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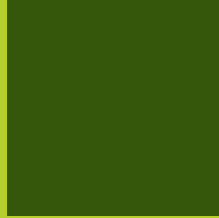
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Issue 5
August 2010



Above
Pupils playing football
in the spirit of the
1 Goal campaign!

esspinnews

1 Goal campaign

The World Cup provided an opportunity to campaign for universal access to quality basic education through the 1 Goal campaign. ESSPIN, on behalf of UKAid, produced a special documentary on education reforms in Nigeria for exposure at the World Cup Education Summit held in Pretoria on 11 July 2010. In collaboration with the Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA) ESSPIN also supported national and state level launches of the campaign in Nigeria.

The short documentary film addresses MDGs 2 and 3 regarding education in Nigeria with emphasis on the gaps and interventions by the UK government through its support programme, ESSPIN. ESSPIN is addressing the education crisis in Nigeria and seeks to improve basic education in six Nigerian states (Enugu, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara and Lagos).

Continued inside on page 2.

esspin

Education Sector
Support Programme
in Nigeria



UKaid

from the Department for
International Development

Organisational Profile

ESSPIN is one of a set of DFID-funded State Level Programmes (SLPs), working on governance, accountability and the delivery of health and education services. ESSPIN supports Federal and State authorities as they work both to reform the governance of education and to improve the quality of education that children receive.

ESSPIN is a partnership between the Nigerian Government and the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID). The six-year programme (2008 – 2014) supports Federal and State governments – Enugu, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara and Lagos – in their efforts to develop effective planning, financing and delivery systems that will improve the quality of basic education.

ESSPIN supports simultaneous action on multiple fronts. Support for schools is accompanied by support for communities, support for State and Local Government and support to develop Federal laws, policies and budgets.

ESSPIN is managed by a consortium of partners led by Cambridge Education, a member of the Mott MacDonald Group.

1 Goal campaign

The documentary narrates that things are changing with the help of UKaid. Teachers are being trained; new classrooms are being built to reduce class sizes to 60 per class. For example, in Jigawa over 400 classrooms were repaired, while in Lagos, 1000 new teachers have been recruited, 400 classrooms built and 500 are to be renovated over the next three years. The documentary also reveals that in the six states work is underway to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Bolaji Abdullahi, Commissioner of Education, Science and Technology, Kwara State summed up the situation thus: 'In the next two years, we'll begin to see that children's learning achievements in our schools are improving...'

'Girin-Girin' – promoting education reform through radio drama

ESSPIN is producing a new radio drama series for broadcast in September 2010. Set in a typical Nigerian community, the gripping drama captures the intrigues of local politics and society whilst introducing listeners to the key issues of basic education.



Above
The late Richard Dalgarno, Kano State Team Leader.

Adieu, Richard Dalgarno

All at ESSPIN were shocked and saddened to learn that Richard Dalgarno, ESSPIN Kano State Team Leader, died suddenly in Abuja on 23 July 2010. Richard had spent the previous day at the ESSPIN Technical Team Meeting at which he had contributed with his usual knowledgeable insight and passion for the education reform process in Nigeria. He will be very much missed by his colleagues, especially the Kano team, and our thoughts are with his family and friends around the world.

ESSPIN website

The ESSPIN website has been revamped to improve its functionality and give visitors a good tour. Interactive features that allow visitors to make comments, suggestions and enquiries have been included in the new design. Visit www.esspin.org/you to share your thoughts on the new ESSPIN website. We welcome your comments.

school

'I no longer have to beg my friends for a few sips of water when my supply runs out (she laughs)... in fact, I no longer have to carry a water bottle from home'.

Aishatu Abdullahi

Pupil of Gobirawa Special Primary School, Fagge, Kano



Above right
Aishatu Abdullahi drinking from the new borehole.

Impact of water and sanitation in Kano School

For Aishatu Abdullahi, a 15 year old pupil of Gobirawa Special Primary School in Fagge Local Government Area of Kano State, going to school is a better experience. Her school is among the 20 schools in the State that benefited from the ESSPIN-supported borehole project. Before the intervention, the children trekked as far as five kilometres to and from school with plastic containers filled with water. With serious overcrowding at Gobirawa (11,962 pupils, 114 teachers and 30 classrooms), lack of clean water was a major problem.

