

ESSPIN is supporting schools to become effective centres of learning at the heart of the community. We are working to improve the way education is managed at all levels of government and to get more and better resources in schools. ESSPIN is helping Nigeria's children to grow.

Background

Improving the quality of basic education is a key policy thrust of Enugu State Government. The government identifies unstable policies, inadequate funding, poor teacher motivation and poor supervision over the years as leading to the dysfunctional state of the education system. The 2009 Annual School Census (ASC) Report revealed the poor condition of public primary schools. There are no adequate classrooms. As much as 40% of the existing classrooms need major repairs; 80% have insufficient furniture and 66% are without good chalk boards. 72% of the schools have no source of potable water. There is an acute shortage of toilets with an alarming toilet/pupil ratio of 1:278. Furthermore, the absence of coordinated Head/teacher and teacher in-service training hampers effective teaching and learning with adverse consequences for pupil achievement. Since inception in the State in March, 2010, ESSPIN has been supporting government reforms to improve the planning, management and financing of education for quality service delivery and teaching.

ESSPIN's contribution

ESSPIN supported the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Enugu State Universal Basic Education Board (ENSUBEB) to develop their 3-year strategic plans and their functional reviews. All 17 Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) in Enugu were helped with their strategic plans and integrated school development (ISD) plans, thus promoting the concept of whole school development.

Following the sharing and discussion of the Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) assessment and Teacher Development Needs Assessment (TDNA) reports with stakeholders, a tailor-made School Improvement Programme (SIP) was developed and rolled out in Enugu. The SIP bundle piloted in Udi LGA and selected missions' schools includes provision of water and sanitation facilities, school operational funds, capacity development of School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs), and head-teacher and teacher training. It is hoped to replicate the SIP across the State.

1,200 children from poor households have been granted scholarships under the ESSPIN Challenge Fund Scheme covering 30 mission primary schools across 5 LGAs in the State.

ESSPIN Impact in Schools

As part of the SIP, a carefully selected and empowered 12-member-State School Improvement Team (SSIT) is continuously training and supporting LGEA education officers to provide in-service training and professional support to class teachers and head teachers.

Already 121 head teachers have been trained in effective management of teaching and learning activities and are being supported by the SSIT to carry out school self-evaluation (SSE) and provide effective instructional leadership for their schools. 400 grade 1-3 teachers have also received training and support to effectively teach literacy and numeracy in lower primary grades using phonics and number lines. The school level activities have already inspired improved school attendance and punctuality among teachers and pupils. Many head teachers reported with enthusiasm that they have started experimenting with some of the ideas shared at the head teachers' cluster workshops.

Mrs. Juliana Ugwu, the head teacher of Eziamma Primary School, Okpatu in Udi LGA of Enugu State, said: *"The SIP workshop is the best organized workshop I have ever attended. Things were so organized that we had ground rules in our centre. Those rules made the workshop more result-oriented than any of the workshops I had earlier attended. I was very eager to come back to school to begin implementation."*

Mrs. Ugwu's joy knew no bounds when a few weeks after the workshop an education officer and an SSIT member showed up in her school to see her efforts at implementing ideas shared at the workshop and offer support. According to her, *"In previous workshops, participants were taught, but things learnt were never implemented because there was no serious follow-up. Follow-up and support provided by the education officers added to the effectiveness of the workshop"*

"Thank God, I started implementing some of the things I learnt at the workshop as soon I got back. I have held a meeting with my teachers to discuss the ideas. I move round every now and then to see what is going on in the classrooms. This and the class teacher training are already leading to improved teaching and learning in the school."



Teachers participating in an SSIT/EOs training on teaching literacy and numeracy.

ESSPIN Impact in Communities

A state-wide stakeholders' sensitization workshop created demand for community participation in education. ESSPIN, in collaboration with the State government facilitated a School Based Management visioning process aimed at gathering stakeholders perspectives on SBMCs and which culminated in a state endorsed SBMC policy and guideline for the establishment of SBMCs in the state.

