

Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN)

Assignment Report

**Boosting voice and accountability: CSOs' role in
developing School-Based Management Committees to
meet community demand in six states of Nigeria**

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ESSPIN 0--	Programme Reports and Documents
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Reports and Documents produced for individual ESSPIN focal states follow the same number sequence but are prefixed:

JG	Jigawa
KD	Kaduna
KN	Kano
KW	Kwara
LG	Lagos
EN	Enugu

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CGP	Civil Society-Government Partnership
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
ESSPIN	Education Sector Support Programme In Nigeria
LGEA	Local Government Education Authority
SBMCs	School Based Management Committees
SMOs	Social Mobilisation Officers
SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education Bureau
UBEC	Universal Basic Education Commission

Abstract

1. This report captures how civil society organisations (CSOs) in six states of Nigeria have helped school based management committees (SBMCs) to strengthen school access, quality and governance. Since 2010, 38 CSOs have supported state and local government to activate, train and monitor school based management committees. SBMCs improve children's education, bringing in resources and support from community, government and wider society. CSOs work with government teams through a civil society and government partnership (the CGP) which supports SBMC development using the ESSPIN/UBEC SBMC development model. CSOs help to bring the voices and education concerns of communities upwards for greater attention. After three years, all six state governments are investing in further civil society support to SBMCs, based on the positive results they have seen from CSOs' involvement with SBMC development. This report presents a summary of information over three years of reports on SBMC development produced by civil society organisations. The reports show that CSOs are playing an invaluable role in helping government deliver its mandate of quality education for all, by strengthening the capacity of SBMCs and local education staff to improve quality, accountability and participation in education.

Executive Summary

2. This report captures how civil society organisations (CSOs) in six states of Nigeria have helped school based management committees (SBMCs) to strengthen school access, quality and governance. Since 2010, 43 CSOs have supported state government to activate, train and monitor SBMCs through the ESSPIN programme (Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria). SBMCs exist to improve school governance, bringing in resources and support from community, government and wider society. SBMCs hold government, parents and other stakeholders accountable to ensure that all children go to school and get a quality education.
3. SBMCs have been activated using ESSPIN funds in 1565 primary schools in Enugu, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara and Lagos, reaching over 300,000 children. A further 9,291 SBMCs are being activated and trained in ESSPIN states in the replication phase of the SBMC programme, which is funded and managed entirely by state government and UBEC funds, with technical advice from ESSPIN. The process is being rolled out to all primary schools in Kano State and all primary schools in Lagos State.

4. CSOs work with government teams through a civil society and government partnership (called the CGP) which supports SBMC development, using the ESSPIN/UBEC SBMC development model. CSOs also help to bring the voices and education concerns of communities upwards for greater attention. After three years, all six state governments are investing in further civil society support to SBMCs, based on the strongly positive results they have seen from CSOs' involvement with SBMC development.
5. Reports indicate that the key benefits of CSO partnership with government in developing SBMCs include:
 - More skilled and enthusiastic SBMCs
 - Easier entry process for government into communities
 - Community concerns brought up to state government through CSO advocacy
 - More skilled and committed government staff supporting SBMCs.
6. This report presents a summary of information over three years of reports produced by CSOs supporting the SBMC training and development process alongside government social mobilisation officers (SMOs). The CSO reports capture qualitative and quantitative information on SBMC progress, documenting regular interactions with children and adults from school communities where SBMC training has been provided under the ESSPIN model. They show that CSOs are playing an invaluable role in helping government deliver its mandate of quality education for all, by strengthening the capacity of both SBMCs and local education staff to improve quality, accountability and participation in education.
7. The CSO reports used for this review run from 2011 to 2013. They capture demands being made by communities for improving education, and the efforts of communities, CSOs and local governments to strengthen the effectiveness and quality of schools. Issues reported have been mentioned in a number of CSO reports across states. This report also uses information from consultations with partner CSOs, and from participatory data collection in school communities. SBMC information from local government reports has more recently become available, and will be used to produce future learning on how the education system can become more responsive to people's needs and priorities.
8. Review of these reports reveals which education issues are most important to communities, and therefore how government can prioritise its efforts to build trust

and collaboration between education authorities and families. The reports also show how effective the model of using the CGP to support SBMCs has been in improving children's access to good quality, inclusive education. This offers evidence to justify continued investment in the CGP for SBMC development.

How did the situation for SBMCs change?

