



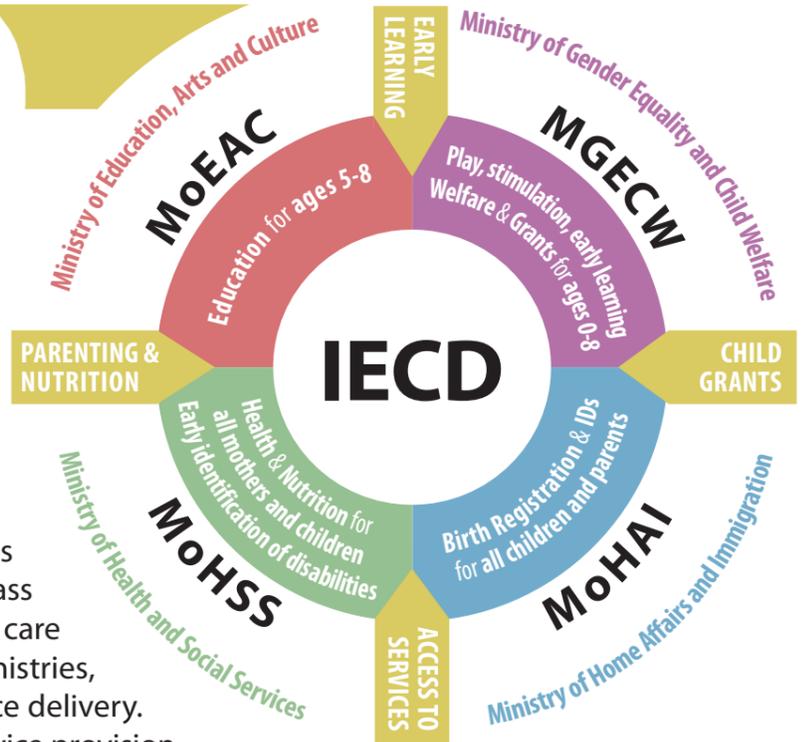
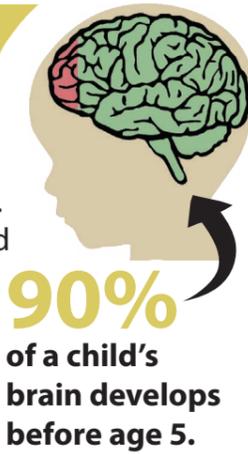
2018

FACTSHEET

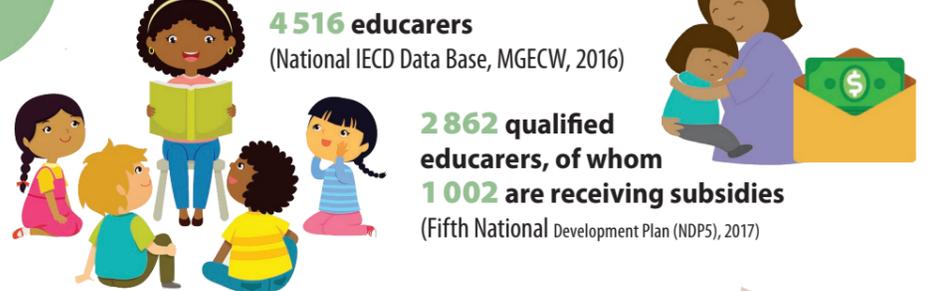
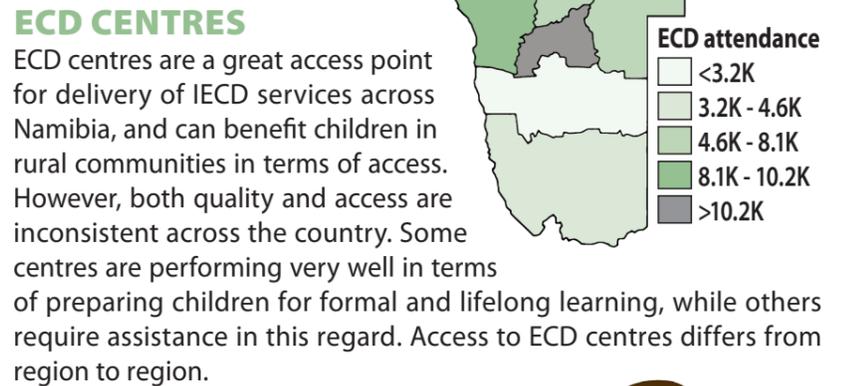
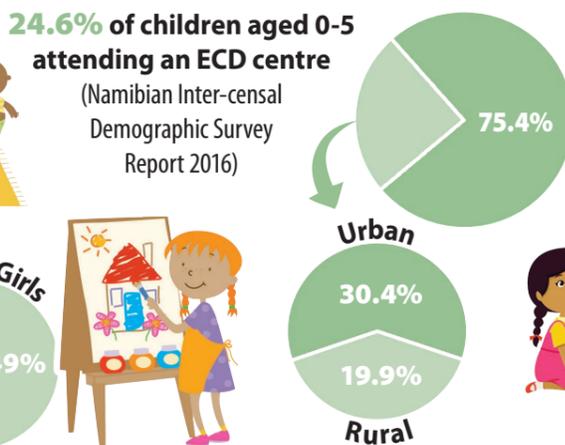
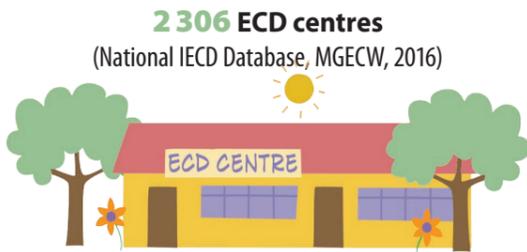
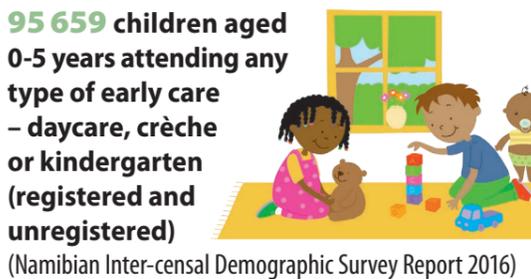
Integrated Early Childhood Development in Namibia

