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(ESSPIN)**

**Assignment report**

**School Based Management Committees (SBMCs)**

**in Policy and Practice**

**Volume 1**

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JG	Jigawa
KD	Kaduna
KN	Kano
KW	Kwara
LG	Lagos

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

CAPP	Community Action for Popular Participation
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CDA	Community Development Association
CLEDEP	Community Led Education Development Planning
CSACEFA	Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All
CUBE	Capacity for Universal Basic Education
DfID	Department for International Development
EGBENN	Enhancing Girls' Basic Education in Northern Nigeria
ESSPIN	Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
GEP	Girls Education Project
JCCE	Joint Consultative Committee on Education
LGA	Local Government Area
LGC	Local Government Council
LGEA	Local Government Education Authority
NIEPA	National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SBMC	School Based Management Authority
SESP	State Education Support Project
STL	State Team Leader
SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education Board
TEGINT	Transforming Education for Girls in Nigeria and Tanzania
UBEC	Universal Basic Education Commission
UBEP	Universal Basic Education Project
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education

## Abstract

1. The federal government of Nigeria has recently introduced School Based Management Committees (SBMCs) in every primary and Junior Secondary School in Nigeria. This reflects a trend in international development for devolved school management and increased parental/community participation in school management. This is a report of research conducted in March – April 2009 which sought to explore the implications of SBMC policy, with a particular focus on questions of gender, poverty and school governance through case studies of ten schools and communities in five states (Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara and Lagos) as well as interviews at Federal, State and Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) levels.



## Executive Summary

### Introduction

2. The federal government of Nigeria has recently introduced School Based Management Committees (SBMCs) in every primary and Junior Secondary School in Nigeria. This reflects a trend in international development for devolved school management and increased parental/community participation in school management. This research sought to explore the implications of this policy, with a particular focus on questions of gender, poverty and school governance through case studies of ten schools and communities in five states (Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara and Lagos) as well as interviews at Federal, State and Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) levels. The research was conducted in March – April 2009.

### Key Findings

#### *SBMC policy and implementation*

3. **There is lack of clarity about what kind of institution the SBMC should be, and the reason for its existence.** SBMCs were clearly introduced for a range of different reasons, including dissatisfaction with PTAs, influence of GEP and UNICEF, and a search for solutions to the crises of funding and quality affecting basic education in Nigeria. This has resulted in an absence of a clearly articulated vision for what kind of institution the SBMC should be. Is it an instrument of government, as some believe? Or is it a democratic institution that should represent the interests of parents and other community members? At school and community there is often mystification about why SBMCs have been introduced, and without an understanding of the purpose, there can be no real commitment. This explains why in so many cases the SBMC is an institution on paper only, or dominated by a few elite individuals.
4. **There is confusion over roles, relationships, communication and management of SBMCs.** In no cases did we find copies of the SBMC guidance notes at school level, therefore it should come as no surprise that membership of SBMCs diverges from the guidelines in many cases, particularly with exclusion of women members and student members. In addition the guidelines themselves are complex and rather unclear. The most active SBMCs were found in schools with SESP or GEP interventions however there was still a distinct lack of knowledge about the SBMC among parents and members of the wider community in those cases.
5. **In all cases there are rich networks of organisations, networks and individuals supporting the school.** There is sometimes an assumption that SBMCs are being introduced into communities where there is no capacity and nothing is happening. In fact in most locations there is an incredibly rich array of organisations, focused around different ethnic or religious groups, occupations or interests, or the traditional rulers. In many cases these

organisations have education committees, and a long track record of working to support education.

6. **Standards of teaching and learning are so inadequate in most cases that SBMC alone cannot provide solutions.** Although it was beyond the remit of this research to assess learning achievement, an awareness of the need to raise very poor learning standards must remain central to thinking about SBMCs. A check conducted by researchers in class 4 classrooms revealed that in only 3 of the case study schools, were students able to read what was written on the board. It is interesting that those case study schools were all located in high literacy, urban areas. It is unrealistic to expect SBMC members to have the knowledge and skills to tackle these issues without significant support and resources. SBMCs are not a cheap solution to a complex set of problems.
7. **There is willingness at community level to work for change, but so often parents and members of the wider community are excluded by the groups of elites that control schools and SBMCs.** It was very striking the most of the research teams came back with stories of action being taken during the course of the research. For example, after discussion with researchers, one SBMC was disbanded and re-constituted. At another school, when women in the community learned about the SBMC, they said they wanted to participate in education development and were keen to form a CBO and attend adult education classes. They made a collective request at the feedback meeting and the chief granted their request and are now in the process of registering their CBO. This kind of action cannot be legislated for or simply imposed from outside – it requires grassroots-level work.

### *SBMCs as effective institutions*

#### Resources

8. **SBMCs lack financial resources, and without resources they will not be effectively established.** It is an assumption made explicit by some in government that SBMCs should be able to raise sufficient resources at community level, thus letting state and federal government 'off the hook'. While in some cases there was evidence of impressive local fundraising, this was usually inspired by and supported by contributions from government or donor organisations. The assumption that communities can raise money to run schools, when schools are getting little or nothing from government is fundamentally flawed and fundamentally inequitable, in that those communities in the poorest areas with the least resources will end up with the poorest schools.
9. **SBMC membership requires a complex set of skills.** There is little evidence that the training which SBMC members from the case studies have received has been understood and implemented. In addition there is evidence to suggest that FME training is not being stepped down – rather hijacked by higher level government employees, and that the

training is overly technical and opaque. Training, even good training, on its own, is not the solution.

#### Inclusivity

10. **Women's participation in SBMCs is highly constrained.** The cases show that although the scale of the problem varies enormously according to different socio-cultural contexts, that although women's membership is written into the guidelines, this is completely ignored in some cases in northern Nigeria especially. Even in Lagos, it is rare for younger women to be members or for women to be office-holders.
11. **Children's participation is not accepted.** In most cases, the requirement for student membership is ignored. In some cases where children were members, they were not invited to meetings. In the few cases where children went to SBMC meetings, they were silent. This shows that simply writing the requirement into the guidelines will not make it happen. In this context where children are not expected to attend meetings or speak in front of their elders, it would require significant preparation and support to enable the meaningful participation of children.

#### Communication

12. **In many cases, parents, children and even teachers know nothing about SBMCs.** We found this to be the case even in the GEP and SESP schools in the sample, where much weight is placed on the inclusivity and transparency of the School Development Planning process. This relates to the earlier question posed about whether SBMCs are seen as, and promoted as, organisations that are supposed to represent the wider community. At the moment, the link between parents and wider community members and the SBMC is extremely weak if not altogether absent.

#### Influence

13. **Decision-making on SBMCs tends not to be participatory and power is still held in the hands of a few.** Despite claims to the contrary it is clear that SBMCs as they are currently being implemented are not transparent or participatory institutions; rather the tendency observed in PTAs where decision-making is concentrated in the hands of a few key players (Headteacher, and chair with LGEA influence) is observable in these new institutions too. While this effect might be tempered in SESP and GEP schools, there is still no clear channel for 'ordinary' people to influence SBMC decision-making, nor any kind of expectation that such an institution might be preferable or possible.

#### *Reflections on the literature*

14. The literature throws up a number of challenging questions for the research findings. Firstly, do SBMCs offer a 'patchwork solution to systemic problems' as Burde (2004) suggests? At this stage of the process while it remains unclear what exactly the key objectives of SBMCs are- and while it is too early to say what their impact is – they are not

providing solutions to anything. However it seems timely to develop a clear set of objectives and mechanisms for achieving them before progressing any further.

15. Secondly, are we seeing the ‘entrenchment and reinforcement of gender relations’ (Rose 2003) and other inequalities, through the mass implementation of community participation strategies? The research shows that there is a clear risk of inequalities both between and within schools and communities being exacerbated under the current system, where inclusivity and participation are extremely low on the agenda. The introduction of SBMCs offers an opportunity to open up the closed box of school based management to a much wider audience. This is particularly true in e.g. northern Nigeria where women have not traditionally had a public role or a voice. GEP has shown that this position is not necessarily an entrenched one and that there are spaces for advancement.
16. Thirdly, are we seeing a ‘conflation of identity with identification’ (Cornwall and Goetz 2005: 797)? That is, even if there are women on the SBMC, we must not assume that they will necessarily act in women’s interests. SBMC strategy towards greater inclusion of women at the moment is based on quotas of women on the committee and an admirable (although probably insufficient) targeting of training programmes towards states with greater gender gaps. This is a complex and challenging problem that requires multiple strategies at all levels – and serious understanding of, and commitment to, gender equality from government at all levels.
17. Finally, Ball (1998) suggests that it is important to consider the concept of recontextualisation, that is, the ways in which policies change when they interact with new contexts. The implementation of SBMCs has so far been based on an understanding of policy implementation as simple and linear, which assumes that if policy decisions are communicated, they will be implemented. This research contradicts such a model, and suggests that support for SBMC policy will not materialise, particularly when parents and other community members have no expectation of being heard. In fact according to Ball (Ball 2008) *policies privilege certain visions and interests*. Communities require investment and support if SBMC policy is to be implemented equitably, in a way that will support the development of better educational opportunities for all children.

### *Implications for strategy*

18. **Review SBMC policy and guidelines.** A clear articulation of the purpose of the SBMC is required. This vision must move beyond a narrowly defined, technicist view of SBMC as servant of the education system to embrace a view that sees SBMCs as part of democratic processes at the grassroots, mobilising around demands for rights to education. ‘Sensitisation’ is not what is required here – rather supporting people in knowing their rights, organising and claiming their rights. Another issue is that there needs to be flexibility in SBMC implementation to allow for contextual differences across Nigeria and even from community to community. This will make it more likely that SBMC can

complement existing institutions, rather than threaten or duplicate them. In addition the implementation of SBMCs must be properly resourced, taking into account the sustained support and resources that will be needed to make them work.

19. **Inclusivity of SBMCs requires work and focus.** SBMCs could and should challenge the tendency for schools and SBMCs to be run by a 'cabal' of elite individuals. This would provide SBMCs with a new and unique remit that would clearly differentiate them from the old days of politically linked PTAs. The driving force for this would however need to come from the mobilisation of the wider community. SBMC members must represent particular constituencies in the community and must be answerable to them. Again, this would require sustained support and resources.
20. **Clarify school funding and SBMC's role in relation to it.** Although there were still issues with quality of learning and representation/communication on the SESP schools in the sample, it is clear that providing grants to schools through SBMCs gives them a clear remit. My understanding is that this approach is to be extended and the research findings would support this as an appropriate strategy – as long as there are clear strategies in place to avoid elite capture of these resources.
21. **Work at grassroots level to develop people's knowledge about their rights in relation to education, and their skills to enable them to work through the SBMC to achieve them.** This point links to the earlier point on inclusivity. The most striking aspect of this research is that even where the SBMC is functional and has received a good deal of support through GEP or SESP, most people in the wider community remain ignorant of it and have not had the opportunity to feed into plans for school development which will affect them and their families. This is understood as apathy or acceptance of the status quo. However this research suggests that people are willing and ready to take action, to demand their rights in relation to education, if they are provided with opportunities for dialogue, learning and support. This pressure from the community level is almost entirely missing at the moment from many schools in Nigeria. The possibility of linking up with SAVI to develop this work should be pursued.
22. **Continue to work with, and learn from, the case study schools.** Change is already happening as a result of this intensive research process in the case study schools. We have a great deal of information about those schools and expectations have been raised. I would strongly support the inclusion of these schools in the pilot sample of schools for ESSPIN support.

## Introduction

23. This section outlines the background to ESSPIN and to the study.

## ESSPIN

24. The Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN) is a six year programme funded by the UK Department for International Development (DfID) in partnership with the Federal Government of Nigeria. Its aim is to support federal and state governments to make sustainable improvements in education services. The programme operates in Jigawa, Kano, Kaduna, Kwara and Lagos states. It started in 2008 and this research was initiated under the inception phase of the project.

## The study

25. This research into School Based Management Committees (SBMCS) in policy and practice in Nigeria is a qualitative study based on interviews at Federal, State and LGEA level as well as case studies of 10 schools and communities. It was conducted in March – April 2009.

## Report structure

26. The **context section** provides an overview of the context to the study, including the Nigeria context, state contexts, and an introduction to the ten case study schools. **The background section** is a brief overview of the literature, with a particular focus on SBMC policy and its development in Nigeria, and the SBMC initiatives that have been implemented in Nigeria. The **methodology section** outlines the study methodology, followed by a brief summary of the ten **case study schools**. The **findings section** is a synthesis of the state reports and a discussion of key themes. A **conclusion section** summarises key findings and makes concluding comments, while a final section outlines **implications for strategy** arising from the study.
27. The five state reports are presented on the ESSPIN documentary series as JG 401, KD 401, KN 402, KW 402 and LG 401.

## Context

28. With its great size and cultural, political and historical diversity and complexity, any generalised statement about Nigeria is unlikely to stand up to scrutiny. In addition, a relatively limited research base and the poor quality of data makes it difficult to summarise the Nigerian context. This section however attempts to capture key aspects of Nigeria's socio-economic and educational characteristics, as well as an overview at State level for the five ESSPIN states.

## Nigeria context

29. While population figures are disputed, with estimates ranging from 120 – 150 million, according to World Development Indicators, Nigeria's population is around 148 million (World Bank 2009).<sup>1</sup>This makes it the most populous country in Africa, and means that it accounts for 47% of the population of West Africa. Nigeria's population is made up of more than 200 ethnic groups, the largest groups being the Hausa-Fulani in the North, Igbo in the Southeast, and Yoruba in the south west. Although it is an over-simplification, the north is predominantly Muslim while the South is predominantly Christian.
30. In terms of key social indicators, life expectancy at birth is 46.5 years<sup>2</sup>, while the percentage of population living below \$1 a day is 70.8%<sup>3</sup> (UNDP 2008). According to the UNDP's Human Development Index<sup>4</sup>, Nigeria is 158<sup>th</sup> out of 177 countries (UNDP 2008), while in the Human Poverty Index<sup>5</sup>, Nigeria ranks 80<sup>th</sup> among 108 developing countries for which the index has been calculated (UNDP 2008). Severe gender inequalities are also a feature: according to the Gender-Related Development Index<sup>6</sup>, Nigeria is 140<sup>th</sup> of 156 countries (UNDP 2008).
31. In terms of education, the brief snapshot provided by table 1 below indicates that enrolment rates in primary education are relatively low (63%), and that there is a considerable further drop at secondary level (26%). The gender gap at both levels is significant (9% difference at primary level, 5% difference at secondary level). While these figures are very 'broad brush', they provide an indication of the severe development

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<sup>1</sup> 2007 figures

<sup>2</sup> 2005 figures

<sup>3</sup> 2005 figures

<sup>4</sup> The HDI provides a composite measure of three dimensions of human development: living a long and healthy life (measured by life expectancy), being educated (measured by adult literacy and enrolment at the primary, secondary and tertiary level) and having a decent standard of living (measured by purchasing power parity, PPP, income).

