshops in key sectors of local competitiveness and specialization (e.g. dried fruits and vegetables, dairy products, wool processing, production of jams and juices), procurement of agro-processing equipment, and training of communities in Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), food sanitation and hygiene, marketing assessment and branding of products – <i>WFP, with the support of the Government of Japan (USD 711,000)</i></p>	15,516,926	2,860,000	3,489,152	9,167,774
<b>ILO</b>	Socioeconomic impact and vulnerability assessments, and labour market and business environment diagnostics, inform programmatic and policy response to COVID-19	<p>Provide support in designing a long-term formalization strategy to enable an environment for sustainable and resilient enterprises, generating employment and decent work, to respond to the COVID-19 crisis – <i>ILO</i></p> <p>Rapid impact assessment of COVID-19 on labour market and jobs, and technical assistance for the development of a state employment programme, including the results of a gender-sensitive business gap analysis in different sectors in value chain development (VCD) and the results of a gender-based assessment of financial services, together with ILO social partners – <i>ILO</i></p> <p>Analysis of the short-term demand for a skilled labour force in Djalal-Abad oblast and the development of enrolment-related recommendations for the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions to support linking the education system to the labour market – <i>ILO</i></p>	275,000	75,000	200,000	0

<b>3. ECONOMIC RECOVERY: Protecting jobs, small and medium enterprises and informal sector workers</b>						
Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
	<b>Support to entrepreneurship and the re-profiling of micro/small enterprises</b>		<b>9,018,443</b>	<b>4,350,000</b>	<b>2,468,443</b>	<b>2,200,000</b>
<b>UNDP</b>	MSMEs are able to improve productivity through capacity building and access to finance	<p>Support the development and implementation of innovative mechanisms for tailored financing and other support to viable women-led businesses - <i>UNDP, with support from the Government of Finland (USD 149,900)</i></p> <p>Support in the creation of a joint public/private jobs database to promote the matching of supply and demand, and the creation of a productive asset facility to help MSMEs transition to higher-productivity emerging sectors, with priority given to supporting employment-rich and green productive capacities - <i>UNDP, with support from Japan Supplementary Budget (USD 1,244,571)</i></p> <p>Support to establishing a platform that brings the supply and demand sides of the labour market together, focusing on the most vulnerable target groups, typically those that operate in the shadow economy - <i>UNDP</i></p>	1,918,443	0	1,368,443	550,000
<b>UNIDO, FAO, IFAD</b>	Strengthened capacity of agro-value chains contribute to risk diversification, reducing vulnerability, increasing resilience and fostering agricultural development	<p>Support in strengthening quality and standards compliance of the fruits value chain to facilitate market access for small and medium-sized enterprises - <i>UNIDO</i></p> <p>Support in leveraging responsible investment for resilient sustainable agriculture and food systems, with a focus on agri-food climate-sensitive value chains, particularly those affected by the consequences of COVID-19 - <i>FAO, with the support of the Green Climate Fund (USD 2,400,000), Islamic Development Bank (USD 1,200,000) and FAO Multilateral Fund (USD 400,000)</i></p> <p>Support in the capacity building of processing/aggregator enterprise owners, enterprise managers, and production managers in business, processing technology, marketing and livestock value chain management - <i>IFAD</i></p> <p>Support to smallholders to make them less vulnerable to disruptions in the farm inputs supply chain (livestock, crops and mixed farming), caused by COVID-19 - <i>FAO, with support from the Government of Finland (USD 70,000), the Government of the Russian Federation (USD 30,000) and FAO Multilateral Fund (USD 350,000)</i></p>	7,100,000	4,350,000	1,100,000	1,100,000

