



THRIVE

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ECE

Plan International,

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Why is it important to consider gender in ECD/ECE programming?

Gender inequality underpins high rates maternal mortality, under-nutrition, depression and IPV, and women's limited autonomy and decision-making power

Poor maternal health, nutrition and limited education, decision-making power and mobility linked to poor child health, nutrition and early years' development

Son preference and gender discrimination linked to sex-selective abortion, preferential feeding of boys and reduced opportunities of girls for play and pre-school

Early years' gender socialization mean that boys and in particular girls learn limiting gendered attitudes and norms for appropriate behaviours, future role, right from birth

ECD programmes that ensure girls and boys receive equal and unbiased care and challenge unequal gender power relationships within the household and the gender distribution of care work, have gender-transformative potential

ECD programmes can be enablers for women's employment in formal sector and help to keep older female siblings and adolescent mothers in school



Recognition of the multiple links between gender equality and ECD, and the gender-transformative potential of ECD/ECE programming

Gender identity, attitudes and norms are learned and internalized early



By about the age of 2-3:

- Have a sense of gender identity
- Begin to pay much more attention to “models” of the same sex
- Become aware of gendered prohibitions on certain activities/ behaviours
- Begin to learn and rigidly stick to gender stereotypes.



By about age 5-6:

- Children often imitate the roles of their gender
- May encourage or discourage certain “gendered” behaviours among their peers

Gender-transformative ECD/ECE programming can help to break this cycle of discrimination, supporting girls and boys to develop to their potential, free of limiting gendered expectations



Plan International's gender-transformative approach in ECD



Men's positive engagement in nurturing care



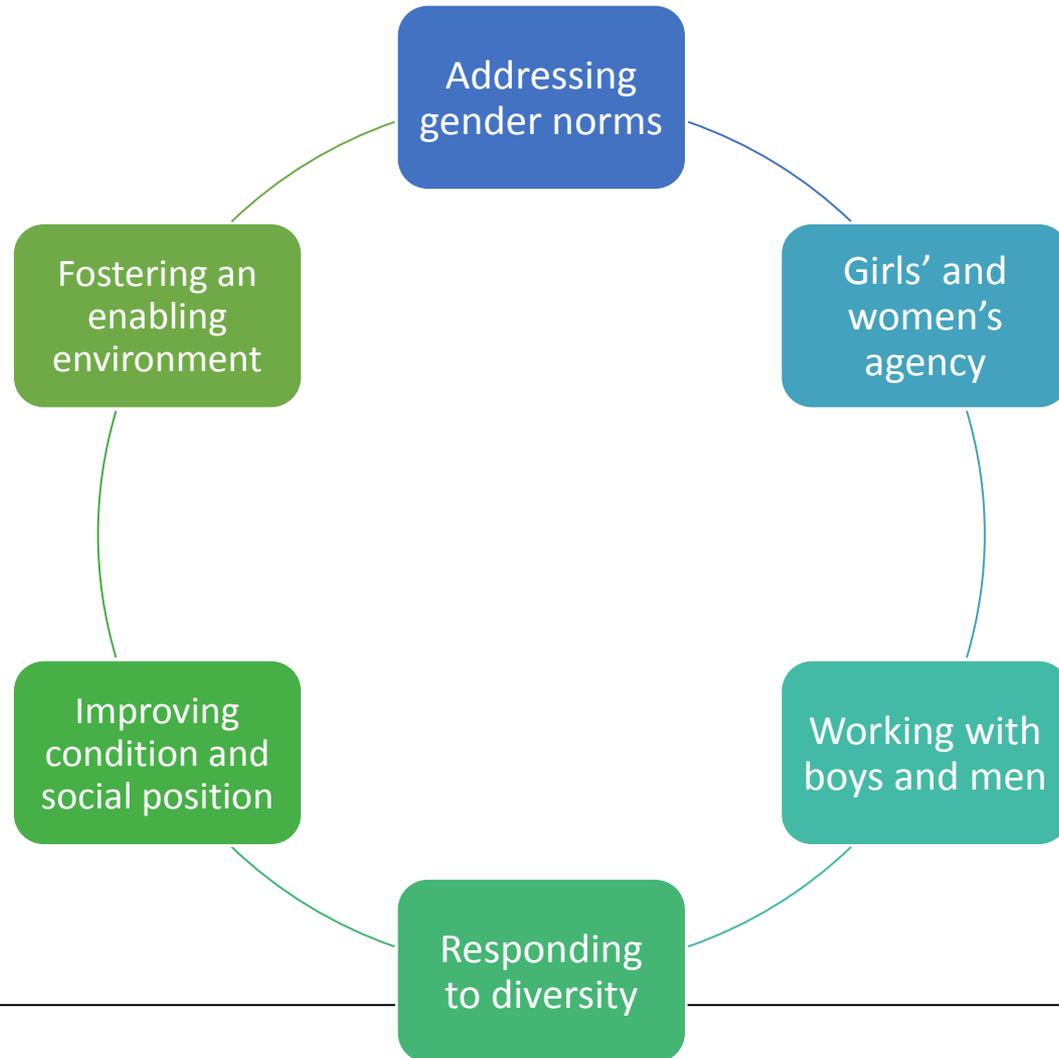
Gender-transformative parenting/care-giving



Gender-transformative quality early learning programming

Promoting gender norm change

Strengthening and adapting ECD work = starting with the six key elements of Plan's gender transformative approach





What does this
MEAN FOR
ecd/ECE?



