

Transforming the care economy through impact investing case study:

Strong Start



The Care Economy
Knowledge Hub

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD	2
INTRODUCTION	4
1 - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
2 - ECOSYSTEM	7
2.1 Kenya: statistical snapshot	7
2.2 Context analysis	9
3 - BUSINESS DEEP DIVE	12
3.1 Business headline	12
3.2 Founder story	15
3.3 Business model	17
3.4 Strong Start's growth story	18
3.5 People and governance	21
3.6 Support received to date	23
3.7 Key business drivers and challenges to growth	24
4 - IMPACT DEEP DIVE	27
4.1 The impact theory of change of the enterprise	27
4.2 Current impact and measurement practices	29
4.3 Care workers' own experiences of the solution	30
5 - LOOK FORWARD	44
5.1 Growth and sustainability plans	44
5.2 Ask of investors and stakeholders	45
5.3 Lessons learned	46
5.4 Recommendations for policymakers, investors, and entrepreneurs	47
ENDNOTES	48



FOREWORD

Vital for our society to function, the care economy – domestic work and caring for children, elderly people, and people with disabilities – as it is now, operates as one of the most pervasive structural barriers to women’s economic autonomy and gender equality.

Across the world care work is mostly done by women and girls, who perform three-quarters of unpaid care work. Representing more than 11 percent of total global employment, paid care work is also a significant source of employment, particularly for women. However, these jobs are poorly paid, in positions that fall outside of formal employment structures, and insecure due to ingrained gender and racial biases and the work’s perceived value. The precariousness of paid care work and the unequal distribution of unpaid care work restricts women’s time and mobility, as well as their equal participation in social, economic, and political life. And this dynamic is unlikely to change without collective action. The climate crisis is increasing the demand for care and domestic work globally, while the COVID-19 pandemic generated a [care crisis](#) that exacerbated pre-existing gender inequalities.

Both formal structures and informal structures (norms) hold care economy inequalities in place. Gendered norms also shape national policies on how care work is recognized and valued, and how the responsibilities between families, governments, and the private sector are distributed.

While public investment and policies must be at the core of the solution, a renewed role for the private sector is crucial. Announced as a [commitment at the Generation Equality Forum](#), in 2021 Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Open Society Foundation’s impact investment arm, the Soros Economic Development Fund (SEDF), launched an [action-oriented research initiative to help Transform the Care Economy through Impact Investing](#) (TCEII). Through this partnership, IDRC continues to build on its commitment to transform the care economy and mobilize finance for gender equality.



Erin Tansey



Catherine Cax



Since its launch, a global consortium of partners has built an [extensive knowledge and evidence base](#) to mobilize capital and impact investment to address the care economy's challenges in emerging markets. The program is now launching a collection of 20 case studies on care economy social innovations and impactful businesses, which complements 59 business profiles and mapping of 165 market-based solutions operating in emerging markets in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. The [TCEI program](#) also involves care-economy businesses incubation and acceleration, research on regulatory frameworks and policies, awareness raising, and industry policy dialogues.

As we witness growing momentum and understanding of the urgency of addressing the care crisis, we hope these case studies on pioneering companies will help advance concrete strategies to move from awareness to action. These case studies help to demonstrate viable and impactful business models, ranging from building social security infrastructure to labor-saving products and services. They offer a unique and nuanced understanding of the businesses' theories of change and impact journeys. The case studies also help to share the lessons these innovators have learned on their pathways to scale, and it is our hope that they will attract more capital into the care economy for deepened impact.

We invite you to read this collection of case studies and engage with them, and the other resources and tools developed by the TCEI program, to mobilize investment into the care economy.

Together we can advance [towards a care society](#) where social innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment can be part of the solution for economic justice globally.

Erin Tansey

Sustainable and Inclusive Economies
Director
International Development Research
Council

Catherine Cax

Managing Director, Investments
Soros Economic Development Fund

INTRODUCTION

The care economy consists of paid and unpaid labor and services that support caregiving in all its forms. In Africa, Asia, and Latin America, women spend between 3 to 5 times as many hours on unpaid care and domestic work as men. This represents 80% of a household's total hours devoted to unpaid care work.

Care economy enterprises can help recognize, redistribute, reduce, and reward - also known as the 4 Rs - unpaid and paid care and domestic work in the following ways:



Recognize: Initiatives that increase visibility and recognition of paid and unpaid care and domestic activity as "productive" work that creates real value and contributes to economies and societies.



Redistribute: Services and initiatives that redistribute care work from individuals to public and private sector entities, and redistribute care and domestic work within the household.



Reduce: Products and initiatives that reduce the time spent on and burden of unpaid care and domestic work.



Reward: Products, services, and initiatives that ensure that care and domestic workers are paid fairly and have professional growth potential. This provides them with financial reward and security.

The Care Economy Knowledge Hub - the research pillar of the Transforming the Care Economy Through Impact Investing Program - aims to address the knowledge gap around care businesses by showcasing various business models and creating a resource base for relevant stakeholders. It also aims to raise awareness and increase knowledge of the state of impact-driven care economy business models and attract a broad range of funders to invest in care economy solutions by showcasing opportunities.

A curated set of 20 business case studies, of which this case study is one, has been researched and written between October 2021 and January 2024. The case study businesses were selected out of a set of 165 businesses that were mapped between October 2021 and August 2022, and then a further 59 that were profiled between September 2022 and May 2023. They present a wide variety of different ways in which care work can be recognized, rewarded, reduced, and redistributed, from different sectors and different geographies, from different stages of the growth journey and different business models, from different products and services and different impact pathways. Each case study was

written based on extensive desk-based research, including a literature review; a review of key business documents; a series of deep conversations with founders, CEOs, and key staff; and impact-focused qualitative research with 8 - 15 consumers of business products and services.

Each case study starts with a 1-page executive summary that provides “at a glance” information on the business and Section 1 provides an introduction. Section 2 describes the ecosystem within which the business operates. The business deep dive can be found in Section 3. Section 4 presents an impact deep-dive, including customers’ own experiences of the care economy solution, and a unique set of qualitative impact data. Section 5 outlines the business’s future plans in their look forward.

Shifting attention towards and investment in the care economy is one of the single most important actions that policy makers, investors, and community leaders can take to achieve gender, racial, and climate justice. We hope that these case studies contribute to the much-needed transformation in our economic and social systems.



Rebecca Calder

Principal Investigator, Transforming the Care Economy Through Impact Investing
Co-Founder and Co-CEO, Kore Global

This project is supported by Canada's International Development Research Center, in partnership with the Soros Economic Development Fund at the Open Society Foundations. Building on their track record and commitment to transforming the care economy and mobilizing finance for gender equality, they are jointly supporting this action research program to help transform the care economy through impact focused business and investment. This case study is a joint research product, developed by a consortium led by Kore Global, including Intellectap, Core Woman, Busara, Sagana, and Volta Capital. Copy editing and graphic design were done by Big Blue Communications.

This particular case study should be cited as follows:

Intellectap, Busara Center for Behavioral Economics, Kore Global. (2024). *Transforming the care economy through impact investing: Strong Start case study*. Kore Global, International Development Research Centre, and Soros Economic Development Fund

1 - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strong Start is a for-profit enterprise that trains care workers in Kenya in early childhood development (ECD), household management, self-advocacy, and job search. The enterprise also engages care workers in community playgroups. In doing so, Strong Start enables workers to enhance their skills, develop a support network with other care workers, and access care work opportunities. Strong Start also offers ECD services for parents of infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers. With 9 full-time employees, the enterprise works with approximately 212 households each month and has trained over 3,000 care workers to date since its inception in 2016. The enterprise works towards rewarding care workers by up-skilling them and recognizing care workers by creating a community for social support and self-advocacy. The enterprise had a revenue of approximately US\$115,000 in 2022.



Strong Start at a glance

Established	2016
Country of operations	Kenya
Offerings	Trains and employs care workers in Kenya in ECD, household management, self-advocacy, and job-search.
Reach	3,000+ care workers trained; 212 households served (monthly)
Staff	9 full-time employees
Revenue	US\$115,000 (2022)
Leadership	Tej Preet Kaur, Managing Director
Contact for partnerships	tejpreet@strongstart.co.ke
Website	www.strongstart.co.ke

2 - ECOSYSTEM

2.1 Kenya: statistical snapshot

 <p>Demographic information</p>	<p>Total population (World Bank, 2022): 54 million</p> <p>Female population (World Bank, 2022): 50.43% of total population, i.e. 27 million</p> <p>Urban & rural population (World Bank, 2022): Urban (29%) Rural (71%)</p> <p>Population in different age segments (<i>% of the total population</i>) (World Bank, 2022):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-14 years (38%) • 15-64 years (59%) • 65 and above (3%)
 <p>Unpaid care work</p>	<p>Proportion of daily time spent on unpaid domestic and care work in urban areas (Oxfam, 2021):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women and girls (5 hours) Men (1 hour) <p>Proportion of daily time spent on unpaid domestic and care work in rural areas (Global Center for Gender Equality, 2022):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household surveys in 2004-2006 in rural Kenya show that women devote nearly 6 times as many hours as men to cleaning the house, preparing meals, fetching water, and collecting firewood.
 <p>Social & economic</p>	<p>Literacy level (Global Gender Gap Report, 2021):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female (78.2%) Males (85%) <p>Poverty (Statista, 2022):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17% of Kenya's total population lived in extreme poverty (less than US\$1.9 per day) as against the global poverty rate of 8.9%. In 2022, 7.8 million Kenyans in extreme poverty lived in rural areas, while 1.1 million lived in urban areas. <p>Formal & informal employment (KNBS, 2023)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2022, 19 million people were employed in Kenya. The total number of people employed in the formal sector was 3 million and 16 million in the informal sector. <p>Gender-based violence (Kenya-Demographic and Health Survey, 2014):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45% of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence since age 15. <p>Gender-based violence (UN Women Kenya, 2014):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40.7% of ever-partnered women aged 15-49 years experienced intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime.



Women's work,
labor, and
entrepreneurship

Labor force participation (*% of total labor force*) ([World Bank](#), 2022):

- Female (49.7%) | Male (77%)

Unemployment (*% of total labor force*) ([World Bank](#), 2022):

- Total: 5.5%
- Female: (5.8%) | Male (5.2%)

Women entrepreneurship

- Licensed MSMEs ownership: ([Kenya National Bureau of Statistics](#), 2016): Females (32.1%) | Males (47.7%)
- Unlicensed MSME ownership: ([Kenya National Bureau of Statistics](#), 2016): Females (61%) | Males (31.7%)
- Firms with female majority ownership, % of firms: [Global Gender Gap Report](#), 2021): 47.5%
- Firms with female top managers, % of total firms: ([Global Gender Gap Report](#), 2021): 18.1%

Gender gap index score ([Global Gender Gap Report](#), 2022):

- Total: 0.73 (0=unequal, 1=equal)

Financial inclusion ([Central Bank of Kenya](#), 2019):

- 33.7% of women have bank accounts.

