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**KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**



# COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION STRATEGY (CDCS)

September 2020 - September 2025

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**ACRONYMS**

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ADB	Asian Development Bank
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CER	Country Economic Review
CLA	Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DFID	Department for International Development
DPCC	Development Partners Coordination Council
DO	Development Objective
DOS	Department of State
DV	Domestic Violence
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EU	European Union
FSR	Financing Self-Reliance
FY	Fiscal Year
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
GOKR	Government of the Kyrgyz Republic
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IR	Intermediate Result
J2SR	Journey to Self-Reliance
KR	Kyrgyz Republic
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MOH	Ministry of Health
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PEPFAR	The President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PSE	Private Sector Engagement
PSLA	Private Sector Landscape Analysis
RDR	Redefining our Development Relationships
RF	Results Framework
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
Sub-IR	Sub-Intermediate Result
TB	Tuberculosis
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USG	U.S. government
WHO	World Health Organization

## I. Executive Summary and Results Framework

The goal of the USAID/Kyrgyz Republic's 2020-2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) is: ***A more inclusive and prosperous Kyrgyz Republic is a leader for democracy and independence in the region.*** USAID views Kyrgyz independence as a necessary precursor to self-reliance. Throughout this CDCS, USAID will aim to strengthen Kyrgyz independence by reducing disinformation, and corruption, and improving the rule of law and respect for human rights. Key approaches will include creating forums for meaningful citizen input, and supporting the development of inclusive political systems, diversified economic opportunities, and improved service delivery for the people of the Kyrgyz Republic.

USAID will advance the CDCS goal through two development objectives (DOs), DO1: strengthened democratic values and citizen-centered governance; and DO2: robust and diversified economic opportunities for the people of the Kyrgyz Republic. These development objectives align directly with the Kyrgyz Government's development priorities, namely: anti-corruption and judicial reform; regional development and local government capacity; reversal of labor migration by expanding opportunities at home; and improvements in the delivery of health and education services. This strategic direction also reflects the Country Roadmap of the Journey to Self-Reliance (J2SR). The body of evidence strongly supports that the elements and approaches highlighted through these DOs are the best route to strengthening the host government's capacity to achieve self-reliance.

Under ***DO1: Strengthened democratic values and citizen-centered governance***, USAID will support the Kyrgyz Republic to strengthen democratic governance, and leverage areas of strong partnership with civil society and the government in anti-corruption, rule of law, accountability, and transparency. To achieve this objective, USAID will foster constructive models of citizen-government interaction that reinforce democratic norms, strengthen the government's capacity to deliver high-quality services, and expand citizen input at various levels and across institutions. This will require strengthening the capacities of media and civil society to facilitate open and accountable governance.

An area of concern for USAID under DO1 is ***countering trafficking in persons (TIP)***, a serious issue due to the country's massive migrant population (Kyrgyz Republic is currently on the Tier 2 Watch List in the DOS TIP rankings<sup>1</sup>). An estimated 18 percent of Kyrgyzstanis are internal migrants, and an additional 12-18 percent have migrated abroad. The effort will require USAID to partner with government institutions and civil society on enforcement of existing but neglected legislation.

Under ***DO2: Robust and diversified economic opportunities for the people of the Kyrgyz Republic***, the Mission will foster Kyrgyz self-reliance via broad-based development of the Kyrgyz Republic's human capital, private sector, and domestic employment opportunities. To achieve these objectives, USAID will facilitate growth of the domestic private sector to create local jobs and increase the country's ability to withstand external socio-economic shocks, reduce its indebtedness to external actors, and help stem economic out-migration. Currently, the World Bank estimates that 28.5 percent of Kyrgyz GDP comes from migrant remittances<sup>2</sup> and the government now faces a significant worsening of its short- and long-term economic growth models as a result of COVID-

<sup>1</sup> [Trafficking in Persons Report - 20th Edition](#), Department of State, June 2020.

<sup>2</sup> [Personal remittances, received \(% of GDP\) - Kyrgyz Republic](#).

19.<sup>3</sup> Spurring domestic employment will be critical for long-term sustainability and resiliency of the economy. To help address these concerns, the Mission will work to improve the domestic business-enabling environment, facilitating private sector growth and expansion particularly in the areas of regional trade, with the aim of enhancing regional connectivity and market integration. Finally, USAID will work in collaboration with other donor partners such as the World Bank and EBRD to ease access to financial and other resources by the private sector.

As economic growth is contingent upon a healthy, educated, and productive workforce, DO2 will also address human capital and service delivery constraints in the health and education sectors. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance that a strong and resilient health care system has to the economic development of the Kyrgyz Republic. In partnership with the Global Fund, USAID will support improved detection and treatment of HIV and TB and increase equal access to quality health and laboratory services. Improved health services and systems will also assist the country in its fight to contain COVID-19 and improve the overall resilience of the health care system. To increase the cognitive and physical development of children, USAID will also reinforce efforts to improve the nutritional status of children and their mothers, particularly in rural areas. In order to foster intellectual growth and independent and critical thinkers among the next generation, USAID's educational programs will focus on improving the quality of teaching, updating curricula, and improving skills in both reading and mathematics. According to a World Bank study, the GOKR spends more than 20 percent of its national budget on the education system, much higher compared to the world average of 14.6 percent and the regional average of 12.3 percent, and yet educational outcomes continue to lag. USAID investments will continue to address this disparity. Based on 2010 data, infectious diseases cost the Kyrgyz Republic almost 70,000 Years of Life Lost annually<sup>4</sup> and poor nutritional practices undermine future health and development outcomes. In the 2020-2025 CDCS, USAID will continue to support the GOKR to optimize use of the health and education budget--an initiative that has garnered \$1 million in savings for the TB sector annually<sup>5</sup>.

**Addressing gender disparities** is paramount to achieving USAID's overarching CDCS goal. USAID, with the cross-cutting Gender IR, will target specific gender disparities that inhibit the achievement of Mission development objectives, focusing on issues such as gender-based violence, women's participation in political processes, gender-specific risk factors for TB and HIV, access to job opportunities, business creation, and equity in educational outcomes.

Furthermore, USAID through its programs will also **address issues on youth engagement and skill set development**. The Kyrgyz Republic's civic education system faces challenges in equipping its youth with the skills needed to participate in local decision-making, and leaves young people vulnerable to intolerance and apathy. USAID will continue supporting youth civic participation, developing civic skills, and supporting youth-led initiatives and their participation in political life.

The Results Framework (RF) that is presented below in Figure 1 is aligned with the host government's National Development Strategy 2018-2040, and reflects challenges and opportunities highlighted in the Kyrgyz Republic's Country Roadmap.

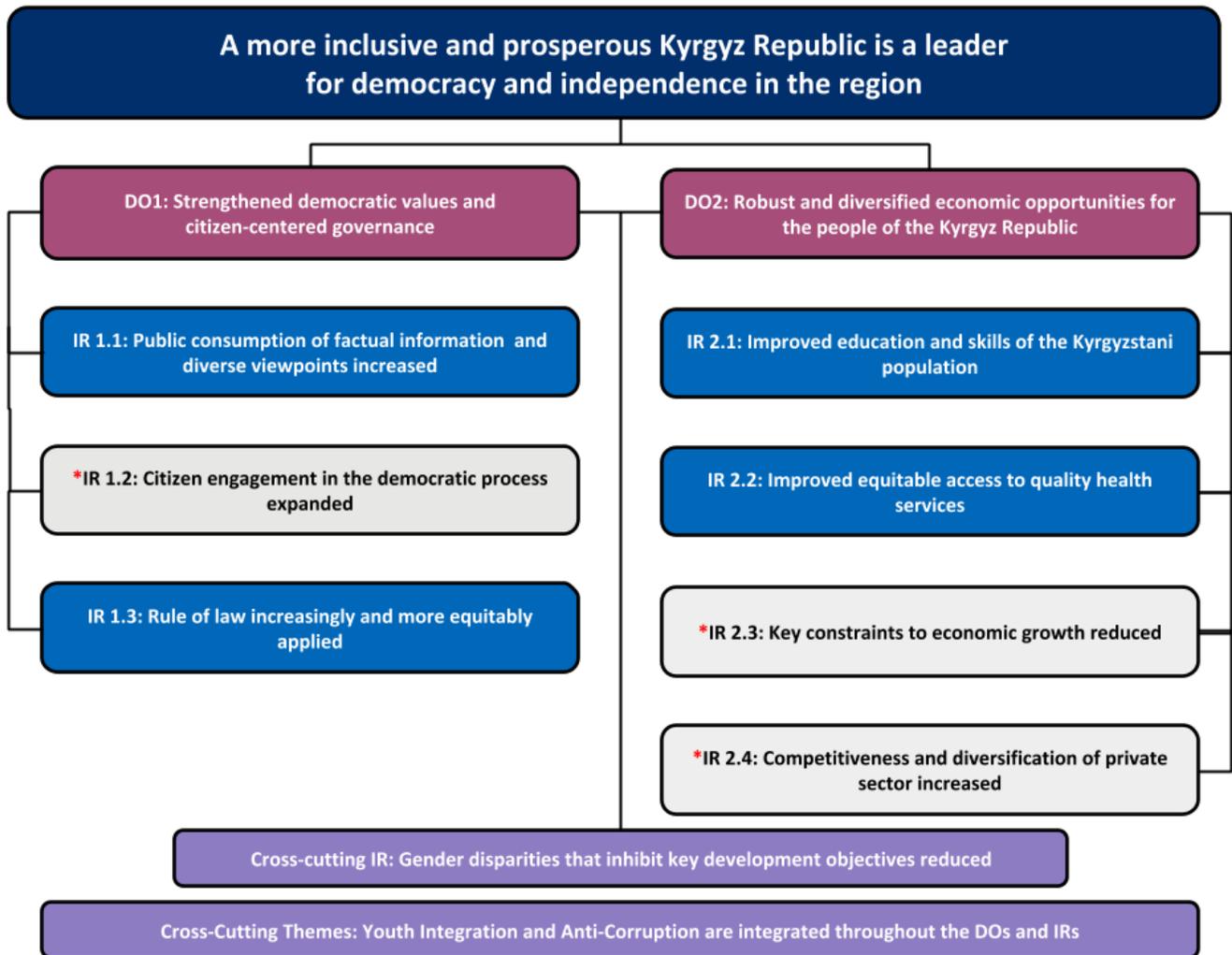
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<sup>3</sup> African Development Bank and UNDP. COVID-19 Socio-Economic Impact and Vulnerability Assessment in the Kyrgyz Republic: Key messages and policy recommendations. 24 June 2020