### 3. ECONOMIC RECOVERY: Protecting jobs, small and medium enterprises and informal sector workers

Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
	<b>More equal opportunities to benefit from the digital revolution/digitalization</b>		<b>3,660,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>380,000</b>	<b>3,280,000</b>
<b>FAO, IFAD, ITC, UNDP</b>	Strengthened strategic framework for digital transformation supports the acceleration of post-COVID-19 recovery	Support for the development of a strategic framework for digital transformation of the agriculture and agri-food system, with potential entry points on extension and research, rural advisory services and e-commerce, etc. - FAO, <i>with support from FAO Multilateral Fund (USD 400,000)</i>  Support to the Government's digital agenda, with a focus on e-agriculture through capacity building, needs assessments, knowledge products and sharing good practices, and replicating and scaling up innovative technologies among rural stakeholders affected by COVID-19 - <i>International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)</i>  Support for the Government in the development of an e-commerce development programme in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2021-2025 - <i>International Trade Centre (ITC), with the support of the EU (USD 150,000)</i>	610,000	0	180,000	430,000
<b>UNDP, ITC</b>	Enhanced access to digital skills and digital solutions allows secure access of vulnerable groups to services needed at the time of the COVID-19 crisis	Support for the development and implementation of innovative mechanisms for digital skills development, digital resilience and providing tailored financing and other support to viable women-led businesses - <i>UNDP</i>  Support in accelerating small and medium-sized enterprise digital transformation, based on changes in buying habits and working habits, strengthening their online visibility and advertising, and helping them with organizing on-demand delivery and other solutions - <i>ITC, with the support of the EU (USD 200,000)</i>	3,050,000	0	200,000	2,850,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>32,940,369</b>	<b>7,293,000</b>	<b>6,790,595</b>	<b>18,856,774</b>

#### 4. MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE AND MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION

Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
	<b>Technical support for public expenditure planning, revenue generation, and monitoring</b>		<b>3,570,160</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,070,160</b>	<b>2,500,000</b>
<b>UNDP, UNICEF, UNECE, UN Women</b>	Policy environment and institutional capacities enhanced to incentivize transformative policy shifts and to stimulate the strategic investments required to achieve SDGs	<p>Support in improving fiscal space to support the needs of the most vulnerable and recovery from COVID-19 – <i>UNDP</i></p> <p>Support to expanding the options for generating new revenue streams through technical assistance on a debt-for-nature (measures on nature conservation and improvement in the country) swap mechanism – <i>UNDP</i></p> <p>Support in strengthening the capacity of central and local authorities, the ministries of finance, education and economy, and the Chamber of Accounts to align national development priorities, including social sector policies, with budget programmes and performance audit tools to increase the effectiveness, equity and efficiency of social spending to address the COVID-19 impact – <i>UNDP/UNICEF, with support from Joint SDG Fund (USD 304,000)</i></p> <p>Support to the Ministry of Education (MoE)/Ministry of Finance (MoF) to test a social finance model targeting complex SDGs objectives at the intersection of gender equality, and fostering a “blended capital” investment approach with a new mindset of social improvements to serve as an important value-add to society and investors in the new post-COVID paradigm (e.g. care economy) – <i>UN Women</i></p> <p>Support to e-taxpayer services that incentivize MSMEs to formalize business operations and transactions to improve revenue outlook in tax administration – <i>UNDP</i></p> <p>Support in enhancing the public-private partnership model to ensure resilient infrastructure and the provision of services as a contribution to economic recovery from COVID-19 – <i>UNECE</i></p> <p>Support in leveraging green finance instruments for green recovery, public disclosure and capacity building – <i>United Nations Partnership for Action on Green Economy</i></p>	3,570,160	0	1,070,160	2,500,000
<b>IOM, UN Women, UNICEF, UNECE, FAO</b>	<b>Analytical and advisory support on the socioeconomic recovery</b>		<b>5,243,550</b>	<b>109,000</b>	<b>4,693,550</b>	<b>441,000</b>
	Socioeconomic policies are better aligned with the need to address COVID-19 consequences and ensure a resilient recovery through evidence-based analysis, data collection and dialogue	<p>Support in the alignment of the long-term National Strategy on Sustainable Development 2018–2040 with the COVID-19 impact and SDG response and recovery goals – <i>United Nations agencies, with the support of Joint SDG Fund financing (USD 304,000)</i></p> <p>Support in the improvement of the State Migration Policy until 2030 and its five-year workplan, informed by the impact of COVID-19, including by strengthening the mechanisms for better data collection – <i>IOM, with support from Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) (USD 61,000)</i></p> <p>Support for exploring policy options for diversifying the current migration and remittance-based growth model, through targeted technical support – <i>UNDP</i></p> <p>Support in strengthening gender-responsive programme-based budgeting to enhance targeted socioeconomic recovery planning, including gender-sensitive localized SDGs indicators in socioeconomic recovery planning and monitoring – <i>UN Women</i></p>	271,650	30,000	116,650	125,000

