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(ESSPIN)**

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Note on Documentary Series

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The documentary series is arranged as follows:

- ESSPIN 0-- Programme Reports and Documents
- ESSPIN 1-- Support for Federal Level Governance (Reports and Documents for Output 1)
- ESSPIN 2-- Support for State Level Governance (Reports and Documents for Output 2)
- ESSPIN 3-- Support for Schools and Education Quality Improvement (Reports and Documents for Output 3)
- ESSPIN 4-- Support for Communities (Reports and Documents for Output 4)
- ESSPIN 5-- Information Management Reports and Documents

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

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AESPR	Annual Education Sector Performance Report
AESR	Annual Education Sector Review
ASC	Annual School Census
CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
C&KM	Communications & Knowledge management
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
C&KM	Communication and Knowledge Management
DFID	Department for International Development
EFA	Education For All
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EPSSim	Education Policy and Strategy Simulation Model
ESSPIN	Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria
FIS	Federal Inspectorate Services
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
GEP	Girls' Education Project
HRM	Human Resources Management
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDPs	International Development Partners
IQTE	Islamiyya Qur'anic and Tsangaya Education
JCCE	Joint Consultative Council on Education
JSS	Junior Secondary School
KERD	Kano Education Resource Division
LGA	Local Government Area
LGEA	Local Government Education Authority
MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEPB	Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget
MLA	Monitoring Learning Achievement
MoE	Ministry of Education
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
MTSS	Medium Term Sector Strategy
NAEQA	National Commission for Education Quality Assurance
NCCE	National Commission for Colleges of Education
NEDS	Nigeria Education Data Survey

NEKNet	Nigerian Education Knowledge Network
NEMIS	National Education Management Information System
NERDC	Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council
NGO	Non Government Organisations
NRITT	National Roadmap Implementation Task Team
NTI	National Teachers' Institute
OD	Organisational Development
ODM	Organisational Development & Management
PATHS2	Partnership for Transforming Health Systems 2
PFM	Public Funds Management
PPM&R	Policy Planning Management & Research
PRS	Planning Research and Statistics
PSA	Programme Support Activity
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
QA	Quality Assurance
QAB	Quality Assurance Bureau
QMT	Quality Management Team
RUWASSA	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency
SAVI	State Accountability and Voice Initiative
SBMC	School-Based Management Committee
SEIMU	State Education Inspection and Monitoring Unit
SESP	State Education Sector Project
SLP	State Level Programme
SMOE	State Ministry of Education
SMU	Social Mobilisation Unit
SPARC	State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability
SRITT	State Roadmap Implementation Task Teams
SSC	School Support Committee
SSIT	State School Improvement Team
SSS	Senior Secondary School
STL	State Team Leader
STT	State Task Team
SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education Board
TA	Technical Assistance
UBEC	Universal Basic Education Commission
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas

Introduction

1. The purpose of these Technical Papers is to provide an up-to-date brief on the main technical areas of ESSPIN activity. A series of Position Papers was produced for the Inception Report in May 2009 and these technical papers are intended to provide a concise update after a year of programme implementation. They each follow a similar format, addressing: issues and objectives; strategy; progress to date; and future challenges.
2. A document such as this cannot be comprehensive, but if read in conjunction with the latest quarterly report (March 2010), it should provide a picture of the current situation and one that evaluates both progress made and the challenges that face ESSPIN in the coming months.

Federal Level Reform

Issues and Objectives

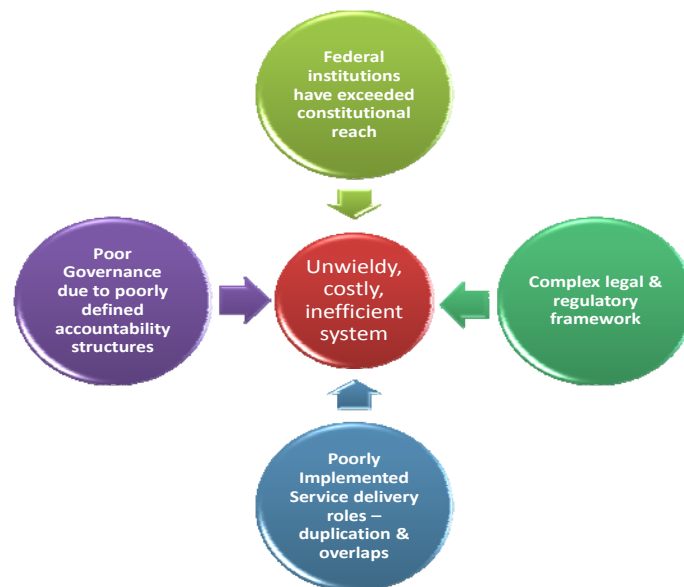
3. ESSPIN's purpose at the Federal level is to strengthen the policy, funding and quality assurance functions of the Federal MDAs, to strengthen the stewardship and governance framework of the Federal Government, within which basic education reform at the state, local and community levels can take place. ESSPIN works in only a small minority of Nigeria's States; work at the Federal level is key to replication across the other States of the Federation. ESSPIN is working with the key stakeholders at the Federal level, which impinge on the provision of basic education. These comprise: the Federal Ministry of Education (FME)¹ and selected parastatals, namely the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) and the National Teachers' Institute (NTI).
4. The objective is to support these Federal institutions to fulfil their mandates and provide an enabling environment that enhances the performance of the State Governments in their attainment of the MDGs and EFA Goals. At both the Federal and State levels, the institutional structures that have been designed to manage the educational system suffer from poor accountability and poor governance, with issues of corruption and inefficiency plaguing the system.
 - FME has exceeded its constitutional reach, often delving into implementation at state level and the challenge is to get the ministry to focus on its core mandate of

