



Republic of Namibia



Right Start

RIGHT START STRATEGY 2025-2030

A two-pronged strategy
for brand awareness and
behaviour change programme
implementation.



Learn more at www.rightstart.com.na

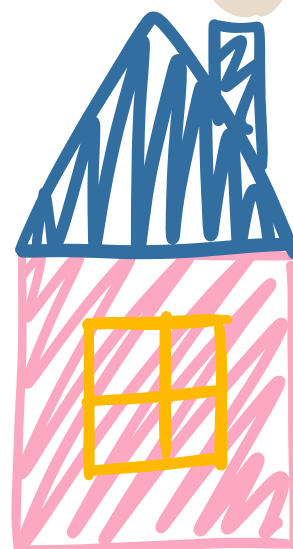
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ACRONYMS

CSI	Corporate Social Investment
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECD-MIS	Early Childhood Development – Management Information System
ECDI	Early Childhood Development Index
EU	European Union
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DWN	Development Workshop Namibia
IECD	Integrated Early Childhood Development
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices
LSM	Living Standards Measure
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MGE CW	Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare
MEIYSAC	Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture
MOHSS	Ministry of Health and Social Services
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NDP6	Sixth National Development Plan
NCF	Nurturing Care Framework
SBC	Social and Behaviour Change
WHO	World Health Organization
TV	Television
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Strategy written by Jessica K Brown,
with inputs from the National RightStart
Committee.

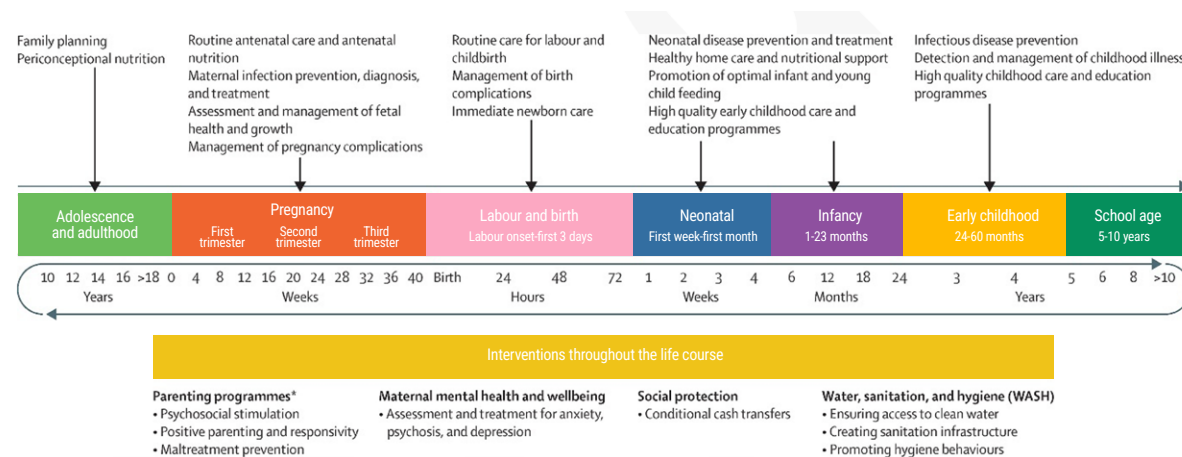


SECTION 1: BACKGROUND AND REFLECTION



1.1 BACKGROUND TO RIGHTSTART

Early childhood, from conception to age 8, is a critical period of rapid brain and body development, laying the foundation for lifelong learning, health, and well-being. The first 1000 days (conception to age 2) are marked by unparalleled growth, with the brain forming millions of neural connections influenced by genetics, nutrition, and environment. Proper nutrition, responsive caregiving, and a stimulating environment are essential, as deficiencies or adverse experiences can lead to long-term issues like impaired cognition, stunted growth, and chronic diseases. The second 1000 days (ages 2 to 5) build on this foundation, with continued brain development, language acquisition, and the refinement of motor, social, emotional, and problem-solving skills. During this time, key physiological systems—neurological, cardiovascular, immune, endocrine, gastrointestinal, and renal—mature rapidly, heavily influenced by the environment. Nurturing settings promote healthy development, while adverse conditions like malnutrition or chronic stress can disrupt growth and increase lifelong health risks.



The Lancet: Interventions to support nurturing care (2017)

The period from school entry to grade 3 (ages 5 to 8) is another crucial phase, focusing on foundational learning. Children develop essential literacy, numeracy, and social skills, which set the stage for future academic success. High-quality early education during this time fosters resilience, self-confidence, and a love of learning, helping to close achievement gaps and prepare children for future challenges. Together, these early years represent a unique opportunity to shape a child's development, emphasizing the importance of supportive environments and interventions to maximize lifelong potential.

In Namibia, too many children are at risk of missing out on their developmental potential due to negative early childhood experiences. Key concerns include limited access to quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) services, high levels of poverty, malnutrition, high levels of violence in homes and communities, lack of early identification and support for children with disabilities, and inadequate infrastructure for early learning and care. Many children, particularly in rural areas, lack access to early education programmes, which are critical for cognitive and social development.



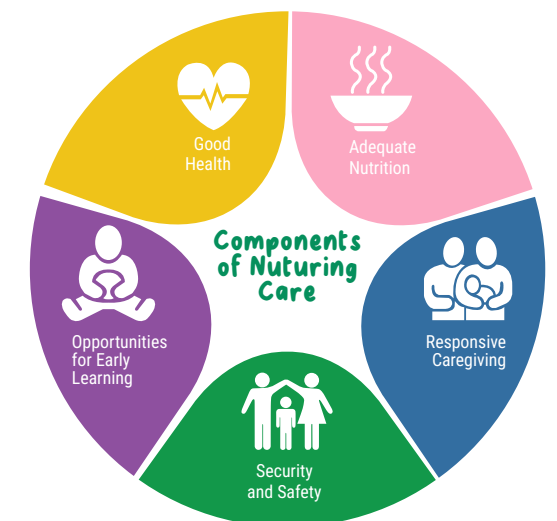
Malnutrition remains a significant issue, with stunting affecting approximately 24% of children under five, impairing physical growth and cognitive development. Additionally, poverty and inequality limit families' ability to provide nurturing environments, with many children experiencing poor living conditions and limited access to healthcare and nutritious food.

While efforts have been made to improve ECD outcomes, many Namibian children are not experiencing the full range of positive early childhood experiences necessary for optimal development. For example, enrollment in pre-primary education has improved but remains low, with only 34% of children aged 4 attending early learning programmes (ECDMIS 2024), and 40% of Grade 1 learners are not considered school ready (UNICEF 2021). Furthermore, disparities between urban and rural areas persist, with rural children facing greater barriers to accessing ECD services.

The RightStart Campaign, originally launched in 2019 to raise awareness around Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD), has been promoting the importance of nurturing care during the early years of life. The campaign is co-led by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGEWCW), the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture (MEIYSAC), and the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS). It has been supported by UNICEF, the EU and Interteam since its launch, with joint implementation including through a range of NGOs and partners. The initial RightStart strategy ran from 2019 to 2023.

The campaigns' goals were to raise awareness about the integrated service and interventions needed to ensure children have the right foundations for life, and to provide simple information which would help parents, caregivers, teachers, communities and service providers to "make a child's first steps the right steps".

In 2024 an effort was made to shift the approach related to Right Start from a "campaign" to a national programme for the delivery of communication, information and advocacy messages related to early childhood. This shift was for the purpose of strengthening the sustainability, reach and impact of the initiative. As a programme it will be enshrined in ministerial plans. The programme focuses on five key pillars: good health, adequate nutrition, opportunities for early learning, responsive caregiving, and safety and security – the components of the Nurturing Care Framework. The overall objective of the RightStart programme is to improve the general understanding of the importance of ECD across all levels of society, from households to service providers, to policy makers and parliamentarians.