What are ECD and IECD?

Early childhood is the period from conception through birth to 8 years of age. During this period, a child's brain grows rapidly. This period is critical to the child's physical, cognitive, social and emotional development. Throughout their early childhood, it is vital that children are given quality healthcare and nutrition, early stimulation, ample opportunities for learning and play, and a safe and nurturing home environment, so that they are better able to fulfil their potential later in life. Those who lack these vital foundational inputs are at risk of not reaching their development potential. To help ensure that no child in Namibia lacks any of these vital inputs, the Government of Namibia offers a combination of services referred to as **Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD)** services. These services encompass healthcare, nutrition, early stimulation and learning, early care, civil registration, child care and protection, and education. In Namibia, IECD falls under the mandate of four ministries, as shown on the right. Strengthened coordination is required to enhance their service delivery. This factsheet provides a snapshot of the current situation in each key area of IECD service provision.

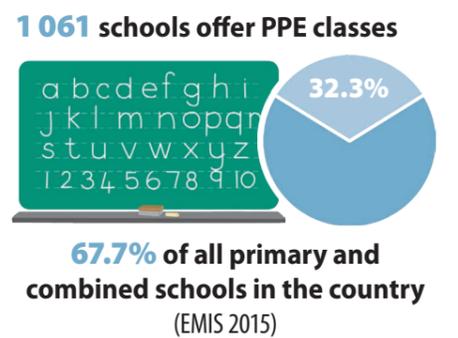
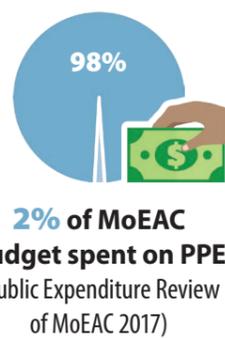
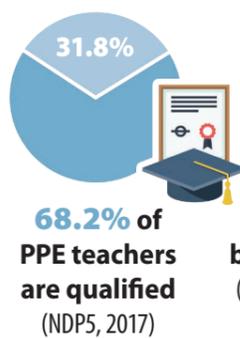
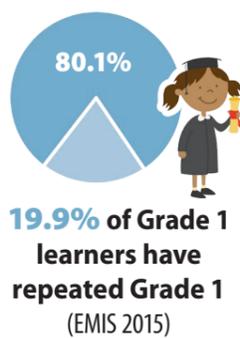
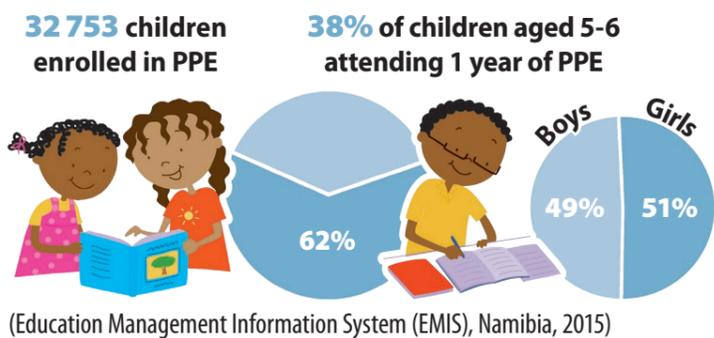