<sup>4</sup> [Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. Global Burden of Disease Study](#), 2010.

<sup>5</sup> [Defeat TB Final Report](#). Abt Associates, June 2019.

Figure 1. Results Framework Graphic.



\*Sub-IRs that feed into these IRs are partially dependent on regional activities funded out of Almaty and thus achievements in this area are subject to the amount of funds allocated by the regional mission to support programming in the Kyrgyz Republic.

## II. Country Context

The Kyrgyz Republic remains the sole example of liberal democracy in Central Asia, standing out among its neighbors for its ongoing commitment to self-reliance. The country actively pursues positive policies favoring self-reliance, including open governance, inclusive development, and economic reforms. It falls short, however, in the implementation of those policies, and often struggles to implement reforms due to ongoing attempts by harmful actors to undermine its independence, a lack of technical expertise, political-economic barriers, such as corruption, and a lack of financial resources. The country remains poor, with a high dependency on remittances from Kyrgyz migrants, particularly those from the southern regions who currently reside in Russia. Russia’s principal economic influence lies in the nearly one million Kyrgyz guest workers, approximately 85 percent of all Kyrgyz workers abroad, whose remittances constitute about 30 percent of Kyrgyz GDP. These factors leave the country more dependent on external actors for its

own economic development. Even amidst these challenges, the GOKR nevertheless continues to co-invest with the United States in reinforcing our shared values of a free and open society, and frequently requests USAID support for varied means by which it can advance its transparency, financial and managerial capacity, and overall responsiveness to citizen concerns. These joint successes in promoting citizen-government engagement and developing an empowered and collaborative civil society reflect its designation as a liberal democracy, which Kyrgyzstanis tout as one of the most important defining factors and one that sets them apart within the region. These defining features could be the source of strength that invigorates the country in its trajectory toward self-reliance.

## Partner Country's Vision on Developing Challenges

The Kyrgyz Government's National Development Strategy 2018-2040 is built around improving the quality and standard of living, protecting citizen rights, developing human capital, and providing employment opportunities and sustainable income to the people of the Kyrgyz Republic. As stated in the 2018-2040 National Strategy "... by 2040 Kyrgyzstan will emerge as a strong, self-sufficient, developed state with the individual in the center as the highest value along with her/his life, health, rights and freedom. Kyrgyzstan will become a country comfortable for living, a country of free and prosperous citizens with a great potential, a country of just and responsible government, a country of original and unique culture." The country's development priorities are focused on four main areas that align with USAID's priorities: anti-corruption, regional development, reversed labor migration, and improved service delivery.

**Anti-corruption and judicial reform:** The Kyrgyz Government's anti-corruption efforts have often focused on Information and Communications Technology (ICT) solutions and improving the behavior of judges. While the government's anti-corruption reforms do not emphasize transparency and accountability, the Mission through its citizen-government engagement, will address this.

**Regional development and local government capacity:** Development of the country's rural provinces is possibly the Kyrgyz government's highest development priority. Lack of job opportunities and high unemployment rates in rural Kyrgyz Republic contribute to the significant internal migration and out-migration, primarily to Russia.

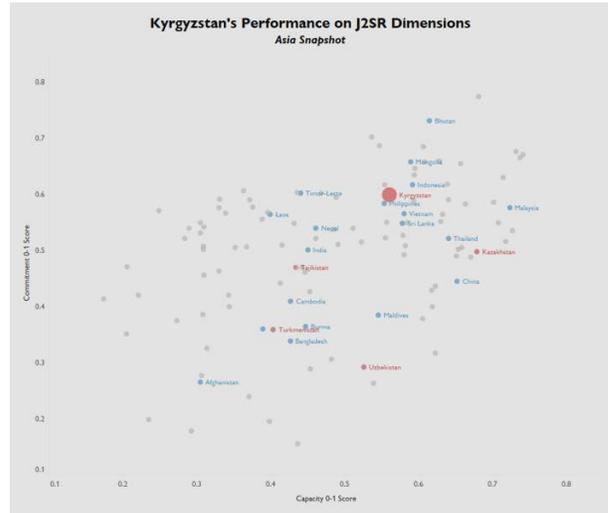
**Reversed labor migration by expanding opportunities at home:** The government also places great emphasis and value on efforts to reverse labor migration and human capital loss. It works to enhance economic opportunities and diversify its economy through private sector-led economic growth, job creation, export growth, and expanded trade within Central Asian countries.

**Improved delivery of health and education services:** The government supports the health and education systems' development through systems-level optimization and the provision of quality service delivery, improved control of infectious diseases, and the development of health workforce skills.

**Women's empowerment:** The GOKR officially supports women's engagement in political, economic, and social activities. While disparities in access to justice and political power remain stark, the Kyrgyz Republic made good headway in 2019 when it instituted a 30 percent quota for women in parliament and local councils. USAID will use this opportunity to increase women's political participation and deepen their roles in the civic and economic spheres of Kyrgyz society.

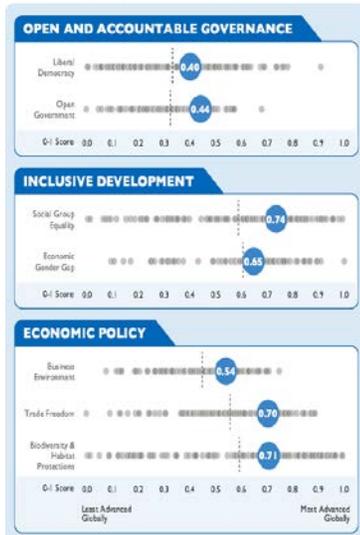
## Country Roadmap - Country's Commitment and Capacity

On its J2SR country roadmap, the Kyrgyz Republic's position in the upper right quadrant reflects strong political will to address barriers to self-reliance, despite inconsistent implementation of favorable laws and policies which need to be remedied. A moderate capacity score reflects a strong civil society, and a country hampered by economic underdevelopment and massive unemployment.



The Kyrgyz Republic, in the self-reliance commitment metrics, falls just above the average on the liberal democracy index for low income countries, and in the upper quadrant for open government; however, in government effectiveness, the country falls below the average score due to political instability and institutional weaknesses. Political instability, instability in the country's leadership, weak institutions, and underdeveloped human capacity continue to hamper the country's movement toward more positive democratic and economic governance.

