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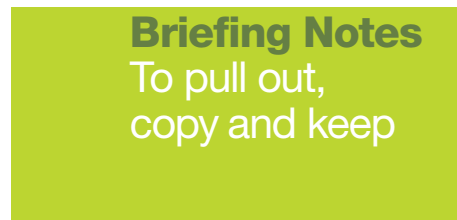
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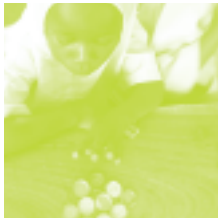
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April 2011



Above
'Hannu Diyawa'
being performed
for a community in
Kano State.

esspin express

Real life drama in Kano

'Hannu Diyawa', is a new community theatre production generating support for school improvement and community engagement work in the northern states. ESSPIN is collaborating with the Social Mobilisation Departments in the SUBEBs to present the drama. The play was performed in communities in Albasu, Fagge and Kumbotso Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Kano State from 15 February to 3 March, 2011. The project is being implemented by Youth, Adolescence, Reflection and Action Centre (YARAC) from Jos with Kano-based actors – some well known in northern Nigeria.

It is designed to sensitise people to quality basic education issues such as poor infrastructure, girl-child education and community involvement. It challenges communities to take responsibility for what happens in schools and to work for a better deal for their children.

Continued inside on page 2.

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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 both to 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 Real life drama in Kano –

The play tells the story of stubborn and suspicious Gagarau who, seeing no value in education, sends his daughter hawking and mocks the efforts of his friends to improve the local school while thinking they are plotting against him. When he is forced to realise that his family and friends have been trying to help him and it is his daughter's self-education that creates an opportunity for his own advancement, he becomes an enthusiastic advocate for supporting the school and enrolling his children.

Large crowds of several hundred have turned up to watch the play. In the final scene the audience suddenly find themselves part of the action as Gagarau turns to them to ask what they are doing to help educate their children and lively debate ensues. 'I am like Gagarau was,' said one father, 'but I too can change'.

ESSPIN's Community Theatre will tour Jigawa and Kaduna in May.



Above
Cast of the community theatre in Kano.

Challenge Fund to boost education in Enugu State

ESSPIN has introduced a Challenge Fund scheme in Enugu to help poor parents to send their children to school. The Challenge Fund is intended to increase school enrolment and completion. The Catholic, Anglican and Methodist Education Secretariats in Enugu State have been selected to implement the Challenge Fund in mission schools.

The Challenge Fund amounts to £100,000 (N24m) per annum and is intended to provide access to basic education for 1,200 pupils per annum for two years. Those eligible for the funds are new entrants into Primary 1–3 and pupils who have dropped out of school as a result of poverty within the past two years. The 30 selected schools are drawn from Udi, Ezeagu and Agwu LGAs in Enugu State. The scheme is a pilot to be replicated by the government and other stakeholders.

Mrs Patricia Ofonabo, the Supervisor of Schools of Enugu State Catholic Mission Education Secretariat, expressed her delight at the launch of the scheme, 'I'm overjoyed because it is a programme that impacts on the poor. I believe it will succeed'.

Right

Alhaji Mohammed Dadi at the launch of the one of the boreholes in Kwara State.



Potable water to boost education in Kwara State

19 boreholes have been constructed across the 16 LGAs of Kwara State as part of ESSPIN's ongoing support to the State government. Putting water and, importantly, sanitation into a relatively small number of pilot schools is part of a more comprehensive whole-school development process. As with much of what ESSPIN does, the water and sanitation component is about showing by doing – both the benefits and the process of managing resources.

Officials of Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board (KSUBEB) have been instructed to monitor the use and maintenance of ESSPIN-supported boreholes.

At Etsu Abdullahi Primary School at Tsaragi in Patigi LGA, Alhaji Mohammed Dadi, KSUBEB member, reported during the commissioning of the boreholes, 'Our children now walk just a few metres to get drinking water. I promise you that any SUBEB officer going to Patigi for whatever reason, must stop over to check this borehole and make sure it is working perfectly. It is now the school's property and if anything goes wrong with it, the school will be held responsible'.