2.2 Context analysis

Macro context in Kenya

The total population of Kenya is 54 million, of which 29% reside in urban areas.¹ Urban areas contribute over 65% to the national GDP.² Rapid urbanization has led to an increase in the number of informal settlements in Kenyan cities and towns. Around 60–80% of the urban population (depending on the city) live in such informal settlements and lack access to basic services and infrastructure such as water, sanitation, and housing.³ More women than men live in extreme poverty in Kenya (with 4 million women living below the poverty line compared to 3.7 million men);⁴ 52% of women live in conditions of extreme poverty.⁵

A significant number of women (16%) still lack basic literacy skills, and in some areas of Kenya, fewer than 20% of girls are enrolled in school. Of the girls enrolled in the first year of school, only 1 in 5 make it to the eighth year.⁶ While 80.8% of girls (aged 9–13 years) in rural areas attend primary school, only 14.3% enroll in secondary school.⁷ In urban areas, 68.6% of girls complete primary education, but only 27.8% enroll in secondary education.⁸ Only 18% of Kenyan women aged 25 and above have completed secondary education, with approximately 49% of the female youth (15–24 years) considered illiterate.⁹

Illiteracy and lack of access to tertiary education in Kenya have led to most women being employed in the informal sector. As of 2019, about 36.8% of Kenya's total female workforce was employed in the informal sector, which is characterized by low and unstable incomes, job insecurity, and lack of access to social protection services.¹⁰ Workers in informal settings are vulnerable to economic uncertainties, discrimination, and exploitation.

Care economy context

Currently, over 2 million people are employed as domestic workers in Kenya. They are typically engaged in home management and are responsible for childcare, cleaning, cooking, and laundry, among others. Domestic workers do not have access to statutory benefits, labor, or social protections due to their status as informal workers, despite the work of labor unions to support integration of domestic workers into the formal employment sector.¹¹ Childcare and

domestic workers, who are predominantly women,¹² face a range of challenges, including low wages,¹³ isolation, denial of leave/rest days, abuse and sexual harassment, and limited training opportunities. In the absence of formal employment contracts, domestic workers are forced to work long hours, with little to no benefits. Approximately 87% of domestic workers do not have job security.¹⁴ As domestic and childcare work is conducted in private homes, care workers have limited opportunities to interact with other workers in the

industry, which limits their ability to share information and build support networks. A weak regulatory environment results in unfair employee conditions, and exploitation, and high turnover rates for domestic and care workers.

Domestic work, especially childcare, is traditionally considered to be the responsibility of women and is accompanied by the perception that such work does not require formal training. Consequently, there is an almost complete lack of education and professional training for domestic workers. A survey of 1,524 domestic workers in Kenya found that only 52% had completed primary education. However, 59% of those surveyed were interested in receiving training in domestic work.¹⁵ The lack of education and training opportunities is especially significant in the context of childcare work as it can affect the quality of care, which has the potential to influence school readiness, language comprehension, and children's behavior.¹⁶

Households with young children also require more conducive support systems to provide quality childcare at home. In a survey of 2,500 Kenyan households that focused on challenges faced by employers while engaging with domestic workers, 14.5% of households reported that workers lack time management skills, 13% reported low standards of work, and another 13% reported that workers often leave their jobs without notice.¹⁷

Market opportunity

Most urban, affluent households in Kenya employ a domestic worker who is responsible for running the home, cooking, and caring for children. However, Kenya's domestic services sector remains largely underdeveloped and unstructured. Although there is significant demand from care workers for professional training, training facilities and opportunities are largely unavailable.¹⁸ Very few industry-specific organizations or welfare groups support domestic workers in Kenya. Although the national domestic workers union - Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers (KUDHEIHA) - includes domestic workers, it is limited in its ability to reach them (as it employs a strategy of door-to-door campaigns, which is looked upon with suspicion by employers and workers).¹⁹

The domestic worker industry in Kenya has potential to employ over 6 million people if it is properly professionalized.²⁰ Kenya has extensive legal and administrative provisions, including in the Constitution of 2010, the Labour Relations Act 2007, and the ILO Convention 189, as well as a number of laws and policies²¹ for regulating the domestic work sector in Kenya. This, together with the demand for professional training, indicates a significant market opportunity. Quality professional training, if provided, is likely to attract many women into the sector. Secondly, as employers face several challenges in hiring, managing, and retaining domestic workers, they are willing to allot time and financial resources

towards the training of domestic workers.²² Studies also show that when domestic workers are trained to become professionals, they command greater respect, receive decent salaries, and can exercise their labor rights.²³ Thus, professionalizing the domestic care work industry by providing training and placement services will ensure that women have access to better employment opportunities as professional domestic workers, that

employment contracts are signed in accordance with Kenya's labor laws, and that employers meet statutory requirements. There is a huge opportunity for the private sector to help improve the working conditions of domestic workers by providing them with appropriate orientation and skills training and by encouraging them to come together to advocate for better livelihoods and improved working conditions.

3 - BUSINESS DEEP DIVE

3.1 Business headline

Strong Start is a for-profit enterprise that provides early childhood care-related services for care workers and high-income households in Nairobi, Kenya. For households, the enterprise provides training programs to up-skill currently employed nannies. Strong Start educates employers on the value of employment contracts and advocates for adherence to employment best practices. It provides households with detailed information on fair employment practices such as contract templates, fair wage lists, overtime calculation tables, and resources for paying statutory benefits. Strong Start also provides households with a range of childhood care services such as micro-pods,²⁴ playgroups, and pre-kindergarten programs. A key feature of Strong Start's in-person childcare programs is the provision of short training sessions to support care workers in advancing their technical and self-advocacy skills within their workplaces. Furthermore, the enterprise helps households find nannies by connecting them to childcare workers who have previously participated in Strong Start's programs.

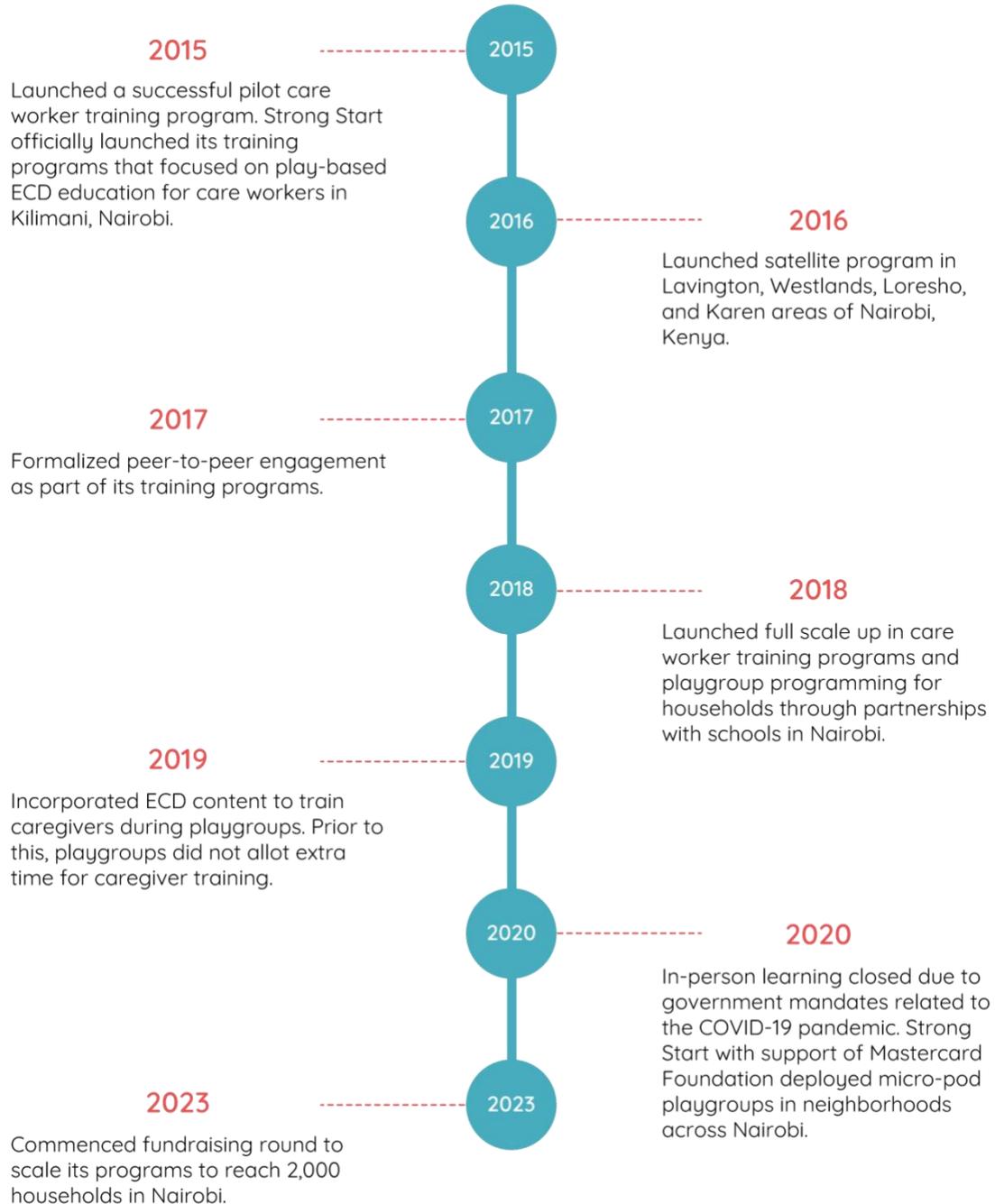
For childcare workers, Strong Start conducts a range of ECD-based training programs aimed at upskilling and empowering them. Although the enterprise's training programs are largely intended for households looking to train their staff, Strong Start also offers training at a subsidized rate to care workers who sign up directly. Through its programs, Strong Start highlights the value of care work and upskills childcare workers, enabling them to access better opportunities and therefore better livelihoods. In addition to upskilling childcare workers, Strong Start trains them on employment best practices, such as employment contracts, the importance of communicating openly and clearly with their employers, and advocating for decent work conditions.

A key value proposition of Strong Start's training programs is that they enable care workers to recognize the significance of the service they provide. After completing the training program, care workers begin to view their work as meaningful and see themselves as professional service providers. Additionally, the enterprise offers care workers access to a safe and supportive community where they can connect with other care workers. The teachers that train care workers are also a source of advice and support. During its initial months of operation, Strong Start witnessed a consistent need for such support. Trainers often spent most of their time addressing workers' questions on dealing with challenges. Thus, the enterprise incorporated structured time for such interactions within its training program. This community was an especially valuable source of support during the pandemic, when there were limited avenues for interactions for the care workers. Furthermore, care workers accompany employers' children to in-person childcare

programs such as micro-pods, playgroups, and pre-kindergarten programs. This too, provides care workers with opportunities to interact with other care workers regularly.

Strong Start's offerings are geared towards helping families during the early childhood years – a time that can be challenging for many. By training care workers on the 5 areas of childhood development²⁵ and the related developmental milestones as well as providing services such as playgroups, Strong Start adopts structured tools and activities through which care workers can create a healthy and stimulating environment for children. Furthermore, Strong Start places a strong emphasis on the value of care work and the role of care workers in early childhood care. Alongside upskilling the care workers, Strong Start focuses on involving care workers in play activities, an approach that is different from typical playgroups where teachers and facilitators engage with children and where care workers' roles are more limited. While several agencies provide basic skills training for care workers, very few adopt an in-depth ECD-based approach like Strong Start.

Strong Start's journey



3.2 Founder story

Founder of Strong Start



Tejpreet Kaur

Tejpreet Kaur is the Founder and Managing Director of Strong Start. She completed her Bachelor of Arts in Women and Gender Studies in 2008 from the University of Toronto in Canada. While studying, Tejpreet worked as a medical secretary for 2 surgical oncologists at the University Health Network in Toronto, Canada. Her experience in managing and advocating for patients that required critical care laid the foundation for her work in community development. Tejpreet went on to work for The Sikh Coalition in New York from 2009 to 2013. She was responsible for managing several operational functions, supporting better management reporting, developing efficient information flow, managing human resource functions, overseeing financial planning and management, and improving overall organizational processes. At the Coalition, Tejpreet initially worked as Director of Operations and then ran the city-wide community development program, under which she led the development of the [Junior Sikh Coalition](#), which focused on youth development and empowerment. While working on these programs, Tejpreet realized that advocacy plays an important role in ensuring that needs of different stakeholders are met. Moreover, as the Sikh Coalition is a donor-funded organization, working with it enabled Tejpreet to develop the skills required to work in resource-constrained environments. She credits this experience as having built her entrepreneurial mindset, to wear multiple hats and develop creative solutions.