9. In 2009, in-depth research was conducted for ESSPIN into how SBMCs were working in Nigeria (Poulsen, 2009). The research found that SBMCs were not effective or participatory, and that SBMCs needed far greater training, resources and ongoing support to deliver on their potential to improve children's enrolment, retention and achievement. Communities had no means of expressing what they wanted to change in education.
10. It was felt that many CSOs had a lot to offer SBMC development. This was because CSOs generally had good experience in delivering training, and as independent bodies they were trusted by communities, meaning that they could generate enthusiasm and confidence about SBMCs. It was also recognised that SBMCs would need help to get high-level decision makers to listen to them, and to communicate their needs. CSOs could use information provided by SBMCs in advocacy and discussion with government, drawing attention to policy and financing difficulties at community level. CSO staff could also transfer their skills to SMOs, ensuring that government could continue to support SBMCs in the long term. The intention of the ESSPIN CGP model was that state funds would be used to contract CSOs to deliver support to SBMC development.
11. Informal reports suggested that initially, state government teams were unsure about the value of using CSOs to support SBMCs. CSOs had been viewed as critical of government rather than supportive, and using government funds to cover CSO costs was new. However, review of CSO reports shows that by 2011, SBMCs were working so well that state governments increasingly allocated funds to replicate the ESSPIN SBMC development model to more schools, including the key role played by CSOs in the CGP. Lagos and Kano are now rolling out the SBMC development model to all schools in the state.
12. SBMCs were frequently reported as increasing enrolment and retention, particularly of the most vulnerable children, and creating relationships and networks which brought in money and support for better, safer school environments. CSOs are increasingly seen by SUBEB and LGEA teams as supportive and helpful, providing ideas, skills and information for government as well as for SBMCs. Between 2012 and

2013, greater numbers of SBMCs became effective and confident, generating sustained improvements in children's access to school and in school governance.

13. Review of the CSO reports indicates changes in how different education challenges are developing, and where government support is needed to solve problems that cannot be overcome by individual communities. Much learning was captured in CSO reports about common barriers to getting more children into better quality school environments, showing where efforts to strengthen school systems are likely to need greater focus.
14. Areas of relative strength and weakness in SBMC operation, and in government's ability to respond to community demand, are also clear. Some areas for improvement in SBMC support were identified at an early stage, and the SBMC development model has been strengthened accordingly, with greater emphasis on women's and children's voices.
15. As demand for the ESSPIN SBMC development approach grows, it is becoming clear that more CSO teams will be needed to support SBMCs, and that SMOs need continued support to get the time and resources needed to support SBMCs.

The ESSPIN/UBEC SBMC development model

16. The purpose of involving CSOs in SBMC development is to promote sustainability and effectiveness in SBMCs' work, and in the work of local government education authorities (LGEAs). CSOs play a dual role in helping SBMCs increase access to school, improved teaching, and better community support for education: capacity building of local government and SBMCs, and advocacy to bring widespread education challenges to a higher level for attention and resolution.
17. The capacity building role aims to transfer CSOs' skills in working accountably and responsively with local communities into the LGEA. This is done by pairing a CSO member with a LGEA Social Mobilisation Officer (SMO) to deliver initial training to groups of SBMCs, followed by regular training and mentoring visits to each SBMC. The CSO trainer helps the SMO with facilitation, training, writing and analytical skills, as well as bringing ideas on how challenges raised by SBMCs can be addressed through evidence-based advocacy within the education system. After this, the SMO will continue regular visits and mentoring for each SBMC in their area (up to approx. 20) to provide long-term advice and motivation for SBMC members, and to collect regular data on communities' education needs, informing planning and resourcing.

CSO and government staff are treated as one team in supporting SBMC development; this team is called the 'Civil Society-Government Partnership' (CGP).

18. Most ESSPIN states use school-based training sessions. A cluster-based approach to training selected SBMC members at district level in Lagos was changed in 2013 to a more locally-based training and support approach, ensuring in-depth capacity building for more SBMC members. This was based on learning from the other states involved in ESSPIN, which indicated that training at least 8 SBMC members directly was important for achieving the high level of capacity needed from SBMCs to achieve dramatic impact on school enrolment, retention and quality.
19. The other role of CSOs in the SBMC development process is to record and take up issues of community demand around education for direct advocacy by CSOs. This is done by CSOs producing detailed reports of the issues raised in each mentoring visit, and using these to capture the main education priorities affecting multiple communities. As a state level group, the CGP then agrees how to conduct advocacy within and outside government, to get responses to the challenges raised. CSOs work with SMOs to manage LGEA and state level SBMC Forums, which give a collective voice on education to communities through their SBMCs. CSOs collaborate within each state to push for government action on issues raised at SBMC Forums, and use visit and Forum report data to influence the advocacy work of other CSOs working on education issues in their state.
20. Key to the ESSPIN approach is the principle of government contracting CSOs to perform these roles. This recognises the value of bringing CSOs' skills into LGEAs, and welcomes the useful role of CSO advocacy in bringing a clear picture of communities' education priorities to state government. While funds were initially provided by ESSPIN, state governments are now recognising the value of CSOs' work, allocating funds from their own resources to pay for CSO support to SBMC development on an increased scale.