<sup>5</sup> The Human Poverty Index for developing countries (HPI-1), focuses on the proportion of people below a threshold level in the same dimensions of human development as the human development index - living a long and healthy life, having access to education, and a decent standard of living. By looking beyond income deprivation, the HPI-1 represents a multi-dimensional alternative to the \$1 a day (PPP US\$) poverty measure.

<sup>6</sup> Measures achievements in the same dimensions using the same indicators as the HDI but captures inequalities in achievement between women and men.

challenges facing Nigeria. It is important however to note that these figures conceal significant regional variation.

	M	F	Total
Literacy rate <sup>7</sup>	79%	63%	71%
NER (primary) <sup>8</sup>	68%	59%	63%
Primary completion	75%	71%	73%
NER (secondary) <sup>9</sup>	28%	23%	26%

**Table 1: Key education indicators. Source: UNESCO (2008)**

32. The Nigerian education system is highly complex, with responsibilities divided between Local Government Education Authority (LGEA), State and Federal government. The Federal government is responsible for policy making and the enforcement of standards at primary and secondary levels. Both Federal and State governments legislate on the planning, organization and management of education. Primary schools are managed by LGEAs while secondary education, adult and non-formal education are managed by State government. At federal level, the National Council on Education (NCE) is the key education policy-making institution. Its members include the Federal Minister of Education and all state Commissioners of Education. The role of the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and the State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs) is to ensure effective implementation of EFA at federal and State levels (Theobald, Umar et al. 2007).
33. In terms of education finance, Federal Government funds for infrastructure and instructional materials should flow from state government through SUBEB to the school. Local Government Councils (LGCs) pay teacher salaries in primary schools. Parent Teacher Association (PTA) levies formerly provided funds for day-to-day school costs (e.g. teaching materials). PTA levies have now been abolished in all project states except Kwara and Kano, however, which means that schools lack funds for day-to-day costs.

## State contexts

### Kaduna

34. Kaduna state is situated in north central Nigeria. According to 2006 figures it had a population of just over 6 million (Kaduna State Ministry of Education 2008). There are significant social, cultural differences between northern and southern Kaduna. Its economy is predominantly agricultural, and is a major producer of maize and yams. Indicators of access to basic social services suggest that in Kaduna state 25.7% of households have access to year-round water supplies (c.f. 43.3% for whole of Nigeria) and 61.1% (55.1 % in Nigeria) have access to a health centre ((Kaduna State Ministry of Education 2008).

<sup>7</sup> 15 and over

<sup>8</sup> 2005 data

<sup>9</sup> 2005 data



	M	F	Total
Poverty incidence <sup>10</sup>	-	-	50.2%
Literacy rate <sup>11</sup>	-	-	67%
NER (primary) <sup>12</sup>	67%	64%	66%
NER (JSS)	25%	23%	24%
Primary completion	-	-	-

**Table 2: Key indicators, Kaduna state****Kano**

35. Kano state is situated in northwest Nigeria. Kano state with a population of 9.4 million (2006 figures) (Kano State Ministry of Education 2008) has a rapid population growth rate, so that pressure on schools and other services is high (Kano State Ministry of Education 2008). Most individuals are self-employed and work for their own enterprise or farm. Primary enrolment rates are slightly below national averages, and the gender gap is relatively high.

	M	F	Total
Poverty incidence	-	-	61% <sup>13</sup>
Literacy rate	-	-	-
NER (primary) <sup>14</sup>	83(49)%	73(44) %	78(47) %
NER (JSS) <sup>15</sup>	21%	12%	16%
Primary completion <sup>16</sup>			73%

**Table 3: Key indicators, Kano state.****Jigawa**

36. Jigawa is located in the north western part of Nigeria. It is mostly desert, and is mostly populated by Hausa or Fulani people, and is predominantly Muslim. The population is around 5 million (Jigawa State Ministry of Education 2008). Agriculture is the main economic activity, with over 80% of the population engaged in farming.

37. Although NER are not available for Jigawa, total enrolment figures for public and private sectors combined show that a total of 253323 boys and 175578 girls were enrolled at primary level in 2007/8; while at secondary level the figures are 49130 boys and 21927

<sup>10</sup> Based on National Bureau of Statistics, *Poverty Profile for Nigeria*, 2005, cited in Kaduna State MOE (2008: 4)

<sup>11</sup> From Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (CWIQ) data, cited in Kaduna State MOE (2008)

<sup>12</sup> From CWIQ data, cited in Kaduna State MOE (2008)

<sup>13</sup> World Bank 2006a, cited in Kano State Ministry of Education (2008). Education Sector Analysis (Draft final report). Kano, SMOE.

<sup>14</sup> The first figure is from NEMIS, the second from CWIQ data. Different methodologies may explain the very different figures – eg Quranic schools are not included in CWIQ figures.

<sup>15</sup> NEMIS figures cited in Kano State MoE (2008)

<sup>16</sup> Various sources cited in Kano State MoE (2008)

girls (Jigawa State Ministry of Education 2008). This suggests that there is a very large gender gap, and very low transition rates from primary to JSS for both boys and girls.

	M	F	Total
Poverty incidence <sup>17</sup>			90%
Literacy rate <sup>18</sup>	51%	22%	31%
NER (primary)	-	-	-
NER (JSS)	-	-	-
Primary completion			

**Table 4: Key indicators, Jigawa state**

38. In Jigawa, a State Steering Committee for School Based Management Committee was created at SUBEB in January 2007. SBMCs in the state were officially inaugurated in August 2008. SUBEB organised two phases of training of trainers for capacity building of SBMCs at zonal and senatorial district levels.

### **Kwara**

39. Kwara state is located in western Nigeria (officially north central) and shares some characteristics with northern states and some with southern states. Population is around 2.3 million (2006 figures) (Kwara State Ministry of Education 2008). Kwara's economy is based on 'subsistence farming, small-scale manufacture and government driven economic activity' (Kwara State Ministry of Education 2008). According to the ESA, in Kwara key social indicators including health housing, water and sanitation are quite good in comparison to national averages, however the incidence of poverty is very high.

	M	F	Total
Poverty incidence <sup>19</sup>	-	-	85.2%
Literacy rate	-	-	-
NER (primary) <sup>20</sup>	78%	80%	79%
NER (JSS)	-	-	-
Primary completion	-	-	-

**Table 5: Key indicators, Kwara state**

### **Lagos**

40. Lagos state is in the south west of Nigeria. Although it is the smallest state (in terms of area) in Nigeria, it has a population in excess of 9 million. As well as the indigenous Yoruba-speaking population the city of Lagos has attracted settlers from Nigeria and abroad.

<sup>17</sup> Source: 2006 Central Bank of Nigeria Report, cited in Jigawa state MoE (2008)

<sup>18</sup> Source: 2002 figures in Jigawa State MoE (2008)

<sup>19</sup> Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2006) quoted in Kwara State MoE (2008)

<sup>20</sup> CWIQ data, cited in Kwara State MoE (2008)

41. According to the National Longitudinal Survey (cited in World Bank 2009), Lagos has one of the highest incidences of poverty and inequality in the country, with 67% of the population living on less than \$1 a day, and a high proportion of the population living in extremely poor conditions.
42. According to the Lagos State MoE, Lagos State has an enrolment of over 2.5 million, with over 1300 public schools, over 1,600 approved private schools and over 2,000 unapproved private primary schools. According to state figures, 50% of primary age children are enrolled in private schools, while 33% are enrolled in public schools, which suggests that 17% of primary age children remain out of school (Lagos State Ministry of Education 2008).
43. Although NER were not available, according to World Bank figures there is no major gender difference in enrolments at primary and JSS levels (World Bank 2009).

	M	F	Total
Poverty incidence <sup>21</sup>	-	-	67%
Literacy rate <sup>22</sup>	-	-	93%
NER (primary)	-	-	-
NER (JSS)	-	-	-
Primary completion	-	-	-

**Table 6: Key indicators, Lagos state**

## Conclusion

44. Reliable data for key socio-economic and educational indicators is difficult to source at State level, hence the many gaps in tables above. However, we can observe that there are significant differences in literacy rates from state to state, for example 53% for Lagos and 31% for Jigawa. This underlines the fact that different states have very different contexts and educational needs. Another key observation is that poverty rates are in general high, but again with significant variation, for example from 50% in Kaduna to 90% in Jigawa.

<sup>21</sup> From National Longitudinal Survey, cited in World Bank (2009).

<sup>22</sup> From Lagos Household Survey, cited in World Bank (2009)

## Background

### Introduction

45. This section describes the background to the research by reviewing briefly the international literature on community participation in education, the different ways that parents and community members have been involved in school management in Nigeria, the development of SBMC policy in Nigeria, key community participation initiatives in education in Nigeria, and any lessons learned.

#### *International literature on community participation in education*

46. The claims made for the benefits of community participation in education internationally are substantial. According to one World Bank review, community participation can help to maximise limited resources, develop appropriate curriculum and learning materials, identify and address problems, promote girls' education, create and nourish community-school partnerships, realize democracy, increase accountability, ensure sustainability and improve the home environment (Uemura 1999).
47. This exhaustive and impressive list is not, however, substantiated by the evidence base. For example in a study of community participation in education prepared for the Dakar EFA assessment in 2000, Bray (2000) notes that while there is evidence of positive results in terms of recruitment, retention and attendance of pupils and improved learning outcomes, community participation can increase geographical and social disparities between communities: 'because the groups that are already advantaged are in a better position to help themselves than the disadvantaged groups' (Bray 2000, 30).
48. Burde (2004) notes that approaches to community participation in education are often not well implemented and have unrealistic aims and objectives. It is, she says
- ...a complex tool that can be manipulated in multiple ways to varying effect... To the extent that it works to increase the efficiency and quality of social services, participation may provide a patchwork solution to systemic problems, veiling more profound and contentious issues of structural change and political representation. (Burde 2004, 1)*

49. Burde suggests therefore that community participation should complement and check the state, not replace it (Burde 2004, 4).
50. Rose (2003) looks at the impact that community participation has improving gender equity in educational outcomes in sub-Saharan Africa. The picture is mixed, but there is evidence that *under the right conditions* community participation can contribute to increased rates of enrolment for girls. In terms of improved achievement and transition however, the evidence base is weak. Indeed, '[a]s an end in itself, community participation in schooling appears to have resulted in an entrenchment and reinforcement of gender relations,

rather than empowering those traditionally excluded from more genuine aspects of participation' (Rose 2003, 15).

51. Guijt and Kaul Shah (1998) challenge the notion of community as a benign space where women can participate – rather communities are themselves gendered structures that can be oppressive to women. It therefore follows that, as Cornwall and Goetz (2005) suggest, that requiring the representation of women on committees may not be a very successful strategy because they may be there on paper only, or they may be there but silenced, or they may be there but not necessarily pursuing gender interests. In addition, women's activity in the 'invited spaces' of participatory development may require them to focus on traditionally 'feminine' interests and prevent them from engaging with bigger picture politics (Cornwall and Goetz 2005).
52. In summary then it is fair to say that, based on the literature, community participation strategies should not be seen as a 'silver bullet', but that under the right conditions they can prove useful. The question here is whether the conditions are right in Nigeria, and what more can be done to improve them.

### Policy development

53. A review of national development plans from 1970 onwards suggests that ideas about community participation in education did not begin to appear until the 1990s and the fourth national rolling plan (Federal Republic of Nigeria 1990). SBMCs are specifically mentioned in the **National Framework for Education** (Government of Nigeria 2007) includes the 'articulation of governance and management policies and strategies that are based on strong involvement of government in education provision, repositioning of ministries of education and the rationalization of parastatals for efficiency and effectiveness; reviewing and enhancing monitoring mechanisms; the establishment of School Management Committees' (Theobald, Umar et al. 2007)
54. The **Education Sector Situation Analysis** (Government of Nigeria 2007), was a project of the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) supported by UNESCO and JICA, which centred on 43 studies spanning the whole education system. The process was started in 2000, with UNESCO support from 2002. The Education Sector Diagnosis (Government of Nigeria 2005) presents a summary of the 43 reports. There is a strong focus on community participation. For example in relation to ECCE '[a] systematic programme of parent and community sensitisation to the psycho-social needs of children' (7) is indicated. On the other hand it suggests '[e]nsuring community ownership of such programmes, to ensure their sustainability.' This indicates a divergent view of community participation which is on the one hand very paternalistic - communities need sensitising - and on the other keen to promote community ownership.

55. The **Ten Year Strategic Plan** (Government of Nigeria 2007) was produced as a response to a perceived crisis in education and was developed in the light of the Education Situation Analysis (ESA), Vision 2020, the National Framework and state plans. There are very few references to community. The establishment of SBMCs and operational guidelines are listed as a policy objective only under the finance section of the plan. This would seem to indicate that SBMCs are viewed primarily as a financial strategy, rather than linked to quality, standards or equity objective.
56. The recently produced consultation document the **Roadmap for the Nigerian education sector** (FME 2009) incorporates a strong focus on SBMCs. For example one of its proposed 'turn around strategies is to 'Strengthen school management and accountability by involving communities through SBMCs' (FME 2009: 37) by December 2009. The question here would be to what extent there has been an engagement with the complex, time consuming and strategies and resources required to achieve this goal; and to what extent it is realistic to achieve it in such a short time frame. At the same time, the FME is planning to establish SBMCs in all senior secondary schools.
57. In summary, a review of the policy suggests that a lack of clarity exists about the exact purpose of SBMCs and rationale for their introduction: difference strands of policy seem to view SBMCs as a way to ease the financial burden of government, a way to promote community ownership, or a way to inform or 'sensitise' communities.