Tejpreet moved to Nairobi in 2014. Soon after the birth of her first child, Tejpreet employed a nanny to help with her childcare responsibilities. Her experience during this time sparked the idea for Strong Start. Tejpreet realized that whenever she directed the nanny to engage in certain play activities with her child, the nanny was very creative and approached the activity in a way that would engage the child. Tejpreet realized that her nanny could provide even more value to her child's development with the right training. At this time, Tejpreet's neighbor was pursuing her master's in early childhood development and had to complete

certain requirements connected to her course. Along with her neighbor, Tejpreet decided to conduct a pilot training with 8 nannies to see if they could enhance care workers' skills and enable them to create a better environment for children. After the first pilot, Tejpreet conducted several additional training programs to test the concept and business model, eventually founding Strong Start in 2015. The enterprise's training sessions focused on ECD and included both the care worker and the child. During the first hour, care workers were taught concepts and given tools, which they then practiced during the second hour as part of play activities with children. Tejpreet noticed that not only did the training programs impart valuable information to the care workers, they also instilled in them an appreciation for the value of care work. This resulted in the care workers viewing their role as important and provided a sense of empowerment.

Tejpreet believes that her upbringing has instilled in her a sense of faith and resilience that has benefited her during challenging times. Additionally, she is a problem solver and brings creative confidence to challenges, which has assisted her to be resourceful and develop solutions for the enterprise's growth.



Domestic work is always considered a last resort for employment. The feeling is that there is no dignity in working in somebody's home. With our trainings, there was a shift in thinking, a shift in their relationship with work. From the first batch, care workers walked away with a sense of the value of caregiving, calling themselves professional nannies. They were getting these big deep dives into caregiving and a feeling that yes, this job holds dignity.

Tejpreet Kaur, Founder and Managing Director, Strong Start



3.3 Business model

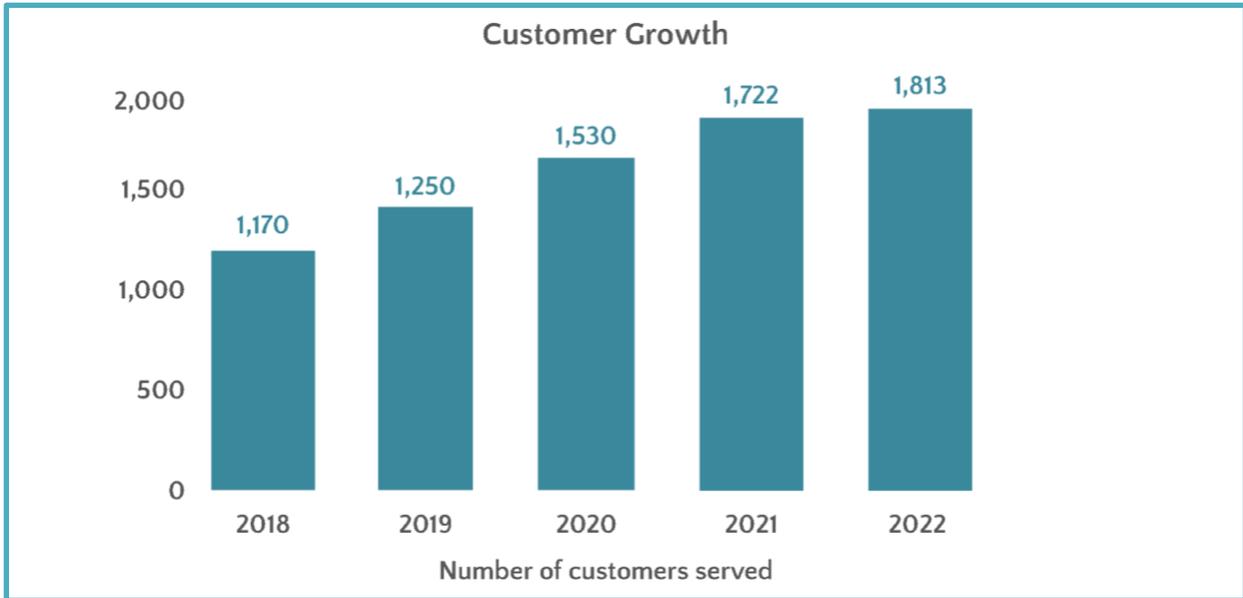
 <p>Customer segment</p>	<p>Strong Start's customer segments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic workers: Strong Start caters to care workers through its training programs. These domestic workers are typically sponsored by the high-income households that employ them to undergo these programs. A limited number of domestic workers enroll independently for Strong Start's training programs. • High-income households: Strong Start offers high-income households with infants and young children early childhood care services through micro-pods, playgroups, and pre-kindergarten programs. It also provides playboxes that contain materials for activities that can be conducted with children. Further, it provides a nanny search service for households.
 <p>Value proposition</p>	<p>Strong Start offers care workers the ability to upskill themselves while working. Its training programs provide both a theoretical and practical component. By creating structured time for support and by bringing care workers together, Strong Start also enables them to develop their network and build sources of support. Its playgroups focus on engaging the care worker and the child. This is different from typical playgroups, which either focus on a teacher engaging with the children or children engaging with each other, but do not involve the care worker. Strong Start's playgroups focus not only on involving the care worker, they also include brief ECD-based training programs related to play activities. Strong Start's childcare offerings (playgroups, micro-pods, and playboxes) for households are grounded in ECD principles, while activities are designed to engage children as well as encourage development. Strong Start's training programs enhance the skills of care workers employed by households enabling them to create a better development environment for the children under their care. The trained care workers are able to track development milestones, ensuring that corrective measures are taken if the child's development differs from expected milestones.</p>
 <p>Competitive advantage</p>	<p>Strong Start approaches early childhood development holistically and has created an ecosystem of quality care by offering services for households and care workers. Its training programs for care workers focus on ECD and provide them with in-depth knowledge on subjects such as the 5 domains of child development, play-based learning, and milestone tracking. Furthermore, its playgroups, micro-pods, and pre-kindergarten programs involve care workers and include ECD-based play activities. While other enterprises operating in this space offer training programs on the basics of childcare, they are not as in-depth or grounded in ECD-based knowledge as Strong Start's programs. Furthermore, Strong Start's care worker training program enables care workers to enhance their self-advocacy skills within their workplaces and creates a community for the care workers.</p>

 <p>Channels & key partnerships</p>	<p>Strong Start receives referrals through existing customers and pediatricians' offices.</p>
 <p>Customer relationships</p>	<p>Strong Start supports both care workers and households by informing them about fair employment practices and by promoting open and clear communication between households and care workers. Strong Start sends email updates to households on training sessions conducted for care workers employed by them. The enterprise maintains a database of care workers trained and connects them with prospective employers when required.</p>
 <p>Revenue streams</p>	<p>The enterprise earns 95% of its revenue through its early childhood care systems, which consist of micro-pods, playgroups, and pre-kindergarten programs (paid for by households). It earns 5% of its revenue through training programs for childcare workers (paid for by households sponsoring care workers employed by them or independent care workers that opt for the training) and a small portion through its playboxes (paid for by households).</p>
 <p>Cost structure</p>	<p>66% of the enterprise's expenses go towards personnel costs, 10% towards rent and other operating expenses, 8% on cost of goods and services, 6% on technology, 6% on training, 2% on marketing, and 2% on miscellaneous items.</p>

3.4 Strong Start's growth story

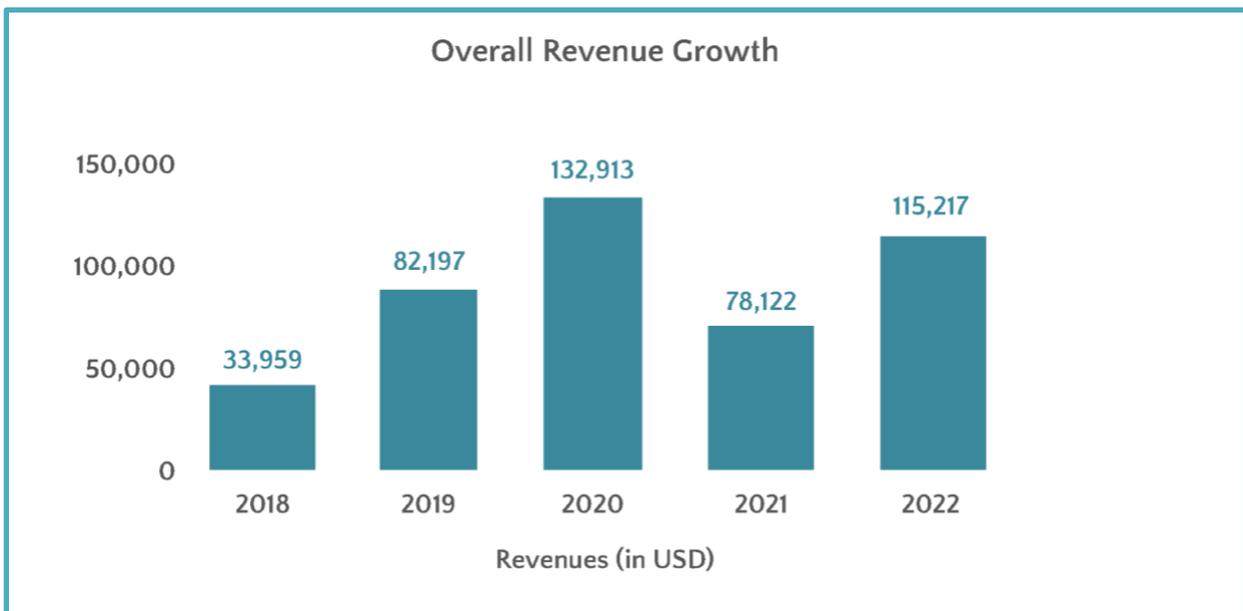
3.4.1 Customer growth:

The number of customers (households and care workers) served by the enterprise has steadily increased from 2018 onwards at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.57% over 5 years. In 2016, the enterprise observed that there was significant demand for early childhood care childcare services. Parents wanted their children to participate in activities that would engage them but would also be beneficial for their development. Moreover, the enterprise realized that children needed spaces to play with other children and care workers during the day. Thus, Strong Start created separate offerings: playgroups to which parents could send their children, and ECD-focused training programs for their care workers. In playgroups, the focus is on the children and on using activities with care workers to create a healthy and stimulating environment. In the training programs, the focus is on upskilling care workers and enabling them to use their skills to benefit children. This has enabled Strong Start to steadily increase the number of households it serves.



