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# Leadership of rural women in Kyrgyzstan: changing the stereotype The case of the Kyrgyz Republic

Women of the Mountains

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## Key words:

- ❑ Women leadership
- ❑ Local governance,
- ❑ Decision making,
- ❑ Women empowerment,
- ❑ Rural community,
- ❑ Customary practice/stereotype



## Women leadership in the context of Kyrgyzstan

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- Women in decision making positions
  - Roza Otunbaeva (current period)
- Women serving as a role model for leadership
  - Kurmanjan Datka (XIX century)



# Kyrgyzstan: gender segregated statistics



**Total population -5.4 million:  
Rural population is 65.9%:**

**out of them women - 50.7%  
out of them women -49.6%**

# Regulatory framework integrating gender approach

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- Most of regulation policies developed with support of international expertise:
  - ADB;
  - UN agencies;
  - AKDN agencies;
  - WB;
  - USAID etc
  
- About 30 regulations and laws ratified since 1990:
  - The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995);
  - CEDAW;
  - The Convention of International Labour;
  - The European Social Charter;

## **National Action Plan on Achieving Gender Equity**

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- ❑ the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic;
- ❑ National Programme on 'Human Rights' (2002-2010),
- ❑ National policy on public employment till 2010;
- ❑ National Plan of Education for All (2002-2015);
- ❑ Government Programme on Action of Social Partners to Decrease Underage Employment for 2007-2011 and others.

## **Laws and Government Decrees supporting GI:**

- ❑ Law on Citizenship (2007);
- ❑ Family and Labor Code;
- ❑ Law on State Guarantee of Equal Rights and opportunities for Men and Women (2008);
- ❑ Code of Elections in KR (2007);
- ❑ Law on Reproductive Rights of Citizens and its realization guarantee;
- ❑ President's Decree on Gender Policy Enhancement (2006)
- ❑ Gender Expertise Procedure (2007).

## Country example

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- Local NGOs focused on women:
  - Women Entrepreneurship Support Association;
  - Congress of Women;
  - Forum of Women NGOs in KR;
  - Women's Initiative Support Center; etc
- Self-help groups leaded by women;
- Village Health Committees;
- Women committees;

## MSDSP KG's practice to empower women

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- ❑ Women entrepreneurship through interest groups and handicraft cooperatives;
- ❑ Promoting women and child healthcare through Village Health Committees;
- ❑ Capacity building for kindergarten teachers and providing early childhood development facilities at village level;
- ❑ Broaden access for vulnerable families in-kind credits on livestock and poultry;





## **Government: Obstacles to fill gender gap:**

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- ❑ Limited financial resources;
- ❑ Low capacity of the government and municipal servants in gender policy;
- ❑ Community ignorance about gender equity
- ❑ Customary practice

## Changing of women's social status

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- Before Soviet regime:
  - *Traditional governance and customs*
  
- Soviet regime
  - *Strong social and political equality*
  
- Independence vs market economy
  - *Women unemployment*

## Women in a decision making position

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National level:

Women in Parliament –33.6%

Women in Government– 0.19%

Local level:

Women in District Council -10%

Heads of Village government-0.9%



## Opportunities to improve women's political empowerment in rural areas

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- 1) To enhance local community to support and promote women's leadership within the territory through:
  - capacity building;
  - mass campaigns;
  - focus group meetings,



## Opportunities to improve women's political empowerment in rural areas

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2) To lobby local standards, charter, or by-laws on gender quorum for local council membership and sub-district administration positions through:

- Women groups;
- Women committees;
- Women council members;



## Opportunities to improve women's political empowerment in rural areas

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- 3) To prepare and promote some active and experienced women to put their candidacy for council member position/election
- Focus groups out of experienced and respectful women and train them on
    - social accountability;
    - social partnership



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***Thank you!***

***Чон рахмат!***

***Спасибо!***