### SBMC policy

58. The development of SBMCs has been a very complex process, with many different initiatives working with different interpretations of policy. The current 'Guidance notes for SBMCs' (FME with UNICEF 2005) were adopted by the Joint Consultative Committee on Education (JCCE) in 2007. The Guidance Notes include detailed information on objectives, constitution and roles and responsibilities of SBMCs. According to the memo accompanying these notes, they were developed by a sub-committee constituted by the FME which went round the country looking at school management practice. According to the memo, an initiative in Benue state, 'Partnership in Primary Education', was particularly influential:

*The Benue experience appears to have been influenced by thrust for greater community involvement, a more democratic management style, increased efficiency and transparency underpinned by good record keeping and utilization of effective management tools, as well as by greater teacher and pupil participation in school administration (FME with UNICEF 2005: 3)*

59. The memo notes that in addition that the Benue experience 'derives from an emergent global trend' (FME with UNICEF 2005: 3) in school management.

60. PTAs are seen as distinct from SBMCs although since there are no formal guidelines or policy statements their role and functions are unwritten. Their membership should include all teachers and all parents of children at the school. Formerly, PTAs charged a levy, part of which went to the school, part of it to LGEA and state government and civil society organisations. In many states PTA levies have been banned. Anecdotally, PTAs are perceived as problematic because the levy can be a barrier to schooling for children from poor families; they are open to corruption; and they can become politicised.
61. The SBMC Guidance Notes suggests a number of challenges in implementation. Firstly, the proposed role of the SBMC is very broad and highly complex, requiring members with considerable skills and experience. Secondly, an SBMC constituted according to the Guidance Notes has no real power – rather its functions are to do with conducting various tasks without real decision-making power or resources. Finally, the legal and policy status of SBMCs is unclear, in that it is not clear from the Guidance Note whether they are suggestions that can be adapted – or prescriptions that must be implemented.
62. A study of the role of LGAs and LGEAs in implementing basic education (Williams 2009) suggests that there is currently a lack of clarity as to the role of LGEAs in supporting SBMCs, and that ‘[t]raining in setting up and supporting SBMCs has been given to different stakeholders by different organisations and this does not seem to be cohesive’ (Williams 2009: 15).
63. In summary, the introduction of SBMCs seems to have arisen from a combination of factors including dissatisfaction with some aspects of PTAs, as well as local and international influence, however guidance on their formation and implementation remains somewhat unclear and open to interpretation.

### **SBMC implementation – government initiatives**

64. This section considers key projects and initiatives that have included a focus on SBMCs or their precursors including Self Help, Capacity for Universal Basic Education (CUBE) initiatives, Girls’ Education Project (GEP) and FME training.

#### ***Self Help***

65. In September 2003, the IDA-funded, World Bank-supported Universal Basic Education Project (UBEP) was launched to assist the Government of Nigeria in implementing Universal Basic Education. UBEP had a federal component and a State component. At the State level, the focus was on institutional strengthening, increasing school quality (including physical infrastructure, teacher training and learning materials) and ‘increasing access to education through innovative approaches and direct support to communities through self-help’.

### *Capacity for Universal Basic Education (CUBE)*

66. Capacity for Universal Basic Education (CUBE) operated in two main phases. During Phase 1 of CUBE (2003-2005), the project worked in 16 states of Nigeria. One of the aims was for 'Strengthened school management through Local Government and community participation'. The main strategy for achieving this was Community Based Research and the development of Community Level Education Development Planning (CLEDEP). This planning process was linked to World Bank funded 'Self Help', which provided grants to schools and communities to assist in renovating and improving primary schools, managed by a community committee (World Bank 2002).
67. CUBE Phase 2 (2006-2008) concentrated efforts on 3 states only: Kano, Kaduna and Kwara. A process of Whole School Development Planning (WSDP) which drew on CLEDEP was developed which subsequently fed into CUBE support for the development of manuals for State Education Sector Project (SESP) School Development scheme (SDS). CUBE also conducted 3 state-based studies of SBMCs in Kano, Kaduna and Kwara.

### *COMPASS*

68. Community Participation for Action in the Social Sector (COMPASS) is an integrated health and education project funded by USAID. It works in Kano, Nassarawa, Bauchi, FCT and Lagos states. The project runs from 2004-2009. The basic education component of the project involves working on aspects of school development including teacher development, infrastructure development. In addition a community mobilisation component aims for all Nigerians to be 'involved in learning, planning, and taking action to improve health and education in their communities. The strategy's main goal is to promote a sense of ownership whereby community members take responsibility for their own community's development' (COMPASS 2007). COMPASS uses a participatory process called the Community Action Cycle to facilitate the establishment of 'quality improvement teams' and 'community coalitions' which will work together to improve health and education provision.

### *Girls Education Project (GEP)*

69. The Girls' Education Project (GEP) was launched in December 2004, a partnership between UNICEF, DFID and FME. In its first phase (2004-2007) it worked in 6 states of northern Nigeria: Jigawa, Sokoto, Borno, Katsina, Niger and Bauchi. The focus of the project was on improving "access, retention and learning outcomes" for girls in the project states (UNICEF Nigeria 2007, 9). Project activities included a strong focus on SBMCs, through providing grants directly to schools to be managed by SBMCs, and dependent on female representation on SBMCs and approved gender-sensitive School Development Plans (UNICEF Nigeria 2007). The second phase of GEP (2008-2011) is working in four states only, Jigawa, Katsina, Niger and Bauchi and has an increased focus on building structures and systems at state level. Again, SBMCs are seen as a key 'vehicle' for this work in that it will involve 'training SBMCs to develop school improvement plans and work with parents to



ensure girls are enrolled and attend school', and that the majority of funding will be used 'to help States develop and implement systems for SBMCs to control budgets to improve the quality of learning in their schools' (DFID Nigeria UNICEF & FME 2008, 1).

### *State Education Sector Project (SESP)*

70. The State Education Sector Project (SESP) is a World Bank funded project working in 3 states, Kano, Kaduna and Kwara. It runs from 2007-2011. The aims of the project are to improve education inputs and learning environment with a particular focus on girls' participation; and to 'strengthen the capacity of school committees, LGEAs and States to plan and monitor the performance of schools' (World Bank 2007, 3). A key feature is that SBMCs develop a school development plan and the project makes direct grants to SBMCs. SESP has developed manuals – one at state level, one at school level, for the school development process, on which the grant money depends. This process draws on the GEP approach with some differences.

### *FME Training*

71. In 2008 the federal government agreed to fund training of SBMCs using the MDG debt relief money. The Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA) led the process, working with FME. National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) and CSACEFA training manuals were adapted and used. The training was designed as a 'step down' process: State, LGEA and CSO members would be trained, and they would train at the local level. However, as at October 2008 there was no funding for the 'step-down'. Training at state level commenced in 20 states 'with high gender disparities' in November 2008 and was completed in April 2009 (Akinsolu and Onibon 2009).

## **SBMC implementation – NGO initiatives**

### *CSACEFA (OSIWA)*

72. The Civil Society Action Coalition for Education for All (CSACEFA) ran a project entitled 'Enhancing Effective Women Participation in SBMCs at community level' funded by the Open Society Initiative of West Africa (OSIWA) during 2007. This project worked in a total of 70 communities in Ekiti, Edo, Imo, Nasarawa, Kebbi, Adamawa and FCT states<sup>23</sup>. Project activities included the development of a training manual for facilitators and members of SBMCs at community level, training of 14 community facilitators, 'advocacy visits' and the production of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials and jingles (Civil Society Action Coalition on Education For All 2007).

### *Enhancing Girls' Basic Education in Northern Nigeria (EGBENN)*

73. This Oxfam/ActionAid project is working in Kebbe, Sokoto and Zamfara states in northern Nigeria to improve girls' education. Project activities include working with SBMCs and PTAs

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<sup>23</sup> Personal communication, civil soc reps 3and4

using methodology influenced by REFLECT<sup>24</sup>, in which SBMCs act as sub-committees of a larger community REFLECT circle (Menkiti n.d.). Phase 1 of the project ran from 2005-2007 in 28 project communities. Phase 2 (2007-2010) is currently under implementation in at total of 36 communities.

### *Transforming Education for Girls in Nigeria and Tanzania (TEGINT)*

74. TEGINT is an Action Aid project funded by Comic Relief, working in Nigeria and Tanzania. In Nigeria the project works in partnership with the NGO Community Action for Popular Participation (CAPP). The overall goal of the project is to achieve a transformation in the education of girls, enabling them to enrol and succeed in school by addressing key challenges and obstacles that hinder their participation in education and increase their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. In particular, one of the project objectives focuses on building the capacity of school management committees and the wider community in addressing HIV and AIDS and girls' rights in education and HIV/AIDS. The project, which started in 2007, is still at the stage of conducting baseline research and developing strategies for implementation (TEGINT 2009).
75. In summary, a wide range of innovative approaches to community participation and education, including SBMCs, has been implemented in Nigeria in recent years.

### *The impact of community participation initiatives in Nigeria*

76. This section looks at evaluations of community participation initiatives in Nigeria in order to draw out what evidence there is for impact. This requires some consideration of what indicators are used to monitor and evaluate SBMCs. According to the **GEP** Phase 1 evaluation 'all GEP schools reported that SBMCs were functioning optimally' (Chege, Zakariya et al. 2008: 20), however there is no particular definition or indicator described for SBMC functionality. The SESP SBMC studies looked at a range of issues including: qualities of the chair, perceptions of purpose, roles and responsibilities, and perceptions about monitoring. The FME training evaluation looked at participants' satisfaction with the training, as well as the extent to which they felt they had gained knowledge around the key areas of 'school effectiveness', 'interaction strategies' and 'participatory methods'.
77. An evaluation of **EGBENN** for funder NOVIB concludes that 'there is evidence to show that the EGBENN project is going to empower poor communities to begin to make more demands' (Moussa, Iyayi et al. 2007) and a 43% increase in girls' enrolment<sup>25</sup>. The methodology by which this evaluation was conducted was not available in the synthesis report however.

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<sup>24</sup> REFLECT is an approach to social change drawing on Freirian literacy and participatory methodologies, developed by the NGO ActionAid ([www.reflect-action.org](http://www.reflect-action.org)).

<sup>25</sup> Personal communication, civil soc rep

78. The **CSACEFA** report for OSIWA (Civil Society Action Coalition on Education For All 2007) is a progress report on CSACEFA's work with SBMCs in the 28 communities of Phase 1, with a particular focus on increasing women's representation and participation. As this is an interim progress report it contains little evaluative information, rather it focuses on process issues such as the development of a training manual and training of trainers. No evaluation report was available at the time of writing.

79. The **GEP** Phase 1 evaluation was conducted in three of the six Phase 1 GEP states, Bauchi, Sokoto and Niger. Two LGAs were selected in each state, and 5 GEP and 5 non-GEP schools in each LGA. Various stakeholders including SBMC members took part in interviews or focus group discussions. According to the evaluation report:

*Functional SBMCs characterised the GEP schools, which have responded positively to the requirement on engaging a minimum of three women. Occasionally, some of the SBMCs had a female membership of nearly 50% as observed in some of the LGAs in Niger and Bauchi. Of the 12,409 members in the 720 GEP focus schools, 2,978 are women, representing 21% (Chege, Zakariya et al. 2008: 4).*

80. In addition,

*Generally, SBMCs in all the GEP states had adopted flexible approaches to increasing school participation rates for boys and girls through various strategies that include, household mapping to identify families with children of school going age and persuade them to enrol them in school (Chege, Zakariya et al. 2008: 4).*

81. While GEP was successful in terms of increasing the numbers of women on SBMCs, the key focus of the evaluation is on increasing girls' enrolment, rather than on the development of a functional committee. While gross enrolment was noted as having increased in GEP schools by 82%, this cannot be causally linked to SBMC activities. Interestingly there is not much focus on learning achievement.

82. While no formal **SESP** evaluations were available at the time of this review, under the auspices of SESP three studies of SBMCs in Kwara, Kaduna and Kano were conducted in 2008 (Aboki 2008; Oladimeji, Oyawoye et al. 2008; SESP/CUBE 2008). In each state, the study was conducted in a total of nine schools in three LGAs. The study focused on five areas: the formation and composition of SBMCs, roles and responsibilities, relationships with other groups, monitoring and evaluation, and the impact SBMCs to date on schools. The study methodology hinged on focus group discussions with groups of stakeholders, including SBMC chair, head teachers, community leaders, education secretaries, children, PTA and SBMC members. The SESP SBMC studies explored perceptions of interviewees of what difference the SBMC had made. In the case of Kaduna, the focus was largely on increased enrolment and teacher attendance. No evaluation was available at the time of writing.

83. An interim report of the **FME** programme of SBMC training (Akinsolu and Onibon 2009), reports on the training which was conducted at zonal and senatorial level. Seven zonal trainings were conducted, each training covering 3 or more states. At each workshop, 65 participants were drawn from SUBEB, SMOE, LGEA, FME, CSACEFA and SBMCs. These participants then ‘stepped down’ the training at senatorial level workshops (3 in each state) which included representatives from all LGAs, including SBMC members, Education Secretaries, Women’s leaders, Community leaders, head teachers, SUBEB and Local Government Education Authority officials, religious leaders and the Civil Society representatives.
84. The FME evaluation focused more on immediate responses to training, so it is too soon to see what impact this project has had on the ground.
85. In summary, while GEP evaluations suggest positive impact in terms of women’s participation on SBMCs, there is little evidence, or focus, in existing reports of impact of SBMC implementation. In the case of many initiatives there is a distinct lack of documentation and evaluation. This suggests that it will be important for ESSPIN to integrate work with SBMCs into on-going M&E work and to document it carefully.