The Nurturing Care Framework

The programme seeks to establish a common understanding that the early years of a child's life, from conception to formal school entry is a period of unprecedented development, where positive experiences are required to build a strong foundation. Children who are supported to develop optimally during this period, with good nutrition, health care, early learning and play, positive, loving and nurturing parenting, and protection from violence, neglect and harm have better lifelong outcomes than their peers who don't have these positive experiences in the early years. Children who benefit from positive early years interventions perform better in school, have better health and wellbeing and go on to be higher earners than their peers.

In an exciting development, Right Start was included as a key programme under the ECD Thematic areas in NDP6. As one of the central ECD interventions it is described in NDP6 as follows:

“ a systematic media, communications and outreach programme “RightStart Namibia” aims to provide accurate, trusted information to make IECD a cornerstone of every household in Namibia. RightStart works to improve knowledge, attitudes and practice related to ECD ensuring that all children can reach their full potential through comprehensive early development information and outreach services, focusing on ensuring that there is a strong understanding about the integrated components of early childhood development based on the nurturing care framework. ”

In order to further formalise the activities of the programme, this strategy and associated implementation plan has been developed.

1.2 WHERE IS RIGHTSTART CURRENTLY? A REFLECTION AND REVIEW.

In the development of the updated strategy, a review of RightStart so far was conducted, looking at the activities which had taken place and reflecting on what worked and what could be improved in this next phase.

COORDINATION, PLANNING, AND FUNDING

What worked well:

The Right Start initiative benefited from strong multi-sectoral coordination, involving three ministries in a steering body that reported to the National IECD Steering Committee. This joint planning structure helped align funding and implementation efforts, reducing duplication and ensuring consistency. The initiative also successfully integrated new ECD communication activities, like Thrive by 5, preventing fragmentation. A well-structured advocacy strategy (2019-2023) provided clear objectives, although it lacked a detailed implementation plan.

What to strengthen:

With the end of donor funding in the last phase, coordination weakened, particularly as funding for a Right Start coordinator ceased. Future efforts should embed coordination within ministerial roles to ensure sustainability. Additionally, Public Relations Officers from ministries were not actively involved, limiting visibility. National budget allocations for Right Start were minimal, requiring ministries to embed funding into their budgets going forward.

REACH AND ENGAGEMENT

What worked well:

The campaign effectively used a mixed approach—TV, radio, print, social media, brochures, and community roadshows—to engage stakeholders. Collaboration with NGOs significantly increased community reach. For instance, Development Workshop Namibia (DWN) reached 80,000 households through house-to-house visits and 14,000 parents through parenting sessions. The Nutrition and Food Security Alliance of Namibia (NASFAN) shared RightStart materials with their membership of NGOs across the country.

What to strengthen:

Despite extensive media coverage, awareness of Right Start remained low, even among key ministries and partners. Strengthening brand visibility and expanding stakeholder engagement are crucial. Media outreach was largely directed at urban, high-income groups through mainstream platforms such as TV or drive-time radio targeting higher income groups. Future campaigns should prioritize platforms catering to lower-income and rural communities, and ensure engagements happen in local languages. Moreover, community outreach and engagement efforts were limited in scope, and should be further expanded through sustained collaboration with NGOs and grassroots organizations.

MATERIALS

What worked well:

A wide range of high-quality materials was developed across different nurturing care domains, supporting the Right Start campaign's messaging and outreach. The campaign website provided a central platform for sharing and storing these materials, ensuring accessibility for stakeholders. Additionally, materials were effectively used in various media formats, including print, radio, TV, and social media, contributing to broad audience engagement.

What to strengthen:

Material distribution and storage need improvement, as there is no centralized repository, leading to duplication and inefficiencies. Establishing a well-organized, accessible database—ideally on a sustainable website—would enhance coordination. Additionally, most materials were developed in English, limiting accessibility for diverse communities. Expanding content in local languages, especially for radio and community engagement, would improve reach. Materials should also be made available in accessible forms for parents and children with disabilities, including in braille and large font formats. Tailoring messages for different stakeholders, based on their needs and motivations, would further enhance impact. Lastly, the material review process was at times slow due to multiple layers of approval. Streamlining this process through clear guidelines and a brand book would ensure timely content delivery.





BRANDING ALIGNMENT WITH CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES.

To ensure that RightStart's brand positioning remains relevant and resonant with evolving audiences, it is crucial to evaluate the foundational elements of the campaign. This was done by the communication agency supporting the ministries in the strategy development. It was found that the brand essence and campaign foundations continue to align well and do not need to be changed in the course of this strategy, including the logo and slogan.



SUSTAINABILITY

What worked well:

Right Start has been successfully embedded in national policy frameworks, including the ECD thematic area of the 6th National Development Plan and ECD transition planning. This integration ensures long-term government recognition and institutionalization. Additionally, the initiative has received donor support for key activities, including the development of materials and the campaign website, which served as a central information hub.

What to strengthen:

Despite policy alignment, financial sustainability remains a challenge. Limited national budget allocations and reliance on donor funding have made long-term implementation uncertain. To address this, Right Start should secure dedicated funding within ministerial budgets and integrate key activities into annual government plans. Furthermore, the campaign website, which went offline due to unpaid hosting fees, should transition to a sustainable hosting model independent of donor contributions. Strengthening inter-ministerial coordination and embedding Right Start within government structure and programmes – such as the MoHSS parenting programme, IECD programmes and MEIYSACs adult literacy programme, rather than relying on external coordination, will also enhance sustainability.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

While indicators were selected, no baseline study was conducted, and monitoring efforts were limited. The recent KAP study offers a foundation for future evaluations. Phase 2 should implement a clear M&E framework, regularly updated through the coordination body, to track progress effectively.

SECTION 2: TAKING THE NEXT STEP





Existing RightStart Logo and Slogan

RightStart is a national communication and advocacy programme led by the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture, and the Ministry of Health and Social Services. It supports the ECD agenda by disseminating clear, evidence-based information on the importance of ECD and the concrete actions that parents, caregivers, teachers, community members, service providers, and other stakeholders can take to improve the early years for young children. In the new phase of RightStart these principles remain, but RightStart's objectives have broadened to increase the range and type of partnership and to strengthen the overall brand trust and awareness, as well as sharing thematic messages based on the Nurturing Care Framework pillars.



2.1 THE STRATEGIC GOALS OF RIGHTSTART

For RightStart to be impactful, it must be both a recognized and trusted brand. This requires clear, relevant messaging and strong calls to action within each thematic pillar.

To achieve this, RightStart has two key strategic goals:

1. To be the trusted voice and central communication platform for all matters related to ECD. This ensures that all stakeholders and strategic partners recognize RightStart as the authoritative source for ECD information and advocacy.
2. To serve as the primary vehicle for multi-stakeholder communication and advocacy on ECD. This means that ECD-related messaging is consistently amplified through RightStart, ensuring a unified voice and maximizing impact.

Ultimately, these goals aim to drive nationwide improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to ECD, leading to better early childhood outcomes.



VISION

RightStart aims to contribute to a Namibia where every child is able to reach their full potential by having the Right Start in life, supported by informed parents, family, an community.



MISSION

RightStart's mission is to help Namibian children to live in an enabling, positive, inclusive conducive, and nurturing environment that supports them to grow, learn, and develop into their best selves. By providing information and guidance to Namibians to foster positive and loving experiences for their children, RightStart aims to ultimately improve educational performance, health, well-being, and economic prospects for all Namibian children, setting the stage for a brighter and successful future.