Now the school is equipped with a 22,500 litre, 10 pump, solar-powered borehole to the delight of the pupils and teachers. The Water and Sanitation programme is part of the School Development Plan, a larger design where target schools pilot a package of reform initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and management of the school as well as provide better facilities.

Aisha hopes to see proper infrastructure. 'The water is a good beginning, I pray there is more to come, and my teacher tells me there is more to come'.



Left and above
An example of a Kano school in need of improvements.

Kano Schools in crisis

The decline of budgetary allocation to the education sector from N24.374b for basic education in 2010 to N13.05b for basic and higher education for 2011–2013 will affect the functionality of primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in Kano State. To this end the Ministry of Planning and Budget has been advised to revise the allocation: otherwise schools, colleges and the state universities will grind to a halt by 2011.

This observation was made at the second meeting of the Kano State Education Sector Steering Committee held on 15 June 2010. Richard Dalgarno, State Team Leader of ESSPIN Kano, in a presentation, summarised the consequences of the 2011 budget, and the implications of a worsening crisis in the sector became evident to all present.

Better School, Better Nigeria broadcast

A 30-minute version of Better Schools, Better Nigeria film has been produced and will be aired for wider view. The new film is a follow-up to the 15-minute documentary films on basic education in Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano and Kwara states aired on African Independent Television (AIT) in June 2010.

As before, relevant stakeholders were alerted to the time and station for the broadcast and able to send their comments by a Short Message Service (SMS) provided by ESSPIN.

Further broadcasts of these films and new ESSPIN documentaries are planned for national and state television stations later this year.

'The SSIT has performed wonders'.

Mrs MA Solawon
Head Teacher, Ansar-Ur-Deen (AUD) Primary School, Igbogbo, Ikorodu

Right
MLA monitor engaging a pupil during the exercise in Kwara.



Impact of SSIT in Lagos school

The objective of the School State Improvement Team (SSIT) of ensuring the improvement of education quality in public schools is becoming a reality. A delighted Mrs MA Solawon, Head Teacher, Ansar-Ur-Deen (AUD) Primary School, Igbogbo, Ikorodu disclosed, 'The SSIT has performed wonders'. She went on to comment, 'Mr Azeez; the SSIT member monitoring Ikorodu Local Government Area (LGEA) has handled this work as if it's personal, and he is very committed. The changes in the school are very alarming. The (SSIT) programme is educative, very encouraging and should continue in like manner.'

Before the intervention, the major challenges facing the school included inadequate teachers, lack of teaching materials, poor pupil enrolment, truancy and lateness to school and lack of commitment on part of the teachers and parents.

The intervention has brought about an increase in pupil enrolment from 445 to 669 by July 2010, a revitalisation of educational development activities such as speech and prize giving day and active involvement of parents in their children's educational development. A large number of parents attended the speech and prize giving day in July 2010.



Above
Parents at the AUD Primary school speech and prize giving day.

Kaduna State constitutes Education Quality Assurance Service (KADSEQAS)

On 27 May 2010, a revised inspectorate structure, the Kaduna State Education Quality Assurance Service (KADSEQAS) was approved by Mallam Suleiman Lawal Kauru, former Kaduna State Commissioner for Education. He also approved the operational guideline document for the inspectorate. A key feature of the new Quality Assurance structure is that it will be a unified service managing assessments of all the schools in the State. The new approach to Quality Assurance is hinged around a Whole School Evaluation process. It is also intended that the new structure will achieve more effective linkages between QA activities, reporting (through the Annual Education Sector Report) and planning (through the annual development of the 3-year rolling Medium-term Sector Strategy).

Monitoring Learning Achievement exercise in Kwara

The Monitoring of Learning Achievement in Kwara State started on 31 May 2010 and has been a hitch-free exercise with immense co-operation from the enumerators, the schools and the Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) officials who have the jurisdiction over the selected schools. Thirty public and private schools are participating in the exercise with enumerators drawn from the three senatorial districts of Kwara State.

The MLA approach uses an assessment instrument that relies on one-to-one interaction between the enumerator and the student. It monitors whether learners are successfully reaching expected levels (minimum standards).