### Lessons learned/best practice

86. As noted above, documentation of community participation and SBMC initiatives in Nigeria are limited. This includes the documentation of lessons learned or recommendations for best practice in relation to SBMCs.
87. The GEP evaluation (Chege, Zakariya et al. 2008) suggests that ‘[c]ontinuous training of members of SBMCs on matters of planning, procurement, and keeping records should be enhanced to increase the SBMC’s capacity in managing schools’. Grants for SBMCs are also recommended. The report also describes strategies taken by SBMCs to encourage enrolment/attendance including household mapping and truancy tracking.
88. A review of lessons learned in GEP 1 underlines the fact that although communities are ready and willing to raise funds, it is important that support from government for SBMCs is strengthened and institutionalised and that training and support for SBMCs is ongoing (Adediran and Thomas 2008).
89. The SESP Kaduna study recommends more active SUBEB engagement, more training for Headteachers to deal with the additional requirements, greater clarity and flexibility in implementation of SBMC policy, and engagement with traditional leaders to further gender equity strategies (Aboki 2008).
90. The FME training evaluation recommendations include a system for monitoring SBMCs to be put in place, an evaluation of the process two years after implementation to note if the desired goals have been met, and the introduction of strategies for sustaining the

implementation of SBMCs. Furthermore Williams (2009) suggests that LGEAs should be accountable to SBMCs.

91. This brief review of the experience of implementing SBMCs and supporting SBMC programmes in Nigeria reveals that although there is much valuable experience, there has so far been little systematic sharing of lessons learned or documentation of findings or evaluation of impact. There is an opportunity here for ESSPIN to provide leadership in this field by facilitating learning and interaction between key projects and programmes.

## Methodology

92. A number of key questions arise from the brief review of experience both nationally and internationally in the previous section. Firstly, are the conditions right for the introduction of SBMCs in Nigeria, and if not, how can they be improved? To what extent are current policies supportive of successful implementation? What needs to be done to make them more supportive? How can lessons from implementation of SBMCs so far be documented and shared? These questions will be addressed through the broader research questions indicated below and in particular through the fourth question which is concerned with strategy.
93. This section outlines the methodological approach of the research, including a description of the conceptual framework, an overview of the methods used, a description of how the case study schools were selected, a description of the approach used for analysis and a discussion of ethical considerations. The research questions appear in box 1 below.

- |  |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 What are the key policies around SBMCs in Nigeria, and how are they understood by key stakeholders at federal, state, local government, school and community levels?</li><li>2 How have these policies been 'enacted' at school and community level?</li><li>3 What are the implications of the ways in which SBMC policy has been implemented for questions of gender, poverty and school governance?</li><li>4 What strategies do the findings suggest for future ESSPIN research and engagement with SBMCs?</li></ol> |
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### Box 1: Research questions

94. The research questions (above) are based on a number of assumptions and hypotheses which will be spelt out further below. The first question is based on the assumption that **understandings** of SBMCs and community participation vary at different levels of the system.

## Conceptual framework

95. The second question is based on the assumption that policy **enactment** – that is, the shape that policies actually take on the ground - unlikely to be in line with the policy. According to Stephen Ball (1998: 127), when considering policy enactment, it is important to consider the concept of recontextualisation, that is, the ways in which policies change when they interact with new contexts and suggests that we must seek to understand ‘the complex relationships between ideas, the dissemination of ideas and the recontextualisation (see Bernstein, 1996) of ideas.
96. The third question is based on the assumption that a crucial underpinning of SBMC policy – and basis for its evaluation – is the extent to which its implementation is equitable and focused on improved school governance. The fourth question is based on an interest in, and concern for, applying lessons learned for better **future** SBMC policy (understood in a very broad sense, not just government policy).
97. Another key set of issues underpinning the research is around power, conflict and change. These issues derive from a set of influences including firstly the assumption that understanding power dynamics within key institutions (including SBMCs and schools) is important. That is, it is important to consider questions of who holds the power within those institutions, who makes the decisions, whether there is conflict and if so how it is dealt with, and how those institutions develop and change as a result.
98. In addition, this research starts from an understanding of policy as both text and discourse, after Ball (2006). As a text, a policy is a statement about practice, and the way that things are, or should be. As discourse, policy exercises power through the production of truth and knowledge:
- Policies embody claims to speak with authority, they legitimate and initiate practices in the world, and they privilege certain visions and interests. They are power/knowledge configurations par excellence (Ball 2006, 26).*
99. Policies are therefore firmly rooted within the social and political world in which they are created and by implication we can learn things about that world through the analysis of policy as discourse.
100. A further set of issues is focused around the question of **community participation** and how to understand and evaluate it. A useful approach is suggested by Wilson and Wilde (2003) in their analysis of community participation through the concepts of influence, inclusivity, communication and capacity (resources). Their approach was adapted for the application to community participation in education (see box 2 below):

<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial and other material resources</li> <li>• Skills and capacity</li> <li>• Training and support</li> <li>• Networks</li> <li>• Motivation and reward</li> </ul>	<b>Inclusivity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership</li> <li>• Processes of formation</li> <li>• Role of women</li> <li>• Role of poor</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Profile and presence of SBMC</li> <li>• Communication of SBMC decisions</li> <li>• Communication between school and SBMC</li> <li>• Communication between LGA and SBMC</li> <li>• Tensions and conflict</li> </ul>	<b>Influence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Within the SBMC, who makes the decisions</li> <li>• SBMC power and influence in relation to school and other local institutions (horizontal)</li> <li>• SBMC power and influence in relation to LGA (vertical)</li> <li>• Possibilities for promoting collective action for change</li> </ul>

**Box 2: four dimensions of community participation in education (adapted from Wilson and Wilde 2003)**

101. These categories suggest a way of organising and analysis SBMCs; however this 4-way model will need to be supplemented by consideration of school governance issues, outlined below.

102. The research is concerned with **school governance**, defined by McLennan (1997) as:

*the integrated management of the complex political, socio-economic and institutional relationships between people (the stakeholders of any particular sector), policy (normative and regulatory frameworks) and power (the distribution and utilisation of power and authority networks) in order to ensure effective and efficient service delivery.*

103. This view of governance as a dynamic balance of power between three entities – people, policy and power - within the framework of an overall direction towards improved education is a helpful one because it incorporates the element of change – that is, governance should be viewed as a dynamic process in which the goal is improved education. In addition, a key debate in the governance literature concerns the extent to which this diversified power does or does not address questions of collective action for social change (See e.g. Mundy 2007). The research therefore seeks to explore the extent to which SBMCs are involved with these aspects of school governance.

## Methodological approach

104. These varied and complex questions and influences outlined above suggest an in-depth, qualitative approach based on a few case studies that will seek to cover the above issues with a wide set of stakeholders at school, community and local government levels.
105. Initially, a review of the literature was conducted which focused on the following questions:
- What are the different ways in which parents and community members have been involved in school management in the past, and why?
  - What are the documented results of that involvement (and what remains undocumented), and why?
  - What lessons can be drawn for future interventions?
106. The literature search strategy involved firstly inviting colleagues and contacts at key organisations to share their documents as well as a systematic search of academic search engines using key words 'Nigeria' 'Community participation', 'SBMC', 'school based management committee', 'education'.
107. In terms of field research, the conceptual framework outlined above required a focus on relationships within and between key institutions, and the perspective of diverse stakeholders, including those with less influence and less voice. The methodology therefore drew on ethnography, institutional analysis and PRA techniques.
108. The research was conducted by five state research teams. Each state research team was led by a state research consultant, supported by the ESSPIN Access and Equity Specialist, a field researcher and a SUBEB representative.
109. At federal, state and local government level, semi-structured interviews were conducted with government officials and civil society representatives. Although the main focus of the research was concentrated at school/community level, it was important to understand whether and how understandings of policy differ at different levels of government and civil society.
110. At school/community level, two case study schools were selected in each ESSPIN state. The researchers spent five days using a range of different tools and activities, with a range of different stakeholder groups (see box 3 below). The long research period and wide range of informants was designed for a number of reasons. Firstly we wished to hear from members of the community with less power and influence, which meant that we needed to 'shake off' influential guides e.g. LGEA representatives who tend to dominate discussions. Secondly, a long research period makes it more likely that participants will become used to the researchers and will feel comfortable in their discussions. Thirdly, the research schedule allowed researchers the time to take advantage of opportunities that



arose to pursue key issues or individuals. Fourthly, a feedback meeting was scheduled at which researchers shared findings at a community meeting and invited feedback and questions, which is good practice from an ethical perspective, in that it gave participants the opportunity to respond to preliminary findings and to ask questions. Finally, time for reflection and analysis for researchers was built into each day so that analysis is conducted on an on-going basis.

<b>Day 1</b>	Tool 3: School profile Tool 4a: Transect walk Tool 4b: Social resource mapping
<b>Day 2</b>	Tool 5a: SBMC Chair interview Tool 5b: Headteacher interview Tool 5c: Female teacher interview (NOT an SBMC member if possible) Tool 5d: Community leader Tool 5e: Women's group leader
<b>Day 3</b>	Tool 6: SBMC group meeting Tool 7: Student activity
<b>Day 4</b>	Tool 8: FGD/venn diagram activity with parents: one men's group, one women's group
<b>Day 5</b>	Tool 9: Group feedback meeting

**Box 3: School/community level tools and activities**

111. The outline timetable and research tools for field research at school/community level appear in Box 3 above. The research manual appears as an annex. In brief, Tools 1 and 2 (which do not appear in Box 3) are semi structured interviews at state and LG/EA level. Tool 3 is a checklist of basic information about the school, to be completed during the research period. Tool 4a, the transect walk, is designed to familiarise the team with the surrounding area. Tool 4b, the social resource mapping, is a participatory activity with a mixed community group to discuss key social and educational issues of concern to the community. Tools 5a-5e are semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders. Tool 6 is a Focus Group Discussion with as many SBMC members as possible. Tool 7 is a game or activity conducted with a group of students which also seeks their opinion about key issues to do with the school and SBMC. Tool 8 is a participatory venn diagram activity, conducted once with mothers and once with a group of fathers of students at the school. Tool 9 is the feedback meeting.

### Case study selection

112. Case studies do not seek to be representative; rather they seek to describe and explain a particular situation (Yin 2003). For the purposes of this research, two case study schools

were selected in each of the ESSPIN focus states (Jigawa, Kano, Kaduna, Kwara and Lagos). Selection of case studies was purposive, according to the following criteria:

- Six cases where there has been intervention in relation to SBMCs, through GEP, SESP, or COMPASS.
- Four cases where there has been no intervention,
- A mixture of urban, rural and peri-urban locations

113. We did not necessarily seek those cases where SBMCs are seen to be performing exceptionally well, or exceptionally poorly (what Gerring (2006) refers to as ‘extreme’ cases). In addition, we sought to avoid better-resourced model or central primary schools, although in practice our sample did include one central primary school and one model primary school.

		<b>Interventions</b>	<b>location</b>
<b>Kano 1</b>	Primary	None	Peri-urban
<b>Kano 2</b>	Primary	SESP	Rural
<b>Kaduna 1</b>	Primary	SESP	Peri-urban
<b>Kaduna 2</b>	Primary	None	Rural
<b>Kwara 1</b>	Primary	SESP	Urban
<b>Kwara 2</b>	Primary	none	Rural
<b>Jigawa 1</b>	Primary	GEP 1	Rural
<b>Jigawa 2</b>	Primary	GEP 2	Rural
<b>Lagos 1</b>	Primary	COMPASS	Urban
<b>Lagos 2</b>	Primary	None	Urban

**Table 7: Sampling framework**

114. School selection was led by ESSPIN state access and equity consultants. For the most part school selection was conducted according to the framework with a number of exceptions, as shown in table 8 below:

	<b>Location</b>	<b>Interventions</b>	<b>Size<sup>26</sup></b>	<b>SBMC status<sup>27</sup></b>
<b>Kano 1</b>	Central Kano	Model school	L	*
<b>Kano 2</b>	Kano outskirts	None	L	*
<b>Kaduna 1</b>	Peri –urban Former army rehabilitation camp in Kachia town	None	M	-
<b>Kaduna 2</b>	Rural Small village	SESP	S	**

<sup>26</sup> L>1000; M 300-1000; S <300

<sup>27</sup> SBMC status: - not formed; \* formed not functional; \*\* formed and functional

<b>Kwara 1</b>	Ilorin	SESP	M	**
<b>Kwara 2</b>	Edge of small, isolated town (LGA HQ)	None	M	*
<b>Jigawa 1</b>	Rural Village	Community Islamiyya School	S	-
<b>Jigawa 2</b>	Rural Village	GEP 1	S	**
<b>Lagos 1</b>	Urban New settlement	None	M	*
<b>Lagos 2</b>	Urban Slum area	COMPASS	M	*

**Table 8: overview of case study school characteristics**

115. In Kano, two urban schools were chosen, neither one a SESP school. This means that we only have 2 SESP schools in the sample and peri-urban schools are under-represented. In Jigawa, the STL requested the inclusion of an Islamiyya school in the sample because of particular interests in working with Islamiyya schools in future, so an Islamiyya school was selected in place of a GEP phase 2 school. This means that we only have one GEP school in the sample. School names have been changed to protect the anonymity of participants. Brief school profiles follow this section of the report.

### Ethical considerations

116. This research was reviewed by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee, Faculty of Policy and Society, Institute of Education, University of London, UK (March 2009). The need to protect informants is the most important ethical issue. Therefore names and school names have been changed. In addition, participants were fully informed about the research, and how their contributions would be used, and their right to withdraw at any time. An information leaflet was prepared which was given to all participants or presented verbally at school and community level, where some participants were illiterate. At LGEA, state and federal level, participants were asked to sign an informed consent form in English, while verbal consent was sought at school/community level. The information and consent forms appear as annexes. In addition a community feedback meeting was held at the end of the research period, at which researchers will seek confirmation and feedback on their conclusions, thus giving participants the opportunity to correct and clarify issues with the researchers.

117. All field researchers were trained in ethical issues, during a training and piloting workshop held in Kano from 15-24th February 2009. A reminder of ethical issues was included in the research manual. In addition, all researchers were contracted by Save the Children. As part of the contracting process, the researchers were required to comply with Save the Children's child safeguarding policy.

## Analysis

118. As well as preliminary analysis undertaken on an on-going basis by research teams, further analysis was conducted with the state research consultants. Each consultant presented to the group findings from their state, LGA and community level research. The group noted down on cards the issues and themes that arose. After all the presentations were complete, the group sorted the cards into categories. The group then developed statements related to the categories which will be used in the case study reports by analysing to what extent the cases support or contradict the statements, in order to avoid the pitfall of generalising from the case studies.