Improving the school environment through better water and sanitation makes schools more child-friendly places in which to learn. This is important in terms of enrolment and keeping children attending. There are benefits to child health (which improves attendance), and better learning because less time is spent collecting water. And hydrated brains work better.

The benefits of clean water and sanitation are greater for girls who carry more of the burden of water collection and are more inconvenienced and vulnerable when out in the bush. Better menstrual hygiene and the need for privacy is a particularly important consideration for teenage girls.

As Alhaji Dadi led delegates from Kwara SUBEB to the commissioning of the boreholes, he added 'ESSPIN has provided us with the basic amenity we have desired for a long time. I do not know what we would have done without ESSPIN and we will continue to ask for more'.

Mrs MM Yunusa, Head Teacher of Etsu Abdullahi Primary School, said the school had been battling with the problem of access to potable water for so long and pledged continuous maintenance of the borehole 'in the interest of the school and community'.

Above

Recording a scene for the 'Gbagan Gbagan' radio programme.

'Gbagan-Gbagan is a call to everybody. I hope the government and other stakeholders are listening and consequently draw up implementable policies to solve the collapsed education system in Nigeria'.

Alfred Victor Ayodele
State Umuahia, Abia

ESSPIN launches 'Gbagan-Gbagan' in Hausa and Yoruba

The new vernacular version of the radio drama in Hausa, 'Galan-Galan', is on Radio Nigeria, Kaduna at 9:15 am on Thursdays and repeated at 7 pm on Sundays. The Yoruba version, 'Gbagaun-Gbagaun' is on Gateway Radio, Abeokuta at 6:15 pm on Saturdays.

UBEC partners with ESSPIN on implementation of SBMCs in public schools

The Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and ESSPIN are partnering to create School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs) in public schools in Nigeria. The partnership recognises the critical role that SBMCs play and their potential in ensuring the success of the UBE programme for the attainment of Education for All. ESSPIN supported an interactive session with stakeholders from UBEC, Kaduna SUBEB, SBMC focal LGEAs and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in order to share the SBMC development process.

In schools

Kano State

Classroom teachers in Faragai Central Primary School, Albasu LGEA, have changed the seating arrangement of their 1,500 plus pupils, to suit the child-centered lessons, pair- and group-work methods that they learnt during SSIT training. Since the training 'the attendance of girls has increased from 60% to 95%' enthused Head Teacher Ibrahim Ismaila.

Kwara State

Teacher quality improvement in Kwara is about improving levels of literacy and numeracy. Since 2009, 5,802 primary 1–3 class teachers and 1,440 Head Teachers have received 8 days training in literacy and numeracy, 2,911 (assistant) Head Teachers have received between 3 and 9 days of school management training and 290 School Support Officers (SSOs) have received 45 days of training and support to enable them carry out their job more effectively. More than N300 million of state funds have been leveraged for this training and support programme so far.

Enugu State

There is excitement among teachers and communities that will benefit from ESSPIN's support to Head Teachers. At Central Primary School, Nachi, a teacher, Mr Udeh said 'Teachers go for in-service training in turns. If you are lucky you will attend once in 3 years. ESSPIN's regular and continuous Head Teacher, teacher in-service training and support will be of tremendous help. Teachers will be able to help children to learn better and measure up to expectations'.

In communities

Lagos State

In Ojo LGEA, water transport is a challenge for the 15 school teachers and 1,000 pupils in a cluster of 8 Primary Schools including Local Authority (LA) Primary School, Irewe, supported by ESSPIN. SBMC advocacy facilitated the provision of two speed boats by the Ojo LGC Chairman. The Baale of Imuden, the chairman of SBMC Cluster 2, and the Parents' Forum were instrumental in the construction of a temporary shed to address overcrowding in LA Primary School 2, Ilogbo Elegba. SUBEB has included the schools in the list of schools benefitting from the UBEC intervention infrastructure fund.

Jigawa State

In Gabasmari Primary School – with the intervention of the School Improvement Programme – the school community has begun to show interest in the education of their children. The community has supported the collection of locally available materials and improvised teaching aids to support the participatory learning. The school attendance increased from 16 to 80 pupils (45 boys and 35 girls).