RIGHTSTART OBJECTIVE:

Through RightStart, stakeholders, organisations and strategy partners understand how important the early years of a child's life are. Especially in terms of ensuring optimal support through adequate nutrition, healthcare, early learning and play, caring and responsive parenting, and protection from violence and harm. By addressing these foundational elements, and by bringing together a range of stakeholders speaking one voice, RightStart strives to build a society where every child's early experiences set the stage for resilience, health, wellbeing, holistic development, academic achievement, and long-term socioeconomic well-being.



PROGRAMME GOALS:

To achieve its vision and mission, RightStart focuses on the following goals with the expectation of achieving the associated results:

GOALS	EXPECTED RESULTS
1. To establish RightStart as the trusted voice and central communication platform for all matters related to ECD.	1. RightStart is recognized as the authoritative source for ECD information and advocacy.
2. To foster multi-stakeholder advocacy and serve as the primary vehicle for multi-stakeholder communication and advocacy on ECD.	2. ECD-related messaging is consistently amplified through RightStart, ensuring a unified voice and maximizing impact.
3. To drive public awareness and demand for quality ECD services.	3. Increased public awareness and demand for quality ECD services.
4. To catalyze behaviour change, encouraging caregivers and communities to adopt practices that prioritize children's inclusivity and holistic well-being.	4. Caregivers and communities adopt practices that support children's holistic well-being.
5. To enhance the reach and impact of existing ECD programmes through coordinated communication and community-led solutions.	5. Existing ECD programmes are more effective and reach more children through coordinated efforts.

By achieving these goals and expected results, RightStart aims to transform societal attitudes toward early childhood, ensuring that every Namibian child benefits from the care, opportunities, and protection they deserve.

2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RIGHTSTART PHASE 2:



To address the challenges identified and amplify the strengths of the RightStart initiative so far and to achieve the goals the following recommendations are made:



Strengthen governance and institutional coordination

- Embed coordination within ministerial roles: Formalize multi-sectoral coordination by integrating RightStart oversight into the mandates of relevant ministries, ensuring continuity beyond donor funding. Designate ministry-based focal points to lead planning and reporting.
- Ensure regular convening of the technical committee: Have a well functioning decision-making body to harmonize messaging, reduce duplication, and expedite approvals. Equip the committee with a brand guide and clear protocols for material development.
- Activate monthly stakeholder engagement: Host fixed meetings with ministries, NGOs, and partners to share updates, solicit feedback, and maintain commitment. Involve Public Relations Officers to amplify visibility through government communication channels.



Secure sustainable financing

- Integrate RightStart into government budgets: Advocate for dedicated line items in ministerial budgets to fund core activities, supported by evidence of the initiative's alignment with national development plans.
- Develop a private-sector partnership strategy: Proactively engage corporate sponsors through tailored pitches (e.g., CSR opportunities) to diversify funding sources and expand reach.
- Transition to sustainable digital infrastructure: Migrate the campaign website to a government-hosted platform with allocated maintenance funds to prevent disruptions.



Expand inclusive outreach and engagement:

- Ensure reach to rural and low-income audiences: Allocate media budgets to platforms accessible to marginalized communities (e.g., local-language radio, community newspapers and pamphlets). Use demographic data to select channels by locality, language, and socioeconomic factors.
- Boost grassroots engagement: Increase funding for community-driven activities (e.g., roadshows, parenting sessions) and deepen partnerships with NGOs, CSOs, and FBOs with proven reach in underserved areas.
- Adopt a multilingual communication strategy: Translate materials into major local languages and train community facilitators to deliver messages contextually.



Optimize material development and accessibility

- Create a centralized digital repository: Develop a ministry-managed platform for storing, updating, and distributing materials to prevent duplication. Include version control and usage analytics.
- Accelerate material production: Streamline approval processes by empowering the technical committee to review content against predefined brand guidelines.
- Tailor materials by audience: Customize messaging for stakeholders (e.g., parents, policymakers) while maintaining core campaign themes.



Reinforce monitoring, evaluation, and learning

- Implement a robust M&E framework: Conduct a baseline study and use the KAP findings to track progress. Define clear indicators for reach, behaviour change, and system strengthening.
- Regularly share insights: Integrate M&E data into stakeholder meetings to guide adaptive management and report outcomes to funders and partners.



Maintain cohesive branding and messaging

- Retain core brand elements: Continue using the existing logo and slogan, as they align with campaign objectives. Regularly assess brand resonance through stakeholder feedback.
- Ensure message consistency: Focus on repetition of core themes across all channels while allowing flexibility in delivery formats (e.g., radio dramas vs. social media).

2.3 IDENTIFYING THE RIGHTSTART AUDIENCES



Parents and Guardians



Role:

They are directly responsible for the child's upbringing and need information on proper nutrition, health care, early learning activities, inclusive and positive parenting techniques



Educators, Teachers And Care Providers



Role:

Teachers and caregivers at ECD centres and preschools who can implement early learning curricula, play based learning, child-centered, developmentally appropriate and nurturing practices – including first response to concerns about health or safety.



Community and Traditional Leaders, Churches and Influencers



Role:

Chiefs, religious and traditional leaders, and local influencers who can advocate for the importance of ECD and mobilise community support and are community thought leaders who influence discourse.



Healthcare Providers, Social Workers, Teachers, Outreach Workers



Role:

Play a critical role in provision of trusted information, early detection of health or protection issues and providing guidance on child nutrition, health, safety and wellness. Responsibility for delivery of certain parental support interventions.



**Policy Makers,
Ministries and
Government Agencies**



Role:
Government officials and policymakers who can create supportive policies and allocate resources for ECD programmes.



**(Inter)National
Development Partners
and Organisations**



Role:
Organisations that can provide funding, resources, training, and expertise in ECD.



Ngos, Npos, Csos, Fbos



Role:
Organisations that can support coordination, convening, dialogue, resources, training, and expertise in ECD.



**Media and
Communication
Outlets**



Role:
Platforms that can help spread awareness and educate the broader community about the importance of early childhood development.



**Businesses and
Employers**



Role:
Funding provider through corporate social investments. As Employers can provide support for parents, such as parental leave, flexible working hours and child care options.

2.4 TWO-PRONGED APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTING RIGHTSTART

With the two strategic goals, in this strategy period (2025-2031) RightStart's challenge is to communicate both:

1

The brand itself and what it stands for, including the overall existence of RightStart as the central communication and behaviour change vehicle for ECD nationally.

2

The key messages under the RightStart which promote knowledge, attitude and best practices in line with the Nurturing Care Framework.

This calls for a reconfiguring the communication around RightStart in a two-pronged approach. To support this, the strategy has two implementation plans that need to run in parallel.

SECTION 3: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN ONE – BRAND AWARENESS



3.1 OBJECTIVES:



The objective of this phase is to increase the awareness about RightStart as a trusted brand. Increasing awareness of RightStart as a trusted brand for ECD guidance is essential for several reasons:

- It creates a single, reliable source of information that parents, educators, and policymakers can turn to for evidence-based, culturally relevant and developmentally appropriate practices.
- A trusted brand unifies communities around best practices in early childhood care, encouraging safer, more nurturing, and non-violent parenting methods.
- When people recognize and trust RightStart, it becomes a powerful advocate for policy changes and resource allocation that support early childhood development.
- A well-known brand can help dispel outdated practices—such as harsh physical discipline—by promoting positive, conscious, child-centered, play-based learning and responsive caregiving.
- It recognises and celebrates positive social and cultural practices and helps to sustain these traditions.
- It encourages collaborative efforts among all stakeholders, from families to government agencies, ensuring every Namibian child gets a strong start in life

3.2 MESSAGES TO SUPPORT BRAND AWARENESS

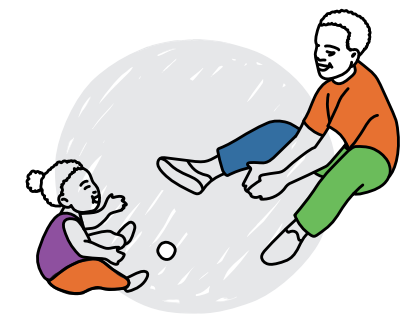


Objective	Message	Call to Action
1. Increase awareness about RightStart as a brand which is trusted for accurate information.	• RightStart is the programme that shows Namibian's how to make a child's first steps, the right steps. • RightStart is "with you every step of the way" to help you play your part in getting the early years right for young children.	Cut through the noise! If it's accurate, trusted, evidence informed information you want, RightStart is the banding you look for.
2. Increase buy-in to RightStart being the vehicle for national ECD behaviour change communication and advocacy	• RightStart is the national voice when it comes to Early Years guidance in Namibia, bringing together many stakeholders, it provides accurate, trusted information. • RightStart is the official vehicle for early childhood advocacy and behaviour change communication—where families, communities, and policymakers unite to give every Namibian child the best start in life.	Support our mission and join the movement to ensure every child receives the care, love, and opportunities they deserve.