### COMMITMENT



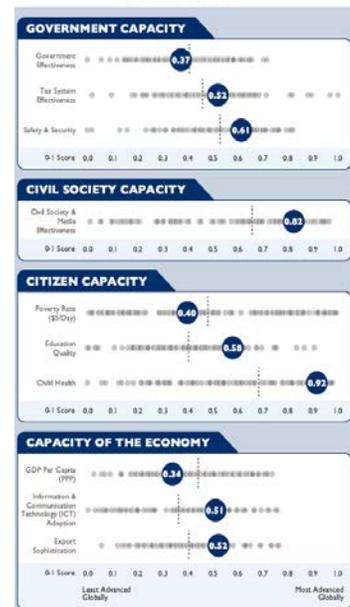
On the roadmap indicators, the Kyrgyz Republic scores higher than the subregional (Central Asia) average in Child Health, Export Sophistication, Business Environment, Biodiversity & Habitat Protections, Trade Freedom, Open Government, Civil Society & Media Effectiveness, Social Group Equality, Liberal Democracy, ICT Adoption, and Economic Gender Gap, and lower than the subregional average on Safety & Security, GDP per Capita (PPP), Education Quality, and Poverty Rate (\$5/Day).

To support the country's journey to self-reliance, USAID will continue to support open and accountable governance, and to strengthen capacity to further implement open government initiatives, as well as judicial and procurement reforms. In economic policy, the Mission will assist in trade and export

initiatives and improve adherence to international technical, quality and safety standards to expand to new markets, support local businesses, and facilitate investment. In responding to metrics around government, civil society, citizens, and economic capacities, USAID will continue to partner across civil society to improve public input into development policy setting and execution. USAID will also work to reduce the poverty rate through job creation and improved health, and address gaps between workforce capabilities and private sector needs.

Over the course of the 2020-2025 CDCS timeframe, USAID will partner with the government and the people of the Kyrgyz Republic to leverage

### CAPACITY



these strengths, and draw on citizen-government engagement to address remaining shortcomings that impede the Kyrgyz Republic's journey towards self-reliance.

### III. Strategic Approach

The strategic approach reflects the Mission's commitment to strengthening the host government's capacity and supporting the country as it seeks to attain self-reliance. The strategy builds on the value of increased interaction between the government and its citizens. This interaction will further reinforce democratic values and help the country to draw on private sector expertise and investment to inform and finance the country's development agenda. In this strategy period, USAID will maintain a more explicit focus on anti-corruption, creating economic opportunities and jobs, and improving access and service delivery in health and education.

USAID's strategic approach responds directly to the strengths, challenges, and opportunities highlighted in the J2SR country roadmap, particularly those relating to government effectiveness, political instability and institutional weaknesses. USAID will work to strengthen open and accountable governance, improve capacity to implement judicial and procurement reforms, support economic policies that assist trade and export initiatives, address gaps between workforce capabilities and private sector needs, and provide equal access to quality health services to have a healthier workforce. The U.S. government and the Kyrgyz Republic have mutual priorities in the areas of anti-corruption, health and education systems strengthening, and increased employment opportunities in the country.

The Mission will focus its approach on:

**Anti-corruption issues across all sectors:** Citizen-government engagement will improve the transparency and accountability of the government and its procurement processes. Anti-corruption work will explicitly work across all programming. USAID's new strategic approach will seize new opportunities for deeper collaboration around anti-corruption efforts, including through working with the private sector, digitization, transparency, Rule of Law, and enhancing media independence.

**Redefining our Development Relationship (RDR):** USAID will continue to evolve its positive relationships with the GOKR as the country progresses in many areas toward becoming the lead development planner, financier, and implementer. Programming in health, education, local governance, and judicial reform has benefitted from steady investments and partnership with the GOKR, enabling USAID to begin to transition its relationship with the GOKR in these areas. USAID will expand collaborative engagement with the GOKR in a similar way in select other sectors, while also supporting civic engagement to incentivize reforms and further the transition in our development relationship.

**Transparency and counter disinformation:** The Mission will adopt a more intentional approach towards countering disinformation. For example, USAID will promote media independence, fact-checking, and data journalism while also proactively promoting results and partnerships. USAID will continue to support transparency and rule-of-law reforms in partnership with the judiciary and civil society.

**Financing Self-Reliance (FSR):** USAID will utilize partnerships to increase access to financial resources, efficiently use scarce public resources in public procurements, implement an effective taxation system to reduce the share of the shadow economy, increase internal funding for economic and social projects, and create jobs to limit labor migration and increase GDP per capita.

**Private Sector Engagement (PSE):** The Mission will maintain its multi-vector approach that brings together donors, the private sector, and the public sector to conduct a thorough analysis of different economic sectors, market segments, and geographical regions. The Kyrgyz private sector has been expanding and consists of different types of businesses and organizations that will require diverse technical approaches within equally diverse technical fields. To address these development challenges in an integrated way, the Mission will include a social and economic impact forecast and industry sector analysis, as well as identification of supply chains, and assessment of geographical markets. USAID will emphasize the need for a strong enabling environment for businesses and start-ups, and seek to increase business productivity that will offer higher-paying jobs that require higher-skilled labor and improved labor standards. The Mission's approach in private sector engagement will include promotion of public-private policy dialogue on specific economic issues essential for economic growth; focus on those initiatives that have specific development challenges and measurable performance indicators; the use of social contracting mechanisms to outsource public services to organizations better suited to engage target populations; targeted technical assistance for private sector businesses on new inclusive markets and ways to minimize environmental impacts; facilitation of value chain linkages; encouragement of innovation; and continuous emphasis on human resources and human capital development, gender equality, and women's empowerment, which is emphasized across all of the Mission's work in the country.

USAID will focus on creating diversified economic opportunities for the people of the Kyrgyz Republic as is emphasized in the National Strategy of 2018-2040, and will work to ensure that the private sector leverages the Kyrgyz Republic as a source of educated and skilled labor to meet the government's priority of attracting economic investment in all of the country's regions, particularly those that have been historically marginalized. By supporting and developing successful, dependable local enterprises that thrive in a reliable and supportive business environment, USAID will encourage investment in the Kyrgyz Republic from the United States and other rules-based countries and move the country in a positive direction towards economic self-reliance and resilience from the actions of harmful economic actors. A financially self-reliant path is based on inclusive economic growth, i.e. it creates diversified opportunities for all segments of the population and allows monetary and non monetary benefits to be distributed fairly across society.

**Role of civil society, media, and citizens:** As the bedrock of Kyrgyz democracy, civil society, media, and citizen initiatives are at the heart of USAID's assistance approach. Under DO1, USAID will support democratic mechanisms that allow citizens to articulate their needs and productively engage the Kyrgyz government in order to receive public services, engage in the governance process, and hold their elected officials to account. To do so, the Mission will promote an environment conducive to citizen advocacy. In addition, USAID will support civil society to collaboratively engage the Kyrgyz government to build accountable, citizen-centered governance that supports inclusive economic growth. Through this positive feedback loop, USAID will seek to reaffirm Kyrgyzstan's commitment to democracy while also supporting increased government capacity to deliver on citizen demands.

**Gender:** Many of the gender-based challenges and opportunities identified in the previous CDCS remain relevant to this strategy period. The GOKR has endorsed a number of policies to improve women's political participation, educational attainment, access to justice, reproductive health, protection from domestic violence (DV), and participation in economic activity. Financial illiteracy and poor access to financing and markets limit women's opportunity to engage in the entrepreneurial arena as competitive players. Emerging conservative interpretations of Kyrgyz traditions and cultural norms are further constraining women's and girls' empowerment in these spheres.

A Gender Rapid Assessment conducted by UN Women in May 2020 showed that the COVID-19 outbreak has had a significant impact on GBV, especially on domestic violence on women, which saw a 61 percent increase in March 2020. Key contributing factors for this jump include lack of income, increased unemployment, and low educational levels.

In March 2020, the Ministry of Labor and Social Development (MoLSD) initiated drafting of the National Gender Strategy for 2021-2030. USAID/Kyrgyz Republic, in cooperation with UN Agencies, will support the MoLSD efforts to draft the Gender Strategy that is planned to be adopted in December 2020. USAID will continue to support the implementation of the Kyrgyz Republic National Action Plan on Gender Equality, while also supporting the drafting and implementation of a new National Gender Equality Strategy.

USAID's work to promote gender equality will support the Kyrgyz government's collaboration with civil society to address inequality and gender-based violence. USAID will also support the successful implementation of a new 30 percent gender quota for members of parliament and local councils. By supporting voter education, hate speech monitoring, and capacity-building for female candidates, USAID will promote women's leadership at the national and local levels.

**Countering Trafficking in Persons:** USAID will partner with Kyrgyz government institutions, most notably the State Migration Service and General Prosecutors Office, CSOs, and the private sector, to counter trafficking in persons. The Mission's approach encompasses four objectives: 1) strengthening bilateral and multi-country strategies to promote rights-based migration; 2) reducing the vulnerability of at-risk populations to trafficking; 3) improving identification and assistance to trafficked persons, and; 4) increasing prosecution of human trafficking cases.