“Before now SBMCs merely existed in some schools because almost all of them were not functional. Members were not properly selected or appointed, and up to the extent that members did not know that they belonged to the committees. There were no clear guidelines on how the SBMCs should be run and responsibilities were not spelt out. There were no consultations...” commented Mr. Ifeanyi Eze, Director of Schools in the Ministry of Education and Chairman of the State Task Team on SBMC, also noting *“the issues are clearer now and with the development of this SBM policy and guidelines the state will be properly guided on the implementation of the SBM project.”*

A head teacher in Akamogh, Ezeagu LGEA, said *“I have heard about SBMCs but I didn't know what they should be doing in the schools. There was a memo that each school should establish an SBMC so I selected some people as members, but they never met because we did not have any direction on what to do or how to operate, but with your explanation I think we did not get it right. The policy and guideline has really spelt out everything properly”*

ESSPIN helped establish a Civil-Society Government Partnership (CGP) made up of 12 CSO staff and 8 ENSUBEB Social Mobilisation Officers who have been trained in community mobilization. The CGP is currently facilitating the establishment of School Based Management Committees in the 91 pilot school communities in Udi LGA. The CGP will support the State Government to replicate the establishment of SBMCs in the remaining 16 LGAs, bringing the total number of established and functional SBMCs to approximately 510 by 2014.

The Missions Education Secretariat, as part of their contributions towards the CF Scheme, will waive school fees for beneficiaries of the scheme. There are plans to replicate the scheme in other Mission schools in the state.



SBMC community engagement exercise in Akama Oghe 1, Udi LGA, Enugu State.

Teachers Development Needs Assessment – The First Step to Better Teaching

Enugu State in collaboration with the UKaid-ESSPIN conducted an assessment to identify the training needs of primary and junior secondary school teachers in order to improve the conditions of teaching and learning in schools. A sample of 3196 teachers from the 17 LGAs in the state participated in the assessment during the last quarter of the year 2010.

"The Teachers Development Needs Assessment (TDNA) is part of a strategic plan from ESSPIN to support education systems reform in our state...", says Godwin Nnamani, an education secretary and a centre coordinator in Udenu LGA, Enugu, during the TDNA exercise. *"The TDNA result shows that we have succeeded in identifying the problem. If the capacities of teachers are built accordingly, there'll certainly be a change in our education service delivery."*

Godwin described the experience as enlightening, revealing the problems teachers were facing and the areas in which their capacities need to be built. *"It is an acknowledged fact that we have problems with regards to teaching and learning; not that teachers do not have the qualifications, but the teachers need to upgrade themselves through training. Identifying the problems of our teachers is the first right step to take; the rest will follow. Let's hope that the government will keep faith in this unique effort by ESSPIN."*

The TDNA exercise has laid the basis for policy discussions about teacher selection and recruitment, as well as teacher career paths and incentives. Following the sharing and discussion of the TDNA reports with stakeholders, a tailor-made School Improvement Programme (SIP) has been developed and rolled out in Enugu State. A key step in this direction was the training of a 12-member State School Improvement Team (SSIT) and 18 School Support Officers (SSOs), to drive change in the teaching-learning process in schools. The SSIT/SSOs so far has supported the training of 121 head teachers, 400 class teachers and SBMCs to carry out school development planning, school self-evaluation and improvements in teaching and learning in schools in Udi LGEA..

"This whole exercise is directed towards our children and giving them a future to look forward to; and ultimately the reason to live. If things go on as planned, we will make our schools places where teaching and learning actually happen..." says Godwin.

It is hoped that the TDNA exercise will inform the development and implementation of a sustainable teacher development programme for the state and, in turn, ensure that approximately 701,351 children in Enugu State will be achieve the learning outcome benchmarks.



Godwin Nnamani, Education Secretary and TDNA coordinator for Udenu LGA, Enugu State.