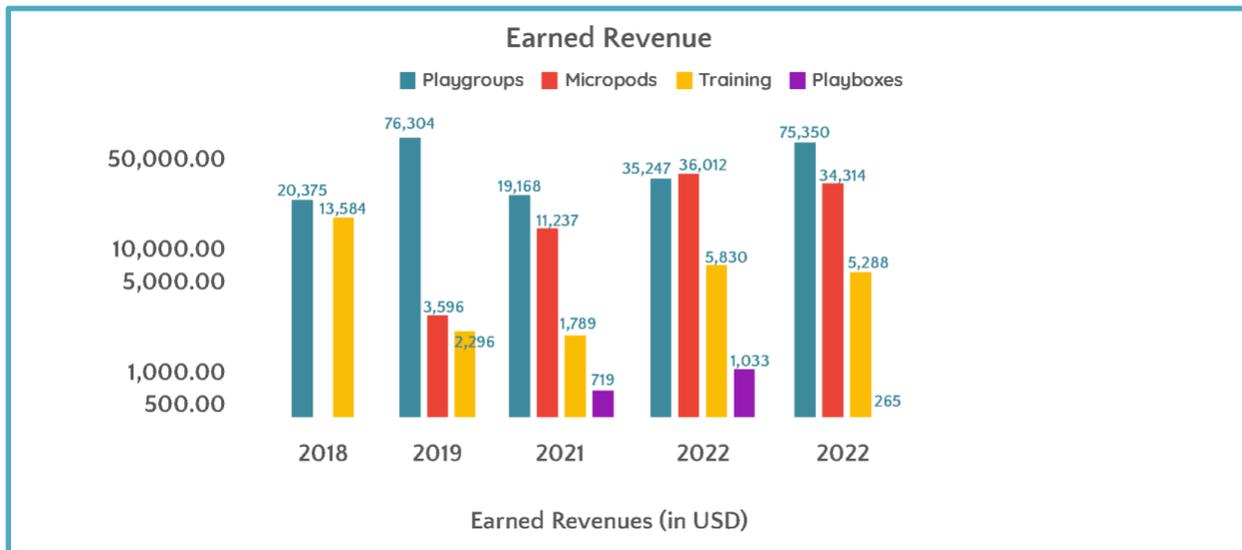
3.4.2 Revenues:

The main source of revenue for the enterprise is the sale of products (playboxes) and services. However, in 2020 Strong Start received a US\$100,000 grant from Mastercard, which was utilized during 2020 and 2021. Strong Start’s revenue growth has steadily increased from 2020 onwards, at a compound annual growth rate of 35.7%.



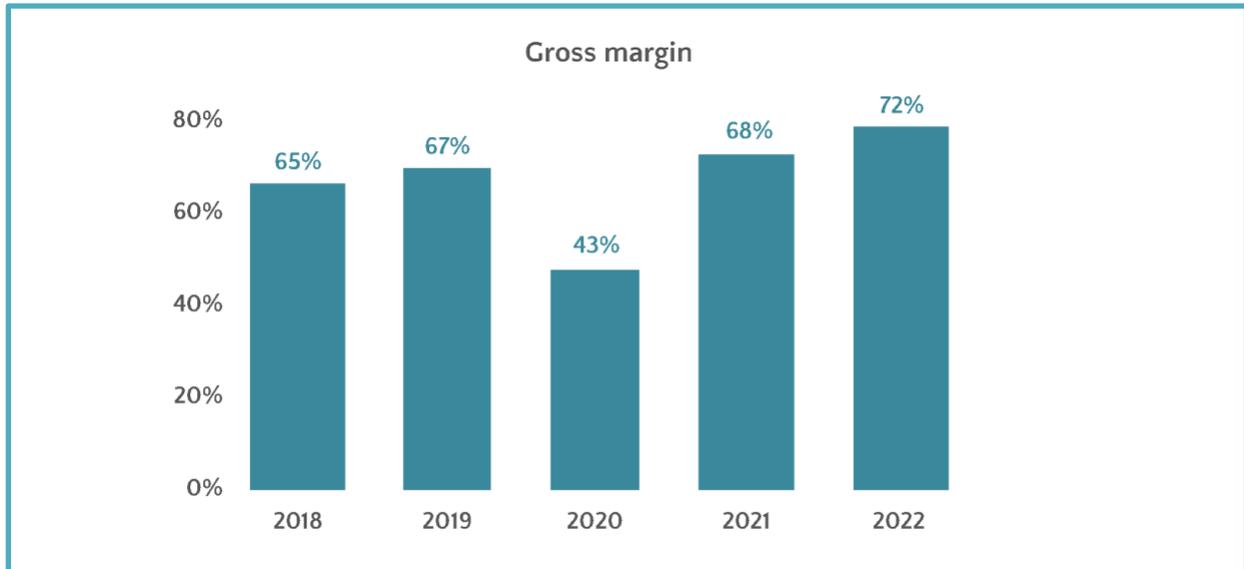
3.4.3 Earned revenue:

On average, an estimated 90% of Strong Start’s revenue is from provision of early childhood care services (playgroups and micro-pods), with the remaining 10% coming from caregiver training programs. In the last 3 years, Strong Start has also started providing playboxes as a product.²⁶ Predominantly, households pay for these products, services, and training programs. Over time, Strong Start realized that there is a significant demand for its early childhood care services among households, and it has managed to capture a strong customer base for these services, which is reflected in the rising revenue contribution of playgroups, micro-pods, and playboxes. However, care worker training continues to be a strong focus. The enterprise plans to develop a caregiver management system so it can better address needs of care workers. In 2020, Strong Start faced several challenges, as it had to limit its offerings as a result of COVID-19-related restrictions. Towards the end of 2020, the enterprise realized that there was demand for safe small group activities for children, as they had been cooped up at home for several months. It began offering micro-pods, a restricted playgroup with 5–6 children from the same neighborhood, whose families had agreed to limited interactions in order to reduce exposure to the COVID-19 virus. Once pandemic-related restrictions were lifted, Strong Start went back to offering regular playgroups as well as micro-pods. Introducing micro-pods enabled the enterprise to bounce back from a significant reduction in its revenue, which has steadily increased from 2020 onwards. Earned revenue has grown at a compound annual growth rate of 35.7% over 5 years.



3.4.4 Gross margin:

The gross margins for Strong Start have fluctuated due to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.



3.5 People and governance

2X Criteria²⁷

- The founder is a woman.
- 100% of senior leadership are women.
- 66% of the Board of Directors are women.
- 98% of full-time employees are women.
- 100% of the care workers are women.
- Services specifically or disproportionately benefit women.

Strong Start is a **gender-transformative** business.²⁸

The enterprise has 9 full-time employees and 6 part-time employees. It also runs periodic internship programs that run for 8 weeks and host 4–8 interns. The full-time staff members include 2 members in the senior leadership team, 3 members in the program team, and personnel responsible for transport and logistics, accounts, marketing and communications, and human resources. All part-time staff members are teachers, who are contracted when needed. Currently, 98% of the full-time employees are women. Furthermore, all the part-

time employees are women and most interns tend to be women. Strong Start has a board consisting of 3 members, 2 of whom are women.

During its initial years of operations, the enterprise realized that even with the relevant qualifications and experience, teachers sometimes did not have the practical experience required to train care workers responsible for children in the age group of 0–5 years. Thus, Strong Start developed its own onboarding process (training in theory and practice) that teachers must complete before they start training care workers. The enterprise has also established an internship program to create a pipeline of teachers.

The enterprise supports its team by ensuring it pays decent wages. It also encourages its team to undertake professional development training programs and funds them to do so. Additionally, the enterprise conducts weekly training sessions for its teachers to encourage continuous learning and peer-to-peer engagement. The enterprise believes in encouraging its team to pursue their goals and in equipping them with the skills and knowledge required for the next step in their career.



We try to make sure we are a stepping stone for them to achieve their dreams and if there is a way for them to achieve their dreams with us, that's ideal. If not, we try to ensure that not only is Strong Start benefiting from their skills and interests but that we are helping them move forward with the next piece.

Tejpreet Kaur, Founder and Managing Director, Strong Start



3.6 Support received to date

The company has received financial support. The key items of the support received are as follows:

Financial	
MasterCard Foundation	Strong Start received an innovation grant from the MasterCard Foundation in 2020 and 2021. This grant totaled US\$100,000 across 2 years and was used for financial inclusion research for care workers. It was also used for incorporation of training and creation of networks of support for care workers in micro-pods. The grant enabled the enterprise to review its caregiver management system and understand various elements that would be required to make it successful.
Non-financial	
ECD	Strong Start benefited from the founder's neighbor's training in ECD. Since she was pursuing her master's degree in the subject, she helped formulate the initial pilot training programs for care workers. Later, Strong Start also benefited immensely from the support of a Harvard-trained ECD professional who helped create the foundation of its formal training programs.

**Details of all other investment and non-financial support received can be found [here](#).*

3.7 Key business drivers and challenges to growth

Key business drivers

Ecosystem

Founder's experience: While working in resource-constrained environments, Tejpreet learned to look at unconventional solutions. For instance, through her work in community engagement, she realized that many spaces like places of worship and schools are often underutilized during weekdays and could be used for community organizing. She leveraged this knowledge while looking for spaces where Strong Start could run its playgroups and training programs during the week. She identified spaces that were underutilized and fulfilled the criteria necessary for Strong Start to run its operations. These criteria include space outside for the children to play, a covered area for unfavorable weather, and a storage space where the enterprise can store materials. She believes that the skills she has acquired across her career have helped her develop the ability to undertake the executive functions required to run a company.

Ease of setting up a business: The entrepreneur has found it easy to set up an enterprise in Kenya. This was especially helpful, as the founder is not a Kenyan citizen. Furthermore, the entrepreneur has also found the business taxes and the process of paying business-related taxes easy and user friendly.

Availability of low-cost rentals: Strong Start has benefited significantly by partnering with institutions like schools and places of worship, leasing underutilized space for training programs and playgroups to keep overhead costs low. Strong Start's presence is also beneficial for these venues. For instance, for customers who live near the Lavington kindergarten, the school becomes a convenient choice when it is time to enroll their children in kindergarten. Strong Start's presence at [Peekaboo's](#) outlet has helped boost traffic to the store.

Referrals: Strong Start has also benefited from word-of-mouth recommendations in Nairobi. Several households that have sent care workers for training, or utilized the playgroups and micro-pods, have recommended Strong Start to their families and friends. Impressed by the quality of care as well as the structured manner (through monthly report cards) in which the enterprise tracks developmental milestones, some pediatricians have started referring their patient families to use Strong Start's services, especially if children are missing milestones.

Challenges to growth

Ecosystem

Households' perceptions related to care workers: The enterprise has observed that some households are concerned that once care workers employed by them participate in Strong Start's training program, they may seek employment elsewhere. However, the enterprise realized that very few care workers looked for other opportunities after completing training. The opposite was more likely, that care workers developed an enhanced sense of loyalty for their employers since they were willing to invest in the care worker's professional development. To address this misplaced perception, Strong Start encourages open communication between the employer and care worker, and a trust-based relationship. For households that contact Strong Start to help them hire a nanny, the enterprise

encourages parents to look at their existing domestic staff and upskill them to take up childcare responsibilities if they show interest. This enables the household members to build on the existing relationship of trust, and it also ensures that care workers understand the value of being enrolled in training by their employers.

Limited recognition of the value of childcare among households: The enterprise has observed that there is lack of understanding among households of the need to formally train care workers to care for babies and young children. Furthermore, work done by women is undervalued and therefore is not well paid. The enterprise encourages households to adopt decent fair employment practices. At the end of its training sessions, the enterprise sends households a summary of topics covered in the session. These include discussions on fair employment practices. The summary also contains points that employers should consider around these topics. The enterprise also trains care workers to advocate for benefits. In recent years, the enterprise has observed a greater appreciation for the value of care work among households that it serves.

Care workers' perceptions: The enterprise, especially during its initial days of operation, observed that sometimes care workers did not see value in additional ECD training before they enrolled in the program. They believed that, as women, they had the inherent skills necessary to carry out childcare duties. To overcome this mindset, during its programs, Strong Start openly acknowledges the experience and knowledge that care workers bring. The enterprise emphasizes that the training is a means of addressing gaps, especially around formal knowledge on ECD, such as how the child's brain functions, and their developmental milestones. It encourages participants to share their knowledge and experience and has incorporated several songs and games learnt from past participants into its activities.