Addressing Gender Norms through ECD/ECE work

In the context of ECD/ECE, this means:

Promoting changes in gender norms that:

- Influence the way girls & boys are treated/cared for differently
- Drives how girls & boys are socialized and taught expectations about roles & behaviours
- Underpin gendered division of care work
- Limit women's agency

Through e.g.:

- Facilitating critical reflection and dialogue at community level
- Working with community members, leaders to identify 'early adopters' or 'positive deviants'
- Use parenting group sessions for women and men to reflect on gender norms and their impact
- Train early childhood educators on gender responsive pedagogy

Working with Men

In the context of ECD/ECE, this means:

Working with men to:

- Promote their emotional involvement with their partners and children
- Share household-decision making, childcare and domestic work
- Use non-violent communication
- Ensure young boys are not being taught harmful notions of masculinity

Through e.g.:

- Reaching men directly through men's groups/father clubs, home visits etc.
- Integrating messaging on benefit of men's engagement into parenting group sessions & awareness raising
- Engaging men as parenting facilitators, workers/volunteers
- Ensuring pre-primary services enable and support fathers' engagement in their children's learning

Inclusion and diversity

In the context of ECD/ECE, this means:

Recognising:

- Young parents – in particular adolescent mothers – often face social isolation, increased stress and may need differentiated approaches
- Other factors of exclusion e.g. children with a disability, ethno-linguistic minorities, refugee populations + the specific needs of girls within these groups

Through e.g.:

- Adapting activities with parents/caregivers e.g. Parenting education & community-based health/nutrition promotion activities to respond to differing needs and diversity of families
- Promote inclusive pre-primary e.g. infrastructure & play material adaptation, educator training, mother tongue learning
- Working with community health care workers to identify children at risk of/with delay or disability & referrals & community support



Country examples

Plan International Togo – Integrated ECD programme

Context:

- Many children not achieving their full development potential.
- Only 20.2% of children have access to early learning.
- Social and gender norms influence parenting practices and beliefs.

Objective:

Contribute to girls and boys from 0 - 6 years receiving the care, support and services they need to survive, to grow up healthy and to develop to their full potential, free from gendered norms and discriminatory attitudes.

Beneficiaries

- ☐ Parents of children aged 0-6 years;
- ☐ Adolescents and young people;
- ☐ Pre-school educators;
- ☐ Traditional and religious leaders.



Plan International Togo – Examples of Integration of Gender

- ECD activities emphasize the participation of men in the caring of girls and boys aged 0-6 years in the household and community.
- During learning through play (LtP) group sessions, the key messages developed for female and male parents of children aged 0-6 years focus on non-discrimination in the division of tasks and roles in the education and learning of girls and boys aged 0-6 years.
- The making and use of gender-neutral toys for girls and boys by parents of children aged 0-6 in communities is promoted.
- 1833 parents of children 0-6 (907 men/926 women) involved in LtP group sessions



Results:

Parents, especially men, are beginning to get more involved in care of their children (in some groups there are more men than women).

Men's engagement work supported by the wider community and community leaders.

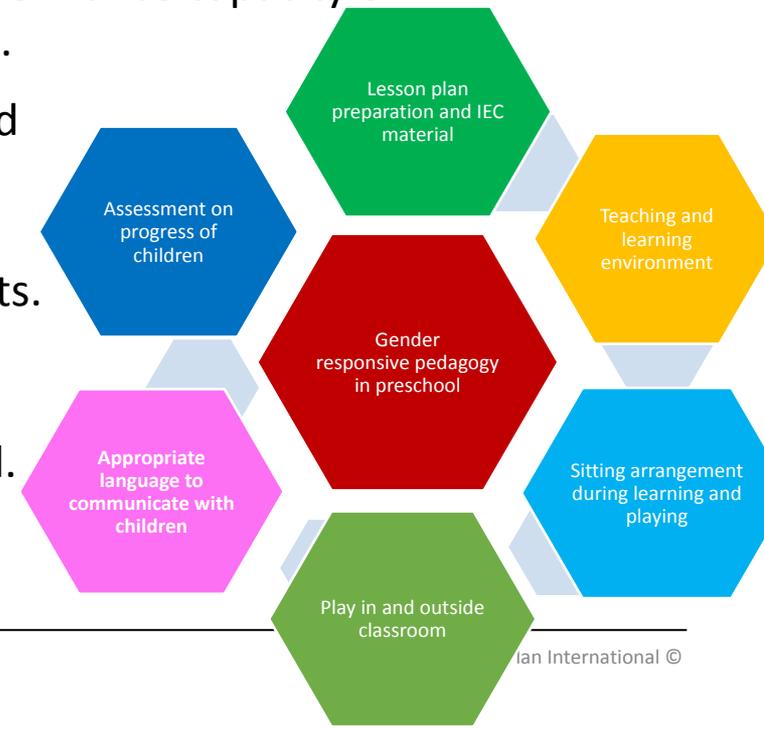
Plan International Cambodia – Support for Gender responsive pedagogy for ECE

Context:

- Strong gender stereotypes about girls and boys at home and in classrooms.
- Pre-primary teacher lack of awareness about gender responsive learning environments.

Approach:

- Teaching to focus on needs, equal learning and participation of girls and boys, encourage teachers to reflect on own gender beliefs, enhance capacity of teachers to support gender equality in the classroom.
- Worked with MoEYS and other education actors, held national consultation workshops.
- Developed 5 teacher books covering main preschool subjects which integrated gender responsive concepts.
- Approved by ECE Department of MoEYs, to be rolled out to teachers re integrating gender responsive pedagogy in teaching and learning at classroom level.





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Recommendations

ECD/ECE are crucial entry points for addressing gender inequality

1. Gender should be explicitly considered and incorporated throughout the programme cycle
2. Ensure that ECD/ECE programmes work systematically to promote men's engagement and address the barriers to their involvement
3. Target families with adolescent mothers



THANK YOU

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