

## CASE STUDY: PROMOTING GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE EARLY LEARNING IN CHINA



In China, awareness of gender issues in kindergarten is overall low. Gender stereotypes are perpetuated through curriculum, learning materials and interactions.



In response, in Jia County of Shaanxi province, Plan International China worked in partnership with the local Education Bureau to support gender responsive, quality early childhood education for girls and boys aged 3-6 years, working with local kindergarten teachers and principals. The project objective is to ensure that all children aged 3-6 receive high quality and gender responsive preschool education.

To understand the local context, needs, challenges and opportunities, a baseline study was carried out. Several trainings were then conducted with head teachers and teachers, initially on basic gender concepts, and later included training on practical skills for integrating a gender

perspective into daily work; for example, how to incorporate a gender lens into story-telling in the classroom. In collaboration with the local Education Bureau and teachers themselves, a guide to promoting gender equality for kindergarten teachers was developed, which responds directly to the needs of local teachers and is being piloted locally. In parallel, gender equality standards for kindergarten were developed, which can be used by the local Education Bureau to assess the level of gender integration in kindergarten. The local Education Bureau has added gender considerations to their annual appraisal, for example, has the kindergarten incorporated gender into their work plan, pedagogy and classroom environment? The local Education Bureau has also provided two picture books, which include a gender perspective, to all kindergartens that participated in the pilot project. Plan International China has completed a training manual on gender equality for kindergarten teachers which contains basic gender knowledge and practical skills. Videos about the importance of gender equality tailored to kindergarten parents have also been developed.

Key lessons learned from this project include: obtaining support from local government is a crucial first step; ensuring that teachers and principals understand why it is necessary to promote gender equality in kindergartens; the importance of including practical actions in the training, to equip teachers with the skills needed to incorporate a gender perspective into their daily work; supporting awareness and engagement of parents/caregivers should be undertaken in parallel; and recognising that the promotion of gender equality and gender-responsive kindergarten is a long-term process that needs planning and resourcing, including in relation to gender norm change work.