COVID-19: Kenya faced strict COVID-19 measures in 2020, which resulted in low enrollment and participation in Strong Start's programs. There was a decline in hiring, placements, and training participation of care workers. Households were also unwilling to risk their children's health by allowing them to come into contact with other children in childcare programs. The enterprise continued operations by conducting online training programs and trying to use easily available household materials for play activities that care workers could use to engage children. However, when the Kenyan government extended the closure of schools by several months in June 2020, the enterprise launched its micro-pod program. To participate in the program, households with young children agreed to create a pod of 3-6 children and to limit their exposure to people outside their pod. Employees from Strong Start engaged with care workers, parents, and children within each pod to provide quality curriculum and supplies. The micro-pod program was successful, and Strong Start ran 17 such groups during the lockdown. The enterprise was able to maintain a steady growth in customers due to its unique offering. Strong Start continues to offer micro-pods as a solution for families that would like their children to play and learn within the neighborhoods. These pods no longer have restrictions on interactions with people outside their pod.

Operational

Scheduling training programs: As most care workers are employed in full-time roles, it has been challenging for Strong Start to schedule its training sessions at a time that is convenient for them. While training sessions are typically scheduled during evenings and on weekends, the enterprise must consider the time taken for commuting, care workers' own responsibilities, and weekend activities and

schedule training sessions accordingly. The enterprise is planning to start offering training programs at different locations (currently only offered at its Westlands location) so that care workers can choose the venue most convenient for them. Moreover, it is developing a hybrid training module, whereby care workers can access training sessions online at their convenience.

Hiring challenges: Strong Start has found it difficult to find qualified teachers for its training programs. Statutory qualifications to become an ECD teacher are not very high. Thus, while the enterprise receives many applications, these often do not meet the standards that Strong Start has set for its trainers. Further, during the initial years, the enterprise did not have the requisite knowledge and resources to identify job sites where its postings would reach the right candidates. The enterprise reached out to schools and universities to check if recent graduates would be interested in applying. Over time, the enterprise has developed its understanding of where to look for qualified applicants and is able to access qualified jobseekers.

Resource intensive activities: Several of Strong Start's operational activities are resource intensive. Currently, all available data on customers and service provision is manually entered into Strong Start's system. Strong Start has hired dedicated accounts and marketing personnel to undertake manual management of this data. However, automating this system is necessary for the enterprise to increase efficiency and productivity. Strong Start plans to use funds from its current fundraising round to automate data management. As Strong Start operates from shared spaces, teachers must set up for each playgroup or training session and then pack everything up once the session has ended. Strong Start has invested in portable furniture and equipment to simplify this. Moreover, it has employed someone who can travel between locations and help teachers with the set-up and take-down. Strong Start plans to use funds from its current fundraising round to establish a permanent center, which will help reduce the need for temporary set-ups.

Financial

Availability of finance: A key challenge that the enterprise faces is the availability of financial resources. Given it is bootstrapped, it has had to slow down several programs until the capital to develop them becomes available. The company has designed a caregivers management system that includes a section for care workers to access employment opportunities. However, connecting care workers with prospective employers requires the ability to vet the applicants as well as find valuable opportunities for them. Given the resource-intensive nature of this program, the company needs funding to further develop the job placement service. Once more funds are available, the enterprise will be able to cater to care workers who are looking to upskill themselves in order to find opportunities alongside its current customer base of care workers that are already employed and whose training is being sponsored by their employers.

Managing cash flows: Another key challenge for the enterprise has been managing cash flows. As it is bootstrapped, it must keep overheads low while also focusing on growth. As a result, the enterprise has not acquired a dedicated space for its programs, and it functions out of leased shared spaces.

4 - IMPACT DEEP DIVE

4.1 The impact theory of change of the enterprise

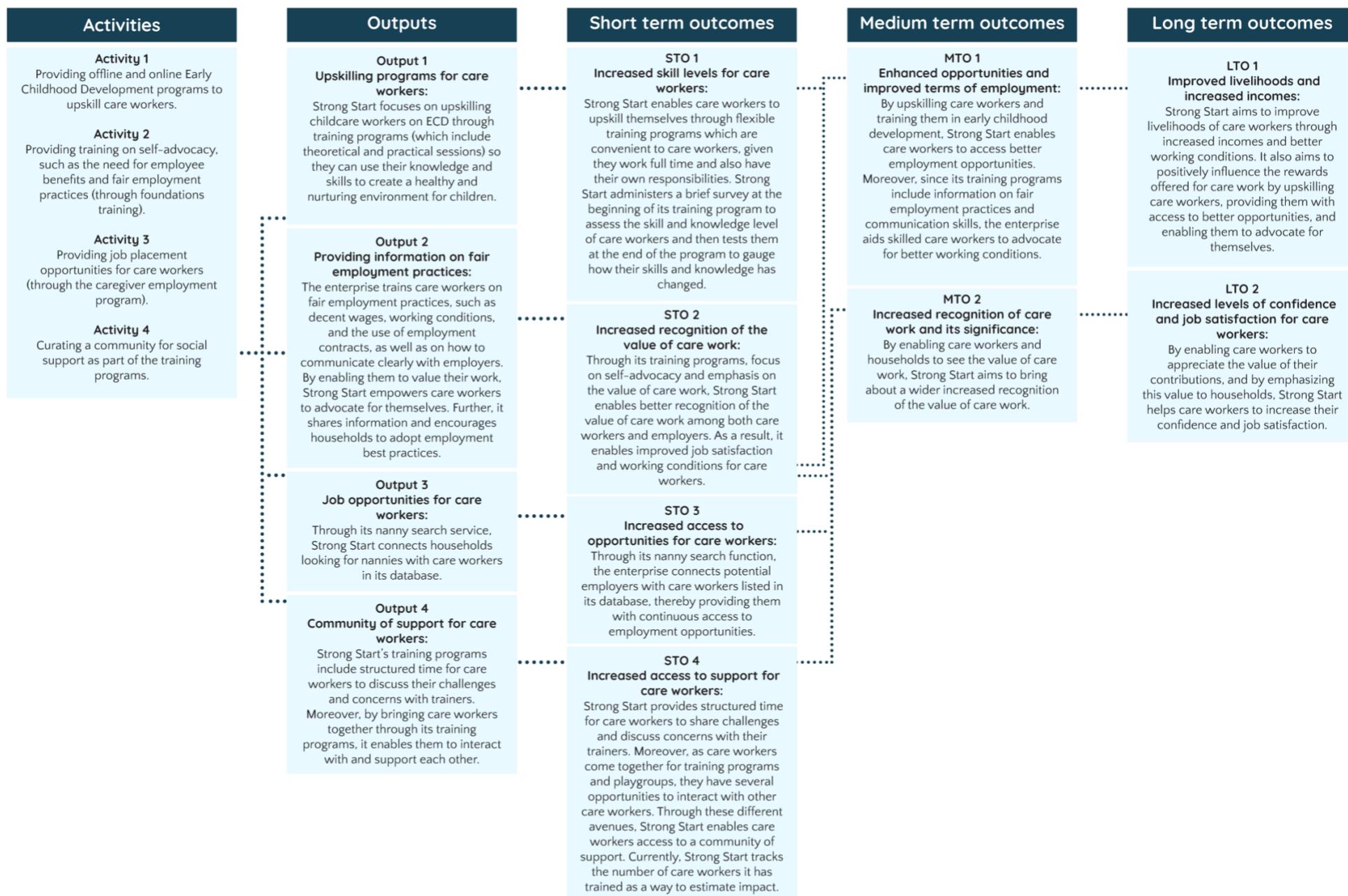
Mission statement

Strong Start's mission is to provide care workers in Kenya with access to dignified and fulfilling employment, higher wages, financial services, and opportunities for job skills training. This will allow for their advancement in the caregiving industry, as well as enable them to interact with the care worker community.

Theory of change

To recognize the value of childcare work and reward childcare workers through improved livelihoods, Strong Start has identified the following theory of change.

Strong Start's pathway to reward care workers





4.2 Current impact and measurement practices

Strong Start collects data to better understand the care workers enrolled in its training programs. It also conducts surveys to understand the impact of its training programs. This data collection is financed entirely from the enterprise's internal resources.

Commercial data

Strong Start focuses on collecting detailed demographic data such as income bracket, family size, education, and experience, among others, for the care workers that enroll in its training programs. This enables them to develop a better understanding of the care workers being trained. Strong Start also collects data from households such as the neighborhood in which they are located, children's age, budget for caregiver, whether the caregiver employed by them has attended any training programs, and how the household heard about Strong Start, among others.

Survey measuring outcomes

Strong Start administers a short survey at the start of its training program to understand what the care workers hope to get out of the program, their income level, and whether they have received any previous training to develop a broad understanding of their skill and knowledge level. It then tests the care workers at the end of the program to assess if the content covered during the training was absorbed and if the program was effective. Parents of young children who attend Strong Start's early childhood care programs are also requested to provide testimonials at the end of the childcare program.

Strong Start business impacts (*as per internal measurement system*)

- Number of care workers trained: 3,000
- Number of households served (monthly): 212²⁹
- Number of individuals trained via the online training platform (monthly average): 50
- Number of care workers placed: 200
- Number of care workers trained that have received self-advocacy training:³⁰ 3,000
- Number of ECD training conducted during micro-pods (monthly): 45

Measurement challenges

1. **Resources:** Currently, Strong Start collects and manages data manually. This is resource intensive. The enterprise would like to automate various aspects of the process to make it more efficient. However, this requires capital and dedicated resources, including development and administration of more detailed monitoring and evaluation tools.



2. **Concerns around privacy:** Strong Start collects demographic data anonymously. However, as care workers fill out details manually during training sessions, care workers are not convinced that their data will remain anonymous and are often reluctant to disclose personal information. By utilizing tools to administer the surveys electronically, Strong Start can ensure that care workers can complete the surveys remotely, thereby reassuring them that their information is being recorded anonymously.

4.3 Care workers' own experiences of the solution

Understanding the social context, emotional needs, preferences, and barriers faced by care workers who seek training from Strong Start is key for potential investors to understand where Strong Start excels and where it has room to grow. The following sections provide insights into the foundation of the business's market success and its impact on the lives of Strong Start's care workers, intending to help investors make informed investment decisions.

To inform this analysis, the research team conducted 12 in-depth interviews with care workers to gather insights into their lived experiences and realities.³¹ This section presents the results of the qualitative impact deep dive, starting with a snapshot of the care workers, followed by an examination of different types of care workers or "personas" and their journey with Strong Start. This section concludes with a qualitative overview of Strong Start's impact, as experienced by care workers in their daily lives.

4.3.1 Care workers' snapshot

Strong Start trains care workers across Kenya, drawing from a diverse demographic base. These care workers, aged between 33 and 56, predominantly offer nanny and housekeeping services. Over half are married and cohabiting with their husbands. Nearly all have at least 2 children, the majority of whom are under 18. Household sizes typically fall between 2 to 6 members. Every care worker interviewed was literate, with most having completed secondary education.

The care workers' monthly household income spans from KES20,000 to 94,000 (US\$144-US\$638),³² with an average of KES35,666 (US\$242). This surpasses both

Kenya's national average of KES20,123 (US\$145)³³ and the international poverty threshold of KES8,939 (US\$65).³⁴ The data suggests that Strong Start supports care workers across various income levels.

