

**Statement
of Sharapat Mazhitova,
Member of Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic at the side event
“Advocating for mountain women and girls’ education through student-
engaged learning”**

(March 8, 2023, at 10.00-11.15 am, Conference Room1, UNHQ)

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you very much for giving me the floor.

In the context of CSW67’s main theme this year, I would like to draw your attention to the challenges and opportunities for mountain women and girls in the field of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).

Social and gender norms and deeply ingrained gender stereotypes prevent women and girls from taking advantage of the many opportunities that digital technologies offer for personal and professional growth.

The future in the world of work will certainly affect both men and women, but studies have shown that 30-50% of women are less likely than men to use the Internet and technology to improve their skills.

In Kyrgyzstan, this situation is worrisome, only one in three girls is computer literate, and only 31% of graduates of STEM professions are girls. Due to social norms and systemic barriers in society, women and girls often lack the self-confidence to pursue STEM subjects and careers.

We have identified three major challenges faced by women working in STEM.

1. Low stakeholder awareness of the importance of STEM results in limited participation of women and girls in STEM.
2. Women and girls are not confident in their ability to succeed in STEM.
3. The existing gap between the existing gender policy and practical implementation, stops the progress of women's participation in STEM.

Despite the above problems, there are some positive developments in 2015. Kyrgyzstan supported and co-sponsored the resolution of the UN General Assembly "International Day of Women and Girls in Science”.

UNDP and UNICEF have brought together 32 STEM organizations in Kyrgyzstan for a continuous exchange of experience. I believe that this is a good step for systematic problem-solving in this area.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that first, we need to break stereotypes, such as patriarchal attitudes, misinterpretation of religion, and others. This is only

possible through education and our joint efforts. To do this, it is very important to support successful girls who have already achieved some success in the field of IT technologies and to inspire girls everywhere, especially in mountainous areas, with success stories of leaders in the field of IT.

I thank you!