Kaduna State

Communities have been sensitised and SBMCs recomposed according to the State adopted policy guidelines in Kaduna in 165 school communities. 2,839 SBMC members have been trained and are being mentored by 35 members of civil society and government partners. Following the trainings, the SBMC in Kurmin Mata, Kachia LGEA, started constructing a block of two classrooms. They applied for support from the Area Development Authority after the roofing stage. The request was approved and the building was completed and painted.

Access and Equity

Introduction

Inequalities in educational opportunities stem from the way education is organised, policies, unwritten rules, and the attitudes of both those who provide education and of the parents, families and communities who send their children to be educated. For example, facilities for children with disabilities are limited, and prevailing attitudes mean that far more boys than girls acquire post-primary education in the North, whereas more boys drop out in parts of the South East.

All states working with ESSPIN commit to improving access and equity in basic education, and to reducing gender inequality. All states, to a greater or lesser extent, involve civil society in making plans to address access and equity, integrate gender issues in Medium Term Sector Strategies and use data disaggregated by sex in annual education performance reports.

What is ESSPIN's approach?

ESSPIN takes a cross cutting and exploratory approach at all levels in the education system. The aim is to find ways to reduce inequality and give all children opportunities for education. State governments are key partners in identifying areas where changes can be made.

Strategy

The first step in developing a strategy to address access and equity is to understand the issues – what educational opportunities children have, and whether or not all children have equal opportunities. ESSPIN therefore supports the development of Education Management Information Systems at federal and state level and the gathering of relevant data on schools and the children who attend them. A key component of this work is to help ministries of education conduct a comprehensive national Annual School Census covering public, private and faith based schools. To get an even better understanding of school attendance, ESSPIN also assesses how many children attend schools outside the formal education system, as is particularly the case in northern Nigeria.

This information provides an overview of the extent to which government, the private sector, religious groups, non-government and civil society organisations collectively meet or do not meet the educational needs of different groups of children. ESSPIN then works with the various education providers to find ways to fill significant gaps.

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Support for access and equity

Planning and costing

As reliable and accurate data becomes available, ESSPIN is helping states to develop strategies, for example, to improve school attendance of girls and children who are currently excluded such as those with disabilities. ESSPIN guides government staff through the process of analysing data on the enrolment of girls, deciding which schemes to get girls into schools and keep them there have been successful, and working out detailed plans and costs for scaling up successful approaches and feeding them into Medium Term Sector Strategies.

Cash transfers

ESSPIN is working with Kano State Government to develop a scheme of cash payments to families to improve girls' attendance at school. ESSPIN helps states develop ways to involve communities in choosing recipient families for cash transfers and in checking that girls are in fact attending school.

Inclusive education

ESSPIN is working with state governments and civil society to give excluded children better educational opportunities. The starting point is to guide states through the process of gathering information on the number of children with disabilities in a sample of Local Government Education Authority districts and to catalogue the types of disabilities. Based on this research and analysis, ESSPIN then helps teams of government and non-government staff to train teachers and school administrators in more inclusive approaches to education.

Future challenges

Planning, accountability and capacity are significant challenges to access and equity in education in Nigeria. ESSPIN needs to show both government and the public that collecting and analysing data, using the information to make plans and using plans to decide where to allocate the education budget, pays off in better access and equity in education.

Better planning and budgeting will only result in better education if those organisations responsible for putting plans into action, governments, the private sector and civil society, are systemically strengthened and develop the necessary skills. The challenge here is to help build capacity throughout the education sector.

ESSPIN support for access and equity in education

Collecting robust data on the current situation:	Annual School Census Censuses of Islamiyya, Quranic and Tsangaya schools	Information on unregistered private schools Annual education performance reviews	Surveys of public attitudes to state, Islamiyya, Quranic and Tsangaya schools Analyses of data
Using information in planning and costing Medium Term Sector Strategies:	Helping states turn access and equity objectives in education sector plans into detailed Medium Term Sector Strategy work plans and budgets	Meeting with private schools and private school associations to discuss the roles of public and private education, and to identify issues private schools wish to raise with state governments	With the Partnership for Transforming Health Systems 2 (PATHS2) creating opportunities for civil society organisations experienced in gender policy issues, working with government and results-based planning to take part in state Medium Term Sector Strategy planning processes and supporting their involvement
Identifying ways to target excluded groups of children:	With the State Accountability and Voice Initiative (SAVI) advocating for mainstreaming gender issues in Medium Term Sector Strategies	Developing check lists for government staff to see how effectively state Medium Term Sector Strategies address gender inequalities	Guiding use of annual education sector performance reviews to reduce gender inequalities