A large proportion of the care workers had prior experience as professional nannies, with only a few working in other roles like housekeeping, cooking, and cleaning. While a vast majority of care workers have at least 5 years of experience, more than half boast over a decade in the profession, and only a small minority have between 1-5 years of caregiving experience. This showcases Strong Start's dual mission: to collaborate with experienced nannies and to offer upskilling for those newer to the



profession, potentially increasing their earnings.

Regarding their motivation to join Strong Start's training, a significant number were influenced by personal connections. Just

over half were encouraged by their employers, while a few were nudged by friends or family. A small subset, driven by their love for children, independently chose the training eager to enhance their childcare skills.

4.3.2 Care worker personas

The qualitative research revealed 3 distinct Strong Start personas:

- ❖ **The Empowered Care Worker:** This persona is eager to learn new skills that could enhance their job performance and make their caregiving and household responsibilities more efficient. While they initially joined Strong Start due to their employers' influence, many were previously unaware of the program. They are deeply grateful for the introduction, as participation in the training has transformed them into professionals, enabling them to earn higher incomes than untrained peers.
- ❖ **The Childcare Enthusiast:** Driven by a profound love for children, this persona ardently seeks ways to nurture, play with, and support them. Their decision to join Strong Start stemmed from their own desire to deepen their childcare knowledge and implement their learnings on the job.
- ❖ **The Struggling Homemaker:** This persona, with an extensive background in housekeeping, aspires to expand her caregiving skill set and access diverse job opportunities within the industry. Motivated primarily by the need for a stable income to support her household, she turned to Strong Start. The training augmented her skills and marketability in the caregiving sector. Yet, despite these advancements, she continues to face challenges in securing good caregiving jobs.

These distinct personas are created through a qualitative understanding of their characteristics, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. Each persona is descriptive, actionable, and unique reflecting their unique experience of engaging with Strong Start. Thus, these personas offer a snapshot into why and how care workers choose to affiliate with Strong Start. By understanding these nuances, the Strong Start team can better tailor their services to resonate with and cater to the care workers' needs.

Below is an in-depth examination of these 3 distinct personas.



Betty's Bio

Betty Masitsa is 30 years old. She lives with her husband and 2 children. Employed as a day nanny, she earns a monthly income of KES35,000 (US\$238).

Betty was introduced to Strong Start during a job interview by a potential employer. The employer inquired if Betty would be open to childcare training to enhance her childcare skills. Positive about the suggestion, her prospective employer took the initiative to enroll her in the Strong Start training program.

Betty Masitsa The Empowered Care Worker

Demographic Information *(of the persona she represents)*

Age: 28–35 years

Marital status: Married

Children: 2 children

Education: Completed secondary education

Average HH income: KES39,000(US\$265) per month

Care Industry Job: Likely to be a care worker for children aged 0–5 years

Duration of work as a care worker: Likely to have more than 5 years' experience

Motivation

Prior to the job interview, Betty was unaware of Strong Start or any institutions specializing in caregiving training. Yet, faced with her prospective employer's wish for her to undertake training, she showed adaptability and eagerness. Recognizing an opportunity to upgrade her skills, she joined Strong Start, with the training fees covered by her would-be employer. There, she underwent extensive training including modules such as care for infants aged 0–6 months, infant meal preparation, first aid, and workplace equity.

This training had a transformative effect on Betty. She is deeply grateful to her employer for the opportunity, and the skills she acquired have not only enhanced her professionally but also enabled her to earn more money than many of her peers without such expertise.

I didn't even know about it. She just searched on the internet and I think that was where she found Strong Start. She then asked me if I was willing to go to train and I told her yes. It was my boss's idea. They saw that I was hardworking and they wanted me to take good care of their kids.

The Empowered Care Worker, 38 years old

Betty's individual values and qualities that define her caregiving job experience

- Before her Strong Start training, Betty lacked confidence in her caregiving abilities. Yet, when presented with an opportunity to train, she quickly recognized its potential long-term benefits and agreed, showcasing her adaptability and forward-thinking.
- Betty's employer not only introduced her to Strong Start, but also handled all aspects of her training, leaving her unfamiliar with some of the program's other offerings such as Caregiver Employment Program and the Strong Start app. Nevertheless, she remains deeply thankful for the opportunity.
- At Strong Start, Betty underwent extensive training in various modules, ranging from childcare for infants (0–24 months) to first aid and nutrition. This education has immensely improved her caregiving skills, which she incorporates into her daily responsibilities.
- With her newfound skills from Strong Start, Betty now efficiently schedules household tasks and collaborates with family members, ensuring chores like cleaning and dishwashing are shared.
- Post-training, Betty's assurance in her caregiving role has soared. She's confident that her skills would secure her a job even if her current one ends. Moreover, she now possesses the assertiveness to negotiate her salary and employment terms, a trait she previously lacked.



Irene's Bio

Irene, a 41-year-old care worker, lives with her husband and 1 of her 2 children. With over a decade in caregiving, she earns an average monthly income of KES53,000 (US\$360).

She first learned of Strong Start from a fellow care worker. Seeing the potential benefits for her professional growth and the well-being of the baby under her care, Irene introduced the program to her employer. Conveying the value of the training, her employer was persuaded by Irene's recommendation and agreed for her to attend the sessions.

Irene Adenyi

The Childcare Enthusiast

Demographic information

Age: 33-50 years old

Marital status: Equally likely to be married or single

Children: 2 children

Education: Completed some secondary education

Average HH income: KES35,000-94,000 (US\$238 - US\$ 638) per month

Care Industry Job: Likely to be mainly a care worker for children aged 0-5 years

Duration of work as a care worker: Likely to have more than 10 years' experience

Motivation

Driven by a profound affection for children and an eagerness to enhance her childcare skills, Irene chose to enroll in Strong Start.

The program's dual training offering for care workers and children aligned with her aspirations. Her enthusiasm for Strong Start's potential, not only for her own growth, but also for the benefit of her employer's child prompted her employer to cover the training expenses. The employer even arranged transportation, ensuring Irene's attendance at the training venue.

The training was extremely helpful for Irene, equipping her with a host of new skills and knowledge that she now applies in her caregiving duties.

I love children, and I wanted to learn more about bringing up children, playing with them, talking to them, to know what to do when the child has a temper, the kind of foods that a child should eat, and how a child should sleep. That is why I decided to join Strong Start. It was my idea to join Strong Start so that I can learn more.

The Childcare Enthusiast, 50 years old

Irene's individual values and qualities that define her caregiving job experience

- Irene's dedication to childcare shines through her completion of several Strong Start modules, including those on infant care, first aid, toddler care, and nutrition. She has applied this knowledge in real-life scenarios, such as administering first aid during emergencies like an electrical shock or choking incident.
- Irene's commitment goes beyond immediate caregiving duties. She aims to further study child psychology to deepen her understanding of child development. This journey in caregiving has seen her income grow from KES21,000 (US\$147) to KES53,000 (US\$ 386) a month, reflecting her hard work and passion.
- The training on task scheduling has enhanced Irene's efficiency. She also actively uses and recommends the Strong Start App to peers for updates and resources.
- While passionate, Irene occasionally faces hurdles implementing her Strong Start training, often due to material shortages or differing household perspectives. She proposes that Strong Start could introduce ongoing classes or tailored online courses for enthusiasts like her, promoting continuous skill development.



Schola's Bio

Schola, aged 47, lives with her husband and 3 children. For over 10 years, she has worked as a housekeeper, earning a monthly income of KES25,000 (US\$170). Due to her husband's health challenges, he cannot work, making Schola the family's primary breadwinner.

She learned of Strong Start through her circle of nanny friends, who spoke highly of their training for nannies. Intrigued, Schola enrolled, hoping to diversify her skills and explore opportunities beyond housekeeping, thus paving a more varied career path.

Schola Mwavali

The Struggling Homemaker

Demographic information

Age: 35-47 years

Marital status: Married

Children: 2 children

Education: Completed secondary education

Average HH Income: KES20,000-25,000(US\$136 - US\$170) per month

Care Industry Job: Likely to be mainly a housekeeper

Duration of work as a care worker: Likely to have more than 10 years' housekeeping experience

Motivation

Being her family's sole provider, Schola saw the value in broadening her skill set to expand her job prospects. This urgency was intensified by her employer's upcoming relocation abroad, prompting her to consider other avenues in the caregiving sector. A close nanny friend introduced her to Strong Start, and Schola was keen to build on her housekeeping background with caregiving skills, ensuring she'd be ready for diverse roles.

Yet, despite her training and eagerness, Schola's career has largely remained in housekeeping, with limited chances to apply the caregiving skills she acquired at Strong Start.

I had done housekeeping for a long time, and when my boss decided to go back to the USA, I decided to go for the nanny training so that I would be able to take care of the children. I did it so that I could have another option apart from housekeeping.

The Struggling Homemaker, 47 years old

Schola's individual values and qualities that define her caregiving job experience

- While Schola has vast experience in housekeeping, she is eager to diversify her skills within the broader caregiving industry.
- At Strong Start, she trained in infant care and first aid. She is keen to pursue more modules but is financially restricted. Additionally, her current role, focused mainly on housekeeping, has not allowed her to utilize her new caregiving skills fully.
- Schola is unaware of some of Strong Start's offerings, like their app and nanny search programs. She suggests introducing training for caring for children with disabilities, seeing it as a potential niche with dual benefits: aiding care workers and serving families in need.
- As her family's sole earner, Schola often feels overwhelmed by expenses. Her limited savings and desire for a better income drive her search for more lucrative job opportunities.



4.3.3 Journey maps

The personas are illustrative of how different childcare providers make decisions and take up the services offered by Strong Start. In the following section, journey maps are used to add additional detail to describe the step-by-step emotional experience that care workers undergo, from their initial introduction to Strong Start and their eventual integration and utilization of its services.

Journey maps are a visual representation of the highs and lows experienced by current care workers as they engage with Strong Start. Journey maps can guide Strong Start to identify opportunities for improvement and ensure that the diverse needs, wants, and constraints of the care workers are considered in the expansion and refinement of their services or reach.

Care workers begin their journey by discovering Strong Start. Initially, they gather information about the program, considering referrals to determine if the training aligns with their goals. For many, their current employers facilitate their registration for the training. During the training phase, care workers not only acquire skills related to childcare, but also learn about fostering a good relationship with employers and the significance of formalizing their roles through contracts. Post-training, care workers maintain their association with Strong Start, tapping into better employment opportunities. Notably, those sponsored by their employers often return to their prior jobs, now better equipped with advanced childcare expertise.

