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December 2011



Above
70,000 Lagos children stand to benefit from newly-released funding.

esspin express

Federal Government releases cash for Lagos schools

The Nigerian Federal Government has released a backlog of N1.8 billion (£7.5 million) to the Lagos State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB). ESSPIN helped SUBEB to access the federal funding which the Lagos state government has matched to provide a total of an additional 3.6 billion Naira (£15 million) for Lagos schools.

Thousands of Lagos children have been learning under trees and on bare floors, in schools without drinking water and toilet facilities, while money earmarked for education was locked away in Federal and State government coffers. The new money, three times the state's annual capital budget for primary education, has been committed to providing about 800 classrooms, 500 toilets, 50 staff offices, furniture, water and other much needed infrastructure to 97 public primary schools prioritised for improvement.

Continued inside on page 2.

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Support Programme
in Nigeria



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Organisational profile

ESSPIN is one of a set of State Level Programmes (SLPs), funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), which work on governance, accountability and the delivery of health and education services. ESSPIN supports federal and state authorities as they work to both reform the governance of education and to improve the quality of education that children receive.

ESSPIN is a partnership between the Nigerian Government and DFID. The six-year programme (2008–2014) supports federal and state governments – in 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.

Continuation from cover Federal Government releases cash for Lagos schools

ESSPIN is working to ensure that all funding for education is used effectively to improve learning in Lagos public primary schools and to avoid the past wastage and misuse of government money. The current head of SUBEB is championing change. Supported by ESSPIN, she has clamped down on corruption in government contracting and has improved the independent monitoring of education spending. Making good use of this increased funding will allow 70,000 pupils to learn in better schools.

Steve Baines

In October, ESSPIN bid fond farewell to Steve Baines, Technical Team Co-ordinator. Steve's wise counsel and warm humour will be much missed. Our best wishes are with him.

ESSPIN approach adopted for 2011/12 annual school census

With the support of the National Education Management Information Systems (NEMIS), all states are to be encouraged to use the simplified approach to data entry for the 2011/12 national Annual School Census (ASC), as tried and tested by ESSPIN. ESSPIN is collaborating with USAID-RTI to allow the data captured to be easily analysed with their EMIS toolkit.

The change in approach is prompted by the failure of all but eight states and the FCT to reach the reporting stage of the 2010/2011 ASC cycle. Three states never carried out enumeration and four never commenced data entry. It is expected that the new approach will lead to a much more successful ASC from November 2011.

Education on air in Enugu

The Civil Society Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA) has been assisted by ESSPIN to broadcast a 13 week radio phone-in programme in Enugu state which commenced in September 2011. The programme has raised awareness of the ongoing reforms for better education service delivery in the state and encouraged public debate. Inclusive education for all; School-Based Management Committee (SBMC); teachers' recruitment and deployment; community participation in education; and boys' drop-out rates in Enugu schools have already been discussed. Tune into the programme every Friday, 3.30pm – 4.00pm on FRCN.

Left

Steve Baines being interviewed for African Independent Television (AIT).

Below

Social Mobilisation Officers at a communication strategy development workshop in Kaduna.



Strengthening C&KM in SUBEB's Social Mobilisation Departments

ESSPIN's Communication and Knowledge Management (C&KM) team is working with SUBEB Social Mobilisation Departments (SMDs) in programme states to develop their C&KM function, particularly with regard to SBMC development.

A rapid review of the C&KM functions, capacity and output of the SMDs was carried out in each state in July and followed up with workshops to help the SMDs develop communication strategies and work-plans. In the coming months, ESSPIN will support the SMDs to communicate to stakeholders through community theatre, film, radio and printed materials as well as promoting their role as data gatherers at community level.

I decided to start covering the education beat after the (JDP) state sensitisation. I understood that it is imperative for me as a father and the voice of the voiceless to ensure I play my part so that government is accountable to the people. This award has only taught me not to limit myself. I am now creating a new education programme in Hausa.

Bashir Muhammad Inuwa
Freedom Radio, Kano



Above
Tony Akowe of The Nation receiving the overall winner award for JDP.

Education journalism awards

Eight journalists from the print and electronic media have been recognised for their outstanding performance in reporting on the education sector under a Journalism Development Programme (JDP) implemented by 'Development Communication Network' and supported by ESSPIN. The year-long programme climaxed with an award ceremony in Abuja in October.