## Limitations

119. The number of case studies was small for the following reasons. Much past research on school management committees internationally has been very superficial, involving perhaps a few questions posed to Headteacher and Chair. These studies tell us very little about how these institutions – upon which great expectations are heaped – actually function – i.e. who makes decisions, and who holds the power? This research was conceived as an antidote to such research and starts from the assumption that there is conflict and difference at the community level which will be reflected in the operation of SBMCs and similar institutions. In addition, in statistically representative sample of primary schools in the ESSPIN states would require a very large sample indeed. The concern of this research is more with documenting the situation and linking it clearly to context: i.e. what works, where, and why. In addition, a broader perspective was introduced through the literature review and interviews with federal, state and LGEA representatives.

## Case study schools

120. A brief profile of each of the case study schools appears in this section.

### Kano 1 Model Primary School

121. Kano 1 Model Primary School is located in Fagge LGA in the centre of Kano city. It is located on a main road in a densely built up area of the city.

122. There are 16 classrooms and some furniture, but the condition of the classrooms is very poor, and many classrooms have no furniture. There is a borehole and 9 toilets (four of which are for staff). There are 30 staff.

123. This is a single shift school with a total enrolment of 1147 students:

Class	Boys	Girls	Total
ECCD	41	49	90
1	61	63	124

<b>2</b>	106	82	188
<b>3</b>	155	111	266
<b>4</b>	74	81	155
<b>5</b>	86	78	164
<b>6</b>	95	65	160
<b>TOTAL</b>	618	529	1147

124. An SBMC has been constituted at this school, but according to records there has only ever been one meeting (June 2008). The SBMC chair is also chair of the PTA and claims to have heard of the SBMC only recently. Other organisations that support the school are the Old Boys' Association and Rotary Club.

### Kano 2 Primary School

125. Kano 2 Primary school is located in Kumbotso LGA in a peri-urban area on the outskirts of Kano city. This is a huge school serving a number of wards. The school is in a fenced area which also includes a secondary school and a health post. Most of the children come from low and middle income families.

126. There are 10 classrooms, and 24 toilets with inadequate water supply. There is furniture only in 2 of the classrooms (6A and 6B). The classrooms are extremely crowded, with in some cases 250-300 students to a room. There are 3 water points, but water supply is sporadic. There are 40 staff.

127. This is a double shift school with a total enrolment of 2571 students:

<b>Class</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>ECCD</b>	33	27	60
<b>1</b>	224	198	422
<b>2</b>	245	181	426
<b>3</b>	255	233	488
<b>4</b>	231	204	435
<b>5</b>	232	267	499
<b>6</b>	217	137	354
<b>TOTAL</b>	1437	1247	2684

128. Although an SBMC has been formed on paper, the PTA continues to hold the power in this school. The PTA has kept the same chair since the establishment of the school 20 years ago, and parents were keen for the PTA to continue in its role. There is a strong influence from the village head who takes an interest in the school.

129. A spot check revealed that very few children were able to read.

### Kaduna 1 School

130. This school is located in a peri-urban environment in Kachia town, Kachia LGA. It is located in a vast area within a former army camp rehabilitation centre. Most inhabitants of the surrounding area are farmers, with a few traders and civil servants.

131. There are five blocks of seven classrooms, as well as one block of three ECCD classrooms. The classrooms are in poor condition. There is some furniture, most of it improvised, e.g. planks of wood. There are three pit toilets and hand-dug wells for water. There is a football field and plenty of space to play. There are 40 teachers at the school.

132. This is a single shift school with total enrolment of 449.

Class	Boys	Girls	Total
ECCD	-	-	-
1	46	32	78
2	57	23	80
3	40	44	84
4	48	33	81
5	30	34	64
6	36	26	62
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>449</b>

133. An SBMC has been established on paper at this school (perhaps just before, and prompted by, the visit of the researchers.) Otherwise the PTA is very active. Other institutions that support the school include petty traders group within the school, Army Rehab centre, Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Ja'amatul-Nasril-Islam (JNI) and ex-service men.

### Kaduna 2 LGEA Primary School

134. This school is located in a village in a rural area of Zaria LGA. It is a SESP-supported school. It is a dry area with mud houses and a few trees. In addition to this primary school, there are 5 koranic schools and a clinic. The inhabitants are mainly Hausa-speaking Muslims.

135. The school has two blocks with six classrooms in total. It has three toilets. There is a hand-dug well with a borehole under construction. There are six teachers at the school, all men.

136. This is a single shift school with 358 students in total.

Class	Boys	Girls	Total
ECCD	-	-	-
1	57	39	96
2	49	23	72
3	40	31	71
4	16	17	33

<b>5</b>	38	13	51
<b>6</b>	30	5	35
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>358</b>

137. SBMC was established in March 2007 through the SESP process, although membership seems to be fluid. While the PTA used to be powerful, since abolition of PTA levies by the Kaduna State government 2 years ago, its influence has waned. The SBMC, with SESP support, has carried out minor repairs, dug a well, purchased teaching aids and textbooks.

### Kwara 1 'A' Primary School

138. This school is located in an urban area of Ilorin town, in Ilorin West LGA. The school serves an area inhabited mainly by Ilorin indigenes, for the most part traders, artisans and civil servants. This is a very old school, established in 1934, and is supported by SESP.

139. The school has 14 classrooms and 2 toilets. There are 49 staff at the school.

140. This is a single shift school with total enrolment of 791:

<b>Class</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>ECCD</b>	-	-	-
<b>1</b>	81	55	136
<b>2</b>	50	58	108
<b>3</b>	74	70	144
<b>4</b>	56	57	113
<b>5</b>	55	54	109
<b>6</b>	62	41	109
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>713</b>

141. The SBMC was set up through SESP and has completed a round of school development planning. With SESP grants, the SBMC has overseen renovation of classrooms, purchase of teacher guides and building of toilets. In addition the PTA is quite active.

### Kwara 2 Central Primary School

142. This school is located on the outskirts of Kaiama town, in Kaiama LGA. This is a very remote area of Kwara state, close to the Republic of Benin, with poor road connections. It is primarily a yam-farming area. This is an old school, established in 1924.

143. The school has seven blocks of 13 classrooms, and 2 blocks with 6 toilets. There is a library and home economics block. There are 53 teachers, however, according to the teacher register, only 33 are in regular attendance.

144. The total enrolment is 829:

Class	Boys	Girls	Total
ECCD	-	-	-
1	70	62	132
2	43	62	105
3	55	41	96
4	45	68	113
5	50	44	94
6	56	52	108
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>829</b>

145. Although an SBMC has been formed on paper, there is little evidence of any activity. The PTA is active and well known, and the school is also supported by a range of local organisations including Bokobaro Progressive Union and the National Association of Kwara 2 Students (NAKS). However, based on observations during the research, there is little evidence of teaching and learning activity.

### Jigawa 1 Islamiyya Primary School

146. This Islamiyya primary school is located in a village in a rural area of Miga LGA in Jigawa state. The inhabitants are Hausa or Fulani and all are Muslim. The school was set up and is run by the Jigawa 1 Development Organisation, a community-based organisation that has been running for more than 30 years.

147. The school has a block of 3 classrooms plus two thatched mud rooms. Any idea of number of teachers? Is it also a double or single shift system?

148. The total enrolment is 293:

Class	Boys	Girls	Total
ECCD	32	38	70
1	25	25	50
2	53	28	81
3	24	25	49
4	11	32	43
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>293</b>

149. There is no SBMC at this school, although the School Development Association (SDA) is keen to establish formal links with the LG EA. The SDA itself is highly organised and structured. It raises money to support the school and oversees its management. There are no female members of the organisation.



## Jigawa 2 Primary School

150. This school is located in a village in a rural area of Maigateri LGA. The school was founded in 1976 under the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme. Since 2005 the school has received support from the UNICEF/DFID Girls Education Project (GEP).

151. There are 2 blocks with total 4 classrooms, all in poor condition. There is some furniture, but insufficient. There are 10 teachers.

152. This is a single shift school with 284 students:

Class	Boys	Girls	Total
ECCD	21	13	34
1	23	16	39
2	14	24	38
3	31	19	50
4	52	26	78
5	09	11	20
6	07	18	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>284</b>

153. The SBMC was established in 2005 under GEP; however both HT and teacher who were trained under GEP have been transferred. The SBMC has been supporting enrolment and attendance of girls. 10A spot check revealed little evidence of reading/writing ability.

## Lagos 1 Community Primary School

154. This school is located in a new settlement area of Alimosho LGA. The catchment area is bounded by swamp on one side and a busy main road on the other. The school was established in 2001 at the request of the local community, on land they donated. A wall was erected around the school in 2005-2006 through a CUBE initiative, Community Led Education Development Planning (CLEDEP). There are six classrooms, and a borehole which is not functioning. Older girls fetch water from a nearby borehole.

155. The students come from poor backgrounds – some students work as housegirls or houseboys - and there is an issue of poor nutrition. There are 15 staff at the school.

156. This is a double shift school, with a total of 569 pupils:

Class	Boys	Girls	Total
1	35	35	70
2	41	36	77
3	56	50	106
4	51	49	100
5	50	56	106
6	59	51	110
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>569</b>

157. SBMCs in Lagos state are based on clusters of schools, and Lagos 1 is part of cluster 5 SBMC which meets in a different school. The SBMC has met regularly since its establishment in December 2008, but has no funds to take action. Prior to abolition of PTA levies, the PTA was very active. The school is well run and children appear to be learning well.

### Lagos 2 Community Primary School

158. This school is located in a long-established community, in a densely populated part of Alimosho LGA in Lagos with a high-ranking and influential Oba.
159. The school shares a large, walled compound with another primary school, and an abandoned building. It has 13 well-maintained classrooms. There is a non-functional borehole, and there are no toilets. This school has 22 teachers.

Class	Boys	Girls	Total
1	59	65	124
2	67	67	134
3	82	94	176
4	95	81	176
5	75	78	153
6	72	97	169
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>932</b>

160. This school is part of Cluster 2 SBMC, along with three other schools in this kingdom and a number of schools from other kingdoms. The Oba is active and very interested in education. He maintains a tight control of what happens on the SBMC.

## Findings

### Introduction

161. This section seeks to synthesise key findings from federal, state, LGEA level interviews and the 10 school case studies. It looks first at what is revealed about how SBMC policy is understood; how it is enacted; and what can be said about impact of SBMC implementation. The latter section is limited by the fact that SBMC implementation is still at the early stages.

### Understandings of SBMC policy

#### *How are they understood at federal level?*

162. Federal level findings are based on three interviews with senior FME officials from Special Education and Education Management Divisions, all of whom are involved with SBMC

policy. During these discussions two clear themes emerged in terms of how SBMCs are understood and rationalised. These are firstly that they are seen as a way to ease the burden – financial and otherwise – of government. According to one official, ‘with SBMCs a lot of things will be easier to manage<sup>28</sup>’. However, this is based on the assumption that the system will function as planned, with state and LGEA governments passing funds to the school. – which it is quite clear they are not doing – and another official admits that it is difficult to get state governments to commit funds to schools: ‘people don’t want to change their pattern<sup>29</sup>’.

163. Secondly, for these officials, SBMCs clearly represent a solution to the problem of gender disparities. As one official says, ‘GEP brought me into SBMCs<sup>30</sup>’, and, according to another official, ‘we saw GEP working<sup>31</sup>’. The third official suggests that GEP has shown that when women are involved in SBMCs, they send their daughters to school. This belief is reflected in the fact that FME’s own programme of SBMC training has focused initially on 20 states with ‘high gender disparity’ (Akinsolu and Onibon 2009), although how this was defined is not clear.

164. The key issue of how the ‘community’ is defined and conceptualised is not questioned by any of the respondents. One official states that ‘communities will ensure that money is spent properly<sup>32</sup>’, while another says that ‘private participation is very important in the community<sup>33</sup>’. There is also a strong focus by these officials on senior secondary and tertiary level education, rather than getting it right at primary level where SBMC initiatives have started. Finally, it is clear that even high level FME officials are in a situation of continued uncertainty in terms of ongoing funding for their programmes, or the ability to plan for future work. One official says of government allocation of resources ‘they say one thing and then do another’, and states that she is not sure if they will be able to continue with the programme of SBMC training.

### *State level*

165. Interviews were conducted with 12 officials (10 male, 2 female) at State level across all five project states. The officials to be interviewed were in most cases Director level with significant involvement with SBMCs. These interviews suggest that in general, the SBMC is understood as an initiative imposed by the Federal Government, although one official in Kaduna said that the initiative came from UNICEF.

166. The level of enthusiasm and support for SBMCs varied from state to state from very enthusiastic (Jigawa) to relatively cool (Kwara and Kaduna). For example in Jigawa, a State

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<sup>28</sup> Interview official 1 21/04/09

<sup>29</sup> Interview official 2 21/04/09

<sup>30</sup> Interview official 1 21/04/09

<sup>31</sup> Interview official 3 17/4/09

<sup>32</sup> Interview official 2 21/04/09

<sup>33</sup> Interview official 3 17/4/09

Steering Committee of School Based Management Committee was created at SUBEB with the following rationale:

- that the poor quality of education delivery cannot be addressed by Government alone;
- to sensitize, mobilize for the effective change of nonchalant attitude of our people toward better delivery of education in our State and the nation in general;
- to implement policy states as directed by Madam Minister of Education to establish SBMC in all public schools before 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2007(Jigawa SUBEB 2007).

167. This statement reveals some of the competing strands of thinking around SBMCs that are evident at state level. Firstly, that the government cannot or will not take sole responsibility for failures of the education system and that SBMCs provide an opportunity for sharing that burden; and secondly that there is a need to 'sensitise' people, usually defined as parents or community members. This seems to be based on an assumption that the problem is one of ignorance of key messages, rather than a dysfunctional system. A similar sentiment was echoed by a Kaduna state official that the purpose of the SBMC is to sensitise the community on the importance of education of their children and to oversee the activities of the school. Similarly in Kano, one official said that one of the roles of SBMC was to ensure that 'for every parent to understand that he or she has responsibility to the school' and to ensure that schools are doing what they are supposed to do.

168. Interviews with state officials in Kwara reveal that SBMCs are expected to see to the smooth running of schools, assume ownership of the school and provide a platform from which the school can generate funds, and a mechanism for effective management of the school.

169. From state level interviews then there is a clear sense that SBMCs are there to educate parents and to check up on schools. This differs from the very optimistic and somewhat idealistic view at federal levels, where SBMCs are seen as the solution to a range of problems. Interestingly, in none of the cases are SBMCs described in relation to the achievement of educational goals, or any expression of SBMC as fulfilling a democratic function, enabling people to demand their rights.