Table 1: Strong Start's journey map for care workers

Stage	 Activities	 Care worker goals	 Emotions	 Barriers	 Levers
Awareness	<p>Discovery: Care workers discover Strong Start through various channels including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations from current employers • Word of mouth from friends and family familiar with the organization • Encounters with Strong Start representatives while at playgroup with their employers' children 	Employers and Strong Start representatives communicate the benefits of the training, emphasizing its ability to enhance care workers' skills and knowledge.	 Intrigued, curious	<p><i>Time constraints</i> Care workers who are currently employed have expressed concerns about balancing their job responsibilities with the training, especially those who attend the sessions and after going to their employers to take care of children.</p>	<p><i>Positive social perception</i> Strong Start is recognized as a reputable entity that offers playgroup services and training, enhancing Care workers' skills.</p> <p><i>Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation</i> Care workers are motivated by the chance to expand their childcare knowledge and secure better employment opportunities.</p>
Recruitment	<p>Recruitment into the training program: Care workers or their employees register for the training online, submitting their CVs via the website.</p>	To successfully navigate recruitment to enroll in the training.	 Interested, curious, and cautious	<p><i>Cost concerns</i> Many care workers found the training costs prohibitive, especially if they aren't working. Most opted for the more affordable sessions at KES7,500 (US\$54) rather than packages priced at KES11,500 (US\$83).</p> <p>For a minority of care workers whose training was employer-sponsored, the fees were often deducted from their salaries.</p>	<p><i>Employer support</i> Majority of Care workers recommended by their employers often had their training fees covered.</p> <p><i>Ease of application</i> The registration submission process was straightforward and user-friendly.</p> <p><i>Entry requirements</i> There's no need for formal experience or certifications to enroll in the training.</p>

Stage	 Activities	 Care worker goals	 Emotions	 Barriers	 Levers
Training	<p>Training schedule: Care workers choose from a flexible schedule. They can attend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily sessions lasting 3 hours • Weekly sessions held every Monday for 3-4 hours • Courses that span a week, a month, or 3 months 	<p>To coordinate their availability to determine suitable training sessions.</p>	 Excited yet slightly nervous	<p><i>Long travel duration</i> The training center's location posed a challenge for distant care workers. Some had round-trip commutes of 2 hours, costing approximately KES300 (US\$2) daily.</p> <p><i>Short-term certifications</i> Although certifications were granted, certain ones, like first aid, had limited validity, necessitating retraining after a few years.³⁵</p>	<p><i>Enjoyable training</i> Care workers found the interactive sessions beneficial, appreciating the regular breaks and snacks.</p> <p><i>Certifications</i> Receiving certifications boosted their professional image, making them feel more qualified.</p> <p><i>Self confidence</i> Many care workers experienced heightened confidence, grateful for their enhanced knowledge.</p> <p><i>Networking</i> Each training group comprised 6-8 care workers, fostering interaction and shared experiences.</p>
	<p>Gaining skills & knowledge: Care workers participate in training sessions to enhance their childcare skills and deepen their knowledge.</p>	<p>To understand the essential competencies for superior childcare provision in the future.</p>	 Happy and cautious	<p><i>Repetition of training</i> More experienced care workers found initial topics basic, covering areas they already understood.</p>	<p><i>Satisfaction</i> Care workers have expressed their overall satisfaction with the training, feeling it equips them to excel in their roles. The acquired skills and insights position them favorably for better job opportunities.</p>

Stage	 Activities	 Care worker goals	 Emotions	 Barriers	 Levers
Working life	<p>Relationship with employer: Post-training, care workers typically return to their prior employers. Others proactively seek new job opportunities.</p>	<p>To secure job positions that align with their enhanced skills and knowledge.</p>	 Happy and cautious	<p><i>Training vs. reality</i> Care workers mentioned that often, the training they received at Strong Start doesn't always align with parental preferences. For instance, there may be differences in how to bathe or feed the child, or which activities are deemed beneficial.</p> <p><i>Experiencing discrimination</i> Some care workers reported instances of discrimination, including extended work hours, verbal mistreatment, and added household tasks unrelated to childcare.</p>	<p><i>Income boost</i> After training, many care workers noticed an increase in their salary. Those returning to previous employers reported at least a KES5000–KES7000 (US\$36–US\$50) raise, while those interviewing for new roles demanded higher wages than before their training.</p> <p><i>Increased confidence</i> Care workers expressed increased confidence, especially when dealing with newborns and applying their first aid skills. They feel well-equipped to handle various emergencies.</p>

Stage	 Activities	 Care worker goals	 Emotions	 Barriers	 Levers
Sustaining work	<p>Post-training relationship with Strong Start: Care workers aim to maintain a professional connection with Strong Start.</p> <p>They are added to the Strong Start database, making them accessible to potential employers and Strong Start whenever a care worker is needed.</p>	<p>To build and sustain a fruitful, lasting relationship with Strong Start and its client base.</p>	 Requires effort but optimistic	<p><i>Passive support from Strong Start</i> Post-training, Strong Start didn't proactively link care workers to prospective employers, instead simply adding them to a database for potential employers to access.</p> <p><i>Lack of employment</i> Majority of care workers highlighted that they didn't receive outreach from potential employers for months after being added to the database.</p>	<p><i>Follow-up</i> Strong Start reaches out to care workers after several months to check on their employment status. Unemployed care workers get re-listed in the database for better visibility.</p>

4.3.4 Strong Start's impact

The impact of Strong Start on childcare providers is based on qualitative interviews with the providers. Quotes are childcare providers' own words.

All care workers reported positive changes in their employment status and significant growth, including an increase in the number of job opportunities, improved confidence, and increased overall profitability. Overall, the childcare providers are highly satisfied with Strong Starts services.

Qualitative evidence of theory of change

Long-term outcome

LTO1: Improved livelihoods and increased incomes.
LTO2: Increased levels of confidence and job satisfaction for care workers.

- Increased earnings:** The training has tangibly boosted care workers' earnings, reflecting their improved skills and experience. Empowered with a clear understanding of their professional worth, they now confidently negotiate better compensation with potential employers. Before undergoing training, they typically earned between KES15,000–KES25,000 (US\$109–US\$182) monthly. Post-training, their monthly earnings have seen a notable surge, ranging from KES30,000–KES45,000 (US\$219–US\$328). Moreover, those sponsored by their employers for the training were rewarded with a pay raise upon completion. Specifically, they reported an additional KES5,000 (US\$36) in their monthly wages. Such financial improvements have not only validated the value of their new qualifications but also significantly improved their standard of living.

"When I finished the training, my boss increased my salary by KES5,000 (US\$36) because he said that I was better at my job."

The Childcare Enthusiast, 40 years old

"After the training, when I went for interviews, I would show them my certificates. They would give me a good salary, more than what I was getting before in my old job."

The Empowered Care Worker, 50 years old

- Increased confidence:** The training has improved the care workers' skill set, empowering them with a deeper understanding and expertise in their roles. This newfound proficiency bolsters their confidence in handling various situations and also instills a sense of professionalism. As a result, every care worker expressed increased self-assuredness in performing their duties, especially in specialized areas like newborn care. Such areas, they acknowledged, were domains they would have hesitated to venture into before the training. Now, they navigate these situations with knowledge and confidence.

"I am happy because they make me feel more professional because most clients want nannies that are professional, and sometimes when they ask for skills and you say that you know about first aid, they say that this is a professional who knows what she is doing."

The Empowered Care Worker, 46 years old

Medium-term outcomes

MTO1: Enhanced opportunities and improved terms of employment.
MTO2: Increased recognition of care work and its significance.

- Employer advocacy for skill development:** A majority of care workers reported that their current employers actively



endorse the training, recognizing the value of honing skills and gaining experience in care work. Not only do these employers sponsor the training, they also stay informed about the care workers' progress. This emerging trend, where employers appreciate and advocate for skill enhancement in care work, subtly plants seeds of recognition for the profession within the broader community. As more employers champion such training, it sets a precedent, suggesting a gradual shift in societal perceptions about the value and importance of care work.

"My boss called me to his office and informed me that he wanted me to join Strong Start training. This training was to improve my skills in engaging and educating children, aiming to improve my job performance. Although he initially paid for the training expenses, he later deducted it from my monthly salary."

The Childcare Enthusiast, 35 years old.

**Short-term
outcomes**

- STO1:** Increased skill levels for care workers.
- STO2:** Increased recognition of the value of care work.
- STO3:** Increased access to opportunities for care workers.
- STO4:** Increased access to support for care workers.

- **Skill verification through certification:** Upon completing their training, care workers are awarded certificates in specific areas, including first aid and motor skills. Not only do these certificates enhance their skills, but they also provide formal recognition of their expertise. With this tangible proof of their qualifications, care workers gain a competitive edge, making them more attractive candidates to potential employers.

"I am grateful and thankful because it has helped me become more professional and it has helped me take good care of the kids that I am raising. The certificates can help you for example get a good payment because the employer will see that you are a professional."

The Empowered Care Worker, 33 years old

- **Improved relationship with employer:** After their engagement with Strong Start, care workers report a more positive and respectful relationship with their employers. Empowered to express their concerns and opinions, they confidently establish professional boundaries. This assertiveness leads many to be acknowledged and treated as true professionals in their field. Many care workers highlighted that some employers extend courtesies, such as providing daily meals, tea, and milk. In instances where a meal isn't provided, some employers compensate by giving them an allowance for lunch.

"I have to respect myself first when I decide to work for someone. I have to set boundaries. We should also dress as professionals when at work. You should also know how to talk to your boss."

The Childcare Enthusiast, 40 years old

"She provides me with milk and sugar and gives me money for food at the end of the month. They give me food and beddings. I have my own room a little bit farther from them."

The Childcare Enthusiast, 33 years old

- **Post training support and opportunities with Strong Start:** After completing the training, Strong Start actively supports care workers in their employment journey in primarily 2 ways. Firstly, their details are promptly entered into Strong Start's comprehensive database, simplifying the job search process as potential employers can easily reach out to them. Secondly, Strong Start remains proactive in its approach, consistently following up with the care workers to assess their employment situation. If a care worker is yet to find employment, Strong Start consults its employer database to identify potential opportunities. Some care workers reported getting calls and interviews through the Strong Start system, ultimately landing well-paying jobs.

"I have had several calls. I got 3 calls immediately after the training. I was to meet with one of them the next day, but it did not happen and she had a 5-year-old girl. The other one that called wanted a live-in nanny, and I was not comfortable with that. The last one met with me, and we agreed on everything including the payment."

The Empowered Care Worker, 47 years old

"They send me a message at the end of the year or just call to catch up and see if I have gotten any employment. Once I told them that I didn't get work for over 2 months and they looked at the database. I got 3 calls the next week for a job."

The Struggling Homemaker, 40 years old

"It has a positive impact. Through Strong Start, I got a job. Through the job, I got money and bought land. I have built on that land and I am still educating my children with that money."

The Empowered Care Worker, 50 years old

- **Training adaptability challenges:** While the training equips care workers with specific techniques and tools, real-world application can present challenges. For instance, certain materials like developmental toys may not be readily available in an employer's household. Additionally, there can be discrepancies between the methods taught during training and the preferences of individual employers. Care workers often find themselves navigating these differences, striving to balance their training with the specific desires of employers. This highlights a potential area for enhancement in the training program: equipping care workers with strategies to seamlessly adapt and integrate their knowledge into diverse household settings.

"Acquiring training materials was challenging. After our training, we didn't receive the materials needed to work with children at home. Some parents are reluctant to purchase these materials, yet it's important for the child to continue class activities at home. Additionally, the effectiveness of some skills we learned varies, as does parenting preferences. For example, some parents prefer their child to self-soothe to sleep, even if it involves crying, which is different from what we are taught in the training."

The Empowered Care Worker, 38 years old.

- **Balancing training, work, and family:** Some care workers reported that due to training schedules and concurrent job commitments, their personal caregiving responsibilities have intensified, particularly during the weekdays. Many workers are able to allocate only 2-3 hours daily for their families. Typically, they spend about an hour each morning with their children during breakfast before heading to work and manage to squeeze in another hour or two in the evening. Despite these challenges, they report that their children and husbands have stepped up, helping significantly with chores, which eases their workload during the weekend.

"My older children help out when they are at home with washing clothes, cooking, and cleaning. They help because they need to know how to do those things."

The Struggling Homemaker, 35 years old.

"It is not a lot because they go to school. So 2 hours in the morning. In the evening I will take time with them when they come from school. I will spend about 30 min with them before they do their homework. I would say I spend about 3 hours daily excluding doing other things."

The Empowered Care Worker, 33 years old.

Outputs

- O1:** Upskilling programs for care workers.
- O2:** Awareness of fair employment practices.
- O3:** Job opportunities for care workers.
- O4:** Community of support for care workers.



