

**ESSPIN is supporting schools to become effective centres of learning at the heart of the community. We are working to improve the way education is managed at all levels of government and to get more and better resources in schools. ESSPIN is helping Nigeria's children to grow.**

## **Background**

ESSPIN has been supporting the Enugu State government in implementing basic education reforms with the main goal of ensuring that schools are equipped to provide high quality education for all children. This culminated in putting in place the School Improvement Programme (SIP) in May 2011. The SIP aims to ensure that all children enrol in schools and complete a full course of basic education as well as meet learning outcome benchmarks for their various classes. Based on its priority on the provision of quality basic education, the State Government has been collaborating with ESSPIN to deliver the SIP largely using its own resources with ESSPIN providing technical assistance.

## **ESSPIN's contribution**

With the completion of the SIP pilot in 91 public primary schools and 30 missions' schools, ESSPIN's focus shifted to supporting the State to roll-out critical aspects of the SIP to all the public primary schools in the 17 local government areas in the state. The first phase of the roll-out witnessed the expansion of participating schools from 91 to 496. 496 head teachers from the schools received training and support from the State School Improvement Team (SSIT) and school support officers (SSOs). They learned how to manage and lead their schools effectively. The capacity of teachers to deliver competent lessons was equally enhanced as over 2000 teachers were trained and supported to be effective in delivering literacy and numeracy lessons. Similarly, School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs) were established and supported to be functional in all the 496 schools. During the review period, over 3500 SBMC members were trained, supported and mentored by civil society organisations and Social Mobilisations Officers to contribute to improvement in their local schools.

The first phase of the roll-out was not limited to public primary schools. A total of 154 missions' primary schools also benefited from the scale-up bringing the total number of missions' schools that benefited from ESSPIN's support to 184. In all, 184 head teachers, 1444 class teachers and over 1840 SBMC members from missions' schools received various forms of training and support aimed at improving the capacities of the benefiting schools to provide high quality education for children.

The second phase of the roll-out has taken off with coverage of the remaining 727 public primary schools, which has seen 727 new head teachers and over 2200 new class teachers coming into the programme. 727 new SBMCs are also set to join the programme.

## ESSPIN Impact in Schools

ESSPIN's technical assistance and direct programme support activities can be clearly seen in:

1,223 public schools are now participating in the School Improvement Programme (SIP) leading to the training and support for 4807 class teachers to enable them deliver competent lessons, especially in literacy and numeracy. During the current school year, full literacy and numeracy lesson plans have been distributed to all 1223 public primary schools in Enugu State. The overall goal is to enhance pupil learning and entrench child-centred best practices in the classrooms. Individual teachers say the training and support activities they have been participating in within their various clusters and schools have made a difference in their classroom practices. **Mrs. Ifeoma Ani**, a primary one teacher says participation in the SIP has brought a great deal of change and improvement to her school. As she puts it:

*"I do not actually know where to start counting the enormous benefits I have gained from the School Improvement Programme. We have been trained on the use of full lesson plans weeks 1-10 and now are having the other part that is weeks 11-20. The full lesson plans have all the techniques, strategies and patterns to follow. The simple rule given to us is to follow the lesson plan step by step. The teaching aids, games, songs and pattern of work to use are clearly spelt out. We have now been given the full lesson plan to aid our teaching skills, most especially in delivering literacy and numeracy lessons".*

Head teachers have also been trained and supported to effectively lead and manage their schools. In the current school year, all the 1223 public schools' head teachers have been trained by school support officers and members of the State School Improvement Team on the various school leadership packages. The training and support provided to the head teachers is already impacting the way head teachers lead their schools. A case in point is **Mrs. Edit Onyia**, the head teacher of Maryland Primary School, Maryland, Enugu. She says of the training she had received:

*"Come to think of it, I didn't really know much about inclusive education. But with the training I have received in our cluster workshop organized by our school support officer, Mrs. Eze Caroline and supported by the SSIT, I now know that every child has a right to quality education irrespective of their social, religious, age, medical or social status. I am now better equipped to comfortably support one of my class teachers in effectively supporting and encouraging an albino boy, Michael Iburu in her primary one class. I now appreciate the need to get him actively involved in classroom activities; no more room for exclusion or discrimination. Other pupils are also encouraged to play and work with him. Michael is now very happy and active in class work".*

The school support officers (SSOs) and SSIT members have not been left in the training and professional development. 197 SSOs have also undergone series of workshops to equip them provide in-service training and support for head teachers and class teachers. 34 State School Improvement Team (SSIT) members have also had their capacities developed to provide cluster and school-based training and support for SSOs, head teachers and class teachers.