Preparation for the exercise in Kwara State started with the constitution of an MLA Steering Committee given the responsibility of ensuring a smooth and seamless exercise. At the committee's formation stage, it was agreed that the best set of people to select as enumerators were experienced teachers who were used to dealing with children and could elicit the best responses from them.

It is anticipated that at the end of the exercise a baseline of learning achievement can be recorded for Kwara against which the impact of the state education reform initiatives can be measured.

community

Writer
Fatima Aboki
Lead Specialist
Community
Interaction



Summary of ESSPIN CSO/SMU partnership work

A programme-wide approach was adopted by ESSPIN across five states in the selection of Civil Society Organisations to work in partnership with the Department of Social Mobilisation (DSM) of State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEB). The focus of the partnership is on community demand and accountability in education. An in-depth capacity audit of education CSOs began in February 2009 and a final selection was made of 36 CSOs.

The CSOs bring wide-ranging experience in education and community development to the programme in each State, and through working with their government partners have become known as Civil Society Government Partnerships (CGP). Working in collaboration with the Local Government Education Authorities (LGEA), CGPs made initial contact with community members. Activities such as sensitisation on SBMCs and community participation and school entry have taken place in all States, as has the establishment of SBMCs in line with State policy. Approximately 8,100 SBMC members have been trained in their new roles.

The CSOs and DSM partners in each State have all received relevant training with the support of ESSPIN on gender, community participation, advocacy, child awareness, participatory monitoring and evaluation and working in partnership, and selected members have completed a Training of Trainers course in preparation for training the SBMCs on SBMC State policy and aspects of school-based management.

The ESSPIN communications team have delivered a comprehensive package of information and promotional materials to support the work. The States are at different stages with regard to the implementation of activities.

In Kano 6 CSOs were selected for partnership and the CGPs commenced work in April 2010 in three focal Local Government Authorities (LGAs) namely Fagge, Kumbotso and Albasu.

In Jigawa state 8 CSOs were selected after going through a participatory capacity audit. The CGPs are working in the nine focal LGAs in the state.

Above left to right
CGPs participating in the training of trainers in preparation for step-down to SBMCs.

In Kaduna 6 CSOs were selected and they are working alongside their government partners in 7 selected LGAs. SUBEB in Kaduna are undertaking the translation into Hausa of the new SBMC policy guidelines and SBMC Guidebook. About 8,200 stakeholders have been reached by a programme of sensitisation in Kaduna State.

In Kwara 6 CSOs were selected and work is progressing well. Progress in Kwara can be illustrated by the constructive engagement between the key actors in the education sector and civil society. A total of 227 school communities have been reached by the CGPs in the four ESSPIN pilot LGEAs and about 7,000 community members including women, traditional and religious leaders, education councillors and children have participated in the process.

In Lagos State 10 CSOs were selected and are currently working with government partners in 20 LGEAs. This has resulted in increased awareness of teachers and community leaders, and the replacement of some formerly inactive SBMC members.



Left
Qualified, good quality teachers need to be retained in schools.

Below
The issue of girl-child education in the northern part of Nigeria is being addressed.

One year quick-win strategy for Nigerian education

ESSPIN has supported the Federal Ministry of Education in its One Year Strategic Plan for the Development of the Education Sector. An implementation Task Team, with ESSPIN as a member, has also been set up by Professor Ruqayyatu Rufa'i, Minister of Education.

Though the strategy was produced within a few weeks of the Minister's assumption of duties on 6 April 2010, the priorities are in accordance with the existing Roadmap for the Nigerian Education Sector formulated by her predecessor, Dr Sam Egwu. The plan covers the period, May 2010 to April 2011. It also includes interventions that may not be completed within the time frame but which should show significant progress.

The Strategic Plan therefore has the following focal areas:

Strengthening the Institutional Management of Education

This aims at enhancing the planning and implementation process as well as ensuring synergy between diverse sections of the education sector.

Standards and Quality Assurance

The challenges of assuring quality in the Nigerian education system are clearly identified. These include poor infrastructure, obsolete facilities and lack of manpower to enhance the enforcement of quality standards.

