

**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

Despite major interventions in education over the past few years, learning outcomes at both Primary and Secondary levels remain poor, with many of Kaduna's children leaving school unable to read or do basic calculations. The common denominator in all this is poor teacher quality. A 2010 survey carried out by the Ministry of Education with support from ESSPIN assessed Kaduna's teachers' knowledge and professional skills in relation to material at Primary 4 level. The results were catastrophic, with over 85% of teachers achieving a score of less than 25% in a battery of four tests.

Appreciating the scale of the problem, the Honourable Commissioner of Education has pledged to make teacher quality a priority issue during his term of office. There are already positive signs of change coming through the work ESSPIN has been engaged in on a pilot basis over the past two years.

## ESSPIN's contribution

ESSPIN has been partnering the State Ministry of Education, State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and seven LGEAs in a pilot School Improvement Programme. As well as installing water and toilets in 60 schools, the pilot is building Head Teacher capacity to be 'leaders' of schools; improving LGEA support to schools; and training teachers to use child-centred methodologies. 165 Head Teachers, 50 LGEA staff and over 730 teachers have benefited from this programme. Plans are now in place to replicate this programme in as many as 900 more schools in 18 of Kaduna's 23 LGEAs. Work will continue to strengthen community involvement through School Based Management Committees (SBMCs). A major success story is the growing confidence of SUBEB Departments such as the Advisory Service Unit (within School Services) and Social Mobilisation to take a more pro-active role in leading this work.

Further confirmation of the value of ESSPIN's work is evidenced by the recent Ministry/SUBEB decision (September 2011) to ring-fence N120M of this year's N150M UBEC Teacher Training allocation to Kaduna to activities which will replicate ESSPIN's School Improvement Programme in a further 500 schools across the State.

## ESSPIN Impact in Schools

ESSPIN's many inputs at the school level have brought about improvements to several facets of the school:

**Quality of learning environment:** ESSPIN's water and sanitation inputs in 65 schools have led to more girls attending schools and all students, boys and girls, becoming aware of health factors. ESSPIN has also completed seven 2-classroom blocks, each with a Head Teacher's room, one in each of the seven ESSPIN supported LGEAs. They now serve as a model for any infrastructural input into any schools in the LGEAs. Kachia Education Secretary, Mrs. Paulina Tella says: *"..... the classroom block in LGEA Kwaturu has transformed the school, giving the school a new look and vigor"*

**Quality of Teaching and Learning:** The Modular School Improvement Programme targeting 165 Head teachers, 731 class teachers and 52 staff in the LGEAs has been completed. A member of the State School Improvement Team (SSIT), Philip Bonet, shared his experience with some students at LGEA Gazara during a DFID review visit. He said: *"The students said that the teachers treated them as if they were their children by showing them they care. In addition, they use instructional materials everyday during lessons. Teachers no longer shout at or hit them"*.

The 24-member SSIT has grown over the years to become a better resource team for the state in the way they deliver training and provide support for LGEA and school staff. Mr. Faraka Luka Handan says: *"I now try as much as possible to make my lessons and even lectures more learner friendly, and I refer back to principles of adult learning each time I have any presentations for an adult audience"*

**Quality of Leadership and Management:** Head teachers and SBMCs are now working closely together in managing the schools. The impact of community involvement can be seen in practice at two schools in Kaura LGEA (Ungwan Musa and Ungwan Dutse). The CSO staff from the GAWON Foundation who work with the two schools say: *"The HTs now delegate responsibilities and have developed positive strategies of working with the communities to improve the quality of teaching and learning. They are now devoting their time to activities that impact on teaching and learning"*.

**Care for, guidance and support for children:** More emphasis is now placed on the welfare of pupils in our schools as teachers use the training they have received to demonstrate a more caring approach which results in improved self-esteem. Students in LGEA Kutura Station, Kajuru demonstrated this when they sang and danced happily with the HT and teachers without intimidation during one of our support visits.



Pupils in a learner centered classroom use locally sourced instructional materials to solve maths problems at LGEA Ungwan Wahala, Kajuru.