Tony Akowe, Kaduna correspondent of The Nation; Anthony Forson, Nigeria Television Authority, Kaduna and Kikelomo Ifekoya of Radio Nigeria, Lagos won the first, second and third prizes respectively. Other winners were Toyin Adurodija Adebayo, National Life, Kwara; Boco Edet, Daily Trust, Abuja; Binta Lawan Umar, Freedom Radio, Jigawa; Bashir Muhammad Inuwa, Freedom Radio, Kano and Lawrence Njoku, The Guardian, Enugu.

The JDP initially involved over 120 journalists from Enugu, Jigawa, Kano, Kaduna, Kwara, and Lagos states and FCT with over 60 undergoing more intensive training and mentoring. Participants were assessed on the quality of their published or broadcast reports. A stream of informed stories and articles on education in Nigeria has featured in the national media. The JDP is raising awareness of the challenges and successes of education sector reform.

Telling stories of education

Civil Society Organisations working on basic education issues met with their media counterparts in Enugu, Jigawa, Lagos, Kaduna, Kano and Kwara states and resolved to collaborate to give voice to community concerns and advocate for improvements in the education sector.

One-day forums, hosted by ESSPIN in the six states during October, provided an opportunity for CSOs and media practitioners to identify and discuss the trials (and triumphs) of basic education reform at community level and across the states. CSO personnel and the journalists then considered practical ways they could partner to raise issues in the media and present the real life stories of education in Nigeria.

Enugu State

ESSPIN has supported the Enugu state government to identify and work out cost implications for the Governor's Special Intervention using the Integrated School Development (ISD) database and approach for 170 primary and 170 secondary schools in the state. This will follow the ESSPIN School Improvement Programme (SIP) being implemented in Udi Local Government Area, which is delivering a 'package' of interventions and assistance to improve school conditions and enhance capacities of all 91 public primary schools in Udi LGA.

Kano State

19,000 children plus their teachers are now enjoying fresh drinking water at school – the first step towards the coverage of 100 schools with clean water and latrines.

2,000 children in religious schools are enjoying core curriculum subjects for the first time.

11,000 girls have been enrolled through the innovative Conditional Cash Transfers programme.

Jigawa State

With ESSPIN's help, Jigawa's SUBEB has led in accessing and utilising federal government UBEC-Intervention Funds. Three of its Local Government Authorities (LGAs) are targeted for the Federal Government MDG conditional grants of about N200 million each.

900 pupils have been enrolled in 30 tsangaya pilot schools and two communities have established schools with a total enrollment of 126 pupils. A Girls' Education Initiative has been launched in 3 LGAs with 3,000 girls being supported with uniforms and learning materials.

Kaduna State

The 24-member State School Improvement Team (SSIT) has grown to become a better resource team for the state in the way they deliver training and provide support for LGEA and school staff. Through the modular School Improvement Programme, 165 Head teachers, 731 class teachers and 52 staff in the LGEAs have been trained in Kaduna state.

Lagos State

At Odogunyan Junior Secondary School, Ikorudu, where over 400 pupils were learning under trees, the SBMC secured approval from SUBEB and the Ministry of Education for a two-storey building of 17 classrooms. In the meantime, the SBMC mobilised N750, 000 to erect a temporary shelter for the pupils.

40,000 pupils in 35 public primary schools in Lagos now have access to clean water and improved toilet facilities through their use of 13 toilets and 30 boreholes provided by ESSPIN.

Kwara State

All 225 ESSPIN-supported schools in the four pilot Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) are able to develop an annual, costed School Development Plan, a very useful tool for school improvement. The schools used the plans in 2010 to access N33,900,002 from the Direct Funding to School (DFS) – an intervention from ESSPIN directly to schools to help them maintain their infrastructure.

Public Financial Management

Introduction

Nigeria's oil generates substantial government revenue. While the Federal Government distributes significant funds to states, not enough reaches schools to create an effective learning environment for pupils. Schools do not have quality teachers, good educational materials or adequate facilities.

However, throughout Nigeria there is a growing desire to improve the quality of basic education. To do this, opaque financial management in education must be reformed. ESSPIN is supporting the aspiration for better education by helping states to develop planning, and financing systems that will streamline and make the flow of funds to schools effective and transparent, and hold those responsible to account.

What is ESSPIN's approach?

Reforming financial management in education is important because state budgets for education have not reflected strategic priorities. The custom has been to draw up annual budgets by updating the previous year's budget. The result is that money has not been allocated to high priorities.