#### **IV. Results Framework Goal Statement and Narrative**

USAID/Kyrgyz Republic's goal for the FY 2020-2025 CDCS is: A more inclusive and prosperous Kyrgyz Republic is a leader for democracy and independence in the region. The Kyrgyz Republic's demonstrated commitment to democratic governance continues to propel the country toward self-reliance. As its citizens reach for a brighter future for their children, they increasingly demand a government that delivers high-quality public services, provides economic opportunities at home, and supports their interests from external actors. USAID will partner with the government and the people of the Kyrgyz Republic to leverage these strengths by drawing on citizen-government engagement to address remaining shortcomings in the country's overall commitment to self-reliance, as well as weaknesses in development capacity that impede Kyrgyz Republic's progress towards self-reliance. In doing so, USAID's development programs will model a means by which the GOKR can harness private sector capital and ingenuity to power its development engine while diversifying its trading partners. USAID will seek to serve as a convening force that unites citizens with their government in prioritizing issues of local concern, ensuring that all voices share an equal weight regardless of their sex, ethnicity, religion, or birthplace. The Mission will continue to emphasize the use of local resources as it assists the country to enact its prioritized reforms, progressively transforming the development relationship from one of donor and recipient, to one of advisor and partner. As it reaps dividends in household income, public health, education, and citizen satisfaction, the Kyrgyz Republic's stature as the leading democracy in Central Asia will continue to grow, and the country will more fully realize its linchpin role in advancing the region toward a resilient, empowered, and interconnected Central Asia.

## DO 1: Strengthened Democratic Values and Citizen-Centered Government

**Development Hypothesis Statement:** If women and men are better informed and empowered to actively participate in the decisions that affect their lives, and if the government increases engagement with citizens and civil society in democratic processes, and if the law is applied more equitably and transparently, then democratic values and citizen-centered governance will be strengthened.

**Development Hypothesis Narrative:** Long hailed as a beacon of democracy in the region, the Kyrgyz Republic can boast of a vibrant civil society, relatively free media, and established democratic political processes. Indeed the 2020 Country Roadmap for the Kyrgyz Republic gives the country above-average marks on all Commitment indicators. These achievements notwithstanding, challenges remain. Grand and petty corruption alike have eaten away at a social contract already threadbare from the government’s struggle to deliver quality public services. Disinformation has grown increasingly common, especially as a way to silence or intimidate opponents. The past year has witnessed a decline in media freedom, with journalists and media outlets facing physical and legal intimidation for reporting corruption. At the same time, the government continues to make anti-corruption and judicial reform a top priority.

USAID will support the Kyrgyz Republic’s journey towards greater self-reliance, which depends on rebuilding the country’s constituency for democracy, meaning engaging a broad and diverse citizenry, empowering them with trusted, factual information, and promoting positive and productive avenues for citizen engagement. Greater self-reliance equally depends on fostering greater political independence and government responsiveness by attenuating disinformation, reducing corruption, and strengthening the rule of law and respect for human rights. In the face of the

COVID-19 pandemic, USAID will support and highlight civil society’s critical role in relief and recovery efforts as well as supporting the GOKR to assist vulnerable populations and hold safe elections, while respecting human rights and inclusive democratic processes.

Furthermore, under DO 1 USAID will support the Kyrgyz Government in promoting human rights through countering trafficking in persons and promoting religious freedom and minority rights. The Kyrgyz Republic is on the Tier 2 Watch List for trafficking in persons by the U.S. State Department and is listed in Tier 2 "Other Countries and Regions Monitored" by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

USAID will coordinate DO 1 programming with a range of other donors across sub-sectors, including the Swiss Cooperation on local governance, FCDO/UK and UNDP on

Parliamentary support, the EU on media development and judicial reform, and the OSCE and UNDP on election support. USAID will continue to leverage the existing Development Partners Coordination Council (DPCC) to coordinate programming and engagement with the GOKR on priority issues.

DO1: Strengthened Democratic Values and Citizen Centered Government
<p><b>IR 1.1: Public Consumption of Factual Information and Diverse Viewpoints Increased</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1.1 Independence of Kyrgyz media outlets strengthened</li> <li>1.1.2 Production of local, factual and diverse content increased</li> <li>1.1.3 Public awareness increased on key development issues</li> </ul>
<p><b>IR 1.2: Citizen Engagement in the Democratic Process Expanded</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.2.1 Strengthened advocacy of citizen concerns on priority issues</li> <li>1.2.2 Increased provision of citizen prioritized public services</li> <li>1.2.3 Increased citizen inclusion in political processes</li> <li>1.2.4 Enabling environment for civil society improved</li> <li>1.2.5 Electoral processes adhere more closely to democratic standards</li> <li>1.2.6 Civil society and government collaborate more effectively to alleviate the risk factors of violent extremism</li> </ul>
<p><b>IR 1.3: Rule of Law Increasingly and More Equitably Applied</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.3.1 Legal systems for protection and prosecution in CTIP cases are more reliably enforced</li> <li>1.3.2 Universal human rights and access to justice for disenfranchised groups strengthened</li> <li>1.3.3 Transparency and accountability of the judiciary and other key government institutions strengthened</li> </ul>

**IR 1.1: Public consumption of factual information and diverse viewpoints increased**

USAID will partner with independent media outlets and civil society to increase the consumption of factual, data-based information and to support authentic Kyrgyz viewpoints on issues of public concern. To achieve this result, USAID will improve the quality of local content by, for example, training journalists and editorial staff, promoting data and investigative journalism, and providing content grants to stimulate innovative, in-demand content, often in local languages. Concurrently, the Mission will strengthen the financial and editorial independence of media outlets by improving their business practices and increasing advertising revenues. In partnership with the media sector and civil society, USAID will advocate for systemic reforms in the business and legal environment to support independent media and freedom of the press. Support to the media sector will be closely coordinated with other donors, including the EU and FCDO/UK, while also leveraging the GOKR priority to increase the percentage of media content in Kyrgyz. Increasing Kyrgyz content will also importantly reduce media outlets' current dependency on Russian-controlled and produce media.

Achieving IR 1.1 will also mean addressing the increase in disinformation that undermines Kyrgyz democracy. In general, the Mission seeks to displace inaccurate, or criminal narratives by supporting independent media to generate factual, resonant Kyrgyz narratives in compelling formats. However, USAID will also seek to address disinformation in the media environment through targeted interventions such as fact-checking. In addition, USAID will seek to attenuate the disinformation directed at the USG through positive, proactive communication campaigns directed at strategically important audiences. USAID will partner with media professionals to give visibility to human-centered, story-driven narratives that can show how USAID is concretely transforming the lives of the Kyrgyz people. In the face of pervasive disinformation, promoting accurate understanding and visibility of USAID's efforts is critical to maintaining and strengthening USAID's partnerships with government and non-government actors, and is thus critical to achieving our development objectives.

Increasing the consumption of factual information and diverse views is critical to empowering citizens to advocate for their interests, hold their government accountable, and make informed choices. Moreover, improved, data-driven reporting on government actions will also promote fiscal transparency and accountability, contributing to efforts to reduce corruption and finance self-reliance.

**IR 1.2: Citizen engagement in the democratic process expanded**

USAID will partner with active citizens and civil society at local and national levels to advocate for citizen concerns on priority issues. In response to citizen advocacy, USAID will also engage targeted local and national government institutions, community actors, and the private sector to expand the provision of citizen-prioritized services. Employing this issue-based approach, the Mission will also partner with Parliament to promote relevant policy reform and government action at the national level through advocacy campaigns and targeted technical assistance. Throughout our work, USAID will seek to address the challenges and priorities of young urban and rural women and men by amplifying their voices and supporting avenues for meaningful engagement with the government and civil society. Monitoring of current activities demonstrates that as citizen engagement and services improve, citizen trust in government increases. Through these activities, USAID will contribute to improving service delivery of essential government services, while also demonstrating that, in comparison to authoritarian alternatives, democratic governance can better anticipate and satisfy the needs of its people, thus reinforcing democratic values. Citizen

engagement will also focus on fiscal transparency and government accountability, both fundamental to FSR.

Supporting the Kyrgyz Government to be more self-reliant and citizen-centered will also require expanding the inclusiveness of political processes. USAID will support inclusive local councils to provide meaningful oversight of municipal governments. USAID will also seek to promote broad participation in the national political processes that hold the central government accountable. By expanding input from youth, women, and religious and ethnic minorities, at various levels and across institutions, USAID will seek to orient services to citizen demands equitably. This work will further foster constructive models of citizen-government interaction that reinforce democratic norms. In particular, the Mission will promote meaningful participation of women in political processes, including by removing inequitable barriers preventing them from running for local and national offices, as detailed in the cross-cutting gender IR. As an important element of inclusive processes, USAID will continue to support efforts to maintain and strengthen the legislative and regulatory enabling environment for civil society.