Teacher Education and Development

Particular attention is paid to teacher education and development. The Plan has identified initiatives to be put in place to encourage and retain good quality and qualified teachers. These initiatives include the provision of housing schemes and more attractive remuneration.

Access and Equity

The Plan identifies strategies to tackle the challenges of enrolment shortfalls in Nigerian schools. Attention is also given to the non-formal sector with specific strategies for adult literacy and nomadic education. The problems of girl-child education in the northern part of Nigeria, and boy-child in the south eastern part of Nigeria are identified for attention in the Plan.

Technical, Vocational Education and Development

The Strategic Plan identifies the need for the production of people with requisite vocational and technical skills and competencies for attaining Nigeria's global economic goals. It provides for the development of the Vocational Education Framework and also an agency to enhance and regulate technical and vocational education up to the Post-Basic Education level.



Funding, Partnerships and Resource Utilisation

Challenges of funding and adequate utilisation of resources in the sector are identified. The plan hopes to develop mechanisms for getting funds directly to schools as well as a sustainable system for monitoring and evaluating the utilisation of UBEC funds by States. It also seeks to strengthen partnerships with International Development Partners, industries and related agencies involved in supporting education in Nigeria.

The Strategic Plan identifies agencies responsible for carrying out specific responsibilities as well as a timeline over which these have to be achieved. The Minister has appointed Task Teams to monitor, evaluate and report on progress made on each of the areas. These Teams are to work closely with implementing agencies in keeping to the timeline.



Left and above
ESSPIN supported posters for the Access campaign.

Access to Education campaign launched

The National Campaign on Access to Education was launched in Yola, Adamawa State on 8 June, 2010 by the Vice-President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Arc. Namadi Sambo, who represented the President. The launch marked the start of the Implementation of the Roadmap and particularly, the One Year Strategy Plan for the Development of the Education Sector of the new Minister of Education, Professor Ruqayyatu Rufa'i.

At the launch, the Vice-President symbolically enrolled children into basic education as well as adults in nomadic, mass and adult literacy classes. With the launch of the Access Campaign, there will be intensive campaigning across the country in diverse media to encourage enrolment in Nigerian schools. The Federal Ministry of Education expects that by the beginning of the new school year, the impact of the campaign would be seen through enhanced enrolment. While the launch in Yola is targeted at girl-child education, the FME plans another launch in the south eastern part of Nigeria to target boy-child education.

ESSPIN is working with Federal and state partners to improve the quality of education and ensure attendance is worth while.

Right
Vice-President Namadi Sambo and Professor Ruqayyatu Rufa'i at the launch of the national campaign on Access to Education in Yola.



Writer

Joanna Harma
EMIS State Specialist



Left
Pupils' needs count.

Flip side of Annual School Census

We had our first day of Annual School Census correction workshops on Thursday 20 May 2010.

The Local Government Education Authority (LGEAs) did not live up to our expectations – they were to arrange a venue (LGEA or a secondary school hall) as well as chairs and public address system but none of these were provided. The hall we were to use was being used for West African Examination Council (WAEC) exams, so we were relegated to the MTN computer lab at the school. When I saw it I almost had a fit – enough space for about 25 people. The plan had been for two LGEAs' head teachers to be called together in one large hall at one time, (which I thought would be unwieldy enough...) and we were to work two days in a row, so four LGEAs called in two separate groups.

The Ministry's Public Relations Officer decided this would be unwieldy for the radio announcement, so they called 3–5 LGEAs together in one place at one time – but said the activity was to stretch over two days, in the hope that some people would opt for the second day. We were to go through the forms as a group using the PA system, guiding them through what to correct. There were five teams in different locations.

I opted to go to the centre where five LGEAs were called to one spot, as I knew they would have a tough time. This of course was compounded by the fact that we had neither hall, nor chairs, nor PA system.

It started slowly enough, with head teachers trickling in, and I was worried that at that rate, we would only get about a tenth of the forms corrected. My fears turned out to be unfounded and the room became jammed with people.

The upshot to all this was that because we had no space and no PA system, we had to deal with people on a person-to-person basis and people just had to wait. This meant that every form was checked individually, which, in turn meant that the quality of corrections would be very high indeed. All LGEAs were dealt with on one day, with all forms being checked by the team or me. This turned out very well in the end, because the level of understanding that the teachers had of the form in the beginning was very low.