Early Childhood Development (ECD) SNAPSHOT



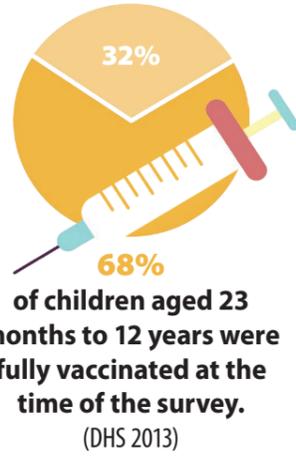
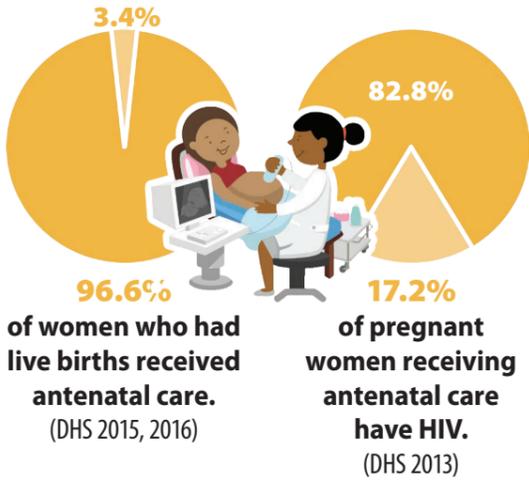
Pre-Primary Education (PPE) SNAPSHOT

Enrolment in PPE is steadily increasing in Namibia, which shows that there is a growing appreciation of the value of a strong foundation. However, not all children (especially in remote areas) are accessing PPE. In addition, high Grade 1 repetition rates illustrate that many learners still do not have the foundational literacy and numeracy skills on which to build their education.



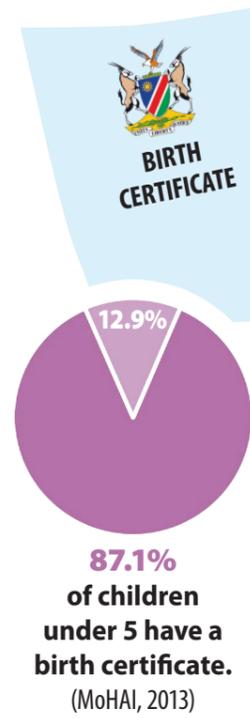
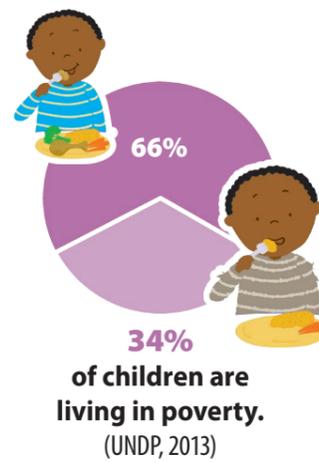
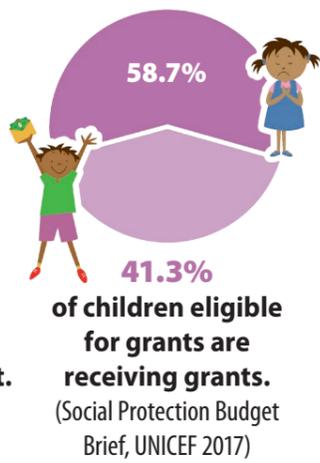
Health and Nutrition SNAPSHOT

Ensuring the good health of both mother and child is a vital component of giving children the best start in life.



Social Protection Child Protection SNAPSHOT

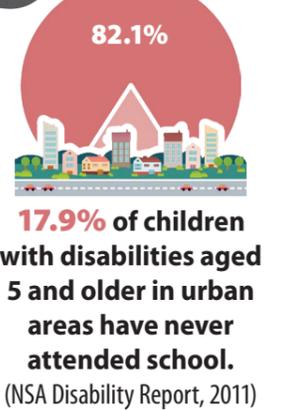
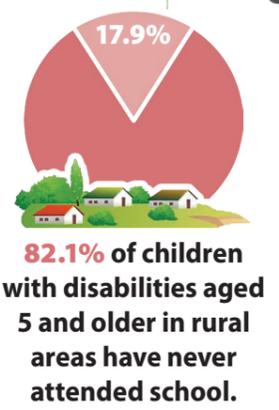
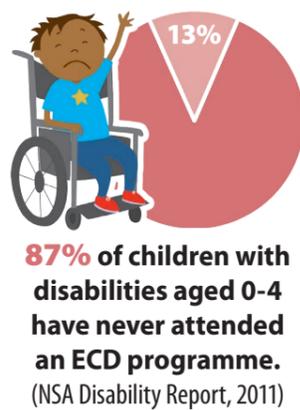
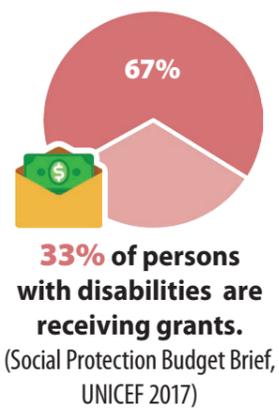
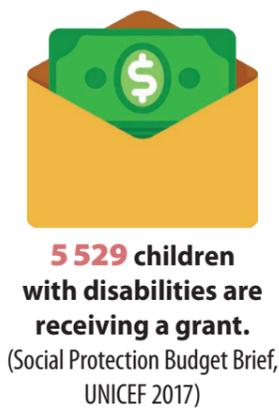
Namibia has established a progressive welfare system in an attempt to ensure that children and vulnerable adults have a basic support system. Children who are eligible can receive **Child Grants** from the MGECW.