Competitive, transparent, policy-oriented electoral processes that meet international democratic standards remain a fundamental avenue for citizen engagement in democratic governance, and a priority for USAID support. USAID will partner with election management bodies, parliament, and political parties to promote effective election administration, while also engaging civil society organizations, and potentially international actors, to observe elections and promote a fair and competitive process. Drawing heavily from USAID's ongoing research and learning approach, USAID will strengthen civil society in its ability to partner with the government to address risk and resilience factors of extremism, a mutual priority between the USG and GOKR.<sup>6</sup>

Across the portfolio, from service delivery to electoral processes to countering violent extremism, USAID will support enduring mechanisms for civil society and government to work together to tackle the Kyrgyz Republic's development challenges. Such sustainable mechanisms are essential to inculcating democratic norms and reliably orienting government action toward citizen priorities.

### **IR 1.3: Rule of law increasingly and more equitably applied**

USAID will partner with government institutions and civil society actors at national and local levels to improve the Rule of Law, focusing on areas of greatest concern to citizens. By promoting accountability, anti-corruption, and transparency, the Mission will support economic and social development while advancing the Kyrgyz Republic's journey to self-reliance. Working with a spectrum of actors from civil society to prosecutors, USAID will seek to counter trafficking in persons, a serious concern for a country with a massive percentage of the population migrating. The Mission will work with the Kyrgyz government, civil society, and the private sector to prevent TIP, provide protection, rehabilitation, and reintegration of trafficking victims, and increasingly prosecute human traffickers.

Furthermore, the Mission will partner with the Kyrgyz government and civil society to promote respect for fundamental human rights across demographic groups. USAID will continue its successful work to expand access to justice in partnership with the Ministry of Justice and civil society actors, while looking to engage new actors such as the GOKR Ombudsman. Efforts will support citizens in rural areas or from disenfranchised groups, who are too often marginalized by traditional legal service and justice institutions, a phenomenon exacerbated by the COVID-19

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<sup>6</sup> Countering violent extremism efforts are partially dependent on regional activities funded out of the USAID Central Asia Regional Mission, and thus achievements in this area are subject to broader regional priority setting and programming.

outbreak. USAID will also partner with civil society and government to support religious freedom and reduce discrimination of ethnic minority groups. USAID will explore opportunities to work with religious group leaders, ethnic minorities, and youth to reduce political, social and economic discrimination.

Finally, in response to USAID research demonstrating strident citizen concerns about corruption, USAID will partner with executive, judicial, and legislative bodies on an opportunity basis to seize instances of political will to reform institutions and systems with the aim of reducing corruption, improving public services, and strengthening the Rule of Law in practice. The Mission's approach will continue to leverage significant political will to reform among judicial institutions as well as the recent increases in funding for judicial reforms from the national budget. However, USAID will also seek to address corruption as political will and the USG-GOKR relationship allow. Reducing corruption and increasing the fairness of Kyrgyz justice institutions greatly strengthens government accountability and consequently democratic norms, while also depriving corrupt actors of influence mechanisms. As such, improving the Rule of Law in the Kyrgyz Republic is essential to fostering self-reliance.

## **DO 2: Robust and Diversified Economic Opportunities for the People of the Kyrgyz Republic**

***Development Hypothesis Statement:*** If we partner with the GOKR to foster a healthy, educated, and skilled workforce for the immediate and long term development of the country, and if key constraints to economic growth are reduced, and if the competitiveness and diversification of the Kyrgyz private sector are increased, then there will be more robust and expanded economic opportunities for the people of the Kyrgyz Republic.

***Development Hypothesis Narrative:*** The Kyrgyz Republic holds great potential for economic growth but must overcome high costs for maintaining and replacing infrastructure, and barriers to diversifying its trading partners. According to the World Bank, the projected GDP growth rate in 2019 and 2020 will be the lowest among Central Asian and former USSR countries. The country's economy is extremely prone to external shocks, due to its strong dependence on the Russian market. With remittances constituting about 30 percent of GDP, Russian economic influence is pervasive. In addition, a burdensome debt load with China could hinder the country's ability to finance and implement its development objectives.

Significant challenges to the Kyrgyz Republic's economy include: a strong dependency on the economies of Russia, Kazakhstan, other Eurasian Economic Union members, and China; high levels of corruption; a large informal sector economy; unequal economic opportunities between gender groups, northern and southern regions, and urban and rural areas; high unemployment among youth; and low productivity and competitiveness of Kyrgyzstani enterprises vis-a-vis those in neighboring countries. Together these factors limit the potential growth of employment and income. As a lower-middle income country, the Kyrgyz Republic often scores high in various factors of the Country Roadmap, including the quality of its Business Environment, Trade

Freedom, and Tax System Effectiveness. Unfortunately, Roadmap indicators such as the Poverty Rate and the GDP per capita remain below average indicating that outcomes are still lacking.

<b>DO2: Robust and Diversified Economic Opportunities for the People of the Kyrgyz Republic</b>
<p><b>IR 2.1: Improved education and skills of the Kyrgyzstani population</b></p> <p>2.1.1: Ministry of Education's planning, management, and procurement practices optimized</p> <p>2.1.2 Teacher capacities improved to meet international standards of teaching.</p> <p>2.1.3 Learning outcomes in reading and math improved.</p> <p>2.1.4 Human resource capital increased by improved skills and labor force conditions.</p>
<p><b>IR 2.2: Improved equitable access to quality health services</b></p> <p>2.2.1 Ministry of Health's planning, management, and procurement practices optimized</p> <p>2.2.2 Healthcare worker capacities are more able to meet international standards of service delivery</p> <p>2.2.3 Case detection and treatment adherence to control infectious disease threats, especially HIV and TB improved.</p> <p>2.2.4 Improved nutritional status of women of reproductive age and children under 5.</p>
<p><b>IR 2.3: Key constraints to economic growth reduced</b></p> <p>2.3.1 Improved business enabling environment</p> <p>2.3.2 Improved access to financial and economic infrastructure</p>
<p><b>IR 2.4: Competitiveness and diversification of the private sector increased</b></p> <p>2.4.1 Improved enterprise competitiveness and sector diversification</p> <p>2.4.2 Trade partners diversified through greater regional connectivity</p>

While the laws of the Kyrgyz Republic are often high-quality and recognized as appropriate for adequate economic governance, the country often fails in implementation and application of its rules and regulations. As a result, the Kyrgyz Republic is ranked 126 out of 180 countries, according to the 2019 Corruption Perceptions Index, which ranks countries based on how corrupt their public sector is perceived to be. The country needs to go beyond passing anti-corruption laws, reducing resources available to government officials, and increasing their accountability. Anti-corruption approaches need to reduce citizens' incentives to engage in corruption. To make businesses more competitive with their peers in neighboring countries, the Mission will strengthen market-enhancing institutions that enforce property rights and contracts, manage competition, provide

tools to the private sector to counter corruption, and encourage formalization in the economy.

The Kyrgyz Republic will make progress towards economic self-reliance by creating secure jobs for its workers in established local businesses, increasing the country's independence from external socio-economic shocks and influence, and developing alternative export markets that enable it to avoid or renegotiate disadvantageous trade terms while growing resilience to supply chain disruptions. USAID will support this objective by creating healthier and more productive workers through higher quality education and technical training, and reinforcing the value proposition for youth to study and work in the Kyrgyz Republic rather than migrating. The Mission will support the Kyrgyz Republic in its efforts to reduce child labor, especially in the agricultural sector, street trade, and domestic labor. USAID's activities will also use a private sector approach to improve the country's business environment, accessing the knowledge and experience of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to diagnose and prioritize financial, legal, and regulatory issues.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted businesses globally by disrupting supply chains, travel, production and consumption. Many Kyrgyz migrants have already returned to the Kyrgyz Republic over the last several months due to the global pandemic and slowing of local economies, and an estimated 100,000 migrants may return to the Kyrgyz Republic in the months ahead as a result of lost jobs overseas. The pandemic is revealing how under-prepared many national, local governments, and businesses have been for such an external shock, resulting in budgets that have shrunk with few contingencies and plans for successfully operating during this long-term emergency. The Mission will immediately adjust its work with the private sector by helping businesses to navigate the new global marketplace, create new business opportunities and jobs for returning migrants, restructure operations, address crisis response, minimize financial stress, and assess security and risk management. To address the longer-term impacts, USAID will

convene private sector actors to develop solutions in partnership with the government and international donor community to enhance trade networks and further bolster local businesses.

COVID-19 highlights the need for much greater diversification in the regional and international export market for the Kyrgyz Republic. Increased trade with more diversified export markets will be achieved through support to cross-boundary value chains, including through harmonization with international standards and inspections, and improved infrastructure to provide goods and services. Only the creation of local, well-paying jobs will contribute to permanently decreasing economic out-migration and the vulnerability that comes with it; growth in jobs requires commensurate growth in productivity and sales. USAID will work closely with the private sector to enhance the competitiveness of Kyrgyz enterprises through improved technology, greater financing, and more efficient business processes, while at the same time actively promoting compliance with environmental safeguard standards.