Mentoring and reporting

21. Two types of reports are produced by CSOs in the CGP: reports of regular mentoring visits to schools by CSOs and SMOs and reports of SBMC Forums which are becoming established in states. Mentoring reports summarise the issues raised by SBMCs during monthly mentoring visits conducted by the CGP. These visits take place for one year after initial SBMC training, to help SBMCs increase their capacity and become more sustainable. Each visit is conducted by a CSO staff member and by a Social Mobilisation Officer from the relevant LGEA. The mentoring visits comprise a thematic training session based on state specific SBMC

Guidebooks delivered to SBMC members by the CGP, such as inclusive education, resource mobilization, child protection, and enabling greater participation from women and children.

22. The second part of the visit involves a discussion session where SBMC members talk through challenges and needs for assistance with the CGP. The CGP representatives help the SBMC to come up with their own actions to address problems, as well as identifying which issues need further support from outside the school community. Then the SMO can take any relevant issues up through the education system, and the CSO can take up issues that are more appropriate for action within civil society.
23. Thus the SBMC is encouraged to learn more problem-solving and follow-up skills, and issues affecting multiple communities can be reviewed at a higher level. Reviewing reports of mentoring visits therefore serves three purposes. It helps to capture what efforts communities and civil society have been making to improve children's education, and identifies where further action from government is required to solve major problems. This helps government to see how it should direct future planning and resourcing for education.

How CSOs are working to help SBMCs

24. From the beginning of their work after initial training, most SBMCs have worked on motivating communities to get children into school, and identifying reasons why children were not in school. The CGP has provided regular training and refresher sessions on how and why to include all children in education. To spread these ideas further, the CSOs in Kwara successfully promoted the idea of 'every child counts' as a campaign across the state.
25. CSO reports show clear progress on boosting SBMC function, from initial problems with arranging meetings so that members could conveniently attend, to better-forecasted and arranged meeting sessions with higher attendance. For example, CSO Fantsuam in Kaduna identified challenges of SBMCs meeting without enough members for fair participation, and retrained SBMCs so that they started setting up quorate meetings.
26. CSO reports also show strong and spreading improvements in record keeping, financial management and wider community networking, resulting from the regular advice supplied through CGP mentoring visits. Similarly, reports show improvements in record keeping, financial management and wider community networking. In Jigawa, Gadawur Youth Forum in Dutse LGEA monitored initial problems with arranging meetings so that members could conveniently attend, and guided SBMCs to set up to better-forecasted meeting sessions with higher attendance. Where SBMCs were not functioning well, SBMC reports highlighted challenges to enable

corrective action – for example, in cases where head teachers were using their role as SBMC Secretary to take action without consulting other members. The CGP visited Education Secretaries to get them to ensure that head teachers consulted SBMC members and the wider community.

27. Mentoring support was crucial in getting SBMCs to keep producing detailed and clear records of meetings, which form the core evidence base for LGEAs in deciding community needs around education, particularly around issues like teacher numbers and school repair.
28. The role of the CGP has been essential in taking SBMC activity over major barriers. Mentoring visits involve intensive problem solving, and CSOs then take up complex challenges at LGEA and State level for higher government advice and action. CSOs have helped SBMCs to understand the concept of evidence based advocacy – taking photos and documenting the need for new classrooms and teachers, for example – and presenting it to SUBEB for funding support.

New spaces for community voice and accountability

29. CSOs have been providing training and help with organisation of women's and children's committees attached to SBMCs, to make sure that women's and children's ideas are clearly heard and to give confidence to women and children to speak. Earlier, children in the wider SBMC meetings were less comfortable coming up with ideas before adults. Children's committees help children to meet together separately and share their ideas for improving teaching and access, which they then present to the SBMC meeting. This means that children's views are not missed, which is often essential to understanding why children miss school or struggle with learning.
30. Although progress has been relatively recent, reports are that children's participation is increasingly strong, with issues raised by children being taken up and responded to well by SBMCs once they are articulated. In one school in Kano, after children's committees had been trained by FOMWAN to understand their roles, the head students asked two students in each class to report to them on teacher performance. This provided widespread evidence of teacher lateness and poor behaviour, enabling children to report problems without fear of punishment. Reporting these problems to the SBMC led to teachers coming to class on time and improving their attitudes. Children's committees at other schools in Kano came up with the idea of organising football events which only children in school could take part in, arousing the interest of dropouts to return to school.

