



**Improved Water and Sanitation
Systems that Impact Nutrition and
Education Outcomes for Primary
Grade Students in Kyrgyzstan**

Mercy Corps'

Food for Education Program



Global Water Challenge (GWC) through its New World Program (NWP) allocated \$200,000 usd as pilot funding for Mercy Corps to complement the \$31 million USDA-funded Food for Education Program (FFE) program. Since 2012 the FFE program has been implemented in **481 primary schools**.



Both programs support the government of the Kyrgyz Republic by improving sanitary conditions and the provision of hot meals in public schools; creating an improved learning environment, training teachers and parents on child health and nutrition, and capacity-building at all levels from school administrators to local and national government agencies.



Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

The NWP program targeted Mercy Corps' FFE schools to impact primary grade's handwashing education and water and sanitation facilities.

Mercy Corps renovated and installed handwashing stations, latrines, water heaters, updated water filtration systems, and sanitation equipment.

During the September 2017 - September 2019 period Mercy Corps identified **184 schools** with more than **37,000 primary grade students** that benefited from improved handwashing and potable water conditions.



Handwashing & Sanitation Activities

Mercy Corps' project activities included:

- Supporting schools by training teachers and disseminating hygiene promotion materials for students and teachers.
- Renovating handwashing and sanitation facilities in schools in partnership with local authorities and municipalities.
- Installation of innovative potable water equipment to **134 public schools** in partnership with local business.
- Overall **494 school administrators** were trained on proper handwashing practices and procedures



Potable Water Project

Access to a safe and sustainable water source is critical to the cognitive and physical development of primary age students. Access also ensures that children can get the most out of their education without being interrupted from water borne diseases and parasites.

Mercy Corps targeted **130 schools** under the FFE program to improve access to safe drinking water. The project installed water tanks, water filters, and trained two schools cooks from every school on the importance of safe drinking water

Approximately **26,000 students** have been impacted by the potable water project.



Intersecting Sanitation, Nutrition, and Education

MC's WASH and potable water projects are very unique in that for the first time they allowed a mass number of public school students to have direct access to high quality drinking water and sanitation that has an immediate effect on their nutrition status.

These programs aimed to choose schools based on sustainability factors so primary aged students can have continued access to potable water, sanitation, and hygiene. Promoting and providing WASH resources and tools establishes the foundation Kyrgyz children require to succeed academically and improve nutrition standards to fight malnutrition and anemia.