School Improvement and Teacher Professional Development

Introduction

The scope for improving the quality of education in Nigeria is enormous. Better school administration, good buildings and facilities, first-rate teaching standards, appropriate teacher training, fair salaries and clear career paths for education professionals would all contribute to giving Nigerian children better opportunities – to become literate, numerate and equipped with the skills to fully take part in Nigerian society.

What is ESSPIN's approach?

ESSPIN, recognising that there are no quick fixes, takes a radical approach that puts schools and teachers centre stage. This approach simultaneously supports change inside schools – by improving school management and the teaching and learning taking place in the classroom – and outside schools, by working with communities, state and local governments.

ESSPIN focuses on schools because schools are where children learn. ESSPIN's approach to school improvement takes into account all the factors affecting schools, both within and outside schools. Within schools this covers management, teaching and learning and the school environment. Outside schools it means helping decision makers provide schools with the resources and services for schools to work better.

Strategy

ESSPIN starts by arranging meetings, work-shops and seminars for key education policy and decision makers in each state to discuss their particular needs and what can be done within the directions set by their Medium Term Sector Strategies. These discussions give senior staff opportunities to seek support from ESSPIN in particular areas of need.

In some states improving learning outcomes may mean providing teachers with specific training focusing on literacy and numeracy and, at the same time, providing training for head teachers in school management.

In other states, pilot school improvement schemes may build on existing initiatives, such as in Lagos where school improvement activities are being linked to a state school renovation programme.

In schools

School improvement is about supporting schools in order to improve student learning outcomes as well as strengthening the school's capacity to manage change. Support for school improvement starts at state level with State Quality Management Teams and flows through State School Improvement Teams to School Support Officers working directly with schools.

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State Quality Management Teams

Senior people from across state education systems come together in State Quality Management Teams that lead and manage school improvement. ESSPIN helps these teams sharpen the skills they need to drive school improvement forward. The State Quality Management Teams direct the work of State School Improvement Teams.

State School Improvement Teams

The State School Improvement Teams are made up of 20 to 30 people seconded, initially for two years, from across the education sector, for example lecturers from teacher training colleges and universities, head teachers and inspectors. The State School Improvement Teams, after training, begin guiding and supporting head teachers and School Support Officers through a two-year learning-by-doing programme. They also lead a modular training programme for classroom teachers.

The State School Improvement Teams coach and mentor head teachers to improve their leadership and management skills. The teams, with the School Support Officers, also provide an advisory service that both head teachers and classroom teachers can call on.

School Support Officers are located in each Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) and provide advisory support to schools. Close links between the School Support Officers and the quality assurance services in the LGEAs ensure that advice to schools is related to the school inspection process, and addresses specific needs and deficiencies.

Outside schools

Teacher training

To address the external factors that affect school improvement, ESSPIN helps states review teacher training colleges, develop plans to improve teacher training and integrate these plans into Medium Term Sector Strategies.

Political will to translate plans into action, reform colleges and curricula, and match college intakes to demand for teachers, varies between states. ESSPIN helps prompt dialogue on career paths and salary scales, and how they link to professional development.