As well as the message there is an intention to influence we want the audience to know (knowledge), what we want them to think (attitude), and then what we want them to do (practice), in order to see shifts in the ultimately experience and outcomes for children. For the overall brand awareness these are as follows:

Thematic Area	Objective	Knowledge (K) - What people should know	Attitude (A) - What people should believe	Practice (P) - What people should do
Brand Awareness	Increase awareness about RightStart as a trusted brand.	RightStart provides accurate and trusted ECD information.	RightStart is the national voice for ECD advocacy and change.	Recognize RightStart as the go-to source for ECD guidance and share its messages.
	Increase buy-in to RightStart as the key vehicle for ECD communication.	RightStart unites stakeholders for national ECD behaviour change.	RightStart empowers communities, families, and policymakers.	Follow and promote RightStart's resources and initiatives.

3.3 INITIAL ACTIVITY PLAN AS PART OF RIGHTSTART BRAND AWARENESS



- Under the RightStart coordination committee, have a clear distinction between "implementation activities" for the RightStart programme and "Brand Identity" activities for developing the brand.
- Streamline communication channels and eliminate too many decision processes to reduce brand confusion or dilution.
- Ensure that all stakeholders and strategy partners understand and embrace the core message, regardless of their individual category focus or media activity idea. Only a repeated integrated core message will help to grow awareness and engagement.
- Develop website and create social media content that focus on brand awareness and brand promotion, separate from the RightStart content messages.
- Identify and secure influencers and brand ambassadors within stakeholders and strategy partners helping you to obtain overall concept buy-in.
- Create a RightStart brand campaign communicating the brand purpose (amplifying the visibility of the slogan) as per brand strategy to create brand awareness, state benefits and values, introducing the communication service offer.

The table below illustrates what actions RightStart should consider under this strategic goal. This is detailed further in the implementation plan.



	Category	Communication Action	Description
High Level Buy in to Brand	Briefings	Ministerial and ED briefings	Brief decision makers on RightStart and get their endorsement to use as common vehicle for related messaging under their mandates.
	Ambassadors	Public Endorsements (High-Level: Ministers, Parliamentarians, Governors)	Encourage high-profile leaders to publicly support and advocate for RightStart, increasing credibility and policy engagement. This includes: - The president - The Vice President - The Prime Minister - Members of parliament - Governors - Ministers of key-line ministries - Former presidents and first-spouses
		Face of Campaigns	Involve high level names and trusted, well-known voices to be faces on RightStart on Social and Legacy Media campaigns
		Champions	Designate officials as "RightStart" champions to promote the overall campaign and to speak for it on high level platforms.
Overall Brand Awareness	Media and Public Relations	Press Releases, Articles, and Interviews	Issue press releases and publish articles to share updates, success stories, and insights. Organize media interviews with key stakeholders.
		Media Partnerships	Partner with radio and TV stations to air programmes and advertisements promoting RightStart initiatives.
		Public Endorsements (High-Level: Ministers, Parliamentarians, Influencers)	Encourage high-profile leaders to publicly support and advocate for RightStart, increasing credibility and policy engagement.
		Public Endorsements (Community Level)	Mobilize children, parents, teachers, local leaders and community influencers to endorse and promote RightStart programmes at grassroots levels.
	Branding and Awareness	RightStart Brochure	Provide a detailed overview of the RightStart concept, its objectives, and benefits to inform and engage stakeholders.
		Website	Act as an information hub with key programme details, updates, media center, and downloadable resources.
		RightStart Branded PR Materials	Distribute branded items (flags, banners, pop-up materials, gazebo, t-shirts, pens) at events to reinforce brand identity.
		RightStart Brochure and Info Material (Including CSR Guidelines)	Introduce the RightStart concept to private sector while also providing CSR guidelines for businesses to ensure message consistency.
	Stakeholder Engagement and Events	Workshops and Seminars	Organize sessions to align stakeholders, share knowledge, and create a unified message.
		Events and Activity Planning/Organiser	Plan and execute events where RightStart can interact with stakeholders, beneficiaries, and the public.
		Expo Coordinator	Provide guidelines on setting up a RightStart exhibition stand while maintaining corporate identity.
		Invite Influencers and Leaders to Media and Community Platforms as Guest Speakers	Arrange for influential figures and respected community members to speak at key events, media discussions, and community forums to advocate for RightStart.
	Digital and Social Media Marketing	Social Media Campaigns	Develop and run strategic social media initiatives to promote RightStart programmes, share updates, and engage with the online community.
	Corporate and Community Partnerships	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Initiatives	Encourage businesses to include RightStart in their CSR programmes, securing financial and resource support.

SECTION 4:

IMPLEMENTATION

PLAN TWO – RIGHT-START PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION



4.1 OBJECTIVE OF RIGHTSTART PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION



With improved brand awareness, the RightStart programmes' other goal is to support Ministries and the various partner organisations working on the ground with a strong and clear voice that helps them to communicate about the value of ECD and the relevant thematic elements that make up nurturing care, based on their mandates, contexts, and needs. From the ministry perspective, there should be drive for general information sharing and cohesion related to ECD communications. From NGOs and other partners, the messages and assets should assist them in their individual ECD programmes, while also ensuring consistency of messaging nationally.

It is also essential this support builds on what has previously been achieved and carried out at the behest of the Ministries by the different stakeholders and organisations. For this, participating strategic partners, key ministries, NGOs, and welfare organisations will be given a clear mix of media and an opportunity to work with RightStart. This is also where they decide which form their involvement will take. Choosing under which of the ECD pillars they would like to build their communication, as well as simple messaging to measure their own communication strategies against.

For example, while RightStart's message is to **Make a Child's First Steps It's Right Steps**

Umbrella messaging must tie into:

Good Health

is one of the steps to ensuring every child takes the right steps.

Adequate Nutrition

is one of the steps to ensuring every child takes the right steps.

Opportunities for Early Learning

is one of the steps to ensuring every child takes the right steps.

Responsive caregiving

is one of the steps to ensure every child takes the right steps.

Safety and Security

is one of the steps to ensuring every child takes the right steps.