Adding to the problem, waste, corruption, lack of control over expenditure, opaque and uncompetitive procurement practices, and unsupervised capital projects mean that only a fraction of the budget allocation is used appropriately.

Most of the funds for basic education are channelled through State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs). But SUBEB financial systems are inadequate. Staff rarely have appropriate training, and procedures for supervising and reporting expenditure are weak.

Further along the funding channel, there are more difficulties. Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) and schools generally have not prepared their own plans and budgets and have had to rely on what states allocate. Even then they have difficulty in getting hold of money when they need it. This means local authorities, schools, head teachers and communities have their hands tied when it comes to trying to improve education.

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Strategy

ESSPIN's four-point strategy for supporting better financial management in education is to:

Help states to build robust educational financial management systems in which strategies drive priorities, priorities drive budgets and budgets are used appropriately;

Help states to put in place measures that make corruption difficult;

Help the federal Universal Basic Education Commission, State Universal Basic Education Boards and Local Government Education Authorities to set up financial management systems that will streamline the flow of funds;

Help schools and communities to develop greater autonomy by building their skills to plan, budget and manage devolved funds.

Action plans and budgets

The push to streamline the flow of funds to schools and make the flow more transparent is growing in both the federal Universal Basic Education Commission and states. States now prepare Action Plans that guide the development of annual state budgets for education. All parts of state education systems prepare Departmental Work Plans for the overhead component of state recurrent budgets.

As a result of going through the planning process and preparing annual education budgets, states have already made substantial changes. SUBEBs are reviewing their financial management systems. Boards are identifying where, for example, procurement needs to be reformed to prevent corruption and are directing state teams to implement recommendations.

Future challenges

The move to programme and activity-based budgeting to turn Medium-Term Sector Strategies into action is perhaps the greatest challenge faced by states.

The sheer magnitude of streamlining flows of funds for education through SUBEBs to hundreds of local authorities and thousands of schools is enormous. Powerful vested interests in the SUBEBs that control the flow of federal funds to local education authorities and schools are another challenge. It will take time for SUBEBs to devolve funds. It will also take time for Local Government Education Authorities, schools and school-based management committees to build the skills and systems they will need to manage devolved resources.

Complementing ESSPIN's approach, the DFID State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability (SPARC) programme is working with state Ministries of Planning and Budgeting to speed up budget reforms. SPARC will also help SUBEBs and Local Government Education Authorities rationalise and make financial systems more transparent to improve payment to schools.

ESSPIN support to public financial management for education

Helps put in place an annual cycle of planning, budgeting and reporting

Helps the main channels for education funding – State Universal Basic Education Boards, State Ministries of Education and Local Government Education Authorities – rationalise and make financial systems more transparent

Helps mend holes in the pipelines for capital funds and teachers' salaries to prevent leaks

Helps reorganise State Universal Basic Education Boards, Local Government Education Authorities and state Ministries of Education to improve financial management

Supports decentralisation

Departmental Work Plans and Budgets

First step towards activity-based budgeting

Translate plans in state Medium-Term Sector Strategies to specific activities in the annual recurrent and capital budgets

Set out exactly what departments will do in the financial year – both routine and development activities

Specify staff responsible for carrying out activities and match activities with staff complements

Provide baselines for assessing how budgets are used

Help those involved understand how annual Departmental Work Plans relate to Medium-Term Sector Strategies, and build skills for preparing subsequent Medium-Term Sector Strategies

Organisational Development and Management

Introduction

In Nigeria there is a strong desire to make fundamental changes in the way that education is provided and managed. But this is made difficult by top-heavy education structures, overlapping responsibilities and ineffective management systems. To be successful, reform in education has to take place in parallel with other changes, including changes in legal frameworks, planning and financial systems.

ESSPIN is helping federal, state and local government education agencies to work together more effectively and build trust in each other. To do this, ESSPIN is supporting those agencies as they review their roles and responsibilities, and identify the skills and structures needed to deliver quality education without duplication and waste. This includes streamlining the top-down management system and developing the capacity of managers across the system to work more effectively.

Top-down education management leaves schools and communities almost powerless to play a part in improving education. When central authorities determine what schools need, there is little scope for local ownership of education. Schools and communities need to be consulted, and to be given responsibilities for improving teaching and learning – and for managing the resources needed to do so.

What is ESSPIN's approach?

Throughout the education system, the core management functions of planning, financial management and quality assurance are weak. So ESSPIN's approach is to help improve the skills needed to deliver those functions. Working with senior staff throughout the education system, ESSPIN is providing opportunities for capacity building so that managers can prepare sound organisational plans and budgets, and determine ways in which organisational structures might operate more efficiently and effectively.