#### *LGEA level*

170. At LGEA level, interviews were conducted in 9 LGAs in the five states (2 in each state, with the exception of Lagos, where one large LGA was selected), with a total of 15 officials (13 male and 2 female). Officials were in most cases either Education Secretaries or SBMC/PTA co-ordinators or social mobilisation officers.

171. The most striking aspect of LGEA interviews was the fact that some LGEA officials (e.g. in Lagos and Kaduna) believe that the SBMC is accountable to the LGEA, despite the fact that the LGEA does not provide any resources, nor have any control over SBMC activities as defined by the Guidance Notes. In Kaduna, one Education Secretary said that SBMC

membership is decided at the LGEA level by the Planning, Research and Statistics department. This reflects the top-down nature of SBMCs and the absence of a concept of SBMC as a democratic, representative institution.

172. In Kano, although SBMC leadership has been established at the LGEA level, no meetings have been held because understanding of SBMC is still poor. In Lagos, one official said policies were formulated at Federal and State levels without consultation at the grassroots.
173. In Miga LGEA, Jigawa, there were clear variations in terms of how the SBMC is perceived and therefore much variation in how those ideas are applied.

### *School and community level*

174. An overwhelming finding was that in most cases, although a few key players at school and community level (especially Headteacher and SBMC chair) knew about the SBMC, very few others, including teachers, parents and children, had even heard of it. In addition, very few members had seen a copy of the SBMC guidance notes. For example at Kwara 2, even the Headteacher said that he had never seen the guidance notes. The SBMC chair, however, said that he had seen the guidance notes and that the main role of SBMC was in assisting in improving teaching and learning. However, he could only name three other SBMC members. This suggests that the school – and the SBMC – continues to be run by a ‘cabal’. Neither mothers nor fathers knew anything about the SBMC or its activities.
175. Even in the case of the SESP schools, there is little or no knowledge of SBMC activities among parents and the wider community. For example at Kwara 1, the SBMC was formed as part of the programme of SESP support. The SBMC chair said that the main role of the SBMC is in making the school a conducive place for learning, to promote enrolment and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the school. At Kaduna 2, meanwhile, while there seemed to be some knowledge of the SBMC within the wider community (although women did not have any knowledge), knowledge even amongst members of the amount of grant, school development plan and membership was very limited, suggesting again that the decisions are made by a few members only.
176. At Kaduna 1 school, the SBMC is established on paper only, and even the members have no idea about the purpose or role of SBMC. At Lagos 1, members of the wider community had not heard of the SBMC, while teachers at the school had heard about it but knew nothing about it. None of the members interviewed had seen the SBMC guidelines; the chair of Cluster 5 SBMC said that he had seen something similar at UNICEF training, but not exactly the same. In addition, he did not see the SBMC as a grassroots organisation, saying that ‘people are not well educated’. At Lagos 2, members of cluster 2 SBMC showed no knowledge of the policy guidelines, and mothers nor teachers had never heard of the SBMC. The Headteacher thought that the role of SBMC was ‘doing the same as the PTA and more’.

177. At Jigawa 1, there is no SBMC since this is a community-based Islamiyya school. Rather the SDA has the role of management and development of school and community. In this case however, members of SDA and members of the wider community clearly saw SDA as being accountable to the community.
178. At Kano 2, the SBMC chair had not seen the guidelines but saw the role of SBMC as overseeing school management and mobilising support. The village head had only recently heard about the SBMC from the Headteacher, when the Headteacher told him about the circular and asked his advice. At Kano 1, although the Headteacher and other teachers know about the SBMC, mothers, fathers and children had not heard of it.
179. In summary, varied views of the SBMC and its role emerged at different levels, from a rather optimistic view of SBMCs as a solution to problems at state level, to a suggestion that SBMCs might contribute to checking or controlling schools and communities at LGEA level, while at school and community level the case studies reveal that the majority of people have never heard of SBMCs and have no knowledge of their purpose.

### SBMC policy enactment

#### *How has SBMC policy been enacted?*

180. Processes of SBMC formation vary considerably from state to state, and from school to school. In most cases, SBMCs were formed in response to a letter from the LGEA. At Lagos 1, the Headteacher got a letter informing her about the Cluster SBMC which was to cover the school. At Lagos 2 however, the Headteacher did not receive a letter, but heard about it on the radio, and then the Chairman phoned her to inform her that the SBMC had been started, but she has no idea how the chairman was elected. In other cases however it seems that the LGEA felt that it has been cut out of the process, for example in Kano, the non-involvement of ES may have delayed/slowed implementation of SBMCs.
181. In terms of selection of members, there was a lot of variation between nomination and election, although the extent to which election processes were open and participatory is questionable. See for example box 4 below which describes the process at Kaduna 2 (a SESP school). At Kwara 1, the other SESP school in this sample, the selection process was described as participatory. The Headteacher was informed by the LGEA by letter, she called the PTA which passed on the information to its members. A general meeting of 'the community' was called they came up with a list of members. But this still raises questions about who was invited to the meeting, and who made the decisions. At Jigawa 2, the SBMC was established under GEP in 2005. 'Community' members, although it is not clear who this group comprised, held a meeting with LGEA officials and identified and selected members.

182. SBMC Membership often varied from the criteria laid down in the guidelines. For example at Kano 2, there were 20 SBMC members. At Kaduna 2 the research team observed that the people representing the SBMC kept changing, and that it is unclear to members and the wider community who the members should be. At Kwara 2 the SBMC chair said that there was a ballot to elect members, but he could only name 3 other members.

*At Kaduna 2, the Headteacher was informed by circular from the LGEA of the need to form an SBMC. The HT called PTA leaders who were called for a meeting of the community for briefing. Members of SBMC were therefore elected and others selected during the community meeting in March 2007. The process of formation was, in theory, confirmed by community members during the feedback meeting. However, the majority of men who participated in discussions were ignorant about the formation process of SBMC in the community, thus calling into question the inclusivity of the feedback meeting. In addition, discussions with parents and children revealed that women and pupils were not present at SBMC meetings. The minutes show that one or 2 women attend meetings, yet women members themselves could not remember attending meeting once.*

#### **Box 4: SBMC formation process at Kaduna 2**

183. Although many of the case study schools claim to have established SBMCs, contradictory responses by different stakeholders suggest that in many cases, the SBMC is an organisation on paper only. For example at Kano 1, although the Headteacher claimed that the first SBMC meeting took place in June 2008, the chairman said that he only got to know about the SBMC very recently. At Kaduna 1, the SBMC was established in 2005, in that members were selected by the Headteacher and their names sent to LGEA without being informed. The first meeting was not held until 27<sup>th</sup> March 09 – just before the research team visit and probably because of it.

#### **Alternative organisations**

184. The introduction of SBMCs has failed to take adequate account of PTAs, other Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) and their roles in terms of supporting the schools. It is clear from these case studies that SBMCs are not established in an organisational vacuum, and that in many cases there are ‘home-grown’ organisations that have been successfully carrying out the functions of SBMCs for many years.
185. For example, Kano 1 has a home grown institution, the ‘school management committee’, which is responsible for managing the budget of the school. At Jigawa 1, the SDA has been in place for 30 years, organising community development activities, including establishing and running the school. It is a well organised institution with a clear structure and constitution. The SDA constructed the school, checks enrolment and attendance, pays allowances for four teachers, and pays for transport to SUBEB.

186. In Lagos, Community Development Associations (CDAs) are highly influential. Each community (including the Lagos 2 community) has a CDA, which meets monthly. Researchers were told CDAs are only for the people who are 'landlords' in the LGA, or 'sons of the soil', people whose families have settled in the area for generations., so their membership is somewhat exclusive.

187. This raises a number of issues. One is that Jigawa 1, currently a community-based Islamiyya school, is keen to formalise its status by registering with the LGEA, which means that the establishment of SBMC will be required. Is there flexibility in the SBMC structure to allow for other organisations to carry out some or all of their functions? Another issue is that membership of SDA is all male, reflecting the cultural norms of the area. GEP has shown that those cultural norms can be challenged and that women's participation in school management and community based organisations can be supported and encouraged.

### **SBMCs and PTAs**

188. As discussed earlier the PTAs are viewed ambivalently as institutions which, on the one hand, have been fundamental to the survival of resource-starved schools for whom the PTA levy may have been for many years the only source of income (see box 5 below for details of the PTA levy in Kwara state). On the other hand the PTA levy system was ripe for abuse and serves in effect as a tax on the parents of school-going children.

*In Kwara, a PTA levy is charged three times a year: N 210 in the first term, and N180 in the following two terms.*

*The N210 levy is broken down as follows:*

<i>School</i>	<i>N160</i>
<i>LGEA</i>	<i>N 10</i>
<i>Central PTA</i>	<i>N 10</i>
<i>SUBEB</i>	<i>N 15</i>
<i>State PTA</i>	<i>N10</i>
<i>COPSHON</i>	<i>N5</i>

*Although the amounts are small, the amounts accruing at state level from tens of thousands of students will be very large indeed and may explain why there is a lack of enthusiasm in some quarters for SBMCs.*

### **Box 5: PTA levy Kwara**

189. The abolition of the PTA levy in Lagos, Jigawa and Kaduna states has had a clear effect on the implementation of SBMC policy. In some cases, it has led to tensions between PTA and SBMC. In Jigawa, the state PTA chair said that 'where the PTA is strong there is slight



misunderstanding between PTA and SBMC, they are considered as intruders to the school'. At Jigawa 2, the SBMC has 'overshadowed' the PTA. At Kaduna 2, in the recent past, PTA was described as the 'all in all'. With the abolition of levies, PTA has been incapacitated. However it is also claimed that they work closely together.

190. In Lagos, the abolition of PTA levy has resulted in a climate of fear. One community leader said 'members of the local community do contribute to whatever the school needs when the PTA was still in existence, but now even the Headteacher is so afraid to collect money from anybody'. At Lagos 2, the Headteacher said there is no PTA any more, and that some former PTA members are now on the SBMC.
191. In Kano, however, where the PTA levy is retained, there appears to be an interesting merging of PTA and SBMC. At Kano 2 it is claimed that there is no conflict between PTA and SBMC. PTA is understood as concerned with relationships between parents and teachers and they oversee teachers. The SBMC however is understood as 'all encompassing', concerned with the overall management of the school. At Kano 1, the SBMC chair is also PTA chair. The school budget (i.e. PTA levy) is managed by PTA and they want this to continue. This begs the question of what the SBMC is for.

### *Resources*

192. According to Wilson and Wilde (2003), communities need to be resourced to participate, and all parties require appropriate understanding, skills and knowledge as well as organisational capacity. Turning first to resources, it is clear that with the exception of SESP schools where grants have been made available, the development of SBMCs into functional organisations is severely constrained by a lack of resources. Kano 2 and Kano 1 are both experiencing extreme overcrowding and lack of furniture, and there is no clear route available for SBMC to address this. At Lagos 1, the cluster 5 SBMC has been meeting regularly but as the chair says, 'we are financially handicapped'. At every meeting, members contribute from their own pockets. Similarly Lagos 2's (Cluster 2) SBMC chair says that 'our greatest challenge is money'. Lagos 1's Headteacher says that the monthly amount from local government is insufficient to run the school.
193. While this situation clearly requires attention, it is interesting to note that among the case studies there were schools that had been relatively successful in terms of raising funds from the local community. Jigawa 2, for example, has arranged for various CBOs to contribute money and materials, while individuals donate money and small goods, co-ordinated by SBMC. Although this school received GEP support it did not receive grant funding, although UNICEF provided instructional materials, games, recreational materials, toilets, school furniture, building materials plus teacher training. It may be, therefore, that the support of an outside agency, and a sense of shared purpose, inspires local community support. At Kwara 2, the SBMC had successfully collected resources from other community based organisations including the Kwara 2 Busenonu Association and National Association

of Kwara 2 Students. In this case the school is well connected, with influential former students.

194. At Jigawa 1, this community school has been entirely community funded through SDA member donations. Some wealthier individuals (patrons) some of whom live outside the village, provide substantial support, and their contributions are key to the school. One had given 100,000. According to one representative, everyone gives according to their means, even if only a little. In this case there seems to be a strong sense of community pride and cohesion, with people pulling together to run their local school according to a set of strong shared values: something that cannot be inspired through an organisation imposed from the outside.
195. To what extent is there evidence that all parties (communities, and government) have the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding in order to make SBMCs work? The type of training to which SBMC, LGEA and state government representatives had access was very variable. For example at Kaduna 1, members had had no training or support, and consequently had no knowledge of SBMC purpose, or their roles and responsibilities. No training or support. At Kaduna 2, SBMC members have had training through SESP in school budgeting, financial guidelines on grant usage, SDP, record keeping, SBMC roles and responsibilities. However they still showed 'poor understanding' of their roles and responsibilities except chair and Headteacher. In Lagos, there was some confusion - cluster 5 SBMC chair had attended a one week programme on school based management organised by UNICEF and UNDP. In addition, he had attended a seminar on whole school development with conflicting messages.
196. The question that this raises is whether the government has the intention to ensure sustained funding for schools, or whether the introduction of SBMCs is designed to place the burden of fundraising onto communities, thus absolving the government of this responsibility.

### *Inclusivity*

197. According to Wilde and Wilde, successful community participation requires processes and institutions that reflect the diversity of the local community and interests. We looked in particular at the role of women, children and poorer members of the community on the SBMC.
198. Although the SBMC guidance notes (FME with UNICEF 2005) require 'two representatives of students' body (headboy and headgirl)' as members, in nearly all cases student membership was ignored, or where student members were included, they were not invited to meetings, or if they were invited to meetings, they were silent. For example at Jigawa 2, the presence of students is not seen as important or necessary. At Lagos 2, SBMC members include Headteachers, trade women, nurse, tailor, students, community man, market leaders, technician and Oba. According to the minutes, one JSS student attended once. It is

clear that student membership of the SBMC is met with strong resistance and not seen as culturally appropriate.