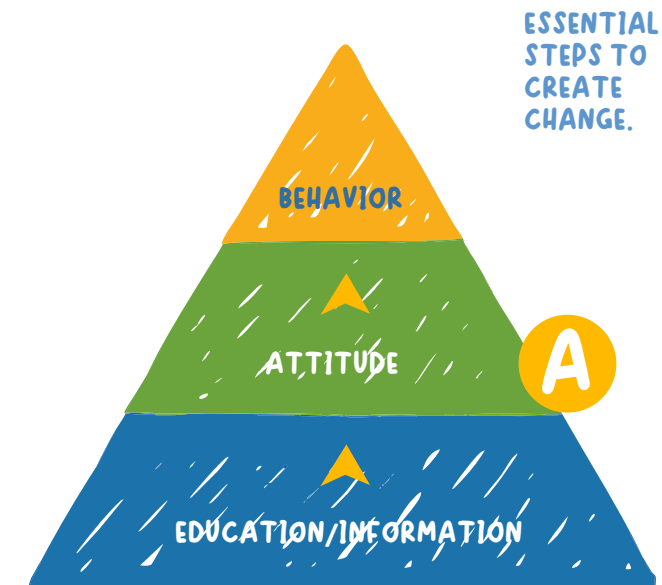
While there are an extensive number of issues and sub-themes under each component, it is important that RightStart remains focused and strategic, covering key issues without losing focus with over-expansion of the messages. It is also important that the five pillars are never prioritized over one another as all are required in a holistic manner for optimal child development. The concrete messages below, help to further unpack what these steps are in a more tangible way, with a call to action.

4.2 RIGHTSTART THEMATIC MESSAGES

For behaviour change, there is a process and a relationship between knowledge, attitude and practice. For each of the thematic areas, as well as overarching messages, it's also suggested to have a clear breakdown of ultimately what we want the audience to know (knowledge), what we want them to think (attitude), and then what we want them to do (practice), in order to see shifts in the ultimately experience and outcomes for children.

These are detailed below together with the core messages.

Keeping the intended knowledge, attitude and practices in mind will help to tailor and adapt the messages based on the audience



Messages on the broad value of ECD:

OBJECTIVE	MESSAGES
1. Ensure overarching understanding that the early years of a child's life a critical and short window of time which has a profound impact on their life-long outcomes.	90% of a child's brain develops before the age of 5. - Experiences in the earliest years of a child's life – shape their future.
2. Ensure that value is put on early years interventions	- No period in a child's life is more critical in determining their future than the time from conception to school going age! - Early years matter! .
3. Emphasise the joint nature of responsibility to get the early years right.	- It takes a village to raise a child – we need to work together to ensure every Namibian child has the RightStart in life. - We all play a role for giving a child the RightStart

Intended Knowledge, attitude and practices attained:

Thematic Area	Objective	Knowledge (K) - What people should know	Attitude (A) - What people should believe	Practice (P) - What people should do
Overall ECD Awareness	Ensure understanding of the critical early years.	90% of brain development happens before age 5.	Early years shape future success.	Prioritize early childhood interventions.
	Emphasize collective responsibility for ECD.	A child's future is a shared responsibility.	Every adult plays a role in ensuring a child's right start.	Work together as a community to improve ECD outcomes.

Messages on each pillar of the Nurturing Care Framework:



GOOD HEALTH

OBJECTIVE	MESSAGES
1. Pregnant women consistently attend antenatal clinic visits and relevant referrals as soon as they know they're pregnant. Fathers accompany them.	Pregnant? Stay healthy from the start. Go for a pre-natal check up at a medical facility as soon as you find out you're pregnant and keep going throughout! Fathers – join your pregnant partner to support her and learn.
2. Children are fully immunized	Protect your child by getting all the recommended vaccines on time. Follow the immunisation schedule to keep your child healthy.
3. Pregnant women do not drink alcohol or smoke during pregnancy and should understand that this impacts child development and mother and baby's health.	- Alcohol, tobacco and drugs can seriously harm your health and the health and development of your baby. Avoid recreational drugs, alcohol and smoking during pregnancy. - Children exposed to mothers smoking, drinking and recreational drugs in the womb can have serious development and behaviour issues including challenges with cognitive development resulting learning challenges, behavioural issues, and disabilities.



ADEQUATE NUTRITION

OBJECTIVE	MESSAGES
1. Mothers breast feed for as long as possible.	Breast is best! Breastfeed your baby exclusively for at least 6 months.
2. Practice exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months, thereafter, introduce solids and continue breastfeeding for at least 12 months and up to 24 months.	- Breastfeeding reduces the risk of malnutrition. Breastfeed up to the age of 2 years or beyond to protect your child. - Breastfeeding helps to protect your baby from infections and some chronic diseases later in life - Breastfeeding is good for mum and baby, it helps mothers to reduce stress, helps them to lose weight after pregnancy and can lower the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases - Breastmilk provides all the nutrients a baby needs up to the age of 6 months. - Breastfeeding is very convenient- It is clean and safe, always available, at the correct temperature and it is free - Breastfeeding helps establish a strong emotional bond between mother and her baby - If you need to be away from your baby, you can express your milk, and have it fed to your baby by spoon or cup that has been washed with soap and water.

ADEQUATE NUTRITION CONTINUED

OBJECTIVE	MESSAGES
3. Complementary feeding is done with food of the right consistency and through active feeding. Food that is too runny doesn't properly nourish your baby.	- Make every meal count for your baby to grow up healthy and strong - At the age of 6 months, while continuing to breastfeed, start introducing soft, home cooked foods into your baby's diet. - As your baby grows older, offer your baby different types and "thick/rough" textures of home cooked foods. - Do not give your baby soft porridge through a bottle - Ensure porridge is thick enough to be filled with nutrients (not soft porridge dripping off spoon).
4. A mixed and balance diet is given to young children, with their nutrition being prioritised.	- Ensure your child eats a variety of foods, including fruits and vegetables, beans, eggs, milk and other animal protein foods - Ensure young children eat healthy, nutrient dense food (like milk, peanut butter, meat, eggs, beans) to help keep them healthy and strong. - A growing child can't live off only porridge - Each mouthful is building a brain and body. Prioritise the youngest with the nutritious foods! - Avoid giving your child snacks with a lot of sugar, salt and fat (such as juice, sweets, chips, cakes and fast foods) - Children with severe disabilities require specialized feeding- take your child to the nearest health facility if your child feeds with any difficulty



OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING

OBJECTIVE	MESSAGES
1. Caregivers and educarers understand that learning starts young, and from birth children are exposed to early stimulation and age-appropriate play.	- Learning really is lifelong! Learning starts from the beginning of life. - Children are born ready and eager to learn- important skills like language, problem solving, and reasoning are learned before the age of 3 years! - Babies are born with amazing capacity for learning. Songs, stories, pictures, making faces and speaking to them all helps their brain to grown.
2. Caregivers and ECD centres practice play-based early stimulation and learning and understand the benefits of play.	- Young children learn through play – play teaches problem solving, communication skills, social skills, caring, confidence and much more! - Play is learning and every game is a lesson – encourage and engage in children's play. - Young brains are built through play. - The ECD centre should not resemble the school classroom. It should be more playful, louder, freer and with more freedom in the children's expression.
3. Parents and ECD centres engage with children in their mother tongues	- Celebrate your language! Use your mother tongue to communicate, sing, and tell stories to your children. This reinforces cultural identity and improves language fluences while boosting early learning - Fluency in mother tongue helps fluency in English - Choose an ECD centre teaching in your mother tongue – this will set your child up for mother tongue learning in school.



RESPONSIVE CAREGIVING

OBJECTIVE	MESSAGES
1. Parents and caregivers form close and affectionate bonds with their young children from birth	- An early bond make parenting easier. Hold, cuddle, and talk to your baby every day. These loving moments build a strong bond that helps your child grow. - Children crave attention, giving them attention for positive behaviours will encourage these habits.
2. Parents and caregivers play and communicate with their children (using positive cultural practices as much as possible).	Violence damages brain development and leads to more violence. Use kind words and gentle touches when you play with your child. Avoid harsh discipline and use positive traditions to guide behaviour.
4. Fathers are actively involved in their children's lives	- Fathers- we need you! Children with actively involved fathers have better life outcomes than those without. - Fathers, spend time with your children. Play, talk, and care for them every day to build a loving relationship - Fatherhood is a privilege and joy when it is more than just a financial contribution. - Being a father is the best job in the world!