## Strengthening Government's capacity to respond to community demand

ESSPIN's work with SBMCs is achieving real success in strengthening communities' capacity to voice their demands and their schools' needs. But in order for this to produce real results for schools, an equal input is required to strengthen government's capacity to respond to these demands so that they can be accountable to the communities they serve.

Work with the Social Mobilization Department (SMD) in SUBEB has focused on creating a more functional department, with clear delineation of responsibility, clear lines of reporting and clear systems in place. Following the SUBEB-wide reform process, SMD has been supported to restructure, growing from a four person unit to a 16 strong department, with every member of staff having a clear and distinct schedule. Since March 2011, two whole-department trainings have been delivered to help develop effective working practices, in particular in areas such as delegation, teamwork, and work-planning. Staff have also drawn up their own 'SMD Charter', stating the department's values and working practices and focusing the team on its core purpose and ultimate beneficiary: the child.

There is a refreshed and more purposeful dialogue between SUBEB and LGEA Social Mobilization staff, with clear reporting lines and clear lines of action to respond to community demand and community issues arising.

Magaji Mohammed, Principal Social Mobilization Officer: Community Participation, SUBEB, says: *"I now understand what I'm here for and have a framework in which to carry out my duties. My interaction with LGEA Desk Officers has improved: they call me to ask for advice on how to put the SBMC policy into practice. I'm now confident in doing my job, which is to engage communities in order to create better learning outcomes for the child"*.

Magaji and three other SMD staff have been selected to play key roles in the state's replication of the model of building capacity at school/community level through step-down trainings. These 'Master Trainers' will drive forward the process of selecting and training new CSO partners in order to be able to effectively build the capacity of SBMCs in 500 new target communities.

The ultimate beneficiaries of demands being met are, of course, the people in a given locality – water provision, see photo below, is a key area where provision of facilities improves the lives of both school children and their communities.



A Kaduna community celebrates the opening of a new bore-hole, which provides much needed water for both the school and the community.

## Case Study – helping community leaders support their school

Yakubu Shuaib, SBMC Chairman LGEA Primary School, Magaji Gari, Kaduna North did not use to be concerned about what happened to his school. *“Anybody could trespass on the school premises – for example ruffians could come and spoil the premises. If the roof blew off, we didn’t care because we believed it is government’s responsibility.”* He was not alone in thinking this way. Now, however, as a result of the capacity building, mentoring and monitoring conducted by a partner Civil Society Organisation (CSO) and Social Mobilisation Officers, Yakubu says: *“We now know that the schools belong to the community and the government is just there to help. So we have taken it upon ourselves to repair without going to government. There are projects that we normally waited for government to do but today we do it as community effort. We have achieved a lot and in the near future the school will be better. For example, the environment of the school is now beautiful and neat. Broken roofs and chairs are repaired through community efforts. Recently the wind blew off the roof and we replaced it immediately. If we write to the government, it will take a long time to get their response”.*

Yakubu and his team are also contributing to increased enrolment. *“We mobilise the children from their houses to get them enrolled and we make sure they attend school on time. We also visit the school to ensure that teachers attend classes. Between 7:30-8:30a.m. we’ll be at the gate and inspect the register to ascertain attendance. Our plan is to make public schools more attractive than private schools. I have six private schools near my school and if we can address the problems of the public schools, we’ll get our children back. We have started but we still have more work to do. We have undergone some mentoring and this has gingered us – we now understand our roles”.*

Yakubu is just one of many transformed community members who now advocate and support their local schools as SBMC members. ESSPIN-DFID, has brought CSO and Social Mobilisation Officers of Kaduna SUBEB together to form a Civil Society and Government Partnership. This partnership is developing SBMC members’ skills and providing mentoring and monitoring support. Capacity development includes; understanding roles and responsibilities; child protection & participation; inclusive education; resource mobilisation; financial management; school development planning; relationship management and advocacy. Significant developments are now happening in Kaduna’s pilot schools.



Yakubu Shuaib, SBMC Chairman,  
LGEA Makaji Gari in Kaduna North