An albino boy taking part in a class room activity as a result of inclusive practices training received by

## ESSPIN Impact in Communities

The State has begun to harvest the fruits of effective community participation and contribution to the SIP, a direct result of further support which ESSPIN is providing especially in the 405 roll out school communities. This is evidenced in the level of participation and resources mobilized by various levels of stakeholders.

A report of the Civil Society and Government Partnership (CGP) group in the just concluded mentoring and monitoring visit 1 of the 496 public primary schools involved in the pilot and first roll-out reveals that SBMCs and other community groups are contributing, reaching out and taking ownership of the governance and effective management of their schools.

In Unity Primary School, Akiyi Umulokpa in Uzo-Uwani LGEA, the SBMC approached the Chairman of the LGEA for support and a borehole was constructed for the school. The school was also provided with a school band and writing materials. This, according to the Head teacher is galvanizing both the pupils and teachers to always show up in school. According to her, *“Everyone is excited and now looking forward to coming to school each day.”*

In Central School, Umulokpa in Uzo-Uwani LGEA, after the contractor who was mobilized by ENSUBEB to construct a block of 4 classrooms failed to deliver, the SBMC went on a campaign called it the “complete our school campaign” through Radio Nigeria and got the contractor to complete the work within days. In Ogbagu Primary School, Ngwu in Nsukka LGA, a philanthropist, Engr. Bonaventure Ugwu donated a set of school drums and sportswear worth eighty thousand (N80,000) naira, which the head teacher said reduced lateness and is now attracting more pupils to the school.

Enrolment drive and monitoring of teaching and learning are other areas the SBMCs are supporting school improvement. In Central school Nkpologu, Uzo-Uwani LGEA, the SBMC got a girl, Monica Ezeugwu, who had been out of school for four years back to school. This happened despite her parents attempt to truncate the SBMC’s efforts by withdrawing her from school after the SMBC re-enrolled her in school. Her parents had withdrawn her from school and sent her Lagos to be a house maid.

*“I was forced to go to Lagos by my parents to live with somebody to take care of her children. I did not like it but I could not say no. Thank God the SBMC fought for me. They got me back from Lagos through Rev. Fr. David. I am back to my school and the SBMC are now taking care of my school needs. I am happy”* **Monica Ezeugwu** said.



Teachers during a “catch-up” training at Nsukka LGA

## **Transforming Basic Education through Community participation--the story of Udechukwu Memorial Primary School, Mmaku**

*“Our school is changing now and newer things are happening. Our parents come to school regularly to see how teaching is going on and how we behave at school”* says an enthusiastic Okolo Oluebube Pius

School Based Management Committees have recently been having deeper impacts within the communities where they are based. They have been supporting families and less privileged children in returning to school and assisting them to stay in school as well.

That is the story of the School-Based Management Committee (SBMC) in Udechukwu Primary School in Mmaku, Agwu Local Government Area of Enugu State. The committee relentlessly advocated to philanthropists and politicians to support their school. Their efforts were rewarded when the chairman and other members of the community extended their benevolence to the school with cash donations and other material support.

Udechukwu Memorial Primary School, Mmaku received 400 sets of school uniforms and school supplies, including sandals and sportswear from for pupils who may not be able to afford them. Other prominent members of the community contributed school badges, exercise books, pens and pencils to the school while a religious leader donated a set of drums to the school. SBMCs are known t to encourage community participation and boost a well channeled and innovative demand for education quality. Such was the case of Udechukwu Memorial Primary School which is now changing the story of the school and its attendance.

The women committee of this particular SBMC has currently purchased a water tank for the school and plans are well underway by the same committee for the construction of toilet facilities for the school.

*“Now we have a borehole in our school and a band too which makes me look forward to coming to school every day of the week”* Ogo Favour said with a smile.

The SBMC of Udechukwu Primary School is among the 405 established in the first roll-out of the school improvement programme in the state. ESSPIN, Enugu State Universal Basic Education Board and their CSO partners have been training and supporting the SBMCs to become fully functional.



Head Teacher of Udechukwu Primary School receiving a set of drums for the school.