School environment

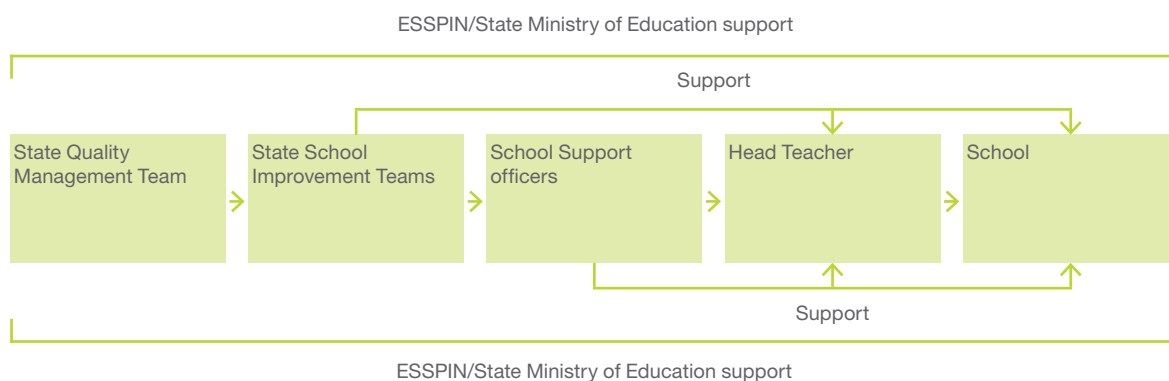
Children need a school environment that encourages learning. This means appropriate school buildings and facilities. ESSPIN involves State Universal Basic Education Boards and communities in pilot school construction projects, in planning and constructing cost-effective classrooms, safe water supplies and toilets. These pilots serve as models for other schools to follow.

ESSPIN also involves State Universal Education Boards and community self-help groups in leveraging ESSPIN grants to implement school development plans.

Future challenges

High level political support for translating plans into action is vital for transforming schools. Where state commissioners drive change, progress is rapid and states implement and fund changes. Where political support is weaker, ESSPIN takes a two-pronged approach, encouraging change champions in middle and senior management to drive change from within, as well as directly approaching political leaders.

School improvement process



The professional development of Head Teachers and teachers is essential for effective and efficient management of resources within schools and to deliver high quality education.



Providing quality education – Lagos State School Improvement Team (SSIT)

‘If the school improvement strategy of solving problems in our schools continues, a lot will be achieved which will have positive impact on the academic performance of the present and future generation,’ says Mrs Aremu. As a member of the Lagos State School Improvement Team (LASSIT) she has the responsibility for training and supporting Primary School Management personnel to improve Head Teachers’ capacity to lead and develop their own schools into effective schools that will produce successful pupils who are literate and numerate.

From Mrs Aremu’s first year working with Kusoro Primary School, the Head Teacher now has the capacity to lead and develop the school properly, the class teachers now use child-centered teaching methods and the SBMC of school and community representatives is now functional.

Mrs Aremu is happy that pupil enrolment has now increased and parents are moving their children from private primary schools to Kusoro Primary School, one of the State primary schools she is supporting.

ESSPIN is partnering with a hundred pilot schools in Lagos State to improve the quality of education in primary and junior secondary schools. Mrs Aremu knew from her years of teaching experience that Head Teachers had difficulty balancing their roles as administrators and academics. The lack of in-service support to teachers has been a major factor in poor pupil performance during the nine years of basic education. ESSPIN has helped SSITs train over a hundred Head Teachers and their deputies in the areas of leading and developing their own schools, and a comprehensive programme of teacher training is underway.

Above

SSIT member, Mrs Aremu explaining a point to a Head Teacher. In the background a parent is bringing her child to school for enrolment.

The SSIT programme has placed three other schools under Mrs Aremu’s supervision – Ajenifuja Primary School, Ansar-Ud-deen primary school and Araromi Primary School all in Mushin LGA. These schools have benefited from the SSIT training package ESSPIN has developed. The schools, in turn, have encouraged the community to participate in the development of the schools through the SBMCs.

The SSIT is established and co-ordinated by the State government and the outcome is expected to be the basis for a State-wide practice benefiting a total of 445,000 children in State primary schools as the pilot school improvement programme is rolled out across the State. Many more children currently outside the system also stand to gain as they are attracted to schools offering a better quality of basic education.

‘Looking back to the achievements made so far by the SSIT, Head Teacher and the community at large, there is no doubt that the vision (Millennium Development Goal 2) for learning would be achievable,’ Mrs Aremu adds.

Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT) targets girls from poor communities who need assistance to secure their education and well-being.

Right
Fathers receiving grants on behalf of their daughters.