31. Excellent progress has also been reported by women's committees in all states, with much enthusiasm among women for organising to support vulnerable children's access to school, and for bringing in more resources for schools.
32. SBMC Forum meetings have been another productive innovation, drawing common challenges upwards for wider action. CSOs work with SMOs to set up SBMC Forums at LGEA and, increasingly, at State level. SBMC members from all schools come together to share challenges and successes.
33. Reports of CSO activity showed that CSOs put a great deal of time into planning and consultation meetings to prepare for these events, to ensure that SBMC Forums effectively bring issues of concern to SBMCs to the attention of government. CSOs reach out to senior government and community leaders to arrange their attendance at Forums. Children have been supported by CGP members to speak at forums about issues which concern them, which has had a powerful effect on getting decision makers to understand why action is needed. In Lagos it was reported that SBMC Forums acted as a major motivation for encouraging SBMC members to keep working hard for schools.
34. In many LGEAs, Forums have not just been about bringing issues upwards, but also about sharing good practice between SBMCs, sharing ideas for overcoming challenges. This creates positive competition in promoting problem solving by SBMCs. In Kwara, this has been taken forward further by a series of awards given for SBMC action at Forums.

How CSOs are working to help government

35. In the first six to nine months of SBMC support, activity reports show CSOs taking a lead role in reminding SBMCs of their duties, training and retraining SBMCs in key tasks such as record keeping, reporting and financial accountability, and advising SBMCs on how to advocate on difficult problems (such as lack of support for new school infrastructure), using evidence and networking. This helps to show SMOs how supporting SBMCs can be done.
36. As newly trained SMOs become more confident in their roles, they are able to gradually take the lead in more of these areas. The value of having CSOs fill the gap between SBMC activation, and full SMO capacity to mentor SBMCs, is that, through having regular, skilled and enthusiastic support visits, SBMC motivation is kept high during the crucial period after initial training. As SBMC rollout takes place, CSOs are

able to transfer experience in helping SBMCs from one LGEA to another. By keeping their own summary records of SBMC mentoring visits, in addition to the mentoring visit reports produced by SMOs, CSOs provide an independent source of verification of SBMC activities and effectiveness.

37. In all six states, state government officials have reported valuing the state SBMC Forum because it allows them to hear from the grassroots and promote SBMCs to more communities. SBMC forums have been an important accountability and communication mechanism for government, enabling LGEA leadership such as Education Secretaries to feed back the reasons why progress on education challenges may have been slow. In Kajuru LGEA, Kaduna, it was explained at the SBMC Forum that temporary shortages of teachers had been created due to terminating the employment of teachers found to be far below basic qualification level. CSOs reported the need for greater logistical support such as venues and travel allowances, however, so that Forum meetings can be organised regularly.
38. CSOs are also using the good relationships formed through SBMC work to offer more services to government. In Jigawa, Hadeja Development Circle established a partnership with the Agency for Mass Education in running remedial classes for out of school secondary students. It is a one year program, after which HDC assists students with JAM forms to sit the secondary examination.

Areas of community demand in education strengthened by CSOs

Promoting access to school for all children

39. CGP mentoring visits regularly encourage SBMCs to keep going with their efforts to get children into school and improve learning environments. CSOs have been particularly active in encouraging SBMCs to seek out the children 'left behind' and still not in school after initial SBMC enrolment campaigns. CSOs have helped SBMCs think about what solutions would help excluded children come to school – children such as girls at risk of early marriage, children whose hawking and other work conflicts with school, children who have disabilities and nomadic children.
40. The following example shows how SBMC leaders value these ideas:

'Mr James Olatunde, the Chairman of ECWA Elesinmeta, ...'appreciated the CSOs and SMOs for teaching them the concept of community sensitisation, which helped them to enrol the children of many nomads and settlers. The [SBMC] give free transportation to children residing at distant locations and provide free accommodation for teachers.' (Ilorin East LGEA Forum Report, Kwara, 2013)