199. The picture in terms of female membership is mixed. The guidance notes clearly require a mixture of male and female members, for example 'two representatives of the community development body (1 male and 1 female)' and 'one representative of women's organizations' so that in theory there should be at least 8 female members out of a total of 17 members. In Lagos, although there were many women members of the SBMC, key officers were men. At Jigawa 2, there was active female involvement through women's group leader. At Kaduna 2, female members of the SBMC were described as very active, in terms of mobilising parents to send their children to school, making financial contributions, monitoring children's attendance and attending meetings. At Kwara 2, while there are women representatives on the SBMC, decision making seems to be controlled by a few (male) members. Mothers claimed to be completely ignorant of the SBMC. At Kwara 1, however, women on the committee were said to play an active role at meetings; in addition the Headteacher is a woman.
200. It was difficult to gauge the extent to which SBMC membership tended to be drawn from better off/elite members of the community, or whether it was possible for poorer individuals to be members. It was made explicit in Lagos that it would be very unlikely for a poor person to be a member of a cluster SBMC because of the expense of travelling to meetings and because of the requirement to contribute to SBMC funds. In other cases the process of selection of members suggests that only influential or well-connected individuals are likely to be selected as members. This suggests that SBMCs as currently formed are more likely to be elite, rather than representative organisations.
201. In summary, it is clear that SBMCs are not being constituted according to the Guidance Notes, and that including student and women members in the guidance notes does not guarantee that they will be included in membership. In addition there is some evidence to suggest that there is a tendency for SBMC membership to be confined to more elite groups.

### *Communication*

202. Wilson and Wilde suggest that effective two-way communication is important, as are clear and accessible guidelines. What is very clear in all cases, including GEP and SESP schools, is that very little information about SBMC or school management more broadly filters down to the wider community. For example at Kaduna 2 (SESP), parents and members of the wider community don't know about the amount of grant, SDP or even who the SBMC members are. Although it is claimed by members that SBMC decisions are communicated through various media (town crier, letters, messages, meetings), mothers said that the SBMC does not communicate its messages to them. At Kaduna 1, even SBMC members did not know that they were members. At Kwara 2, there was no communication about SBMC

to people, and even the HT has limited knowledge about SBMC. At Kwara 1, fathers haven't heard of SBMC.

203. This suggests firstly that information and knowledge about the SBMC is tightly controlled by a few people; and secondly that the SBMC is not conceptualised as a body representing members of the wider community, who have a right to know about decisions that are made that affect the school.

### *Influence*

204. According to Wilson and Wilder, key influence benchmarks are that the community is viewed as an equal partner from the start, that they have representation on all decision-making bodies, that all community members have the opportunity to participate and that communities have access to, and control over resources.
205. Evidence from the case studies suggests that SBMC power is highly circumscribed. For example at Kano 2, the influence of village head remains key – and the fact that he was only recently informed about the SBMC, suggests that it is not considered very important. The only example we came across of an SBMC wielding real power for change was in the case of Jigawa 2, where the SBMC had reported teacher absenteeism which led to a teacher being dismissed. At Lagos 1, the Headteacher retains control over school budget.
206. The evidence suggests however that in most cases, decision making in SBMCs is not participatory, with the 'usual suspects' (Headteacher, SBMC chair) taking decisions. For example at Jigawa 2, 'SBMC chair and head initiate decision making process'. At Lagos 1, researchers observed that the SBMC meeting was tightly controlled by chair. At Lagos 2, there was no discussion at SBMC meetings – only information and instruction from chair – who may in fact be speaking on behalf of the Oba. SBMC clearly take instructions from, and report to the LGEA. At Kaduna 2, the SBMC is being run by 3 key officers – chair, secretary and PRO. At Kwara 2, it seems to be local elites and teachers with strong links to the LGEA who take decisions, rather than the Headteacher who appears to have little power.
207. In summary, then, there is little evidence of participatory decision-making on the SBMCs in this sample; rather, decision-making tends to be controlled by the Chair and the Headteacher in most cases.

### *SBMC policy impact*

208. As we have seen in nearly all cases the implementation of SBMC policy is too recent, and too incomplete to draw conclusions on the impact of SBMCs. In Kano, state level interviews suggest that the only real evidence of change is in SESP and state pilot schools where SBMCs have, for example, at Wudil provided water sources, temporary shelter and at Kunchi renovated a block of classroom and provided teaching materials.

209. It is clear that in those schools where SBMCs are unformed or 'paper organisations' (Jigawa 1, Kano 1, Kano 2, Kwara 2, Kaduna 1) there is little impact, although at Kwara 2 the SBMC is said to be responsible for building a classroom block, with the assistance of the LGA. At Kwara 2, however, the SBMC is not really functioning as an SBMC, since very few people beyond the SBMC chair knew about any of its activities.
210. In others, the SBMC has started to meet, but has not really done anything yet, for example at Lagos 1 and Lagos 2. Examination of the minutes of Cluster 5 meetings show that a great deal of time and effort has been spent agonising over where to raise money and how to prove the legitimacy of the SBMC, through headed notepaper and identity cards for example.
211. The only SBMCs that can be said to be functional are those with external support from SESP or GEP (Jigawa 2, Kwara 1 and Kaduna 2). At Kwara 1, one round of School Development Planning has been completed, which included the renovation of classrooms, purchase of teacher guides, and the construction of toilets. According to the SBMC chair, the work of the SBMC has resulted in improved teaching and learning, impressive attitude of children to school activities and teachers more dedicated to their duties. At Kaduna 2, the SBMC has supplied exercise books and writing materials which has according to one informant, resulted in an increase in the number of children attending school from 340 to 360 pupils, while attendance rates have improved.
212. Despite the fact that it may be too early to evaluate the impact of SBMCs, we can still draw some lessons around key themes from these case studies. In relation to gender, it is clear that women's participation in SBMCs is highly constrained, in many cases, and that a requirement for female membership in the guidelines does not ensure women's inclusion on the one hand; and on the other, that women's inclusion in membership does not ensure their attendance at meetings; and that their attendance at meetings does not ensure that they will be able to influence the proceedings. There is also a tacit assumption that women SBMC members will act in the interests of women but there is no evidence to back this up. In addition there are some indirect issues of concern around gender. The Lagos case studies demonstrate that through a combination of factors including the introduction of SBMCs, the abolition of PTA levies, the clustering of SBMCs so that meeting attendance involves travel, there is a tendency for SBMC membership to be difficult for certain groups of women and men, especially younger women.
213. In terms of the poverty implications of SBMCs, it is too early in the course of SBMC implementation to say whether or not SBMCs are having any impact. Certainly there was no evidence from these case study schools of SBMCs taking specific pro-poor actions (e.g. providing learning materials or uniforms for poorer children). What was clear, however, was that in most cases government schools are by definition attended by children of poorer parents in that parents who earn a salary will endeavour to send their children to private schools: in which case SBMCs represent a key opportunity for ensuring that poorer children

are able to attend and achieve in schools. Another question related to poverty is the extent to which SBMCs demonstrate representation from poorer members of the community. Evidence from the case studies suggest that in most cases, SBMC members tend to be drawn from more influential and elite sections of the community.

214. The question of what are the school governance implications of SBMCs is about the extent to which the introduction of SBMCs has led to a more effective, efficient mode of school management that has resulted in better learning opportunities for pupils.
215. It is crucial to note that a spot check of students, usually in class 4, showed that in only three of the schools was there an indication that students could read and write well. For example at Jigawa 2, reading and writing ability of students was not good, despite the positive impact of SBMC. However at Kwara 1, Lagos 1 and Lagos 2, pupils could read and write well and also speak English fluently. While this was not in any way a rigorous test of learning achievement it is useful to bear in mind that the ultimate focus of SBMCs should be in terms of contributing to better schools, where children learn.
216. In the three schools where, it seemed, learning was happening, there is little evidence to suggest that this was linked to SBMC activities; rather we would suggest that it was to do more with a culture of learning within those urbanised communities in which those schools are located. There is little evidence among the case study schools that SBMCs are particularly concerned with questions of teaching and learning.
217. In summary, while it is clearly too early at this stage to see any real impact from the implementation of SBMCs, it is not too early to note key tendencies in relation to inequities and power relationships which clearly require action as soon as possible if they are to be addressed.

## Conclusions

### SBMC policy and implementation

218. **There is lack of clarity about what kind of institution the SBMC should be, and the reason for its existence.** SBMCs were clearly introduced for a range of different reasons, including dissatisfaction with PTAs, influence of GEP and UNICEF, and a search for solutions to the crises of funding and quality affecting basic education in Nigeria. This has resulted in an absence of a clearly articulated vision for what kind of institution the SBMC should be. Is it an instrument of government, as some believe? Or is it a democratic institution that should represent the interests of parents and other community members? At school and community there is often mystification about why SBMCs have been introduced, and without an understanding of the purpose, there can be no real commitment. This explains

why in so many cases the SBMC is an institution on paper only, or dominated by a few elite individuals.

**219. There is confusion over roles, relationships, communication and management of SBMCs.**

In no cases did we find copies of the SBMC guidance notes at school level, therefore it should come as no surprise that membership of SBMCs diverges from the guidelines in many cases, particularly with exclusion of women members and student members. In addition the guidelines themselves are complex and rather unclear. The most active SBMCs were found in schools with SESP or GEP interventions however there was still a distinct lack of knowledge about the SBMC among parents and members of the wider community in those cases.

**220. In all cases there are rich networks of organisations, networks and individuals supporting the school.**

There is sometimes an assumption that SBMCs are being introduced into communities where there is no capacity and nothing is happening. In fact in most locations there is an incredibly rich array of organisations, focused around different ethnic or religious groups, occupations or interests, or the traditional rulers. In many cases these organisations have education committees, and a long track record of working to support education.

**221. Standards of teaching and learning are so inadequate in most cases that SBMC alone cannot provide solutions.**

Although it was beyond the remit of this research to assess learning achievement, an awareness of the need to raise very poor learning standards must remain central to thinking about SBMCs. A check conducted by researchers in class 4 classrooms revealed that in only 3 of the case study schools, were students able to read what was written on the board. It is interesting that those case study schools were all located in high literacy, urban areas. It is unrealistic to expect SBMC members to have the knowledge and skills to tackle these issues without significant support and resources. SBMCs are not a cheap solution to a complex set of problems.

**222. There is willingness at community level to work for change, but so often parents and members of the wider community are excluded by the groups of elites that control schools and SBMCs.**

It was very striking the most of the research teams came back with stories of action being taken during the course of the research. For example, after discussion with researchers, one SBMC was disbanded and re-constituted. At another school, when women in the community learned about the SBMC, they said they wanted to participate in education development and were keen to form a CBO and attend adult education classes. They made a collective request at the feedback meeting and the chief granted their request and are now in the process of registering their CBO. This kind of action cannot be legislated for or simply imposed from outside – it requires grassroots-level work.

## SBMCs as effective institutions

### Resources

223. **SBMCs lack financial resources, and without resources they will not be effectively established.** It is an assumption made explicit by some in government that SBMCs should be able to raise sufficient resources at community level, thus letting state and federal government 'off the hook'. While in some cases there was evidence of impressive local fundraising, this was usually inspired by and supported by contributions from government or donor organisations. The assumption that communities can raise money to run schools, when schools are getting little or nothing from government is fundamentally flawed and fundamentally inequitable, in that those communities in the poorest areas with the least resources will end up with the poorest schools.
224. **SBMC membership requires a complex set of skills.** There is little evidence that the training which SBMC members from the case studies have received has been understood and implemented. In addition there is evidence to suggest that FME training is not being stepped down – rather hijacked by higher level government employees, and that the training is overly technical and opaque. Training, even good training, on its own, is not the solution.

### Inclusivity

225. **Women's participation in SBMCs is highly constrained.** The cases show that although the scale of the problem varies enormously according to different socio-cultural contexts, that although women's membership is written into the guidelines, this is completely ignored in some cases in northern Nigeria especially. Even in Lagos, it is rare for younger women to be members or for women to be office-holders.
226. **Children's participation is not accepted.** In most cases, the requirement for student membership is ignored. In some cases where children were members, they were not invited to meetings. In the few cases where children went to SBMC meetings, they were silent. This shows that simply writing the requirement into the guidelines will not make it happen. In this context where children are not expected to attend meetings or speak in front of their elders, it would require significant preparation and support to enable the meaningful participation of children.

### Communication

227. **In many cases, parents, children and even teachers know nothing about SBMCs.** We found this to be the case even in the GEP and SESP schools in the sample, where much weight is placed on the inclusivity and transparency of the School Development Planning process. This relates to the earlier question posed about whether SBMCs are seen as, and promoted as, organisations that are supposed to represent the wider community. At the moment, the link between parents and wider community members and the SBMC is extremely weak if not altogether absent.



## *Influence*

228. **Decision-making on SBMCs tends not to be participatory and power is still held in the hands of a few.** Despite claims to the contrary it is clear that SBMCs as they are currently being implemented are not transparent or participatory institutions; rather the tendency observed in PTAs where decision-making is concentrated in the hands of a few key players (Headteacher, and chair with LGEA influence) is observable in these new institutions too. While this effect might be tempered in SESP and GEP schools, there is still no clear channel for ‘ordinary’ people to influence SBMC decision-making, nor any kind of expectation that such an institution might be preferable or possible.

## *Reflections on the literature*

229. The literature throws up a number of challenging questions for the research findings. Firstly, do SBMCs offer a ‘patchwork solution to systemic problems’ as Burde (2004) suggests? At this stage of the process while it remains unclear what exactly the key objectives of SBMCs are- and while it is too early to say what their impact is – they are not providing solutions to anything. However it seems timely to develop a clear set of objectives and mechanisms for achieving them before progressing any further.
230. Secondly, are we seeing the ‘entrenchment and reinforcement of gender relations’ (Rose 2003) and other inequalities, through the mass implementation of community participation strategies? The research shows that there is a clear risk of inequalities both between and within schools and communities being exacerbated under the current system, where inclusivity and participation are extremely low on the agenda. The introduction of SBMCs offers an opportunity to open up the closed box of school based management to a much wider audience. This is particularly true in e.g. northern Nigeria where women have not traditionally had a public role or a voice. GEP has shown that this position is not necessarily an entrenched one and that there are spaces for advancement.
231. Thirdly, are we seeing a ‘conflation of identity with identification’ (Cornwall and Goetz 2005: 797)? That is, even if there are women on the SBMC, we must not assume that they will necessarily act in women’s interests. SBMC strategy towards greater inclusion of women at the moment is based on quotas of women on the committee and an admirable (although probably insufficient) targeting of training programmes towards states with greater gender gaps. This is a complex and challenging problem that requires multiple strategies at all levels – and serious understanding of, and commitment to, gender equality from government at all levels.
232. Finally, Ball (1998) suggests that it is important to consider the concept of recontextualisation, that is, the ways in which policies change when they interact with new contexts. The implementation of SBMCs has so far been based on an understanding of policy implementation as simple and linear, which assumes that if policy decisions are communicated, they will be implemented. This research contradicts such a model, and

suggests that support for SBMC policy will not materialise, particularly when parents and other community members have no expectation of being heard. In fact according to Ball (Ball 2008) *policies privilege certain visions and interests*. Communities require investment and support if SBMC policy is to be implemented equitably, in a way that will support the development of better educational opportunities for all children.