Observations

At a point during the day, I was helping one head teacher to correct his form. He had 1142 children in his enrolment, and I thought it was a big school. Then I got to classrooms – I asked the head teacher, 'are you telling me you have 1100 kids in one big room?' and he answered 'I don't have 1100 kids!'. I called his attention to the enrolment he recorded. He then said that he was instructed to inflate the figures. It transpired that the real enrolment was not 1142 but 93. He had clearly taken the instruction and run with it – wildly. For the rest of the day I did not come across such wild figures – however it makes me wonder, and worry, that other head teachers have at least doubled the enrolment rather than multiplying by over 10. I quizzed them all when it was not the familiar small class sizes... and they all claimed the enrolment to be true. So, hard to tell!

Another interesting thing that came out of the process is that most teachers with National Certificate of Education (NCE) got this qualification after doing their Grade Two. This means that the academic qualification is the right one – less than SSCE, with NCE as their teaching qualification.

Finally we dealt with them all, and captured some schools that were not captured during the first round. But, the number of times I had to have some of the Head Teachers correct the same thing underscores the huge gulf in understanding and how important it is to train enumerators very well.

Writer
Masooda Bano
IQTE Consultant



Right, above and left
Typical Tsangaya school learning environments.



Tsangaya school cluster model launched in Kano

In response to the constant demands made by the Kano, Kaduna, and Jigawa State governments to develop a model for teaching modern subjects to children from Tsangaya schools, an integration pilot has been successfully launched in three Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) in Kano State (Albasu, Fagge, and Kombotso).

A total of 28 Tsangaya school clusters started operating in Kano at the end of March. Each cluster has a total of 30 students – in some cases permission has been given to increase the total number to 35. Over 800 children from 140 Tsangaya schools have therefore started benefiting from basic education. The entire pilot, or parts of it, can be easily replicated in Kaduna and Jigawa.

Brief details of this pilot include:

Establishment of community school

The basic feature of the model is to establish a community school to cater for children from a cluster of five closely located Tsangaya schools (so that the children can easily walk to the central community school). In the first year of the school, children from the Tsangaya schools are being taught Mathematics, Hausa, Social Studies, and English.

The government curriculum is being followed in these schools to ensure the eligibility of these children to enter middle and secondary State schools on completion of primary education. The six-year primary education syllabus has been condensed to three and a half years' duration. The choice of a separate community school instead of providing a teacher to teach inside the Tsangaya School was based on the ineffectiveness of such experiments in the past. The Mallams (teachers) do not like external intrusion in their schools. It is also difficult, practically, as not all children in the Tsangaya school are of suitable age to benefit from such education.

Formation of a cluster

One of the main challenges of the model was the successful mobilisation of the Mallams to agree to form a cluster and to release the children of the suitable age group for a number of hours each day. Identification of locations where there are five Tsangaya schools close enough to form a cluster was itself a challenge. The IQTE census data helped identify these locations.

School site

The other big challenge was to find a school site, since the model required that the community or the LGEA takes responsibility for providing a one-room building to establish this community school close to the cluster. The fact that most clusters have secured such a one-room school site (even if at times very basic) is one of the biggest achievements of the model so far.

School hours

The flexibility in school hours is central to the design of this model. Based on the ESSPIN IQTE studies conducted in 2008, it was recognised that the children in Tsangaya schools are busy most of the day with their Qu'ranic education. It is therefore important to identify those hours which will be considered appropriate by the Mallams to release the children. After consultation, it was agreed that two hours of teaching per day for five days in a week, followed by a full teaching day (five hours) on Thursday is feasible. IQTE schools close on Thursdays and Fridays, so the children don't have to pursue Qu'ranic education on these two days. The children in these schools are thus getting 15 hours of education each week though the exact timings of the school in each cluster have been set to suit the needs of that specific cluster.

Teachers from the community

The real key to the success of this model is the ability to develop a cadre of well-trained and highly motivated community-based teachers. Mallams forming the cluster were requested to identify a local person in their immediate community who has 10 or 12 years of education (secondary or senior secondary certificate) whom they think will be good teacher. Thirty people were identified and have been trained and are now running these schools.