#### 4. MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE AND MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION

Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
<b>UNDP, IOM</b>	Strengthened capacity of banks and financial institutions support movement of financial flows towards sustainable development	<p>Provide support to financial institutions and entrepreneurs through a feasibility review of potential investment projects targeted at Eurasian Development Bank second-tier banks - <i>UNDP</i></p> <p>Provide support in increasing financial inclusion by enhancing digital remittance transfers by migrants and leveraging the development value of remaining remittance flows in the COVID-19 context - <i>IOM, with support from SDC (USD 53,900)</i></p>	173,900	0	53,900	120,000
<b>UNDP, UNESCO, ILO, UNEP</b>	Green recovery efforts contribute to strengthening the resilience of the socioeconomic context	<p>Support to strengthening the capacity of the national economic structure in relation to a green and low-carbon growth trajectory through enhanced climate actions, as reflected in the Nationally Determined Contribution commitments, and building the whole-of society adaptive capacity in relation to climate change - <i>UNDP</i></p> <p>Support to strengthening policymaking capacity by providing a comprehensive roadmap on potential renewable energy sources to cover the existing energy gaps - <i>UNDP</i></p> <p>Support to rationalized policy formulation on fossil fuel subsidies for a greener and healthier recovery that leads to the realignment of budget expenditure to address immediate COVID-19 socioeconomic needs - <i>UNDP</i></p> <p>Support for renewable environmental protection efforts towards conservation and development targets to extend the value of nature, as well as adopting nature-based solutions and natural capital accounting - <i>UNDP</i></p> <p>Support to strengthening the institutional capacity of the Government to develop evidence-based policymaking through green economy modelling of the seven green economy priority sectors and advisory support in mobilizing private funds for greener recovery in the context of COVID-19 - <i>UNDP/ILO/UNEP</i></p> <p>Support for the formulation of informed policies and increased capacities for the introduction of transformational and green economy approaches that can reconcile welfare and nature for building back better - <i>UNESCO</i></p>	4,513,000	4,000	4,453,000	56,000

#### 4. MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE AND MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION

Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
<b>UNDP, IOM, UNESCO</b>	COVID-19 socioeconomic impact assessment and vulnerability analyses inform policy measures of the national COVID-19 response	<p>COVID-19 Socioeconomic Impact Assessment, with explicit focus on vulnerability and poverty and expanding social protection beyond the provision of food/humanitarian aid – <i>UNDP, ADB</i></p> <p>Assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the position of migrants and remittances – <i>IOM, with support from the Norway Ministry of Foreign Affairs (USD 20,000)</i></p> <p>Evidence-based data collection (including price monitoring and the adaptation of data collection and analysis tools), analysis, and dialogue to guide people-centred socioeconomic policies aimed at addressing the consequences of COVID-19 – <i>FAO, with support from FAO Multilateral Fund (USD 50,000)</i></p> <p>Provide technical support for establishing and enhancing the food security monitoring system, including price monitoring systems in national and regional markets, and regular annual household assessments to inform on project achievements and the food security situation in WFP-targeted areas to inform future interventions. The survey will be adapted to the need to reflect COVID-related issues to inform further programming – <i>WFP, with the support of the Government of Russian Federation (USD 100,000)</i></p> <p>Update on the science, technologies and innovation needs assessment in the Central Asia region – <i>UNESCO</i></p>	285,000	75,000	70,000	140,000
<b>Multilateral collaboration and regional partnerships</b>			<b>1,830,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>380,000</b>	<b>1,450,000</b>
<b>UNDP, WFP, UNECE, UNESCAP, United Nations agencies</b>	Established multilateral collaboration and regional partnerships leverage learning from the COVID-19 response and unlock regional partnerships to help national recovery	<p>Support in developing various recovery macro scenarios under the new normal of continuous shocks triggered by COVID-19 – <i>UNDP and other United Nations agencies</i></p> <p>Support to guide better policy design and implementation based on the lessons learned from the COVID-19 response and recovery through national and regional dialogue platforms and forums with multiple stakeholders – <i>UNDP, WFP, UNECE, UNESCAP</i></p> <p>Support to expanding access to alternative sources of funding and international support through technical assistance on the ratification of international agreements, treaties and instruments (e.g. Vienna Platform for Action) – <i>all relevant United Nations agencies, with support from FAO Multilateral Fund (USD 75,000)</i></p> <p>Support to improving national and subregional capacities for the implementation of trade facilitation mechanisms addressing the impact of COVID-19 and exchange of information on non-tariff measures between agencies in Kyrgyzstan and export promotion strategy updates – <i>UNECE, UNDP, ITC, with support from the EU (USD 180,000)</i></p> <p>Enhanced capacities for the export of agricultural products (e.g. plants, plant products, food products) through the implementation of relevant international standards (e.g. PPC, Codex Alimentarius), enhanced regulatory cooperation at the regional level, and faster adoption of trade facilitation practices – <i>FAO, with support from the Standards and Trade Development Facility (USD 570,000 USD), FAO Multilateral Fund (USD 100,000)</i></p>	1,830,000	0	380,000	1,450,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>10,643,710</b>	<b>109,000</b>	<b>6,143,710</b>	<b>4,391,000</b>

## 5. SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Agencies	Intended outcome of the United Nations response	Contributing interventions	Total budget	Re-purposed	Funded	Unfunded
	<b>Enhancing inclusive dialogue between the state and citizens, and within and across communities, and promoting participation</b>		<b>7,994,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>6,211,000</b>	<b>1,703,000</b>
<b>UNDP, OHCHR</b>	Dialogue, social cohesion and confidence building contribute to accountable and inclusive COVID-19 response and recovery	<p>Support for a human rights-based response to COVID-19 through analysis, advisory and technical assistance, with a particular focus on accountable institutions, inclusion and the participation of vulnerable groups</p> <p>Support in fostering an enabling legal environment for more effective, transparent and accountable budget planning and execution for COVID-19 recovery</p> <p>Support to fair, transparent, inclusive and peaceful elections in line with health safety and security standards – <i>UNDP, with support from multilateral funding (USD 6,266,000)</i></p>	7,994,000	80,000	6,211,000	1,703,000
	<b>Strengthening governance capacities for peace and inclusive responses to emerging crises</b>		<b>11,755,000</b>	<b>541,000</b>	<b>6,760,000</b>	<b>4,454,000</b>
<b>UNDP, IOM, OHCHR, United Nations, Volunteers UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, UNESCO, UNODC</b>	Increased governance capacities for coordinated, inclusive response and recovery, and mitigation of risks of violence	<p>Support to strengthening whole-of-government and whole-of-society coordination, response and service delivery to crises, with equal participation and the inclusion of voices of left-behind groups</p> <p>Support to strengthening community resilience to COVID-19 through inclusive crisis response and recovery – <i>IOM, with support from UK FCDO (USD 20,000)</i></p> <p>Support to strengthening the planning and implementation of crime prevention and conflict risk mitigation strategies to support COVID-19 response and recovery – <i>IOM, UNDP, UNODC, with support from Peace Building Fund (PBF) (USD 60,000), UNDP multilateral funding (USD 1,139,000), the Spotlight Initiative and the Government of Qatar (USD 50,000)</i></p>	11,755,000	541,000	6,760,000	4,454,000
	<b>Building resilience to environmental and biological risks that impact peace and social cohesion</b>		<b>1,466,840</b>	<b>230,000</b>	<b>641,840</b>	<b>595,000</b>
<b>UNECE, FAO, UNDP, WFP, UNDRR, UNESCO</b>	Building of resilience to disaster and climate change risks reduces further impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic	<p>Support for the expansion of coordination, management, analytical and response capacities for risk mitigation against crisis/disaster situations – <i>FAO, with support from the Green Climate Fund (USD 4,000,000); FAO multilateral Fund (USD 350,000)</i></p> <p>Support to smallholders in building climate-resilient livelihoods and capacity building in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis – <i>WFP, with the support of Green Climate Fund (USD 200,000)</i></p> <p>Support for post-COVID-19 recovery and “build back better” efforts – <i>UNDP, with support from multilateral funding (USD 114,300)</i></p>	1,466,840	230,000	641,840	595,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>21,215,840</b>	<b>851,000</b>	<b>13,612,840</b>	<b>6,752,000</b>