### Implications for strategy

233. **Review SBMC policy and guidelines.** A clear articulation of the purpose of the SBMC is required. This vision must move beyond a narrowly defined, technicist view of SBMC as servant of the education system to embrace a view that sees SBMCs as part of democratic processes at the grassroots, mobilising around demands for rights to education. ‘Sensitisation’ is not what is required here – rather supporting people in knowing their rights, organising and claiming their rights. Another issue is that there needs to be flexibility in SBMC implementation to allow for contextual differences across Nigeria and even from community to community. This will make it more likely that SBMC can complement existing institutions, rather than threaten or duplicate them. In addition the implementation of SBMCs must be properly resourced, taking into account the sustained support and resources that will be needed to make them work.
234. **Inclusivity of SBMCs requires work and focus.** SBMCs could and should challenge the tendency for schools and SBMCs to be run by a ‘cabal’ of elite individuals. This would provide SBMCs with a new and unique remit that would clearly differentiate them from the old days of politically linked PTAs. The driving force for this would however need to come from the mobilisation of the wider community. SBMC members must represent particular constituencies in the community and must be answerable to them. Again, this would require sustained support and resources.
235. **Clarify school funding and SBMC’s role in relation to it.** Although there were still issues with quality of learning and representation/communication on the SESP schools in the sample, it is clear that providing grants to schools through SBMCs gives them a clear remit. My understanding is that this approach is to be extended and the research findings would support this as an appropriate strategy – as long as there are clear strategies in place to avoid elite capture of these resources.
236. **Work at grassroots level to develop people’s knowledge about their rights in relation to education, and their skills to enable them to work through the SBMC to achieve them.** This point links to the earlier point on inclusivity. The most striking aspect of this research is that even where the SBMC is functional and has received a good deal of support through GEP or SESP, most people in the wider community remain ignorant of it and have not had the opportunity to feed into plans for school development which will affect them and their families. This is understood as apathy or acceptance of the status quo. However this

research suggests that people are willing and ready to take action, to demand their rights in relation to education, if they are provided with opportunities for dialogue, learning and support. This pressure from the community level is almost entirely missing at the moment from many schools in Nigeria. The possibility of linking up with SAVI to develop this work should be pursued.

**237. Continue to work with, and learn from, the case study schools.** Change is already happening as a result of this intensive research process in the case study schools. We have a great deal of information about those schools and expectations have been raised. I would strongly support the inclusion of these schools in the pilot sample of schools for ESSPIN support.

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## **Annex 1 - Research teams**

### **Jigawa**

Dr Michael Musa (Lead State Researcher)

Abubakar M. Nashabaru

Habiba Awwalu

### **Kano**

Mohammed Kudu Bawa (Lead State Researcher)

Halima Ahmed

Baturiya Wada

### **Lagos**

Jane Hughes (Lead State Researcher)

Tina Obanubi – Adeoba

Rachael Olafajo

### **Kaduna**

Grace Akuto (Lead State Researcher)

Shehu R. Ibrahim

Sambo G. Yakubu

### **Kwara**

Felicia Onibon (Lead State Researcher)

Dr Mrs Funke Opadokun

Funke Bolaji

## Annex 2: Terms of Reference

**Title of Assignment:** School Based Management Committee Research

**Location of Assignment:** Abuja, Lagos, Kano, Kwara, Kaduna and Jigawa States

**Duration:** 75 days

### Background

Despite the possession of considerable oil wealth, a rising population, inefficient government investment in front line public services and years of neglect have left the Nigerian education system in a poor state. Education indicators are amongst the lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly for girls. Currently it is estimated that there are 7-9 million school aged children not attending school, a disproportionate percentage of whom are girls.

Since legislation was passed in 2004 establishing nine-year compulsory Universal Basic Education, the main sectoral focus of Federal and State governments has been an expansion of basic education to meet the Millennium Development Goals. There has been a significant increase in investment in the basic education sector through State governments and through Federal sources such as the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC). Access remains a problem, as do the low quality of education outcomes and the stark inequities in the system.

The Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN) is a six year DFID programme of education development assistance and is a part of a suite of programmes aimed at improvements in governance and the delivery of basic services. ESSPIN's aim is to have a sustainable impact upon the way in which government in Nigeria delivers education services and is directed at enabling institutions to bring about systemic change in the education system, leveraging Nigerian resources in support of State and Federal Education Sector Plans and building capacity for sustainability. It is currently operating in five States (Kano, Kaduna, Kwara, Jigawa and Lagos) and at the Federal level. ESSPIN builds upon previous technical assistance projects in education, in particular the Capacity for Universal Basic Education Project (CUBE). ESSPIN will run in parallel with World Bank credit-funded projects in four of the States (the State Education Sector Project (SESP) in Kano, Kaduna and Kwara and SESP II in Lagos).

### Objectives of the assignment

The main objectives of this consultancy are: (1) to provide a comprehensive analysis of the status of school-based management committees in ESSPIN states so as to form a strong analytical foundation, and (2) to explore the way forward to further expand and strengthen SBMC for improving education service delivery and outcome.

### Specific task for the consultancy (See details attached as annex)

- To provide technical and professional lead in the design of School Based Management Committee research in collaboration with National consultants and state teams. This will include; developing criteria for selection of sample LGA/School communities, training of field researchers, develop field reporting format, piloting the draft instruments and conduct a review of the instruments in Kano state.



- Coordinate and supervise the field research in 5 states whilst at the same time carrying out document desk review
- Facilitate the collation and analysis of data and information using agreed format
- Produce preliminary and progress reports.
- Produce a draft and finalize reports of a consolidated 5 states to ESSPIN
- Debrief ESSPIN and other stakeholders on outcomes and recommendations
- Develop strategies for ESSPIN implementation phase

### **Outputs**

1. Summary reports of the each phase and of the consultancy will be shared and discussed by the international consultant, the Lead Specialist and Community Interaction prior to departure from Nigeria. The consultant will also ensure that the Lead Specialist and the Technical Team Leader are fully informed throughout the period of the consultancy.
2. A draft analytical report of the consultancy will be submitted within 14 days of the completion of this consultancy and summary presentation to ESSPIN and other key stakeholders for comments.
3. A final report on the process, analysis undertaken in each of the states, the strategies and action plans to take forward commitments on support to SBMCs in ESSPIN states are expected within two weeks of the completion of this assignment. The report should be submitted electronically by email, in Microsoft Word, font Arial – size; 12.

### **Institutional/administrative arrangements**

The consultant will report to the Lead Specialist Community Interaction and will undertake this assignment in 6 phases: an initial planning and pilot visit to work with National consultants and field researchers in Kano state. The consultant will coordinate and undertake actual field work in Kaduna, Jigawa, Kwara and Lagos States. Collaborate with the co researchers to analysis field data, debrief and submit a report.

### **Timing, venue and duration of the Consultancy**

This assignment is expected to be undertaken in phases, spread across coming months (February – June 2009). The process will begin with an initial ten (10) day's work in February during which plans for subsequent phases of the research will be agreed between the international consultant and ESSPIN.

#### ***Timing (tentative)***

2 weeks in February 2009

2 weeks in March 2009

2 week in April 2009

1 week in May/June 2009

1 week in June/July 2009

### **Venue**

ESSPIN states, (Kano, Kaduna, Kwara, Lagos and Jigawa), other relevant federal agencies and in particular UBEC, State MoEs, SUBEB, CSO, MDG office, LGEAs and school/communities.

### **Competencies**

#### **Qualifications/experience**

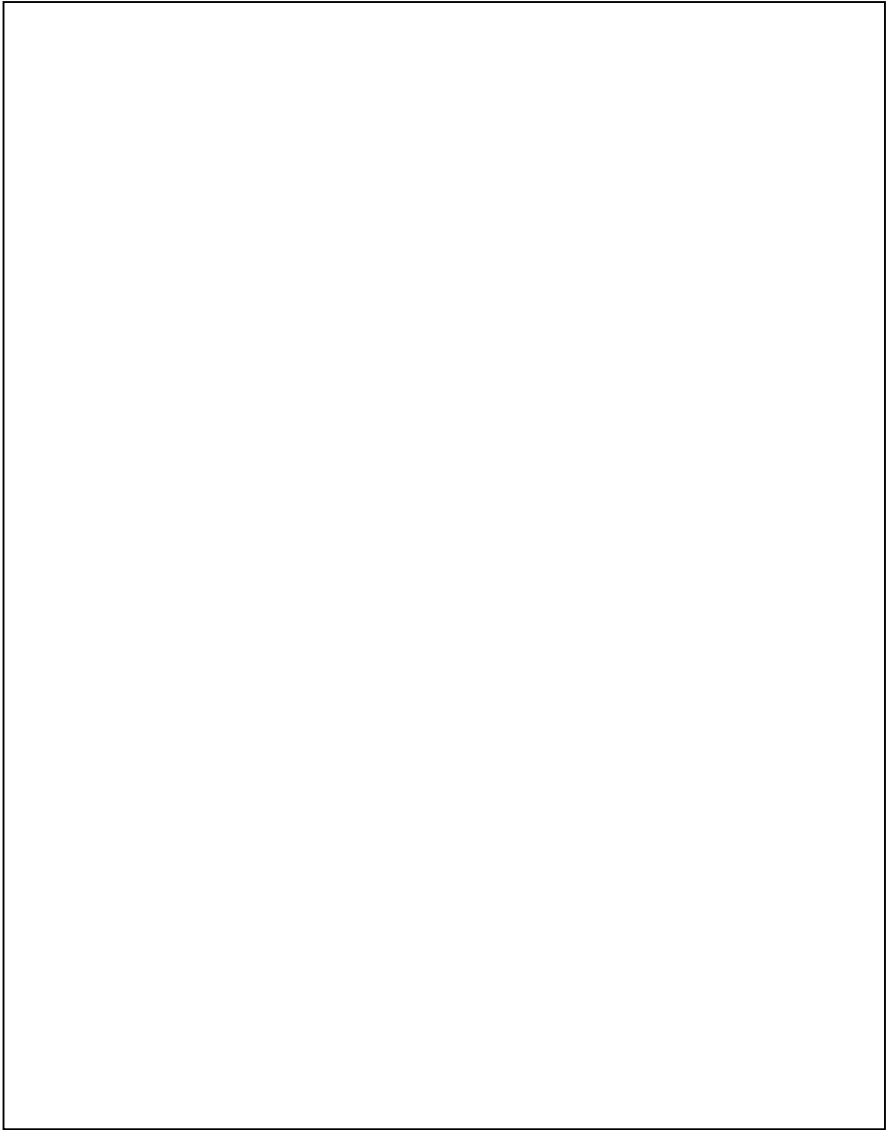
1. A postgraduate qualification in education, social development or development management and experience of strategies to community participation and social service delivery.
2. Extensive practical experience of community interactions and school development management structures in developing countries.
3. Experience of providing professional and technical inputs in development assistance programmes/projects.

#### **Knowledge**

1. Practical knowledge of educational development issues in Nigeria and other countries.
2. In-depth knowledge and experience of current international literature on school Based management and governance.
3. Knowledge of Nigerian Government and parastatal structures and systems.
4. Experience of School Based Management Committees initiatives in resource poor environments in developing countries (essential), preferably in Nigeria (desirable)

#### **Abilities**

1. Ability to communicate appropriately with clients and stakeholders and to elicit reliable information.
2. Ability to inspire colleagues and to act as member of a team.
3. Ability to design and facilitate/implement an investigation into the outcomes and effectiveness of school based management committees.
4. Ability to design and facilitate participative and interactive workshops



***Why is this research being done?***

The purpose of this research is to find out about how different communities support their schools, with a particular focus on School Based Management Committees.

***Who will be in the project?***

Meetings will be held with different people including:

- Federal, State and LGEA officials
- Members of Schools, including headteacher and teachers
- Members of the Community, including community leader, SBMC Chair, women's groups, parents of children at the school.

***What will happen during the research?***

At Community level, the research team will spend five days in each community, conducting interviews and activities with the people outlined above.

***What kind of questions will be asked?***

- What are the organizations in your community that support the school?
- Who are the members of these organizations?
- What resources do they have and from where?
- How are women represented?
- How is information about decisions taken communicated?
- Who makes those decisions?
- What changes have happened in the school and community as a result?

***What will happen to you if you take part?***

If you agree to participate, members of the research team will take notes while you are talking. We are not looking for right or wrong answers, only for what everyone really thinks.

***Could there be problems for you if you take part?***

I hope you will enjoy talking to us. Some people may feel uncomfortable or unhappy talking about some topics. If they want to stop talking, we will stop. If you have any problems with the project, please tell us.

***Will doing the research help you?***

The information that you give us may be included in a report, which will help ESSPIN to develop future plans. In addition, it will contribute to Helen's PhD research, which is focused on learning more about how community participation in schools can be improved. There is no possibility of payment for participants.

***Who will know that you have been in the research?***

We will keep all notes in a safe place, and will change all the names in our reports – and the name of the school/community – so that no one knows who said what.

***Do you have to take part?***

You decide if you want to take part and, even if you say 'yes', you can drop out at any time or say that you don't want to answer some questions.

## Annex 4: Consent Form



a programme funded by DFID



### Consent Form

#### School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs) in policy and practice in Nigeria

#### *A Research Project (March – April 2009)*

I have read the information leaflet about the research ☐ (please tick)

I agree to be interviewed ☐ (please tick)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**ESSPIN Abuja:** Abia House, Plot 979, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Off Ahmadu Bello Way, Cadastral Zone AO, Central Business District, Abuja.

**Contact Person:** Fatima Aboki, Lead Specialist – Community Interaction.