41. SBMCs have increasingly taken up issues of disability and health affecting children's access to school. Need for disability aid is often met by communities, or by communities approaching charitable foundations and government for support.
42. SBMCs and CSOs have worked together to address the way in which the PTA levy has acted as a barrier to access. CSOs took up the issue in Kwara when SBMC children's committees and C-EMIS community research by children in Kaiama LGEA showed that significant numbers of children were not coming to school, because they feared their teachers' anger when their parents had not paid the PTA levy. The issue was investigated and SBMCs reported that the levy of over N400 was too high for the poorest parents. CSOs took these findings to the State Ministry of Education, which agreed to reduce the levy to c.N200.
43. In Jigawa, Kano and Kwara, CSO reports indicated that greater policy attention is needed on the needs of nomadic communities. In particular, nomadic groups requested greater flexibility in school timings when they are grazing their animals. ESSPIN could be asked to provide advice on how to manage this without losing core teaching time.
44. CSOs are helping SBMCs improve and correct their work to include the most excluded children. For example, in Kaduna, HVCF observed that two SBMCs had built ramps in the school for easy access for children with physical disability, but on mentoring visits HVCF observed that the ramps only gave easy access of the veranda and not the classroom. The CGP decided to address this in refresher training for the SBMCs so that the ramps can be corrected to make access to the classrooms easier.
45. Girls' education has been a major focus of CSO efforts. The CSO Female Leadership Forum in Ikeja, Lagos, reported on how their training and orientation to SBMCs on protecting girls from early marriage and keeping them in school was achieving results:

"The Head-teacher of G.R.A primary school and the SBMC members are doing so much in curbing early marriage and drop out of girls from the school. It has been identified that the majority of the pupils in the schools are children of security officers/ guards within the Hausa community and these children especially the females are eventually forced out of school for early marriage. The SBMC intervened by selecting its Chairman from the Hausa community and he in turn has been reaching out to other members of the Hausa community by constantly sensitizing them on the hazards of early marriage."

46. Where pregnancy was keeping girls out of school, CGP encouragement has led to educators advocating for the rights of girls to stay in education. For example, the head teacher of Ikeja Primary School, Lagos intervened in the case of an ex-pupil of the school who got pregnant and was finding it difficult to get enrolled in any of the secondary school in the area. With the head's assistance, a secondary school in the area agreed to enrol her.
47. In Jigawa, girls' education has been a major focus of CSO efforts. CSOs such as KAHDEV not only encouraged SBMCs and communities to support girls through school, but planned and carried out detailed follow-ups to remind community members about the need to act on girls' education. These follow-ups included encouraging parents to visit schools and see the progress their daughters were making. This helped to inspire parents to keep girls attending school. Through these methods, Junior Secondary School Chaichai's SBMC maintained 14 girls through to the final year of senior secondary school in 2010, at a relatively early stage in the SBMC's existence.

Improving retention in school through child protection and welfare

48. The reports show that drop-out from school is often related to child welfare, poverty and protection issues. Child protection work around education has been taken up enthusiastically by many SBMCs and by the CGP, as a result of their training. SBMCs, SMOs and CSOs are helping children and communities to be heard, and are helping to reduce threats of abuse and exploitation, particularly from teachers and particularly affecting girls. This is bringing many children back to school and preventing others from leaving.
49. CSOs helped spread messages to protect children from abuse in schools and communities, both through connecting SBMCs with sources of advice, and through reporting on the issues. For example, in Kaduna HVCF reported a local woman leader calling on the SBMC and head teacher, to caution teachers against asking pupils, especially females, to go to their homes to sweep, wash plates etc., as a measure to prevent sexual harassment. Girls were told not to do that and to report to parents when such was demanded of them by teachers. In Kano, the CSO FOMWAN persuaded traditional leaders under the district head of Albasu to watch for signs of abuse of girls, improving protection in an area where abuse had been common.
50. In another example, in 2011 CSO NUT reported that the SBMC in JASS Jamulo engaged with the parent of a girl whose parents had engaged her for early marriage.

The SBMC successfully persuaded her parents to cancel the engagement and enrol her back in school.

51. Teachers have been transferred away from situations of abuse. Learning from this work, and providing recognition and support for those who are involved in child protection issues, offers a chance for the education system to develop better and more systematic ways to keep children safe. In Lagos, CSOs used SBMC Forums and meetings with government and international agencies to raise child protection issues, in response to many requests from SBMCs and communities for support on child protection and welfare. As a result, the CSOs are working to link to the UNICEF supported Child Protection Network (CPN).
52. Challenges of child labour creating time conflicts with education have been regularly reported on, despite efforts to reorganise school and work timings in many communities. These issues, particularly hawking by female children, have been most challenging in the poorest communities. Sexual exploitation through hawking was raised in CSO reports as a concern. Time has also been a problem for school attendance, where children (especially girls) are expected to fetch water before school in communities without boreholes. Investigating further where boreholes are needed, and how providing water can be speeded up, would be an effective way of getting more children through education.
53. Lack of healthcare has also been acted on by CSOs where it stops children staying in school. For example, in Kwara one group of CSOs took up the case of a girl whose vision, development and ability to learn was being damaged by a large facial tumour, which neither her family nor the SBMC could afford to treat, or knew how to seek the right treatment. This case illustrated the networking benefits of involving CSOs in grassroots education issues. The local CSO brought the issue to the wider CSO group, which approached several charitable foundations and the state Ministry of Health to work out a course of action. After months of persistent work to seek an operation, the CSOs secured the necessary certification from health agencies and the funding and service provision from a charity to remove the tumour. The girl was able to return to school completely free of problems.
54. CSO reports from Kano in late 2013 indicate that dropout of children from school related to poverty issues is still a big concern, despite successful SBMC efforts to get children back into school. This suggests that more focus on poverty as a barrier to education will be needed from government in Kano.