- **Overall satisfaction of the training:** Care workers gave the training a perfect score of 3 out of 3 for satisfaction. They expressed appreciation for the subject matter covered, the quality of instruction, and the overall benefits they derived from attending the sessions.

"I would choose 3. Because the teacher was there to answer all our questions and they taught us that if we implement the teachings they would work. But we also need to do things according to what the family is comfortable with. If we work on what they allow us it will work."

The Childcare Enthusiast, 56 years old

- **Affordability:** Training sessions for care workers range in price from KES7,000–KES14,000 (US\$51–US\$101), depending on the specific program selected. While a majority of care workers find the training accessible and affordable since their employers cover the cost, some shoulder the expense themselves. For this latter group, the cost can be somewhat steep, and they would appreciate a more affordable pricing structure.

"My boss paid for it because he wanted me to register for the training. He did everything and then just told me to go to this place and take the training and then come back to the job after I am done."

The Childcare Enthusiast, 40 years old

- **Building connections:** During the training, care workers interact with peers, exchanging insights and experiences from their profession. This fosters a sense of camaraderie among them, allowing for mutual learning and support. As a result, many care workers naturally establish their own support networks, further strengthening the bonds and assistance within their community.

"We just talk about the children. It has helped me, especially with taking care of children. So most of the time when we meet, we refer to the activities that we learnt at Strong Start. We can make a group and even plan for a play date."

The Struggling Homemaker, 50 years old

- **Cultural and professional challenges:** Care workers, particularly when caring for children from diverse cultural backgrounds, often encounter challenges in balancing the training they have received with the specific desires of the parents. This cultural disparity can sometimes make it challenging for them to advocate for themselves, whether in relation to their training or their rights. For instance, some care workers have noted instances where they are expected to work additional hours without overtime pay. Live-in nannies, in particular, sometimes find themselves tasked with domestic chores beyond their job description, without additional compensation. While the training emphasizes open communication between employers and employees, it might be beneficial to incorporate aspects that address these cultural and professional differences directly. This would empower care workers to confidently assert their rights, regardless of any cultural differences.

"There, I used to wake up early to work and I used to sleep late and there were some extra jobs that I used to do. For example, I used to wash the dishes, but that is not my job. I used to wake up at 6am and start work at 7am, then work until 10pm."

The Childcare Enthusiast, 35 years old.

"It is a bit challenging because he is white and I am black. They want me to raise the child differently from the way we raise African children. The man will not want me to feed the children too much. But the wife will tell me to feed the baby well. So, I am left there in between them."

The Struggling Homemaker, 33 years old.

5 - LOOK FORWARD

5.1 Growth and sustainability plans



Increased number of customers served

Strong Start plans to serve 2,000 families a month by 2025. To achieve this, the enterprise aims to expand its paid services to middle-income households in Nairobi. This will allow Strong Start to access more care workers who are employed, as well as to deliver training programs to the care workers. It is estimated that there are 385,461 middle-income households in Nairobi.³⁶ As the enterprise streamlines its offering and develops a more accessible hybrid training, it hopes to bring down costs and make its training program available to more self-paying care workers. To increase the number of customers served, Strong Start also plans to reach out to pediatrician's offices in a structured way as a way of connecting with potential customers. As part of its effort to reach more customers, Strong Start plans to establish a permanent center by utilizing funds from the current pre-seed round. It further plans to expand its presence to 5 locations by 2024, while each location will run its own training programs along with playgroups.



Establishment of the caregiver management system

Strong Start is planning to establish a caregiver management system, which will allow care workers to access training programs (hybrid delivery) as well as access job placement resources. Strong Start envisages this to be a hybrid system through which caregivers can access training programs as well as community support and access job opportunities. Currently, Strong Start must consider safety concerns about late-evening sessions, as well as care workers' existing schedules while planning in-person training sessions. By creating the ability to learn remotely, Strong Start will be able to address these challenges. Moreover, creating a hybrid model, where certain training sessions and resources can be accessed online, will allow the enterprise to keep costs low. The enterprise requires a team of people, especially tech experts that can dedicate themselves to developing the hybrid training programs, as well as human resources personnel who can vet care workers that apply to be placed through Strong Start. The enterprise also requires funds to build the technology that would support the different aspects – training, community, and job search – of the caregiver management program. Eventually, the enterprise would like to also develop a physical career center for care workers, where they can access required resources and leverage them while preparing for interviews, etc, as well as meet their peers and draw support from a shared community. It plans to earn revenue from the training program as well as the job search facility.



Expansion of blended training courses

Strong Start plans to create a hybrid training program that consists of classes that are 30-60 minutes. This will enable care workers not sponsored by households to purchase one class at a time. It plans to divide these classes into various levels, such that care workers can access the next level only after they have completed the previous one, earning badges/qualifications in the process. By creating a hybrid

	<p>program, Strong Start hopes to bring down the cost of individual classes as well as the overall program.</p>
 <p>Facilitate statutory payments for care workers</p>	<p>Strong Start plans to partner with government agencies to create a facility for care workers to receive statutory benefits from their employers. Typically, domestic workers register as self-employed and are therefore unable to access these benefits from their employers. Strong Start plans to streamline and simplify the process to enable employers to pay these benefits conveniently.</p>

5.2 Ask of investors and stakeholders

Financial

Pre-seed round: Over the next 6 months, Strong Start is looking to raise US\$200,000 through a pre-seed round and plans to use these funds to establish a permanent center, hire teachers, upgrade its IT systems, and develop the caregiver management system. It plans to use 25% of funds raised for center upgrades including establishing a permanent center, 20% for additional management hires, 20% for its working capital requirements, 25% for sales and marketing, and 10% for upgrading technology. It aims to support an additional 200-500 care workers through the caregiver management system.

Seed round: After the current funding round, the enterprise plans to raise another US\$500,000 through a seed round within the following year. This will enable the

enterprise to serve 500 households per month. The enterprise will also use these funds for the design and development of its tech platform, management hires, strategic partnerships, and as working capital, which enable them to further increase the number of households served to 2,000 households.

Non-financial

Access to mentors and networks: Strong Start requires access to a wider network of advisors, mentors as well as potential board members, that can help guide its growth over the next few years.

Tech support: To operationalize the various components of its hybrid-training program, caregiver management system, and monitoring and evaluation tools, Strong Start requires the right technological tools and expertise.

5.3 Lessons learned

Strong Start's experience demonstrates the significance of understanding key stakeholders while creating service offerings. Its pilot programs as well as several initial training programs were conducted at its founder's home. Tejpreet always offered tea and refreshments to the attending care workers, which allowed for an organic sense of camaraderie and connection. As Strong Start began offering more formal programs, it noticed that classes would often start late because care workers wanted to share concerns and challenges with the teacher and with each other. The enterprise realized that this was an important source of support for the care workers. In response, the enterprise included structured time for discussion within its training sessions to support care workers. This community of support plays a significant role in empowering care workers and enabling the recognition of the value of their services.

This need to recognize the needs of key stakeholders is also demonstrated in Strong Start's experience with households. Initially, Strong Start offered training programs in which care workers would undergo study for the first hour and then use what they had learnt during the second hour of play with the children under their care. However, the enterprise soon realized households needed a place where their children could engage in play activities with their care workers and with other children. There was great demand for childcare-focused services such as playgroups, so the enterprise decided to create 2 distinct offerings: training programs that focused on improving the care workers' knowledge and skills, and early childhood care services such as playgroups that focused on the child.

Additionally, businesses need to cultivate the ability to develop a creative approach to problem solving. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the enterprise could not organize playgroups. The enterprise initially conducted online sessions, during which it provided information and instruction on various activities with which care workers could engage children at home. However, it observed the need for households to find safe spaces where children could interact with one another. It introduced micro-pods for small groups of children. Soon there was a significant demand for the service, which enabled the enterprise to tide over a challenging phase.

5.4 Recommendations for policymakers, investors, and entrepreneurs

 <p>Policymakers</p>	<p>Creating security nets: Given the informal sector suffers from low wages and challenging working conditions, policy makers need to create a security net for domestic workers. The informal sector can do this by introducing regulations, creating a social security system, and facilitating the implementation of existing regulations and mechanisms that safeguard domestic workers. For instance, it can streamline the statutory benefits that domestic workers should receive from their employers.</p>
 <p>Investors</p>	<p>Adopting a balanced view of technology: Technology plays an important role for most growing businesses. However, for people-focused businesses like Strong Start, it is an enabler rather than the center of their solution. There is a perception that investors are more interested in investing in tech-focused businesses that leverage cutting-edge technological innovations such as artificial intelligence. Investors should, therefore, adopt a broader lens to evaluate investment opportunities.</p>
 <p>Entrepreneurs</p>	<p>Understanding key stakeholders: The enterprise believes that being able to understand and appreciate concerns of the care workers has enabled them to create offerings that truly address their needs and enable them to enhance their skills and access better work opportunities. Moreover, this understanding has enabled the enterprise to include advocacy for care workers' welfare as a key component of its offerings. Strong Start's ability to understand the needs of households has allowed it to evolve its initial offering into 2 separate services-playgroups and a care worker training program- thus better serving its customer base. Further, the enterprise was able to provide a solution for households in the form of micro-pods through the challenging COVID-19 pandemic. In conclusion, the enterprise believes that it is important for entrepreneurs to understand the value of and the concerns of the market they plan to serve.</p>



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²⁴ Micro-pods are small groups of children who come together to play and learn. During COVID-19, micro-pod families agree to limit their exposure to people outside of their pod. Pods normally consist of 3-6 children and are becoming a popular solution to learning through the coronavirus pandemic. Post pandemic, micro-pods have continued to be a solution for families that would like their children to play and learn within the neighborhood. These pods no longer have restrictions on interactions with people outside their pod.

²⁵ The 5 key areas are gross motor skills, fine motor skills, speech and language, cognitive and intellectual development, and social and emotional skills.

²⁶ Playboxes are kits that contain instructions and materials for activities that can be conducted with children.

²⁷ 2X criteria can be found [here](#).

²⁸ Businesses were assessed on a 21 point scale, with scores of 0-7 being gender unintentional, scores of 8-14 being gender intentional and 15-21 being gender transformative.

²⁹ As of August 2023.

³⁰ The self-advocacy training is part of the caregiver training program.

³¹ The research team conducted 12 in-depth interviews with childcare providers. Strong Start shared a list of care workers who fulfilled the following criteria: female care workers who belong to the low income status, have been attending Strong Start's training program for a minimum of 3 months and a maximum of 1 year. The care workers for the interviews were selected through purposive sampling to ensure diversity in age, occupation, socio-economic status. An interview guide was used to ensure consistency in the questions asked, although some follow-up questions were added as necessary to explore topics in more detail. The interviews were conducted in Kiswahili, audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis. The data collected from these interviews was analyzed thematically in NVivo to identify key themes and patterns in participants'



responses. Given the small sample size and purposive sampling, one of the limitations of our analysis is that it might not be representative of the different socio-demographics of all care workers affiliated with Strong Start.

³² US\$1 = KES138.59. Retrieved from: <https://www.centralbank.go.ke/rates/forex-exchange-rates/>

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³⁵ First-aid training certifications typically have a validity of 1 year. In keeping with this global standard practice, care workers at Strong Start are required to renew their first-aid certification annually to ensure they remain up-to-date with essential life-saving skills.

³⁶ According to a census undertaken by the government in 2019, there were about 1.5 million households in Nairobi. Based on the KNBS Economic Survey in 2022, the estimated percentage of middle income households is 25.58%. Therefore, the number of middle-income households in Nairobi is 385,461.



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