To register for any child grant, the child must have a birth certificate. This can be a significant barrier to accessing services, especially if the child was not born in a health facility and the birth has not been registered.

Children with Disabilities SNAPSHOT

ECD centres provide an opportunity for early identification of children with disabilities and their referral to related services. However, a large number of children with disabilities are not accessing ECD, and many educators still require further training in early identification and referral.

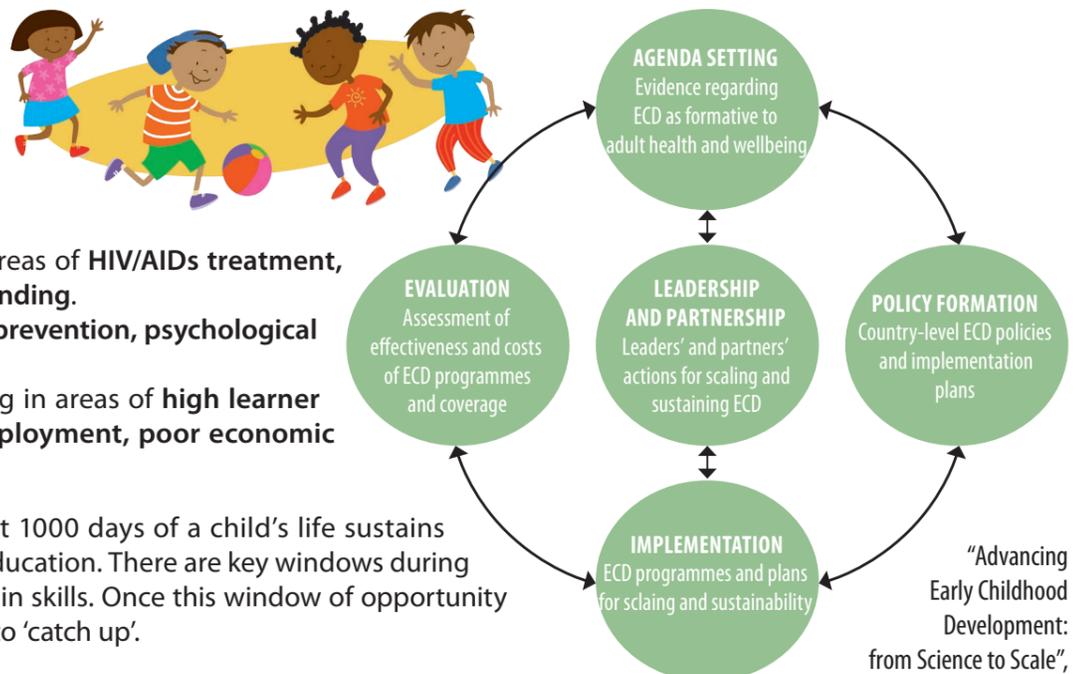


Why Early Moments Matter

Evidence shows that early experiences shape the rest of a child's life. Early investments in IECD can generate long-term impacts and savings.

- Investing early in **child and maternal health** reduces spending in areas of HIV/AIDs treatment, social protection, stunting, poor nutrition and reactionary health spending.
- Investing early in **child protection** reduces spending in areas of GBV prevention, psychological support, policing, judicial processes, and child welfare grants.
- Investing early in **early stimulation and learning** reduces spending in areas of high learner repetition and dropout rates, out-of-school children, youth unemployment, poor economic performance, persistent poverty and low productivity.

The burden and cost of inaction is high. A holistic response to the first 1000 days of a child's life sustains future investments in child health, social and psychological welfare and education. There are key windows during children's development where they are most responsive to learning certain skills. Once this window of opportunity closes, the child's ability to learn decreases, making it much more difficult to 'catch up'.



"Advancing Early Childhood Development: from Science to Scale", *The Lancet Series*, 4 October 2016 (www.thelancet.com/series/ECD2016).