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USAID Advancing Nutrition Kyrgyz Republic

FACT SHEET

Overview

USAID Advancing Nutrition is the U.S. Agency for International Development’s (USAID) flagship multi-sectoral nutrition project seeking to improve the nutritional status and health of populations vulnerable to nutritional deficiencies around the globe. This five-year project began in October 2018 and draws on expertise that spans sectors and contexts. Collaborating with stakeholders, JSI Research and Training Institute, Inc. and a diverse group of partners strengthen nutrition outcomes in a variety of development and humanitarian response



Aizada with daughter Jasmina. Credit: Maxime Fossat.



PROJECT PERIOD

October 2019–August 2023

WHERE WE WORK

Bishkek City, Batken Oblast, Jalal-Abad Oblast

settings. We do so by supporting country-led scale-up of effective, integrated, and sustainable nutrition programs and food and health systems. The project strengthens USAID’s global nutrition investments by providing assistance to USAID Missions and in-country partners working at local, regional, and national levels to improve the nutritional status and health outcomes where the burden of malnutrition is highest. We focus on the individuals most at risk of malnutrition, especially young children, their caregivers, and women of reproductive age.

Our Work in the Kyrgyz Republic

Malnutrition among children and women in the Kyrgyz Republic is an urgent problem with negative long-term consequences for socio-economic

development. USAID Advancing Nutrition works to improve the nutritional status of women of reproductive age (ages 15–49) and children under five, with a specific focus on the 1,000-day window of opportunity. Working closely with partners in national and local government, village health committees, oblast and district-level health centers, local and international NGOs, and other nutrition stakeholders, we aim to—

- Improve knowledge, attitudes, and motivation related to healthy nutrition practices, including increased use of facility-based nutrition services
- Improve household demand for a variety of nutritious foods, while increasing access to these foods year-round
- Improve the capacity of the health system to plan, deliver, and monitor nutrition services
- Build the capacity of local institutions that deliver nutrition services
- Advocate for improved policies and resource allocation for nutrition services.

We will achieve these goals through two objectives:

1. Improve nutrition-related behaviors through enhanced social behavior change at the individual, household, and population levels
2. Improve the quality of nutrition services within the health system.

Achievements

- Successfully advocated for the inclusion of **nutrition counseling indicators** into the routine health reporting system, based on data from primary health care providers. **The indicators were officially adopted in September 2021 by the Ministry of Health.**
- Supported the **update of the national anemia technical guidelines.**
- Trained more than **2,000 community volunteers** in collaboration with the Kyrgyz Association of Village Health Committees. The volunteers deliver key nutrition and hygiene messages to



At the market in Jalal-Abad. Credit: Maxime Fossat.

households, particularly those with pregnant or lactating women and children under two. These volunteers have reached **more than 93,000 community members** in Batken and Jalal-Abad Oblasts.

- Integrated **gender-transformative activities in our community outreach work** through interactive trainings for community activists and disseminating informational materials that respond to **social and gender norms in nutrition practices** among community members.
- Trained **1,061 primary health care workers** across Batken and Jalal-Abad Oblasts on the national infant and young child feeding (IYCF) curriculum, adolescent and women's nutrition and anemia (AWNA), and the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI). More than **16,500 mothers of children under two and over 12,500 adolescent girls, pregnant women, and women of**

reproductive age received improved nutrition services and counseling from the project-trained health care providers.

- Selected **37 trained health workers as mentors for supportive supervision** of their peers and completed two rounds of IYCF and two rounds of AWNA supportive supervision. The mentors from Batken and Jalal-Abad Oblasts completed 4,300 evaluations of 600 health care providers' counseling. As a result of supportive supervision activities, the skills of the trained health workers improved by an average of 22 percent in both oblasts. The trained health workers gave close to **70,000 consultations on IYCF and AWNA** in the two oblasts.
- Monitored the BFHI program implementation in institutions and supported health providers in **making changes to management procedures, clinical practices, and health care worker behaviors** regarding breastfeeding. We made supportive visits to **15 medical institutions** in Batken and Jalal-Abad Oblasts.
- Established **an active presence on Facebook and YouTube** with the aim of reaching key audiences with nutrition and hygiene messages and campaigns to influence improved nutrition and health practices.
- Aired **regular monthly and quarterly television spots with nutrition and hygiene messages** through state and regional television and radio stations in Batken and Jalal-Abad Oblasts.
- Provided technical support to the Republican Center for Health Promotion to **update its social**

and behavior change and communications strategy for nutrition during the first 1,000 days.

- Partnered with USAID's primary reading project, **USAID Okyy kepemet!**, to produce 20 age- and reading-level appropriate books on the topics of diversified diets, handwashing practices, and healthy nutrition for primary school students.
- Strengthened our partnership with the **Agriculture Productivity and Nutrition Improvement project**, funded by the World Bank, in the spheres of food storage and preservation practices, including conducting community outreach work and sustainability of integrated interventions for both projects.
- Conducted a **baseline and a mid-term survey among mothers with children under two** in Batken and Jalal-Abad Oblasts. The first survey established baseline levels for indicators associated with **11 nutrition-related practices** and identified areas where program activities could most effectively focus, while the second survey determined if and how the nutrition-related practices improved since the start of the program.
- Conducted **an organizational capacity assessment** of our key partner, the Association of Kyrgyz Village Health Committees, and identified strengths and priority areas for USAID Advancing Nutrition to support.
- Established a **multi-sectoral nutrition platform in Batken Oblast**, which convened regional government and other stakeholders from a wide range of sectors to improve nutrition and hygiene.

USAID Advancing Nutrition Kyrgyz Republic
The Agency's flagship multi-sectoral nutrition project

15 Razzakov Street
Office 6B
Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

Visit www.advancingnutrition.org and contact info@advancingnutrition.org for information.



@nutritionfordev



advancingnutrition.org

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