USAID coordinates closely with donors and the government in the areas of economic growth, health education, and all other development sectors contributing to DO 2. USAID chairs the Education working group of the DPCC. The working group includes GOKR participation, and provided leadership for the drafting of the new Education Sector Strategy that was jointly developed by donors and the Ministry of Education. In health, primarily HIV and TB, activities work hand-in-hand with the Global Fund and the Ministry of Health (MOH), so that all essential services are maintained and gradually transitioned over to the GOKR. USAID participates in a number of relevant working groups on private investment, agriculture and food security, water, and information technology, and works closely with partners in these fields, including the World Bank, GIZ, FCDO/UK, ADB, EBRD, OSCE, and the EU.

### **IR 2.1: Improved education and skills of the Kyrgyz population**

A shortage of skilled, qualified labor is one of the major obstacles to economic growth in the Kyrgyz Republic. The skills learned in primary education serve as the foundation for all future learning and skills development. Learning outcomes measured in international and national sample based assessments in the Kyrgyz Republic point to very low achievement and performance in all grades tested. The USAID-supported 2017 Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) results in 2017 showed that only 44 percent of all sampled grade 2 pupils and 47 percent of all sampled grade 4 pupils attained grade-level proficiency in oral reading fluency. In math, 60.3 percent of children are at or below the basic level at grade 4<sup>7</sup>. The last year that the Kyrgyz Republic participated in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) was 2009, and the country ranked the lowest of all participating countries, as 83 percent of students did not reach the baseline level of achievement in reading at age 15. In science, 82 percent did not reach the baseline level, and 53 percent did not even reach the lowest level of measured performance. This raises concerns over the ability of these 15-year-old students to “be capable of the basic tasks that will enable them to participate effectively and productively in life situations.”<sup>8</sup> The basic education system is not producing the required outcomes in early grade reading and math, which will jeopardize children’s ability to continue learning successfully in later grades.

Increasing the skilled labor pool and spurring economic growth and productivity for future generations of Kyrgyzstanis will require addressing systemic issues within the country’s education system. While current government expenditures on education are high (averaging around 20

<sup>7</sup> [2014 Center for Educational Assessment and Teaching Methodologies](#), and [2017 Center for Educational Assessment and Teaching Methodologies](#), National Sample-Based Assessment of Student Achievements (CEATM, NSBA).

<sup>8</sup> A Comparative Analysis of PISA 2009 Results in CEECIS. UNICEF 2009

percent of the domestic budget annually), the impact of these funds is hampered by waste, reliance on out-dated learning materials, use of antiquated pedagogical theory, and a lack of continuing education for teachers.<sup>9</sup> To address these issues, USAID will invest in strengthening the education system from the ministerial- to the classroom-level. To stimulate progress toward self-reliance, USAID will continue to assist the Ministry of Education to plan and implement systemic reforms, while simultaneously ensuring that classrooms are equipped with age-appropriate learning materials. Teachers will further their development through USAID-led learning networks that will allow educators to share experiences linking practice to contemporary educational theory. USAID will develop electronic educational materials, blended-format training modules for remote education, and apps for mentors/methodologists to facilitate ongoing continuing education among teachers. These approaches will support high quality distance learning and help prepare for additional school closures and delays due to COVID-19.

In addition to the challenges in primary education, the country's secondary education system fails to provide graduates with both the soft and hard skills required by the private sector to attain well-paying jobs. Both the 2020 Gender Analysis and 2019 Youth Assessment demonstrated that many young women and men living in rural areas lack educational aspirations for or beyond secondary education but are interested in quality technical and vocational training. As these assessments indicated, the demand for jobs has consistently far outstripped availability, even before the COVID-19 epidemic -- going forward, these needs may be further exacerbated in the face of the predicted 10 percent contraction of the Kyrgyz Republic's GDP due to COVID-19 (UNDP/ADP, 2020) and the temporary reversal of migrant flows resulting from the global economic decline.

In response, the Mission will work with its implementing partners to ensure that information about technical and vocational training reaches young urban and rural women and men, both as a means of recruiting participants, and as a means of seeking information about youth challenges and desires in participating in USAID activities. The Mission will take a targeted approach in supporting gender inclusivity and integration so that young women are aware of and feel empowered to engage in training opportunities outside their traditional domain.

## **IR 2.2: Improved equitable access to quality health services**

A strong workforce requires healthy workers who are served by a robust and accessible health system. Infectious diseases — including HIV, TB, and public health threats like COVID-19 — remove people from the labor force and can be financially catastrophic for affected families. In addition, poor nutrition undermines citizens' health status and increases susceptibility to disease, while also impeding economic development. An effective public health system, which prevents disease and malnutrition and provides appropriate care and treatment when they do occur, functions as a public good, strengthening the workforce and increasing economic productivity.

In the Kyrgyz Republic, gaps in quality service delivery persist as Soviet infrastructure decays and well-thought-out policies and approaches remain approved but unimplemented. The TB sector offers an important example. Curative TB services remain tied to an inefficient and stigmatizing in-patient hospitalization model, which demands long-term removal from the workforce. Despite trends toward primary healthcare approaches and deinstitutionalization of services - facilitated by USAID and resulting in annual savings of hundreds of thousands of dollars in recouped resources (Compendium of good practices in the implementation of the Tuberculosis Action Plan for the WHO European Region 2016–2020) - hospitalization remains a major tool of the MOH, while stigmatization of the disease persists. As a result, in the TB sector in 2018, almost one-third of TB

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<sup>9</sup> Kyrgyz Republic: Education Sector Analysis, UNICEF, 2018; Kyrgyz Republic Education Development Strategy 2030

cases went undetected, and less than one out of six individuals detected with dangerous drug-resistant forms of TB were cured of their disease (World Health Organization, Global TB Report 2019). These failures of the health system represent significant economic and human losses for the country.

To address these gaps, USAID will partner with the MOH, other donors, the private sector, and civil society to support health systems strengthening and quality service delivery in the health sector. Infection prevention and control (IPC), surveillance, and case detection will be emphasized throughout all disease control programs in order to prevent the spread of disease both within healthcare settings as well as among community members. These elements have become especially relevant as the country adapts to long-term management of COVID-19 and hence will receive even greater focus.

At the national level, USAID will promote relevant policy reform and government action through advocacy campaigns and targeted technical assistance. Building on the proven cost-savings from shifting from institutional to outpatient treatment models, USAID will continue to make the investment case to the MOH to sustain these shifts. At the same time, USAID will assist the MOH to reinvest recouped resources, while improving their procurement and planning strategies in order to fight corruption, modernize policy, and better anticipate and meet the needs of citizens. A component of this support will include partnering with public and private entities, as well as with civil society, to perform community oversight activities, ensuring the transparent and accountable use of funds. USAID will continue to support the engagement of the public- and non-profit sector to optimize service delivery and promote social inclusion through the empowerment of marginalized populations.

At the local level, USAID will focus on both supply- and demand-side constraints. To address demand issues, USAID will conduct health promotion and social and behavioral change communication activities to increase uptake of services and adherence to treatment, particularly for stigmatized diagnoses such as HIV, TB, and malnutrition. To improve supply-side concerns, USAID will work with professional networks to conduct training and foster knowledge exchange, with the aim of developing healthcare worker skill sets and retaining them within their positions. USAID will also engage targeted municipal governments, community actors, and the private sector to expand the provision of citizen-prioritized decentralized services. USAID will pay particular attention to addressing the needs of women, HIV-affected key populations, and youth in both health promotion and health service delivery interventions.

Through these activities, USAID will prevent illness and malnutrition, increase access to quality care that minimizes time out of the workforce, and, resultantly, reduce economic shocks for Kyrgyz families.

### **IR 2.3: Key constraints to economic growth reduced**

USAID will promote more effective business policies and governance, and support their implementation, by offering greater access to resources for doing business, helping improve the quality of the country's infrastructure, reducing the cost of doing business, and improving conditions for local workers to seize economic opportunities in their homeland. USAID will help establish and strengthen private sector actors to enable them to assume a greater role in developing the economy. With a stronger environment for business, positive incentives for business formalization, increased investment, and the creation of more private sector jobs, tax revenue will increase, thereby supporting the Kyrgyz Republic's own development and self-reliance. USAID will support government activities to create a business-friendly, competitive, and

inclusive enabling environment, which recognizes the added value of including women and youth, increases formal investment, and reduces the size of the country's substantial shadow economy.

