

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

Despite years of neglect that have left Nigeria with poor quality public education, there are now indications of Lagos State Government's desire to improve educational services. Efforts are being made to address the problems facing basic education in the state – weak management of education, inadequate implementation of policies, and poor tracking and monitoring of education budgets.

The failure of schools to provide basic opportunities for learning, low teaching standards and inadequate training for teachers are also being looked into.

Similarly, communities are beginning to participate in the governance and improvement of schools. Their involvement had been very minimal with only a few Lagos communities actively involved in demanding for better services and holding government accountable. Now, Lagos communities are beginning to 'own' schools.

ESSPIN's contribution

ESSPIN has alerted Lagos government to the nature of the problems in the system, and the solutions. The programme adopts an integrated approach which focuses on key elements that work together to deliver quality education rather than tackle problems in isolation.

ESSPIN has helped to restructure and strengthen government institutions and supported them to develop strategies to effectively manage education in the State. ESSPIN has also helped make useful data from teacher and learner assessments and school census available to policy and decision makers.

Support for schools is accompanied by support for communities. This means resourcing selected primary schools to create an effective learning environment for pupils and helping communities to 'own' schools and demand for better services. ESSPIN is promoting community participation in School Based Management Committees (SBMCs).

ESSPIN helped the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) to access federal funding, then matched by Lagos state government, to provide an extra 3.6 billion Naira (£15 million) for Lagos schools. This will provide about 800 classrooms, 500 toilets, 50 staff offices, furniture, water and other vital infrastructure to 97 public primary schools.

ESSPIN Impact in Schools

Pupils are becoming more involved in their learning as a result of the child-centered teaching methods being used by teachers in ESSPIN supported schools. The methods have increased pupil-teacher interaction, made learning more fun, and helped pupils to become more confident and achieve more.

Since ESSPIN's intervention, the majority of year 4-6 pupils of Ilogbo-Elegba Primary School, Ojo Local Government Education Authority can now read and write.

Approximately 40,000 pupils in 35 public primary schools now have access to clean water and improved toilet facilities through their use of 13 toilets and 30 boreholes provided by ESSPIN. Better water and sanitation makes schools more "child friendly" and comfortable places to learn and children spend less time collecting water. And hydrated brains work better! The benefits of clean water and sanitation are generally greater for girls.

Pupils across the state are also adopting the more healthy habits being promoted by the Lagos School Health Clubs – a joint initiative by ESSPIN, PATHS2 and Lagos Government.

There are remarkable increases in school enrolment in many ESSPIN-supported schools, due largely to community mobilisation, infrastructure provision, and the child-centred learning approach. Enrolment at LA Primary School, Iba rose from 581 in 2009/10 to 1,703 in 2010/11 and from 583 in 2009/10 to 830 in 2010/11 at Gbeleyi Primary School.

Government is considering giving money *directly* to schools for minor school projects like repairs and purchases. This recognises the success of ESSPIN's Direct Funding to Schools (DFS) intervention in the 100 pilot schools. For instance, with the DFS a borehole was fixed and six toilets renovated in Oluwole Primary School, Akoka.

All 100 pilot schools are now able to generate a School Development Plan, a necessary tool for prioritizing school needs, doing a school self-evaluation and implementing action plans.

The Quality Assurance (QA) officers, trained by ESSPIN, are ensuring that quality learning is taking place in schools by supporting teachers, rather than critically monitoring and evaluating teachers and school infrastructure.



Thirst no more

Pupils of Ajenifuja Primary School, Ilupeju, Ikeja drink water from an engine-powered borehole provided by ESSPIN.

ESSPIN Impact in Communities

ESSPIN encourages and supports the establishment of School-Based Management Committees (SBMC) to engage communities in school governance and improvement. The remarkable impact of SBMC interventions is being felt daily in many Lagos communities.

SBMC members and parents of pupils in Folu Primary School, Ibeju-Lekki LGEA set up a Community People's Police to check loiterers, truants and out-of-school pupils. The school's population increased from 100 to 400 pupils within a session.

In Ojo Local Government Area, SBMC advocacy to the LG Chairman helped to secure two speed boats to provide daily transport for 15 teachers and about 1,000 pupils attending eight primary schools in a riverine area.

The Abijo community set up Children Traffic Officers to help pupils cross the notoriously dangerous Lagos – Epe Expressway and help reduce accidents involving school pupils.

The SBMC of St Kizito's Primary School Ifako Ijaye convinced the CHRIO Foundation, an NGO, to build a 24-hole toilet facility and a water borehole at the school

An NGO provided two classrooms and a head teacher's office to Adeba Primary School, Ibeju Lekki as a result of the SBMC and Parent Forum School Self Help Campaign.

At Odogunyan Junior Secondary School, Ikorodu, 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.

Pupils of Ajegunle Primary School, Agege and Methodist Primary School, Randle Road, Apapa are now using a wide range of learning resources in the school libraries provided by community members mobilised by SBMC.

ESSPIN Impact on State and LG Institutions

Lagos Ministries, Departments and Agencies in the education sector are now able to develop Medium-Term Sector Strategies (MTSS) and Departmental Work Plans on their own, having been trained by ESSPIN. The M&E and Education Management Information System units are also now able to monitor MTSS activities and conduct an annual school census with little or no external support.

The current head of SUBEB, supported by ESSPIN, has clamped down on corruption in government contracting and improved the independent monitoring of education spending.

The Lagos State Government is to institutionalise and replicate the State School Improvement Team (SSIT) – a school improvement approach introduced by ESSPIN – as a way of improving teaching and learning in public schools in the State.



No more learning in the sun
A classroom block under construction by SBMC of Odogunyan JSS, Ikorodu to temporarily shelter about 400 pupils without classrooms.

Case Study

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.” – 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.

“There were serious overlaps in responsibilities, conflicting job roles and duplication of activities causing confusion and inefficiency”, said Adebayo (56), who is responsible for coordinating 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; streamline their structure and functions; and 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 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 emphasized.



LGEA Reform

Mr. Hezekiah Adebayo (left) explaining the change brought by the SUBEB/LGEA reform and supported by ESSPIN