SAFETY AND SECURITY

OBJECTIVE	MESSAGES
1. Child abuse is reduced and families understand the impact of violence on children.	- Violence stunts child brain development and damages bonding between child and caregiver. - The period from birth to age 3 is when children learn social and emotional skills, if they experience harsh treatment and violence in their early years it will stunt this development and make them more violent themselves. - Stop normalising violence: As communities we can hold ourselves and each other to account. - Report child abuse – don't handle it in the family or community. - Our children deserve a true childhood! Do not enforce adult labour or practices on them. - Protect our child from harm. Reject any form of abuse. Children rights are not a choice.

SAFETY AND SECURITY CONTINUED

OBJECTIVE	MESSAGES
2. Parents, teachers and community members use non-violent methods for child behaviour management	- Violence and neglect can stunt child brain development. Choose non-violence in homes. - Children who experience violence and neglect in childhood are more likely to struggle with behavioural and mental health issues. - Violence breeds violence. - Violence levels in Namibia are at crisis level. The change starts with us. - Children deserve their childhoods, do not subject them to adult labour
3. Parents, teachers and community members make environments safe for children	- The environments children live in impact their health and development. Keep spaces free for fecal matter and waste. - Do not practice open defecation. Build latrines and tippy taps if there is no running water. - Cover water containers to protect from illness and drowning. - Teach children road safety and awareness of hazards.

In order to ensure that children with disabilities are not overlooked, a separate, stand-alone set of messages has also been established to promote inclusion, early identification and support to children with disabilities or developmental delays.



INCLUSION AND DISABILITY

OBJECTIVE	MESSAGES
1. Development monitoring and early childhood intervention are taking place to identify and support children with disabilities or developmental delays is sought quickly.	- Parents educate yourselves on developmental milestones. Request a health care worker to provide you with information. - If you have concerns about your child's development, seek help as soon as possible from a medical doctor for quality medical assessment and care. - Parents educate yourselves on developmental milestones. Request a health care worker to provide you with information. - Parents, your child with a disability is eligible for a disability grant, speak to your health provider or social worker. - Parents educate yourselves on developmental milestones. Request a health care worker to provide you with information.

INCLUSION AND DISABILITY CONTINUED

OBJECTIVE	MESSAGES
2. Children with disabilities have the same opportunities as their peers and have tailored support to optimize these opportunities.	- Teachers, children with disabilities should be accommodated in your classes and should be supported with individualized learning. - Watch, listen, adapt: every child's needs are different—respond early and speak to parents and seek additional support if you feel children have disabilities or developmental delays. - Teachers, promote inclusion in and outside classrooms for peer-to-peer support, play and learning. - ECDs, include and integrate children with disabilities. Inclusive play is powerful play. - Every child belongs—in classrooms, playgrounds, and storytelling.
3. ECDs, service providers, and communities accept and support children with disabilities.	- Challenge stereotypes: speak up when you hear myths or stigma about disability and advocate for the rights of children with disabilities. - Model inclusion: invite every child to play, learn, and belong. - Offer support to families with disabilities who might need extra assistance or accommodations. - Children with disabilities are especially vulnerable to abuse, neglect or social isolation – stay vigilant and prevent mistreatment



Intended Knowledge, attitude and practices attained under each component of the nurturing care framework:

Thematic Area	Objective	Knowledge (K) - What people should know	Attitude (A) - What people should believe	Practice (P) - What people should do
Good Health	Encourage pregnant women to attend antenatal care and involve fathers.	Prenatal care ensures a healthy pregnancy and baby.	Fathers should support their partners by attending check-ups too.	Visit clinics early and regularly during pregnancy. Fathers should attend appointments.
	Ensure full immunization for children.	Vaccines protect children from life-threatening diseases.	Immunization is a critical investment in a child's health.	Follow the immunization schedule for full protection.
	Reduce alcohol and tobacco use during pregnancy.	Alcohol, tobacco, and drugs harm the baby.	Avoiding harmful substances leads to healthier babies.	Expecting mothers should not drink or smoke. Families should support healthy behaviours.
Adequate Nutrition	Promote exclusive breastfeeding for at least 6 months.	Breast milk is the best nutrition for babies and supports their development.	Breastfeeding strengthens immunity and development.	Breastfeed exclusively for 6 months, and up to 2 years if possible.
	Ensure complementary feeding is appropriate.	After 6 months, babies also need soft, nutrient-rich foods.	Proper feeding supports brain growth and health.	Introduce thick, nutrient-rich foods after 6 months, in addition to breastfeeding.
	Promote balanced diets for young children.	Young children need diverse food groups daily.	Prioritizing child nutrition ensures long-term health.	Feed children a mix of protein, fruits, and vegetables.
Opportunities for Early Learning	Encourage play-based learning in ECD centers and homes.	Play is essential for cognitive and social development.	Learning through play is more effective than passive learning.	Encourage free, expressive, and engaging play for all young children.
	Promote mother-tongue communication.	First-language learning enhances cognitive growth and language skills.	Using mother tongue strengthens identity and learning.	Speak, sing, and tell stories in mother tongue at home and in ECD centers.
	Ensure learning starts from birth.	Babies absorb and learn from their environment.	Interaction from birth builds language and cognitive skills.	Talk, sing, and interact with babies daily.
Responsive Caregiving	Promote early bonding between parents and children.	Loving touch and communication build strong relationships.	Close parent-child bonds create happier, more resilient children and easier parent-child relationships.	Hold, cuddle, and talk to your baby every day. Make the effort to bond with them from birth.
	Encourage positive parenting and non-violent discipline.	Harsh discipline harms brain development.	Kind and patient caregiving leads to well-adjusted children.	Use non-violent discipline and positive cultural practices.
	Increase father involvement.	Active fatherhood improves child development and outcomes.	Fatherhood is more than financial support—it is love and care.	Fathers should engage in daily caregiving, play, and bonding activities.

Thematic Area	Objective	Knowledge (K) - What people should know	Attitude (A) - What people should believe	Practice (P) - What people should do
Safety and Security	Promote non-violent discipline in homes and schools.	Violence stunts brain development and emotional health.	Children thrive in safe and nurturing environments.	Use non-violent methods to guide behaviour.
	Create safe spaces for children in homes and communities.	Unsafe environments expose children to harm and trauma.	Every child deserves a safe, secure, and loving space.	Childproof homes, schools, and playgrounds to prevent harm.
	Reduce child abuse through awareness and action.	Child abuse has lasting mental and physical consequences.	It is everyone's responsibility to protect children.	Report child abuse and advocate for safe child-friendly spaces.
Inclusion and Disability	Promote early identification and intervention	Early identification helps improve outcomes for children with developmental delays.	Early intervention is essential and can make a big difference.	Monitor children's development and seek support early if needed.
	Ensure equal opportunities with tailored support	All children can thrive when given the right support and opportunities.	Children with disabilities are equally valuable and capable.	Offer inclusive, individualized support to enable participation.
	Foster inclusive support from ECD's, schools, services, and communities	Inclusion benefits all children and strengthens communities.	Every child deserves to feel welcomed and supported.	Support and advocate for inclusive practices in ECDs, schools, services, and communities.



4.3 IDENTIFYING THE RIGHT MEDIA CHANNELS

To maximize the impact of RightStart's outreach, a strategic approach to media channel selection is critical. This involves setting clear objectives, curating a targeted toolkit for stakeholders, and embedding accountability through data-driven evaluation.



1. Define Clear Objectives for Media Engagement

RightStart will equip stakeholders with a Media and Engagement Toolkit designed to align with the following goals:

- Raise ECD awareness through accessible, culturally relevant content.
- Provide actionable tools and tips to empower caregivers and communities.
- Deliver messages in engaging formats (e.g., storytelling, interactive media) to sustain audience interest.
- Foster approachability by linking audiences to additional resources and support.
- Drive behavioral change through evidence-based, repetitive messaging.
- Motivate calls to action (e.g., participation in parenting sessions, resource utilization).