USAID will work together with the GOKR and the private sector to emphasize the importance of risk management - financial and non-financial, and risk mitigation, at a project and macro level. Cooperation with the public and private sectors provides specific advantages in risk burden-sharing, operational management, emergency response mechanisms, and business continuity planning during socio-economic shocks. All the measures that are taken at the macro level by implementing rule of law to improve the business environment will intensify economic growth and limit investment risks.

The Kyrgyz government continues to show its dedication to financial self-reliance through the introduction and implementation of important reforms, such as registration of property rights, access to credit, and starting a business. Increasing the ability of local businesses to operate in the formal economy will support the country's self-reliance by improving tax collection and self-financing of public expenditures rather than relying on external debt. USAID will support the country's next step toward financial self-reliance by seeking opportunities to partner with the government to reform the country's tax system and by working with financial institutions to improve access to finance. Advanced forms of business financing, such as private equity funds and venture and investment funds, must be developed to enable affordable access to capital for business expansion and job creation. The Mission will assist in the introduction of new financial products and lending mechanisms to simplify access to finance.

In order for the Kyrgyz Republic to grow as a self-reliant member of the Central Asia region, supportive infrastructure such as reliable transportation, energy, and telecommunications must also expand. USAID will use its significant expertise to promote regional and local infrastructure development (such as roads, railway networks, air corridors expansion, sustainable energy, and water systems) through new partnerships for investment that protect the country's interests and resources, while simultaneously promoting environmental safeguards to minimize and reduce potential adverse impacts on the environment and biodiversity.

Early in the global COVID-19 pandemic, the GOKR instituted restrictions on movement to reduce the spread of the virus, which have had a negative impact on the Kyrgyz economy. To mitigate some of these impacts, the Mission will support the Kyrgyz Government in its efforts to provide additional financing to SMEs, especially to farmers and other producers of value-added agricultural products. USAID will provide its expertise to the private sector enterprises to speed up recovery, and to the GOKR on stimulus measures, to keep businesses and unemployed workers afloat.

#### **IR 2.4: Competitiveness and diversification of the private sector increased**

Increased competitiveness and diversification of the currently underdeveloped private sector will make the Kyrgyz Republic's economy more resilient. USAID will facilitate trade expansion with neighbors in the region, expanding export markets and raising awareness about Kyrgyz products. More specifically, USAID will target job creation among Kyrgyzstani enterprises by assisting local businesses to adopt new technologies and innovations, promote international quality standards, and promote development of high-growth potential economic sectors such as IT and high-value agricultural processing. By improving enterprise competitiveness, economic growth will accelerate. USAID will partner with the government and private sector to promote a more equitable workforce, including women, youth, and marginalized populations, and to access resources including jobs, business creation, new technologies, and innovations.

USAID will promote greater regional connectivity in Central Asia by working to reduce cross-border trade barriers, enabling private sector companies to expand cross-border supply chains, engaging in e-commerce, and becoming more resilient and capable to adjust to possible supply chain disruptions. USAID will leverage its private sector partnerships to seek and develop trade partners and improve business' capacity for navigating international markets, standards, and regulations. To capitalize on new opportunities, Kyrgyz businesses have to be able to meet environmental, health, and safety standards applied by the EU and others internationally. USAID will also support businesses to advocate to their government for the streamlining of customs processes and tariff regulations to reduce the cost and delays which characterise regional trade.

## **Gender Cross-Cutting IR**

In the Country Roadmap indicators, Economic Gender Gap and Social Group Equality in the Kyrgyz Republic score higher than average in subregion, Central Asia. However, social norms and stereotypes in the Kyrgyz Republic support detrimental gender practices related to women's political participation, economic empowerment, migration, religion and non-consensual marriages. Indicators of gender and social group inequality in the Kyrgyz Republic include: low wage parity, higher rates of female unemployment and underemployment, and large proportions of women employed in vulnerable employment; stagnant maternal mortality ratios; a high unmet need for family planning; men left behind by health services, especially in tuberculosis; alarming school drop-out rates among boys in rural and remote regions; rapidly increasing HIV rates among vulnerable populations; high prevalence of gender based violence (GBV), and diminishing numbers of women in leadership positions in all levels of government. Higher rates of female unemployment, low wages, poor health conditions among vulnerable populations contribute to low scores for the poverty rate and education quality roadmap indicators.

Additionally, gender based violence has negative direct and indirect costs on social cohesion, mental and physical wellbeing, childhood development, economic growth, government effectiveness, democracy, peace, safety and security. Women and girls in the Kyrgyz Republic suffer from domestic violence, child marriage, bride kidnapping, trafficking and other forms of physical or sexual abuse. GBV is pervasive, affecting an estimated 29 percent of Kyrgyz women each year, and thus represents a critical human-rights gender gap.

The USAID/Kyrgyz Republic Gender Analysis demonstrates that as women's representation in politics increases, so does the government's provision of services aligned with women's needs. In 2019, the Kyrgyz Republic instituted a 30 percent quota for women in parliament and local councils. USAID will seize this opportunity by supporting women to increase their role, visibility, and impact in politics, as well as the social and economic spheres.

### **Cross-cutting IR: Gender disparities that inhibit key development outcomes reduced**

USAID will promote gender equality, and youth and female empowerment throughout the USAID/Kyrgyz Republic portfolio through an integrated programming approach. USAID will target specific gender disparities which inhibit the achievement of Mission development objectives, focusing on issues such as gender-based violence, women's participation in political processes, gender-specific risk factors for TB and HIV, access to employment opportunities, business creation, and equity in educational outcomes. In addressing specific gender disparities, USAID will emphasize transforming harmful gender norms while also working in close partnership with the Kyrgyz government and civil society. USAID will seek ways to reach gender equity in economic outcomes, including education, behavior change, and business enabling environment reforms.

Mission AORs, CORs, and activity managers are required to have a stand-alone gender Work Objective in their Annual Work Plan and the Mission Gender Expert will continue to build their capacity to understand and respond to gender gaps.

## V. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

USAID/Kyrgyz Republic will use performance and context monitoring, sector and thematic assessments, and regular public opinion polling to inform strategic learning, evidence-based adaptive management, and strategic communications. USAID will collaborate closely with GOKR counterparts and other development partners in the selection of outcome indicators and learning questions. The Mission will also seek to build relationships with local universities, well-regarded research institutes, and other influential sources of expert knowledge in the planning and execution of its learning agenda. By working increasingly through local providers for evaluation and learning services, the Mission will strengthen local capacity to implement the national development agenda, while gaining credibility as it communicates its vision for attaining a more inclusive, prosperous, and democratic future for the Kyrgyz Republic.

By creating a shared understanding with local development partners, the Mission will invest in the right combination of evidence and learning needed to encourage continued progress in redefining the development relationship, and to support a steady transition to self-reliant, local leadership across the portfolio.

In support of its cross-cutting IR for reducing gender disparities, USAID will track disaggregates for gender and youth for all appropriate people-level indicators. In addition, USAID commits to tracking operational indicators related to gender integration in its solicitations and activities. Specifically, the mission will track the percentage of solicitations and awards that: explicitly recognize gender gaps with potential to influence development outcomes, incorporate responsive activities in work plans, and actively track the success of those responses in their MEL plans.

The Mission will continually adapt its learning agenda throughout the course of the CDCS in order to pursue learning questions that measure and evaluate the country's journey to self-reliance, focusing on the following components:

**Financing Self Reliance:** For example, the Mission will seek to understand how its activities and approaches influence accountability, anti-corruption, and transparency; how new or existing partnerships increase influence local funding for development; how improvements to the taxation system can reduce the share of the shadow economy and increase internal funding for economic and social projects; and how the sectoral or geographic focus of job creation can result in the greatest reductions in labor migration or equitable income growth.

**Private Sector Engagement:** For example, the Mission will assess how best to catalyze growth in the private health sector in the Kyrgyz Republic; how partnering with the private sector in media and health sectors promotes accountability and transparency; how to leverage private expertise to bring about improvements in the business environment; and how public private partnerships at the local level improve service delivery and help finance the country's development agenda.