Conditional Cash Transfers – A Ray of Hope

Bilkisu Jamilu grins as she effortlessly completes in English her section of the consent form allowing ESSPIN to take and use her photograph. Her chirpy banter with her mother and sister point to a warm family relationship. Her uniform is clean and her nails cut short, but her rubber sandals are patched, a size too small and covered with the infamous Harmattan dust of Kano.

Bilkisu (12) and her sister Zaliha (10) are beneficiaries of the Kano CCT programme for Girls' Education: the first of its kind in Nigeria. CCT is a three-year pilot to support girls through upper primary and junior secondary years. In partnership with the Kano State Government, ESSPIN (DFID/UKaid) and the World Bank SESP, 2,500 girls from the three ESSPIN-supported Kano LGEAs currently meet the criteria to benefit from the programme (amongst 11,000 registered across the state).



Above
Bilkisu and Zaliha
Jamilu, proud
CCT recipients.

CCT targets girls from poor communities who need assistance to secure their education and well-being, and who might come to harm if forced into street hawking to eke out a living. Enrolment, attendance and performance are the key conditions for remaining in the cash transfer programme.

CCT should increase the transition rate of Kano girls to Junior Secondary School, which is currently 10% lower than that of boys. Secondary education can help empower girls with knowledge and skills to raise their prospects, stabilise family finances and improve their self-esteem.

A longer school career benefits the girl's future family, and is associated with lower maternal and child mortality. For many families, CCT now offers hope for a better future, where previously there was none.

Asked about the CCT programme, Bilkisu says 'the money will help my parents to tend to some of our educational needs. Even though it will not be able to cover all the costs, it will certainly ease the burden, as there are ten of us'.

Bilkisu's and Zaliha's mother, Hauwa, says that the CCT money will provide uniforms and exercise books for her girls. She has a son at university and vows that against all odds, one day her daughters will also attend tertiary institutions and attain their full potential.

The girls' school, Thimarul Quran Islamiyya Primary School, has also benefited from the ESSPIN water and sanitation programme, with a functional borehole in place and toilets under construction.

ESSPIN is helping to develop professional and competent teachers and Head Teachers.



Writer
Blessing Giwa
Knowledge Management
Officer, Kaduna

Left and below
Child-centered
learning methods
in literacy and
numeracy have
been introduced.

State School Improvement Team (SSIT) leading the way in Kaduna

‘There has been remarkable improvement in attendance and punctuality on the part of teachers and pupils, because of the child-centered learning methods we have been introduced to,’ says Mrs Christiana Allahmagani, Head Teacher at Sabon Gari School. She added, ‘The training has also helped to build good working relationships between Head Teachers, teachers, and Local Government Education Authority staff’.

ESSPIN worked with the recently formed Kaduna SSIT, drawn from the local Gidan Waya College of Education, to provide new modular in-service training for about 250 District Education Officers, District Education Supervisors and Head Teachers.



ESSPIN has also provided support visits to strengthen Head Teachers’ capacity to carry out school based tasks. The Head Teachers were trained on leadership, school management, School Self Evaluation, School Development Planning and delegation of duties to colleagues. Teachers will soon be included in the programme.

Bibiana Deshi, lecturer at Gidan Waya and a member of the SSIT in Kaduna, thinks she is now a better lecturer, mentor, and supporter to Head Teachers, teachers and LGEA staff. With the new skills acquired from ESSPIN, Bibiana is able to organise small scale training for Head Teachers and teachers using the ESSPIN developed modules. 43 Head Teachers in schools in Kachia district have benefited from Bibiana’s input.

Reflecting on her own professional development, she says ‘I was supposed to train future teachers, I couldn’t tolerate any performance below average, but now I’m more sympathetic towards slow learners so they are happy participating in class activities and I’ve seen improvements’.

This teacher training initiative is part of ESSPIN’s contribution to helping the Nigerian government improve teaching and learning in schools using available resources. Schools are at the heart of ESSPIN because they provide the environment in which children learn. Quality schools are staffed by quality teachers. Current training and career development of teachers in Nigeria provide teachers with few incentives. Well-structured career development plans and performance-based incentives, together with changes in the way principals and teachers are selected and made accountable to parents and the communities they serve, will help improve the quality of education for Kaduna’s 1 million primary school children.

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