Accountable teacher allocation, attendance and performance

55. Several barriers to getting teachers in place were tackled successfully through CSO support. In Kano, the CGP identified a common challenge in Kumbotso LGEA, where several head teachers had been transferred, disrupting SBMC activities and curtailing efforts to improve the school. The CSO Aminu Kano Centre For Democratic Research and Training made an advocacy visit to the Education Secretary, which resulted in the transfers being reversed.
56. In Lagos, the CSOs approached local government in Amuwo-Odofin for support in reinstating a boat to bring teachers to riverine schools which had been stopped two years ago, causing major teacher attendance problems. The boat was reinstated, enabling the schools to become far more active due to regular teacher attendance.
57. In Buji LGEA, Jigawa, CGP mentoring led to SBMC and community members from four schools monitoring the resumption of teachers in the first week of every term.
58. CSOs are also helping to capture information on how SBMCs are improving teacher attendance, making government payment of teacher salaries more cost-effective. In Kaduna, HVCF drew together information from several schools to identify that SBMCs had been monitoring teachers' and children's attendance. The CSO discovered that several SBMCs have reported to the head teachers those teachers that come late. These teachers were cautioned and teacher late-coming and absenteeism thus reduced. The CSO was able to review time and movement books of the schools for evidence of these improvements.
59. CSOs have also been able to let government know when SBMCs are concerned that too few teachers are in place for the number of children in schools. CSOs are capturing the root causes of problems with supplying teachers to primary schools, and building up a clearer picture of where issues are most severe.
60. In Kwara, CSOs have organised several meetings to present evidence of where rural teachers are not in post, or where teachers have not been allocated proportional to the enrolment of the school. The lack of teachers in rural schools would not have been reported clearly to government without SBMC reporting and CSO advocacy. The CSOs' efforts have resulted in State government undertaking three teacher reallocation exercises, to move urban teachers to rural schools. Several schools experienced improved teaching numbers as a result.

61. In Enugu, SBMCs raised lack of teachers as a major problem, especially in more rural schools. CSOs visited schools to produce a clear set of data on where teachers were and were not working in which schools. The CSOs recorded schools where teachers were registered on the payroll but had retired and no longer came to work; schools where teachers were supposed to be present but regularly did not attend; and schools where teachers did attend but where numbers were far too low for the children enrolled.
62. The Enugu CSO group then invited the Commissioner of Education and several other key education officials to a meeting to present this information, in February 2013. As a direct result, the Commissioner made a decision to conduct a full investigation and report back to the CSO group. The CSO group is currently producing a report for government to summarise the evidence and the points covered in the meeting. The CGP in Enugu is also pursuing ways to convert the qualifications of part-qualified teachers who already live in rural areas, to enable them to take up government teaching posts. These major issues with teacher deployment, including inefficiency in funding of teaching posts, would not have been brought to light at all without CSOs in the CGP taking up SBMC issues for advocacy.

Strengthening investment in school infrastructure

63. SBMCs have been supported to take active ownership of school sites, and are making it clear that they can provide good conditions for protecting government investment in school infrastructure. SBMCs have been supported to take active ownership of school sites, and are making it clear that they can provide good conditions for protecting government investment in school infrastructure. For example, in Dutse, Jigawa, when Yalwa Primary School moved to a new site, the SBMC cleaned the school, removed all unwanted trees, and cleared land. They then requested a hand pump from the SUBEB, which was provided. Similarly, in Buji LGEA, Jigawa, SBMC members at JSS Gantsa provided voluntary security to protect a solar water pump. Many SBMCs across states have been constructing secure storerooms to protect school equipment and materials.
64. It is clear from reports that the support provided by the CGP to SBMC activities is both protecting and adding to government investment in education. The value of government funds spent on classrooms and school equipment is being retained by SBMCs, who ensure that maintenance and repair takes place, often moving schools or classrooms from being unusable to being back in use. Schools which have become inactive due to teacher absence are also being reactivated.