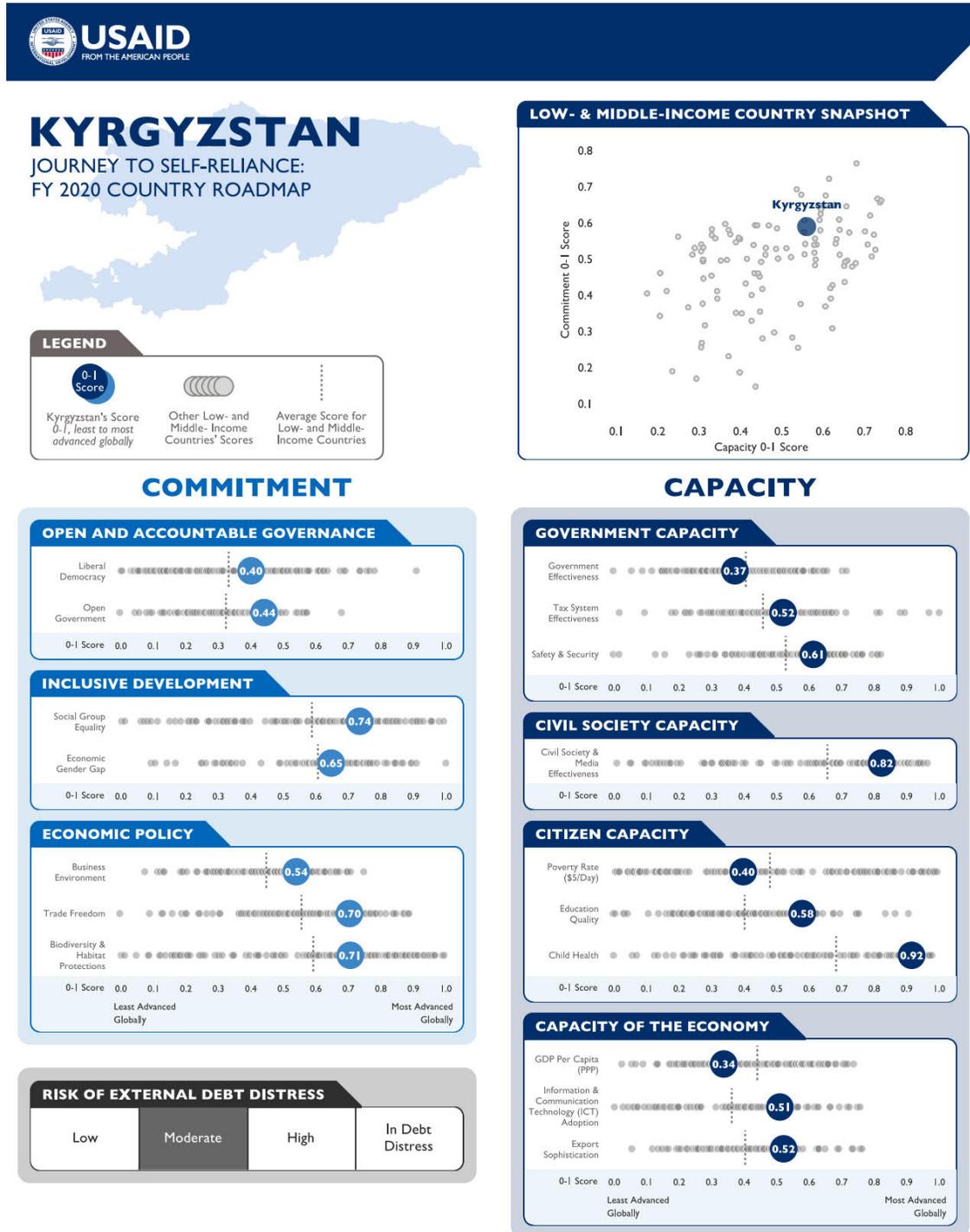
**Redefining the Development Relationship:** The Mission will include in its activities performance metrics to assess local readiness to assume leadership in planning, financing, and implementing local development. For example, USAID will assess how its partnership with the Ministry of

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Education on procurement and planning activities, systems-level optimization and quality service delivery progresses its self-reliance.

## VI. Annex

### Journey to Self-Reliance Country Roadmap





# SELF-RELIANCE ROADMAPS

## INDICATOR DEFINITIONS AND SOURCES

All source data are for the latest year available, typically 2018 or 2017, and are derived from third-party institutions. All indicators are weighted equally in the calculation of the overall Commitment and Capacity scores. Names and boundary representation in the map are not necessarily authoritative.

For more information on definitions and sources, please visit [selfreliance.usaid.gov](https://selfreliance.usaid.gov).

### COMMITMENT

#### OPEN AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE

**Liberal Democracy:** Measures freedom of expression, freedom of association, suffrage, elections, rule of law, judicial constraints on the executive branch, and legislative constraints on the executive branch. Source: *Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)*.

**Open Government:** Measures the degree to which a government shares information, empowers people with tools to hold the government accountable, and fosters citizen participation in public policy deliberations. Sub-factors include: publicized laws and government data, right to information, civic participation, and complaint mechanisms. Source: *World Justice Project, Rule of Law Index*.

#### INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

**Social Group Equality:** Measures political equality with respect to civil liberties protections across social groups as defined by ethnicity, religion, caste, race, language, and region. Source: *Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem), Social Group Equality in Respect for Civil Liberties*.

**Economic Gender Gap:** Index comprising five components: (1) wage equality between women and men for similar work; (2) the ratio of female estimated earned income to male income; (3) the ratio of female labor force participation to male participation; (4) the ratio of female legislators, senior officials, and managers to male counterparts; and (5) the ratio of female professional and technical workers to male counterparts. Source: *World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report, Economic Participation and Opportunity Sub-Index*.

#### ECONOMIC POLICY

**Business Environment:** Assesses a country's entrepreneurial climate by measuring business' access to infrastructure (such as the internet and transport, and to credit), business flexibility (the costs of starting business and of hiring and firing), clear and fair regulations (e.g., intellectual property rights), and perceptions of meritocracy and opportunity. Source: *Legatum Institute, Prosperity Index*.

**Trade Freedom:** Measures a country's openness to international trade based on average tariff rates and non-tariff barriers to trade. Source: *Heritage Foundation, Index of Economic Freedom*.

**Biodiversity & Habitat Protections:** Measures extent of marine protected areas, terrestrial biome protection (weighted for both national and global scarcity), representativeness of protected areas, and whether protected areas cover the ranges and habitats of critical species. Source: *Yale University/Columbia University Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN)*.

#### RISK OF EXTERNAL DEBT DISTRESS

Rates a country's risk of public sector debt distress on a four-tier scale: "low risk", "moderate risk", "high risk", and "in debt distress". Ratings are based on countries' debt and market structures, fiscal and macroeconomic outlook, and institutional capacity to manage debt burden. Ratings help guide the borrowing decisions of lower-income countries to meet development needs while reducing the chances of excessive debt build-up. Ratings are shown for 54 lower-income countries for which the IMF prepares risk ratings and are not scored components of Commitment or Capacity. Source: *International Monetary Fund, Debt Sustainability Analysis for Low-Income Countries*.

### CAPACITY

#### GOVERNMENT CAPACITY

**Government Effectiveness:** Measures the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and its independence from political pressure, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to its stated policies. Source: *World Bank, Worldwide Governance Indicators*.

**Tax System Effectiveness:** Estimated ratio between a country's tax collection and the expected level of tax revenue that a country could achieve, given its macroeconomic, demographic, and institutional features. Source: *USAID, Collecting Taxes Database, Tax Effort Indicator*.

**Safety & Security:** A combination of objective measures of security, and subjective measures of personal safety, personal freedom, and social tolerance. Source: *Legatum Institute, Prosperity Index*.

#### CIVIL SOCIETY CAPACITY

**Civil Society & Media Effectiveness:** Measures the range of actions and mechanisms that citizens, civil society organizations, and an independent media can use to hold a government accountable. The mechanisms include using informal tools such as social mobilization and investigative journalism. Source: *Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem), Diagonal Accountability Index*.

#### CITIZEN CAPACITY

**Poverty Rate (\$5/Day):** Measures the percent of the population living under \$5/day in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms. Source: *World Bank, PovCalNet*.

**Education Quality:** Gauges both the quality of education—using harmonized scores across major international student achievement testing—and the quantity of schooling received—using age-specific enrollment rates—to evaluate the relative performance of educational systems worldwide. Source: *World Bank, Human Capital Index, Learning-Adjusted Years of Schooling Indicator*.

**Child Health:** A composite measure that aggregates child mortality, access to at least basic water sources, and access to at least basic sanitation facilities. Source: *Columbia University Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN)*.

#### CAPACITY OF THE ECONOMY

**GDP Per Capita (PPP):** Measures the flow of resources available to households, firms, and government to finance development as the country's total Gross Domestic Product (PPP) divided by the country's population. Source: *World Bank, World Development Indicators*.

**Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Adoption:** Index comprising: (1) mobile-cellular telephone subscriptions; (2) mobile-broadband subscriptions; (3) fixed-broadband internet subscriptions; (4) fiber internet subscriptions; and (5) internet users. Source: *World Economic Forum (WEF), Global Competitiveness Index*.

**Export Sophistication:** Measures the diversity and ubiquity of a country's exported goods, key markers that can help gauge economic sophistication and resilience. Source: *Center for International Development at Harvard University, Economic Complexity Index*.