

**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 are double those for private schools in the state. 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 problems – 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 put the government under increased pressure.

## ESSPIN's contribution

ESSPIN has helped provide empirical evidence of the nature and extent of the problems 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 many challenges. The School Improvement Programme (SIP) was introduced 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.

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

The Lagos State government is now applying the ESSPIN School Improvement Programme (SIP) model in an additional 500 schools and will extend it to all public primary schools by October 2012.

In schools applying the SIP model, head teachers' and teachers' efficiency has improved considerably. 89% of head teachers can now carry out effective classroom observations while 80% are able to organise professional development to meet class teachers' needs.

Similarly, 84% of class teachers in the schools now use child-centred learning methods with at least 50% of their lessons starting and ending on time.

*"We spend less time writing on the chalkboard now and do less talking. The children don't sleep in class again because they are always doing activities. And what they see and do, they remember"*, said Miss Ajape Kafayat Omowumi, a teacher at St Peter's Blessed Primary School, Agege.

Approximately 40,000 pupils, about half of them girls, have access to clean water and toilet facilities after ESSPIN provided 13 toilets and 30 boreholes in 35 public primary schools.

*"We don't wee wee at the back of our classrooms again. We use the toilets now"*, said Omotosho Boluwatife, a Primary 6 female pupil of Oluwole Primary School, Akoka.

13,289 children are benefiting from renovated classrooms, improved sanitation, and instructional materials provided after schools in five disadvantaged LGAs in the state were assisted with N50 million from ESSPIN's Challenge Fund..

For the second year, ESSPIN through its Direct Funding to Schools (DFS) intervention has helped 100 primary schools to carry out minor but essential repairs and purchases worth over N44 million. Seeing the advantages of schools managing their own funds, the government has been spurred to adopt DFS in next year's budget.

*"We received N159,783 from ESSPIN which we used to repair two classrooms for 114 pupils. The rooms are more attractive for the pupils to learn now"*, said Mrs S. A. Owolabi, Head Teacher, Ajegunle Primary School, Agege.

At St Paul's Catholic School, Ebute-Meta, the DFS was used to buy two sets of traditional costumes for pupils in the Cultural Group. Now the pupils are appropriately dressed at school occasions, and happy and motivated to show their musical and dancing talents.



### Happy children

Pupils of St Paul's Catholic School, Ebute-Meta perform in costumes bought with ESSPIN's DFS

## ESSPIN Impact in Communities

Lagos communities are becoming more involved in school management and development, especially through the SBMCs. ESSPIN has been promoting the formation of SBMCs and had supported the restructuring of 154 SBMC clusters to individual school-based SBMCs for 603 primary schools in 14 LGAs in the state.

Between January and May 2012, SBMCs raised N22,172,000 to provide a wide range of support to Lagos schools, including renovation and construction of classrooms and provision of instructional materials.

The Alimosho clustered SBMC helped to improve the learning environment of Community Primary School Egbe by speaking out against its previous deplorable state. The SBMC petitioned the State Governor who directed the authorities to urgently renovate the school.

The same SBMC also pressured SUBEB to approve the construction of 18 classrooms for neighbouring Egbe Primary School.

In Surulere Local Government Area (LGA), SBMC Zone 5 influenced the LG Chairman to construct new blocks of classrooms at Imman Shuaib Primary School, Sijude Primary School and Odo Olowu Primary School.

Taking a cue from ESSPIN, education authorities in Lagos State are becoming more responsive to the needs of schools in their areas. The Ifelodun LCDA completely fenced Jimoh Ojora Primary School to safeguard water and toilet facilities provided by ESSPIN and provide a safe learning environment for the pupils.

Similarly, the Ikorodu LGA provided N5 million to augment ESSPIN's Challenge Fund to help disadvantaged children in the area remain or return to schools. The additional funding will be used to improve the infrastructure of L.G. Primary School, Majidun.

*"If we do not collaborate in providing qualitative education for our children, they will turn out to become the dreaded 'area boys' and the community would be the worse for it",* said Hon. Olalekan Majiyagbe, Education Secretary, Agege LGEA.

Having been sensitised and mobilized with ESSPIN support, community and religious leaders are now leading the cause for school improvement in their domains. About 10% of SBMCs in pilot schools are chaired by traditional or religious leaders.

The Baale of Imude in Ojo LGA reconstructed a collapsed classroom in LA primary School II, Ilogbo Elegba. Similarly, the Baale of Irewe is subsidising boat transport fares for teachers and students in Irewe, a riverine community also in Ojo LGA.



### Going to school with ease

Pupils and teachers in Irewe in Ojo LGA now enjoy subsidized boat fares to and from school, courtesy of a traditional leader in the community

## Case Study

### Lagos SBMCs – working for school improvement

615 pupils at Community Primary School, Egbe in Alimosho LGA of Lagos State are enjoying a newly renovated block of classrooms, new furniture, and improved toilet facilities.

It was a development which the School Based Management Committee (SBMC) made possible. The SBMCs are official bodies being established nationwide under government policy to strengthen the link between local communities and their schools and to check schools are working.

*“Before now, almost all the classrooms were in a state of disrepair, some close to collapsing on the pupils”,* narrates Pastor H. O. D. Osoba, a retired school teacher and the SBMC Chair. His years of interest in education and his training for the SBMC spurred him to work with community members in Alimosho to create a safe learning environment for the children.

*“We mobilised ourselves and did some minor repairs like re-plastering of walls and floors. The Rotary Club in Egbe came to help and provided water and toilet facilities and classroom furniture. But these were still not enough,”* said Osoba.

*“We approached the local authorities but without results. We thought hard about what other steps we could take. Then I thought about making a case to the Governor. So I emailed the Governor. I attached pictures of the dilapidating school structure and appealed to him for total renovation of the school”,* explained Osoba.

Two weeks after his email, repair works started in the school – supervised by the LG Councilor for education. SUBEB also started to construct a new block of 14 classrooms in a school next door! By raising its voice, the Alimosho SBMC moved the Governor to intervene and direct relevant authorities to act.

Now the pupils of Community Primary School Egbe are learning in a safe environment.

*“The rains do not disturb us again and our classroom floors are smooth now”,* said Betty Eduvereri, a nine year-old Primary 5 pupil.

As in Community Primary School Egbe, SBMCs in Lagos State are working to improve the quality of education that Lagos children receive. For its part, ESSPIN is promoting the formation and strengthening of SBMCs in all public primary schools in the state.



#### **Safe environment**

Left: Renovating a block of classrooms to provide a safe environment for pupils of Community Primary School Egbe