# ANNEX

## Monitoring framework: United Nations framework for the immediate socioeconomic response to COVID-19

### 1. HEALTH FIRST: Protecting health services and systems during the crisis

**1.1** Number of people accessing essential (non-COVID-19-related) health services, disaggregated by sex, age group and at-risk populations:

- a) Vaccination programmes
- b) Sexual and reproductive health services
- c) Nutrition programmes

**Agency leads(s):** WHO/UNICEF (a), UNFPA (b), WFP/FAO (c)

**1.2** Number of health facilities that have received United Nations support to maintain essential immunization services since COVID-19 disruptions, disaggregated by type of health worker and type of support

Type of health worker:

- a) Health workers based at healthcare facilities
- b) Community health workers

Type of support:

- c) Rapid training to provide essential maternal, newborn and child health services
- d) Provision of Personal Protective Equipment and Risk Communication and Community Engagement material
- e) Provision of Maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) supplies (e.g. oral rehydration solutions, antibiotics) and maternal, newborn and child health communication materials
- f) Remuneration for community health workers
- g) Establishing community-based health delivery points
- h) Ensuring supportive mechanisms
- i) Connecting community health workers to GBV prevention and response information and services
- j) Other

**Agency leads(s):** UNICEF

**1.3** Number of countries protecting health services and systems:

- a) With a set of core essential services to be maintained during the COVID-19 pandemic
- b) With a multisectoral mental health and psychosocial support technical working group
- c) With health sector policies being implemented, informed by socioeconomic impact assessments focused on at-risk populations

**Agency leads(s):** WHO

**1.4** Number of community health workers receiving United Nations support to maintain essential services since COVID-19 disruptions, disaggregated by type of support

**Agency leads(s):** UNICEF

## 2. PROTECTING PEOPLE: Social protection and basic services

**2.1** Number of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services, disaggregated by sex, age group and at-risk population

**Agency leads(s):** UNICEF

**2.2** Number of children supported with distance/home-based learning, disaggregated by sex

**Agency leads(s):** UNICEF

**2.3** Number of primary school children receiving meals or alternatives to meals, such as take-home rations, disaggregated by sex and transfer modalities

**Agency leads(s):** WFP/UNICEF

**2.4** Number of countries with measures in place to address GBV during the COVID-19 pandemic, which:

- a) Integrate violence prevention and response in COVID-19 response plans
- b) Raise awareness through advocacy and campaigns, with targeted messages for both women and men
- c) Provide options for women to report abuse and seek help without alerting perpetrators
- d) Ensure the continued functioning of shelters for victims of violence, and expand their capacity
- e) Ensure women's access to justice through police and justice response to address the impunity of perpetrators and protect women and their children

**Agency leads(s):** UN Women/UNDP

**2.5** Number of beneficiaries of social protection schemes and services related to the COVID-19 pandemic, disaggregated by type of programme, territory (rural/urban), sex, age group and at-risk population:

- a) Financial aid packages
- b) Cash for productivity/transfer programmes
- c) Water and sanitation services
- d) Food and nutrition schemes
- e) Legal aid services
- f) Human rights protection services
- g) Psychosocial support services