65. The CGP in Kano and Jigawa identified that a major barrier to girls completing primary education was the lack of junior secondary schools (JSS) in rural areas for girls to go on to. CSOs conducted advocacy with local and state government on the issue, and secured agreement to set up several more girls' junior secondary schools in the areas involved.
66. Once schools are up and running, communities are also being mobilised by SBMCs to provide additional resources to keep schools functioning, such as equipment, furniture and building materials. Initially, SBMC resource mobilisation focused on contributions from the local community around the school, and was usually directed at urgent and relatively straightforward items such as materials and labour for repair of school facilities, uniforms for poor children out of school, and learning materials such as chalk. The provision of these types of resources increased, and continued throughout the period of reporting. As SBMCs matured, and with additional resource mobilisation training and advice from the CGP, many sought more substantial funding from higher-level sources, such as philanthropists, faith groups, or businesses. This brought in donations such as teaching materials, play equipment, computers, first aid kits and fans.
67. Reporting over time shows that SBMCs have been able to keep up a sustained flow of resources for these items from communities. Many infrastructure improvements have come from listening to children, which has been enabled in many cases through CSO support to children's committees linked to SBMCs. For example, in Ilorin East, Kwara, CSOs are taking up children's requests for school toilets to SUBEB.
68. Efficient use of school infrastructure has also been promoted by SBMC action on improving school safety, again often in response to children's concerns expressed through children's committees. Children have raised the need for security guards to stop schools being occupied, and have pointed out where parts of buildings and sanitation need repair. Early repairs will minimise the cost of damage and help schools stay in use.
69. In several areas, however, there were challenges of significant economic and social pressures and divisions in rural communities affecting people's ability to support education and children. This was a particular issue in Kaduna, Jigawa and Kano, where very cash-poor rural communities found it extremely difficult to mobilise resources for schools.

70. CSO reports from Kaduna contain frequent problems of flooding and water damage to school buildings which SBMCs have raised. For example, in September 2012, heavy rain collapsed the only existing primary school in Sabon Maro community, in Doka district of Kachia LGA. Some members of the community took advantage of the disruption to steal the zinc doors and windows of the school, forcing the pupils and teachers to hold classes under trees. With the emergence of SBMC in the community, the stolen items were recovered and the people responsible were asked to apologise to the community.
71. Cases like this show how easy it is for schools to be taken out of action in the aftermath of natural disaster. It suggests that government should consider rapidly-accessibly emergency education repair budgets, to prevent schools from falling out of use when bad weather occurs. This is particularly necessary given increasing severe weather patterns.
72. Government has responded to funding needs identified by SBMCs to varying degrees. In Enugu, Udi LGEA and SUBEB have embarked on total rehabilitation of all schools in the LGEA as well as investing in new school structures. They have also doubled the efforts on their usual technical support to schools.
73. Security and violence were reported in Lagos and Kwara as a challenge to maintaining the operation of school premises. Gang occupation and encroachment of schools by squatters were tackled by CSOs and SMOs, advising SBMCs on how to challenge and negotiate to get school buildings free from occupation. In one case, following the advice of the SBMC and CGP, the principal of Oregun Junior High School reported hoodlums invading the school to the Lagos State Government. The government intervened by attaching officials of their Task Force to the school, who now raid the school regularly and arrest hoodlums.
74. Despite improvements, many of the issues raised by CSOs with local government on behalf of SBMCs still focus on lack of resources for school infrastructure. Unsafe buildings where parents are too afraid to send their children to school; classrooms housing two or three classes where noise drowns out lesson content; classes having to take place in the open air, affected by heat, dust, rain and traffic noise. Nigeria's efforts to get 10 million children into school are going to need strategic approaches to getting the fabric of schools in place. It would be useful to focus greater policy attention on budget allocations to education and disbursement of infrastructure funds.

How can CSOs and state governments work together to support education?