2. Summary of suggested media outlets for reach and depth of engagement:

Type	Media House	Languages	LSM (Income Range)	Coverage	Key Strengths
TV	NBC Television	English, Local Languages	LSM 3–9	National	Public broadcaster with educational and cultural content
	One Africa TV (Future Media)	English	LSM 5–10	National	Commercial station with youth/lifestyle content
Radio	NBC Radio Network (includes National Radio, Omurari, Keisames, etc.)	Oshiwambo, Nama/Damara, Otjiherero, Afrikaans, English, others	LSM 2–8	National & Regional	Extensive local language broadcasting; trusted public service broadcaster
	Omulunga Radio (Future Media)	Oshiwambo	LSM 5–8	North/National	Popular among Oshiwambo speakers; strong in populous areas
	Fresh FM (Future Media)	English	LSM 6–10	Urban/National	Youth-focused; modern content and digital engagement
	Kati FM (additional)	Oshiwambo	LSM 3–7	North-central Namibia	Community-based; strong youth listenership
	Base FM (community)	English, Afrikaans	LSM 2–6	Windhoek (urban)	Grassroots appeal; active in informal settlements
	Kosmos 94.1	Afrikaans	LSM 6–10	Urban/National	Popular with Afrikaans speakers; loyal audience
	NBC Funkhaus FM	German	LSM 7–10	Windhoek	Niche but culturally valuable for German-speaking Namibians

Type	Media House	Languages	LSM (Income Range)	Coverage	Key Strengths
Print	The Namibian	English, Oshiwambo	LSM 4–9	National	Highest circulation; strong online readership
	New Era	English, Local Languages	LSM 3–8	National	Affordable and accessible; strong on developmental news
	Republikein	Afrikaans	LSM 6–10	Urban/National	Long-standing daily with loyal Afrikaans readership
	Namibian Sun	English	LSM 5–9	National	Youth-oriented; modern and accessible format
	Informanté	English, Afrikaans	LSM 4–8	National	Weekly tabloid with strong investigative focus

Understanding LSM (Living Standards Measure)

LSM is a tool used to segment audiences based on access to services, amenities, and living conditions rather than income alone.

- **LSM 1–4:** Typically lower-income households, often in rural or informal settings with limited access to media technology.
- **LSM 5–7:** Middle-range households with moderate access to media, mobile phones, and radio.
- **LSM 8–10:** Higher-income, urban-based households with full access to television, internet, newspapers, and advanced devices.

This helps tailor messaging to ensure inclusivity across economic and geographic groups.

3. Ensure Accountability and Continuous Improvement

RightStart will uphold transparency and adaptability by:

- Utilizing analytics tools: Require media partners to share metrics (e.g., website traffic, social media engagement, audience demographics) to assess performance.
- Gathering stakeholder feedback: Conduct surveys, focus groups, and community consultations to identify preferred content types and platforms.
- Iterating strategically: Regularly review channel performance against objectives and reallocate resources to high-impact platforms.
- By anchoring media selection in clear goals, stakeholder collaboration, and iterative learning, RightStart will amplify its reach, relevance, and capacity to drive lasting change.

The table below lists various activities and opportunities through which stakeholders and implementation partners can amplify their own messages under the RightStart 'umbrella'. This is further fleshed out in the RightStart Implementation Plan.



	Category	Communication Action	Description
High Level Advocacy	Media and Public Relations	Ministerial and Regional Political Leadership Statements	Issuing press releases and official statements to highlight ECD milestones, challenges, and recommendations.
		ECD Parliamentary Caucus Launch	Lobbying for dedicated ECD champions in Parliament to advocate for policy and budgetary support.
		Media Engagements and Public Awareness with high level officials	Promoting ECD messaging through TV, radio, and print media to educate the public and other policymakers.
	Branding and Awareness	Fact Sheets and Policy Briefs	Developing concise, research-backed documents to inform decision-makers about ECD's importance.
		Brand Assets for Ambassadors	Develop Brand Assets for high level policy makers that they can use/wear in public platforms to show their ambassadorial role
	Stakeholder Engagement and Events	Parliamentary and Cabinet Advocacy Sessions	Engaging high-level government officials in structured advocacy discussions on ECD.
		Field Visits with Parliamentarians and Ministers	Organizing visits to ECD centers for policymakers to observe the impact of early childhood programmes.
		Governors and Traditional Leaders Briefings	Conducting regional sessions to involve local authorities in ECD advocacy and implementation.
		Private Sector Roundtables	Engaging business leaders to promote ECD investments as part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
	Digital and Social Media Marketing	Social Media Advocacy	Using digital platforms to share key messages on ECD, targeting decision-makers. Using other influential figures and tagging, linking with priorities.
		Video Content on ECD Impact	Producing short films highlighting the benefits of ECD and the cost of inaction together with high level decision makers.
	Policy and Advocacy	Policy Forums	Organize forums for policymakers to discuss and create supportive policies for ECD.
		Knowledge Sharing between policy makers	Participate in national and international forums to exchange experiences and best practices.
Behaviour change and community level outreach	Stakeholder Engagement and Events	Workshops and Seminars	Organize and manage sessions for stakeholders to align on RightStart messaging and objectives, brining together different ministry stakeholders, NGOs and other partners.
		Regional stakeholder collaboration sessions.	Leverage local events and workshops to spread awareness and engage ministry partners.
		Roadshows	Manage and execute local roadshows to create visibility and engagement.
		Assist in Organizing Open Days and Pre-School Events	Plan events to encourage participation and awareness in early childhood education.
		Joint partner outreach	Arrange multi-partner, multi-service outreach, such as birth registration with immunisation campaigns and parenting sessions.
		Partnership and Networking	Collaborate with local health facilities to integrate ECD messaging into check-ups and immunizations.

	Category	Communication Action	Description
Behaviour change and community level outreach	Branding and Awareness	Printed Materials	Distribute pamphlets, booklets, and posters at clinics, markets, and community centers to spread awareness.
		Public Relations	Create stakeholder awareness through newspaper editorials, advertisements, and press releases.
		Assist with Supplying Advertising and PR Material (Posters, Pamphlets, etc.)	Support stakeholders by providing promotional materials to maintain brand consistency.
		Provide Info Material and Communication Guidelines	Ensure consistent messaging by providing communication guidelines and educational materials.
	Digital and Social Media Marketing	Social Media Campaigns	Utilize Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp to promote awareness and share tips and tie in with legacy media activities
		Social Media	Develop content and messaging for social media platform to be used across ministry and partners social pages. Coordinate social media activities through steering committee.
		Influencer Campaigns	Engage social media influencers to create content around the importance of early childhood development.
	Media and Public Relations	Press Releases	Issue regular press releases on ECD initiatives, activities, and milestones.
		Media Partnerships	Partner with radio and TV stations to air programmes and advertisements promoting ECD.
		Public Endorsements	Encourage leaders to publicly endorse ECD programmes and initiatives to enhance credibility.
	Corporate and Community Partnerships	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	Encourage businesses to integrate ECD into their CSR programmes for long-term impact.
		Public-Private Partnerships	Establish collaborations with businesses to co-fund and support ECD centers and initiatives.



4.4 HIGH LEVEL ADVOCACY AND BUY-IN

Importance of High-Level Buy-In

For RightStart to achieve national impact and long-term sustainability, securing high-level advocacy and buy-in is essential. Support from key decision-makers—such as parliamentarians, ministers, regional governors, and traditional authorities—ensures that they are supportive, elevate ECD as a national and regional priority, and help to improve acceptance. High-level engagement enables policy integration, secures budget allocations, and strengthens multi-sectoral collaboration.