Low teachers' salary

The main argument for having such teachers is that in such models, the teachers are not paid a proper salary but receive a token allowance (3,500 naira) and they are allowed to pursue other jobs at the same time. Since SUBEB is not responsible for providing teachers to the Islamiyya and Qu'ranic schools due to financial implications, this strategy is the only way to meet the shortfall in teachers' numbers in the immediate future.



Above
Pupils reciting the Koran in a Tsangaya school in Kano State.

Intensive teacher training

The model requires preparation of an intensive teacher-training programme where these young recruited teachers are offered five weeks of training in multi-grade teaching. The 30 community teachers in Kano underwent a five-week training course (three weeks in workshop format, and two weeks of in-school follow-up) in March and April.

Support teachers visit each school once or twice a month and are required to fill in a teacher and school assessment form, which is then submitted to the ESSPIN Kano IQTE State Specialist. All teachers in a given LGEA are also required to participate in a monthly meeting with Support Teachers to discuss common problems. The teachers will also be participating in a monthly three-day training workshop in Kano with Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) trainers and the Support Teachers for the first year. Thus, in terms of ESSPIN resources, the actual training is the most costly element of the model.

Training of Master Trainers and Supervisors

Such a model also requires good support and refresher training. Two master trainers have been trained at each LGEA level. These master trainers attended the five-week training course organised for the teachers and are being provided with follow-up training. Two VSO volunteers are working with the Support Teachers to further train them. The training will take place for two days each month, when the VSO volunteers will work with the Support Teachers to guide them in preparing the three-day training workshops to be held for the teachers at the end of each month.

School Support Committee

The model also requires active involvement of the community to mobilise resources, identify a location for the hosting of the community school, help maintain school infrastructure, and monitor teacher and student attendance. School Support Committees (SSCs) have been developed for all the schools: members comprise Mallams of the five Tsangaya schools, three parents or local community members (as in some cases the parents might not be in the neighbouring area) and two Support Teachers. The teacher acts as the secretary of the SSC. The teacher is required to take the minutes of the meeting, which are then submitted to the ESSPIN Kano IQTE State Specialist through the Support Teachers.



Challenges for the future

The model has made an exceptionally good start, but challenges remain:

Rains and school infrastructure

Not all clusters have been successful in getting good buildings. Infrastructure assessment forms have been developed which the mobilisation team is now using to assess the status of each school site. Buildings that require immediate help to ensure that they can survive the heavy rains will be identified.

Introduction of vocational training

It is also very important to introduce some vocational training into the community school so that the children can learn some income-generating skills. The Mallams are constantly asking for provision of vocational skills in these schools. In fact, in order to mobilise the Mallams to allow the children to come to the community school, the mobilisation team had to convince them that basic education is critical to enable these children to gain the kind of vocational skills the Mallams want, such as motor mechanics, etc.

Feeding

Currently ESSPIN is feeding the children every Thursday at the cost of 2,500 naira per school. The money is given to one of the Mallams from the cluster, who is located closest to the school, and who cooks for the whole school. Efforts will be made over time to rotate the duty among the Mallams. The feeding will last four months after which the ideal option is to have the community or a philanthropist take over the role of covering the cost.

From ESSPIN's perspective, the justification for covering the feeding costs in the initial four months is to allow the Mallams and the community some time to see the benefits of this school and to develop a real appreciation for the education being provided so that they will send the children whether or not there is feeding on Thursday. Already the signs are that most children will come whether or not there is feeding.

Above left to right
Transformation
of the learning
environment of
Tsongaya schools
in Kano.

Teacher drop-outs

In the long-term, the programme has to build in a provision for passing on this training at very low cost to train other potential teachers. This will be required in order to expand the programme but also to ensure replacements in case any teacher drops-out.

Long-term government commitment

Right now ESSPIN is paying the salaries of the teachers. One of the key challenges in the coming months is to ensure that the programme is embedded within SUBEB if the IQTE Board is not approved and the government takes over the payment of allowances for the teachers and the mobilisation team.

There are thus many challenges to making the model sustainable. But the enthusiasm with which it has been received by the students, teachers and also many Mallams allows great optimism for a successful outcome. It has also made it a highly rewarding process for the ESSPIN IQTE team.

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