Strategy

A more effective education system requires some reorganisation of federal, state and local governments to clarify responsibilities, locate those responsibilities at the most appropriate level in the system, and put in place measures to make sure those responsible are held accountable. ESSPIN focuses on organisational development and management in the parts of the system where changes will make the biggest difference.

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Federal education management

ESSPIN works with the Policy, Planning, Management and Research Department of the Federal Ministry of Education, and the Universal Basic Education Commission. These two agencies are the main channels of federal funds to basic education.

The Universal Basic Education Commission's strategic plan sets out its main responsibilities – mobilising resources and supporting State Universal Basic Education Boards – and gives states more flexibility in bidding for funds to accomplish goals they themselves have determined.

State education management

In states ESSPIN works with State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBS). These boards channel federal and state budget allocations to local authorities. Then, further along the funding chain ESSPIN works with local education authorities because these directly support schools. With State Ministries of Education, ESSPIN involves all relevant departments and local government organisations in drawing up Medium-Term Sector Strategies. Six states now have these frameworks setting out their visions, missions, goals, objectives and actions. In order to implement these strategies, ESSPIN is helping states to review their organisational structures, legal and financial systems.

Future challenges

Maintaining momentum – building relationships with key policy makers and senior staff in education – is fundamental to changing attitudes and transforming organisations. ESSPIN sustains close ties with the Universal Basic Education Commission and six State Universal Basic Education Boards so that they, in turn, can support and guide the hundreds of local authorities beyond ESSPIN's reach. ESSPIN will need to overcome resistance to change and help reform-minded policy makers and managers to understand the benefits of organisational development.

An additional challenge is to encourage the establishment of robust institutions that will be sustainable after the completion of ESSPIN's work.

ESSPIN support for streamlining educational management

Helping the Universal Basic Education Commission devolve responsibilities, change how funds flow to states and put more trust in states to carry out tasks assigned to them

Helping State Universal Basic Education Boards support and build capacity in Local Government Education Authorities and build sufficient trust in their capabilities to devolve responsibilities to them

Helping Local Government Education Authorities address school priorities through stakeholder forums such as school-based management committees and use evidence-based criteria to select schools for targeted improvement.

Helping review organisational structures to match structure to strategy

Helping review the legal framework of the education system

Helping introduce public sector management reforms to the education system that parallel and reinforce the reforms that SPARC is introducing in the Office of the Head of Service, and Ministries of Economic Planning and Finance.

ESSPIN support for streamlining the education system

Develops planning processes in each part of the education system

Supports the collection, analysis and publication of key educational data including school census returns as a basis for sound planning

Integrates Medium-Term Sector Strategy planning at federal and state levels

Audits state and local authorities to identify overlapping roles, responsibilities and functions

Reforms and develops processes to make them more transparent and accountable

Rationalises management structures, roles, responsibilities, human resources management

Uses learning-by-doing to build capacity

Improves co-operation and communication among federal, state and local government in the education system

Below and right
Better planning
and management
means more resources
for schools.

Writer
Tolase Olatinwo
Knowledge Management
Specialist,
Kwara/Lagos

Education sector reform requires robust institutional systems and structures.



Better systems = Better service delivery = Better schools

‘Before the reform in 2010, the LGEAs had no plans, no targets, and no goals. There were no clear job functions or work plans for staff. Everything we did was unplanned, which made basic education at the state and local government levels poorly managed’ says Hezekiah Adebayo, Deputy Director, SUBEB.

The Lagos State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) were established by law to work together to manage basic education services in Lagos State. However, the institutions had been largely ineffective because of their weak structure and a general lack of clarity in their roles and relationship.



Above
Hezekiah Adebayo,
Deputy Director,
SUBEB

‘There were serious overlaps in responsibilities, conflicting job roles and duplication of activities causing confusion and inefficiency’, said Adebayo who is responsible for co-ordinating the Board Secretary office for overall day-to-day management of SUBEB.

Through ESSPIN’s interventions, however, the government institutions were supported to develop new strategies and plans, which now guide their current activities; to streamline their structure and functions; and to clarify areas of collaboration and limitations of each body.

SUBEB departments are now able to coordinate with LGEA units and LGEAs are carried along in planning and implementation.

This means the much-needed government resources and the reforms in teaching and learning can be directed more effectively to the schools and students to improve the quality of their education.