Without strong political will and leadership, efforts to institutionalize ECD initiatives risk being underfunded, deprioritized, or fragmented. A clear commitment from national and regional leadership creates a smooth path for other activities to continue on.

Key Actions for High-Level Buy-In and Engagement

To solidify advocacy at the highest levels, the following actions should be undertaken:

1.

Engage Parliament and Government Ministries

- Conduct high-level briefings for parliamentarians, ministers, and key government officials on the economic and social benefits of investing in early childhood.
- Advocate for the integration of RightStart into national development policies, such as education, health, and social protection plans.
- Secure dedicated budget allocations for ECD interventions within relevant ministries.
- Establish high level representatives as ambassadors and champions of RightStart

2.

Mobilize Regional and Local Authorities

- Facilitate dialogues with regional governors, mayors, and local council representatives to integrate RightStart messaging into regional and municipal plans.
- Establish partnerships with regional governments to fund and implement localized RightStart campaigns.
- Leverage existing community structures, such as village councils and regional/constituency development committees, to embed ECD advocacy at the grassroots level.

3.

Strengthen Traditional and Community Leadership Involvement

- Work closely with traditional leaders and religious institutions to champion ECD.
- Establish a network of RightStart ambassadors among chiefs, faith-based leaders, and respected elders to drive community ownership of ECD efforts.

4.

Develop a High-Level Advocacy Coalition

- Form a National ECD Advocacy Task Force comprising high-ranking government officials, influential policymakers, and corporate leaders.
- Foster collaborations with influential champions, including First Ladies, political figures, and corporate executives, to elevate the visibility of RightStart.
- Organize national summits and policy forums to reinforce the importance of early childhood investment.

5.

Ensure Media Engagement for Political Buy-In

- Utilize mainstream and social media to highlight high-level endorsements and policy commitments to ECD.
- Facilitate media appearances for policymakers who champion RightStart to create a public narrative around leadership support for ECD.
- Encourage government officials to participate in televised discussions, op-eds, and community engagements centered on early childhood development

SECTION 5:

MONITORING AND EVALUATION



BRAND AWARENESS

	Objective	Indicator	Source	Baseline (date)	Target	2028	2029	2030
Brand Awareness	1. Increase awareness about RightStart as a brand which is trusted for accurate information.	% of people aware of RightStart	perception interviews	to be set	60%	25%	50%	60%
		# of national ministry officials aware of RightStart	perception interviews	30	350	150	250	350
		% logo recognition	perception interviews	to be set	60%	25%	50%	60%
	2. Increase buy-in to RightStart being the vehicle for national ECD behaviour change communication and advocacy	# of partners involved in RightStart for their ECD messaging	Funders and implementors	7	20	11	20	20
		# of national documents with RightStart Embedded	National planning and programme documents	3	7	3	5	7
		Public RightStart budget size	Total annual budget	0	0	4,500,000	4,500,000	4,500,000



BROAD ECD AWARENESS

	Objective	Indicator	Source	Baseline (date)	Target	2028	2029	2030
Broad ECD awareness	1. Ensure overarching understanding that the early years of a child's life a critical and short window of time which has a profound impact on their life-long outcomes.	Percentage of children (aged 24-59 months) with whom any adult household member has engaged in 4 or more activities to provide early stimulation and responsive care in the last 3 days	MICS ECDI data	Data Not Available	80%	Data Not Available	60%	80%
	2. Ensure that value is put on early years interventions	Percentage of children aged 36-59 months attending an early childhood education programme.	MICS ECDI data	Data Not Available	65%	Data Not Available	50%	65%
	3. Emphasise the joint nature of responsibility to get the early years right.	Percentage of children (aged 24-59 months) with whom any adult household member has engaged in 4 or more activities to provide early stimulation and responsive care in the last 3 days.	MICS ECDI data	Data Not Available	80%	Data Not Available	60%	80%



HEALTH

	Objective	Indicator	Source	Baseline (date)	Target	2028	2029	2030
Health	1. Pregnant women consistently attend antenatal clinic visits and relevant referrals as soon as they know they're pregnant. Fathers accompany them	"Percentage of pregnant women attending at least four antenatal care (ANC) visits.	DHA	63% (2013)	80%	68%	74%	80%
	2. Children are fully immunised	Percentage of surviving infants who received the third dose of DTP-containing vaccine.	UNICEF Namibia (WHO/UNICEF estimates of national immunization coverage, 2023 revision)	83%(Estimated value, 2023)	96%	87%	91%	96%
	3. Pregnant women do not drink alcohol or smoke during pregnancy	Percentage of pregnant women abstaining from alcohol and tobacco during pregnancy.	MGECW KAP Study (Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices).	25% (KAP, 2024)	9%	20%	15%	9%



NUTRITION

	Objective	Indicator	Source	Baseline (date)	Target	2028	2029	2030
Nutrition	1. Mothers breast feed for as long as possible, and at least for 6 months in areas of food security and for 2 years in areas of low food security.	Percentage of infants exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months.	MGECW KAP Study (Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices).	80% (KAP, 2024)	98%	86%	91%	98%
	2. Complementary feeding is done with food of the right consistency and through active feeding.	"Percentage of children aged 6-23 months receiving minimum dietary diversity. "	MICS	Data Not Available	to be updated	to be updated	to be updated	to be updated
	3. A mixed and balance diet is given to young children, with their nutrition being prioritised.	Percentage of children aged 6-23 months receiving a minimum acceptable diet.	MICS	Data Not Available	to be updated	to be updated	to be updated	to be updated



EARLY LEARNING

	Objective	Indicator	Source	Baseline (date)	Target	2028	2029	2030
Early Learning	1. Caregivers and ECD centres practice play-based early stimulation and learning	% of households reporting that adults play with young children	MGECW KAP Study (Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices).	58% (2024)	85%	65%	74%	85%
		Percentage of children (aged 24-59 months) with whom any adult household member has engaged in 4 or more activities to provide early stimulation and responsive care in the last 3 days.	MICS ECDI data	Data Not Available	to be updated	to be updated	to be updated	to be updated
	2. Parents and ECD centres engage with children in their mother tongues	Percentage of children (aged 24-59 months) whose father has engaged in 4 or more activities to provide early stimulation and responsive care in the last 3 days.	MICS ECDI data	Data Not Available	to be updated	to be updated	to be updated	to be updated
	3. Caregivers and educarers understand that learning starts young, and from birth children are exposed to early stimulation and age-appropriate play.	% of households that believe that learning starts from birth	MGECW KAP Study (Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices).	2% (2024)	60%	20%	40%	60%
			ECD-MIS	18% 2024	34%	22%	27%	34%
		% of children aged 4 Enrolled in ECD centres	ECD-MIS	34% 2024	55%	38%	43%	55%



RESPONSIVE CARE-GIVING

	Objective	Indicator	Source	Baseline (date)	Target	2028	2029	2030
Responsive care-giving	1. Parents and caregivers form close and affectionate bonds with their young children from birth	"% of children in the household were hugged by themselves or another household member in the past week "	MGECW KAP Study (Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices).	45% (2024)	65%	50%	58%	65%
	2. Parents and caregivers play and communicate with their children (using positive cultural practices as much as possible)	% of households reporting that adults play with young children	MGECW KAP Study (Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices).	58% (2024)	85%	65%	74%	85%
	3. Fathers are actively involved in their children's lives	% of households agreeing that the fathers main role in parenting is to provide financially	MGECW KAP Study (Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices).	53% (2024)	75%	58%	67%	75%



Safety and Security



Disability and Inclusion

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal green lines, resembling notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.





The Ministry of Gender,
Equality and Child Welfare



The Ministry of Education,
Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts
and Culture



The Ministry of Health and
Social Services