

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

The 2011 Lagos Annual School Census (ASC) shows that there are 395,187 pupils and 13,318 teachers in 11,950 classrooms in 1001 public primary schools in the state. The figures for the same indices in the private school sector are much higher. With limited resources, managing such an enormous basic education system remains a big challenge to the state government.

More so, many years of neglect have left the sector with myriads of challenges – weak management, inadequate implementation of policies, poor tracking and monitoring of education budgets, low teaching standards, and lack of basic opportunities for learning. All these are the issues the state government has been confronting in the last few years to bring about improved teaching and learning in Lagos schools.

ESSPIN's contribution

ESSPIN has helped provide empirical evidence of the nature and extent of the challenges in the sector by supporting the Annual School Census (ASC), Annual Education Sector Performance Review (AESPR), and teacher and pupil assessments.

ESSPIN has advocated an integrated approach to school improvement that simultaneously addresses the challenges. It introduced the School Improvement Programme (SIP) as a pilot in 100 schools to demonstrate various reform initiatives. The SIP involves training head teachers and teachers, providing water and toilet facilities, and promoting inclusive education. It has been adopted by the state, which after it initially scaled it up in additional 500 schools, is now rolling it out in all 1001 public primary schools in the state.

ESSPIN is helping communities to engage with their local schools by promoting community participation in School Based Management Committees (SBMCs).

ESSPIN has helped to restructure and strengthen state education authorities and supported them to effectively manage education, including translating long-term plans into Medium-Term Sector Strategies (MTSS). It has also helped to develop an information system to make useful data available to policy and decision makers.

ESSPIN Impact in Schools

Schools are at the centre stage of the School Improvement Programme (SIP). ESSPIN is supporting improvement in the management of schools by head teachers, in classroom teachers' capability, and in school environments that encourage learning.

In the 600 schools that started the SIP model earlier, 85% of head teachers have been observed to be operating effectively, 71% of classroom teachers can deliver competent lessons, while 82% of the schools are meeting the needs of all their pupils.

"I have had two trainings on literacy and numeracy. I have gained skills to arouse the interest of my pupils to learn and especially to help slow learners learn as well," says Mrs Rebecca Odu, a class teacher at Central Primary School, Ikeja.

Tens of thousands of pupils across the state are now learning in much improved learning environments as a result of ESSPIN's interventions in the areas of water and sanitation, classroom renovation through the Challenge Fund, and Direct Fund to Schools (DFS).

At Okerube Primary School II, Abaranje, a dilapidated block of classrooms was reconstructed by ESSPIN in collaboration with the local SBMC. The affected pupils now learn in decent classrooms, shielded from rain and sun which initially disturbed them.

"Many parents withdrew their children because they were sitting on the floor. A parent withdrew five children at once. But now that the environment is conducive, they have been returning them and enrollment is increasing," says Head Teacher M. Egunjobi.

At Epeme Primary School, Badagry, more than 100 pupils initially without any source of water or toilet facilities now daily enjoy clean water through ESSPIN's intervention. The Sanitation Intervention has also made access to clean water and toilet facilities possible for over 40,000 pupils in 35 public primary schools in the state.

ESSPIN has spurred and is encouraging local authorities to be more responsive to schools' needs. At Jimoh Ojora Primary School, the Ifelodun LCDA fenced the school to safeguard water and toilet facilities provided by ESSPIN and went further to renovate the entire school building thus making the environment safer.



Access to clean water

Pupils of Epeme Primary School
Badagry benefitting from water
and toilet facilities provided by
ESSPIN

ESSPIN Impact in Communities

ESSPIN has supported the restructuring of SBMCs, training and mentoring of SBMC members, holding of SBMC Forum, and community mobilisation through drama. All these have led to effective functioning of SBMCs, more public awareness, increased voice and accountability, more resources for schools, and enhanced community ownership of schools in Lagos State.

The SBMC of Apapa Primary School received support from NIPCO Ltd Apapa which provided a block of four classrooms with furnishings worth over N2 million.

The ongoing construction of an 18 classroom two storey building at Ladi Lak Primary School Bariga, Shomolu by Kazuma Construction Company is a testimony of community ability to mobilise support for school development through the SBMC.

The SBMC of Anglican Primary School Apapa solicited over N100, 000 for the surgery of Hawawu, a seven-year-old female pupil who was badly injured in the school during a wind storm. Hawawu, who is back to school, says: "I am grateful to the school and all other people from the community that assisted me when I was in hospital."

Two philanthropists – Mrs Remi Agbowu and Dr Kole Funsho – constructed and equipped a modern library at CMS complex, Bariga, Somolu. The project was facilitated by an NGO named City Profs Academy through the SBMC intervention.

2,000 pupils from across the state with hearing challenges were given free treatments and hearing aids worth N800 million by Starkey Hearing Aids Foundation in USA. The health support was initiated and mobilised by Women Protection Organisation (WOPO) one of the CSOs being supported by ESSPIN in conjunction with BSA Hear and Speech Consult.

The SBMC of AUD Primary School Surulere successfully encouraged and supported Yakubu Yaya, 9-year-old Primary 5 pupil to return and remain in school after an accident that cost him a leg. "I am happy to be learning in school like other children," he says.

6,000 community members and education stakeholders were sensitised on the need to collaborate to support public schools during a community theatre sponsored by ESSPIN.

"The play we have just watched is the story of Darocha Primary School. I will take the message to the rest of my community members. We must wake up. Henceforth, we will attend our project implementation committee meetings regularly. We now see the need," says Mrs Akinyemi, a member of Darocha Primary School, Agege community.



Mobilising communities through theatre

Community members and key education stakeholders were sensitized through drama performances on key education issues in Lagos State

Case Study

Improving school infrastructure to enhance teaching and learning

Jimoh Ojora Primary School II in Ifelodun Local Council Development Area (LCDA) is today a breath of fresh air among public schools in Lagos State – moderately furnished classrooms; clean water and toilets; a well guarded school compound; and happy teachers and pupils.

“Jimoh Ojora Primary School of today is a success story when compared with Jimoh Ojora of two years ago,” says Head Teacher Lydia Adetuba. “I can trace the change in the school to when ESSPIN gave us a water borehole and toilets. This seriously improved the school sanitation.”

Twelve-year old Veronica Igwe in Primary-6 confirms this: “We used to defecate inside papers and then throw them into the bush. Now we use the toilets and there is water to clean ourselves.”

The school community was also making use of the water but when some locals, entering the school at will, started to misuse the borehole; the Ajeromi/Ifelodun Education Secretary stepped in and encouraged the Ifelodun LCDA to build a fence round the school. Now the fence protects the facilities and provides a more secure environment for the pupils.

“Now we have no fears that our pupils will wander away again,” says Adetuba.

Recognising the need to further make the school environment more conducive for learning, the LCDA a few months later renovated all classrooms – providing new roofs, windows, doors, smooth floors, new furniture, and painted walls. Today, the school looks very decent.

“The pupils are more relaxed and comfortable to learn now,” remarks Adetuba.

The teachers are happy too. Classroom teacher Mercy Ukoha says: “I wanted to reject my posting to the school on my first day because of its poor state. But within six months things started to change . . . the toilets, borehole, renovated classrooms, and our trainings. . . Honestly, there has been a great change.”

The change in the school infrastructure is pervasive. It has upped the motivation to teach and learn. It has even led to parents and the School-Based Management Committee (SBMC) committing to employ and pay the wages of cleaners to maintain the toilets.



Safe environment for learning

Pupils of Jimoh Ojora Primary School savouring the safe learning environment in the school