75. As well as finding great improvements of teacher attendance and punctuality, improving children's school access, safety and welfare, and supporting women and children to speak up and feel confident raising issues, it was clear that CSO support to SBMCs, as part of the CGP, had resulted in much tangible improvement to schooling, through advice and training to SBMCs and SMOs, and through large and small scale advocacy with government bodies.
76. One of the main factors in this success is that CSOs are trusted by communities. This means communities will give information to CSOs that will be very useful to state governments seeking to improve the cost effectiveness and reach of their education services. In order to do this CSOs need regular direct contact with a large number of schools and communities, to talk over problems, to compare and select the largest and most common issues, and to build relationships of trust that allow them to go back and collect more detailed evidence to present to government once a key issue has been recognised. Many of these key issues take time to identify, to analyse and to collect supporting information about. This requires long lasting and regular visits to schools and communities.
77. The implication of this is to involve CSOs not only in SBMC training but in the minimum of eight mentoring visits required by the UBEC/ESSPIN SBMC development model. This requires funding for CSOs' (and SMOs') time and travel costs in visiting communities.
78. The focus of CGP training and mentoring on using evidence based approaches to request resources from government means that requests can be tracked back down to source by SMOs, to check that the level of need is genuine. This can make a huge difference in helping government target funding for school infrastructure more accurately in response to need.
79. It was clear from this review that, while different advocacy issues are being raised by CSOs on behalf of SBMCs, communities in several states are experiencing common challenges. PTA levies and other poverty-related issues are still a major barrier to children's school attendance, particularly in Kwara, Jigawa, Kano and Kaduna. Getting the right number of teachers into rural schools remains a key issue in Enugu and Kwara.

80. Ensuring that necessary government resources are reaching schools is particularly pressing in Lagos and Kwara. Improving access to secondary school for girls in Kano, Jigawa and Kaduna is a key demand, while communities across all states are voicing demands to include disabled children in education. Preventing encroachment and misuse of school premises, and resolving conflicts between communities over education, is another common issue.
81. Teacher shortage is a particularly complex challenge which SBMCs are not able to resolve themselves (except in the short term through recruiting volunteer or contract teachers). Neither of these will support government goals of sustainably increasing the number of fully qualified teachers. However, SBMCs and the CGP are showing that it is possible to capture up to date local information on how many teachers are needed – and actually present - in a location. SUBEB could consider further work with CGPs and ESSPIN to help it predict and respond to local needs for teachers, especially in rural areas. In Enugu and Kwara, state government could share good practice on strengthening teacher posting with other states.
82. CSO reports also offer learning about how to sustain SBMC effectiveness. SBMCs appear to rely on a sense of fairness and commitment to keep up their motivation. In Lagos, indications were that SBMCs were being very effective at approaching corporate donors for funds, yet a sense of 'philanthropy fatigue' was reported by CSOs. Several donors were reported as saying that they had paid taxes for government to provide education facilities, and government was not providing basic funding. Mutual government, community and civil society accountability for supporting education should be placed at the forefront of work to roll out SBMCs further.
83. In 2014 there is an opportunity for ESSPIN to help strengthen the documentation and reporting of CSOs, so that it can be more easily analysed by SUBEB or LGEA staff. Further work will be done to simplify regular CSO reporting in 2014, so that it will be easier for Social Mobilisation Departments to conduct their own summary and analysis of SBMC reports.

References

Poulsen, H. (2009) SBMCs in Policy and Practice: Research Synthesis Report. Abuja: ESSPIN Report no. 404

Annex 1: CSOs helping government to support SBMCs through ESSPIN, 2009-2013

Enugu

GNOMINT
Mewood
POVINAA
RACTI
SIRP
YORDEL

(I don't have the other 2 names)

Kano

Aminu Kano Centre For Democratic
Research & Training (CDRT)
Citizens Council For Public Education
Federation of Muslim Women Associations
in Nigeria (FOMWAN)
Magajin Malam Educational Services
Samarib Ventures Ltd
Turaki Educational Consultancy Services

Jigawa

Adolescent Health Information Project
Federation of Muslim Women Associations
in Nigeria (FOMWAN)
Gadawa Youth Forum
Hadejia Development Circle
Kamala Community Health Development
Initiative (KAHDEV)
Miyatti Allah Cattle Breeders Association
Of Nigeria (MACBAN)
Nigeria Union of Teachers

Kwara

Agent of Change Development Initiative
Centre For Appropriate Technology For
Rural Women (CAPTEC)
Federation of Muslim Women Associations
in Nigeria (FOMWAN)
Hilltop Foundation
Royal Heritage Health Foundation (RHHF)
Womankind Family Enhancement Initiative

Kaduna

Fantsuam Foundation
Gawon Foundation
Hope for the Village Child (HVCF)
Lifeline Education Foundation
Waje District Association (WDDA)
Youth Team in Action Supporting
Community Initiated Development
(YOTASCID)

Lagos

Association for Education & Empowerment
Centre for Health, Education and
Development Communication (CHEDCOM)
Defence for Children International (DCI)
Development Support Institute
Female Leadership Forum
Health And Sustainable Development
Association Of Nigeria (HESDAN)
Linking the Youth of Nigeria through
Exchange (LYNX)
Organization For Non Formal Education
Foundation (ONEF)
Talent Plus Resources International
Women Protection Organisation (WOPO)