**Agency leads(s):** UNDP (a-b), UNICEF (c), FAO/WFP/UNICEF/IFAD (d), UNDP (e), UNDP/OHCHR (f), WHO/UNFPA (g)

### **3. ECONOMIC RECOVERY: Protecting jobs, small and medium enterprises and informal sector workers**

**3.1** Number of countries that reinforce United Nations-supported employment policies and a regulatory environment that is conducive to economic recovery and decent work, especially in sectors at high risk from COVID-19 for:

- a) Women
- b) Youth (15–29)
- c) Own account workers and family workers (as a proxy for informal workers)
- d) Migrant workers
- e) Workers with disabilities

**Agency leads(s):** ILO

**3.2** Number of private sector companies and formal and informal sector workers supported during and after the COVID-19 pandemic

- a) MSMEs
- b) Private sector companies, excluding MSMEs
- c) Formal sector workers
- d) Informal sector workers

**Agency leads(s):** UNDP

**3.3** Number of countries adopting fiscal, monetary and legislative stimulus packages for COVID-19 economic response and recovery, that are:

- a) Climate and environmentally sensitive
- b) Gender-sensitive

**Agency leads(s):** UNDP (a), UN Women (b)

**3.4** Number of direct beneficiaries of food supply protection regimes that are designed to:

- a) Protect livelihoods by addressing food supply bottlenecks
- b) Improve protective measures for food supply workers

**Agency leads(s):** WFP/FAO/IFAD/UNICEF/(a-b)

## 4. MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE and multilateral collaboration

**4.1** Number of countries that have undertaken socioeconomic impact assessments in response to the COVID-19 crisis, with a focus on at-risk populations:

- a) Macro-meso economic needs assessment
- b) Labour market impact assessment
- c) Multisectoral and sectoral needs assessment
- d) Fiscal and public debt assessment
- e) Human impact needs assessment for at-risk populations
- f) Gender-sensitive impact assessments

**Agency leads(s):** UNDP (a), ILO (b), UNDP/FAO (c), UNDP (d-e), UN Women/UNDP (f)

**4.2** Number of countries implementing policies informed by socioeconomic impact assessments focused on at-risk populations:

- a) Socioeconomic policy, including employment
- b) Labour market policies, including food security assessment
- c) Fiscal policy
- d) Social protection policy
- e) Women's empowerment policy

**Agency leads(s):** UNDP (a), ILO/FAO (b), UNDP (c), UNICEF/ILO/UNDP (d), UN Women (e)

## 5. SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

**5.1** Number of organizations benefiting from institutional capacity building so that government, employers' and workers' organizations can work together to shape socioeconomic policy responses:

- a) Employers' and business organizations
- b) Trade unions

**Agency leads(s):** ILO

**5.2** Number of community-based organizations capacitated to respond to and mitigate the pandemic, fight against COVID-19-related domestic violence, racism, xenophobia, stigma and other forms of discrimination, prevent and remedy human rights abuses, and ensure longer-term recovery, disaggregated by type of community:

- a) Women's organizations
- b) Youth organizations
- c) Federations of slum dwellers
- d) National human rights institutions
- e) Religious community organizations
- f) Indigenous community
- g) Community-based organizations in fragile and conflict-affected countries
- h) Community organizations representing other at-risk populations
- i) Community-based organizations providing livelihoods support and basic services delivery

**Agency leads(s):** UN Women (a), UNFPA/UNICEF (b), HABITAT (c), UNDP/OHCHR (d), UNDP (e-g) UNDP/OHCHR (h)/UNDP (i)

**5.3** Number of social dialogue, advocacy and political engagement spaces facilitated with the participation of at-risk populations and groups:

- a) Social dialogue spaces at national level
- b) Social dialogue spaces at subnational level
- c) Advocacy and political engagement spaces at national level
- d) Advocacy and political engagement spaces at subnational level

**Agency leads(s):** ILO (a-b), UNDP (c-d)





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