‘We are better positioned now to effectively manage basic education in Lagos State,’ an elated Adebayo emphasised.

Writer
Bankole Ebisemiju
Communications
and Knowledge
Management Co-
ordinator

Right and below
A functioning SMD
will reach out to
community members.

**An effective and efficient
Social Mobilisation Department
drives community participation
in basic education.**



Kaduna SUBEB Social Mobilisation Department – fit for purpose

‘Though community mobilisation is an important element in the delivery of quality basic education, the Social Mobilisation Department did not exist in Kaduna State Universal Education Board. What existed for four years was the Publicity Office, manned by myself as Public Relations Officer and a camera man. In 2005, additional responsibility for social mobilisation was added to the unit but without a clear mandate, structure and function’ said Shuaib Mohammed Dabo, Director, Social Mobilisation Department (SMD) Kaduna SUBEB.

ESSPIN’s work with the SMD in SUBEB has created a more functional department, with appropriate systems and structure in place and clearly defined responsibilities. Following the SUBEB-wide organisational review process, SMD has grown from a four-person unit to a 16-strong department. ESSPIN has delivered three whole-department training events to help develop effective working practices in areas such as delegation, team-work, and work-planning.



Left
Shuaib Mohammed
Dabo, Director,
Social Mobilisation
Department, SUBEB,
Kaduna.

The ESSPIN Communications and Knowledge Management team is providing ongoing capacity building support for the vital C&KM work of the department. Staff have also drawn up their own ‘SMD Charter’, stating the department’s values and working practices and focusing the team on its core purpose and ultimate beneficiary: the child.

There is a new and more purposeful interaction between SUBEB and LGEA SMDs and, in turn, the School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs) they support through their mobilisation activities. SMDs in the LGEAs are now being mentored by SUBEB SMD to provide direct support to SBMCs in contributing to resolving various school issues. There are now 155 functional SBMCs and a replication plan is in place to reach every SBMC.

‘Today, the department is one year old and is fit for purpose with clear mandates and functions that tie into the overarching mission of SUBEB. The SMD will continue to work in strengthening community support in school governance through the SBMCs,’ said Dabo.

Basic education can only be improved and sustained with a high quality teaching force.



Left and below
ESSPIN is helping to develop teachers' skills, so better teaching and learning can take place.

Teachers' Development Needs Assessment – The first step to better teaching

Enugu State in collaboration with ESSPIN conducted an assessment to identify the training needs of primary and junior secondary school teachers in order to improve the conditions of teaching and learning in schools. A sample of 3,196 teachers from the 17 LGAs in the state participated in the assessment during the last quarter of 2010.

'The Teachers' Development Needs Assessment (TDNA) is part of a strategic plan from ESSPIN to support education systems reform in our state,' says Godwin Nnamani, an education secretary and a centre co-ordinator in Udenu LGA, Enugu, during the TDNA exercise. 'The TDNA result shows that we have succeeded in identifying the problem. If the capacities of teachers are built accordingly, there'll certainly be a change in our education service delivery.'



Godwin described the experience as enlightening, revealing the problems teachers were facing and the areas in which their capacities need to be built. 'It is an acknowledged fact that we have problems with regards to teaching and learning; not that teachers do not have the qualifications, but the teachers need to upgrade themselves through training. Identifying the problems of our teachers is the first right step to take; the rest will follow. Let's hope that the government will keep faith in this unique effort by ESSPIN.'

The TDNA exercise has laid the basis for policy discussions about teacher selection and recruitment, as well as teacher career paths and incentives. Following the sharing and discussion of the TDNA reports with stakeholders, a tailor-made School Improvement Programme (SIP) has been developed and rolled out in Enugu State.

A key step in this direction was the training of a 12-member State School Improvement Team (SSIT) and 18 School Support Officers (SSOs), to drive change in the teaching-learning process in schools. The SSIT/SSOs so far have supported the training of 121 head teachers, 400 class teachers and SBMC members to carry out school development planning, school self-evaluation and improvements in teaching and learning in schools in Udi LGEA.

'This whole exercise is directed towards our children and giving them a future to look forward to; and ultimately the reason to live. If things go on as planned, we will make our schools places where teaching and learning actually happen...' says Godwin.

It is hoped that the TDNA exercise will inform the development and implementation of a sustainable teacher development programme for the state and, in turn, ensure that over 700,000 children in Enugu State will achieve the learning outcome benchmarks.

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