¹ Within the FME, the main focus is on the Policy, Planning, Management and Research Department (PPM&R) and the Federal Inspection Service (FIS).

policy formulation, setting and maintaining minimum standards, monitoring progress and managing Federal tertiary institutions.

- UBEC has failed to a significant extent in fulfilling its core function of disbursing federal funds for the expansion of basic education in line with MDG goals. Large amounts of funds that could have been used to support schools remain in central coffers.
- NCCE has failed to set the necessary standards and to monitor and regulate pre-service teacher training to ensure the system works well.
- NTI is producing teacher upgrading programmes that are out of date and ineffective.

Current realities



5. The challenge for ESSPIN is to assist key federal institutions to stop doing what they should not be doing and to start doing what they should be doing a great deal better.

Strategy

6. There are three main strands of the ESSPIN strategy. Firstly, ESSPIN is engaging opportunistically at the political level and using this to influence policy direction and execution.
 - ESSPIN took the opportunity to “adopt” 3 Ministerial Technical Advisers of the former Minister.
 - The ESSPIN Federal Team leader participated as a member of the National Roadmap Implementation Task Team (NRITT). This ensured that key ESSPIN interventions were captured in the Roadmap in two of its four Focal Areas

(Standards & Quality Assurance and Funding). It also ensured that NRITTT pursued an Institutional and Legislative work stream, which is responsible for supporting the reform initiatives for EMIS, MLA and the policy formulation process (JCCE/NCE).

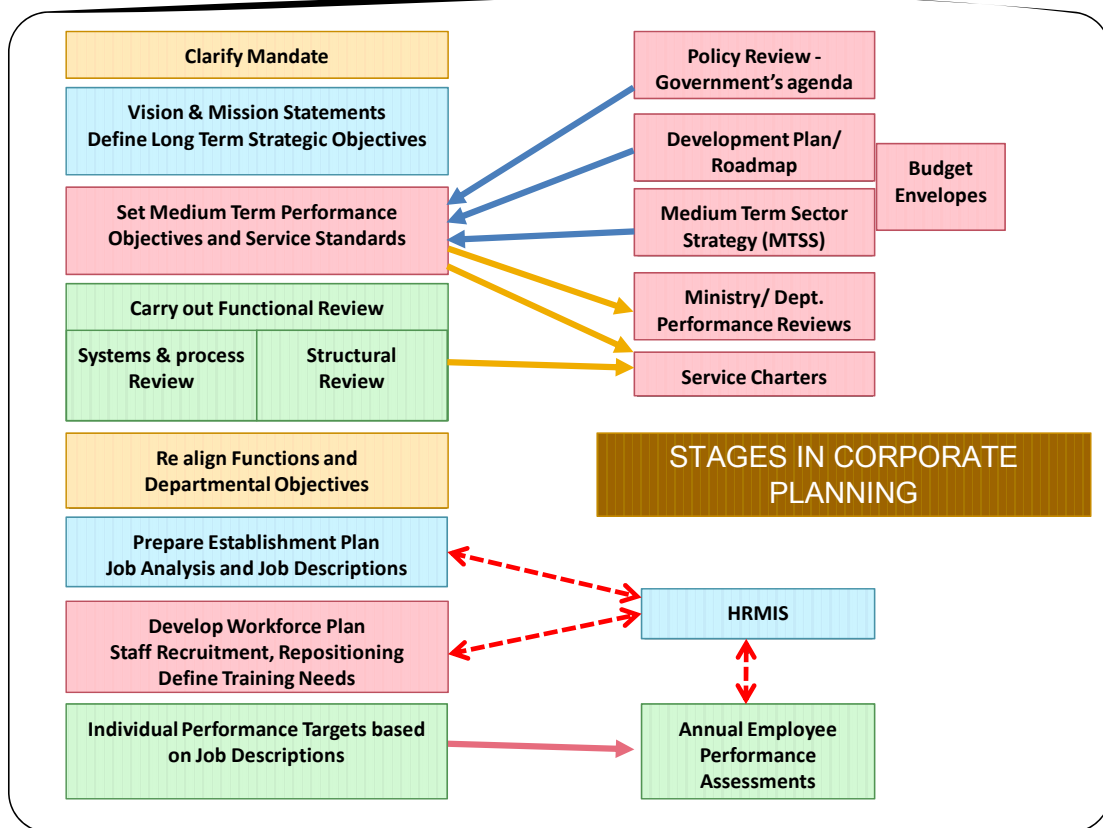
- Advisory support to the new Minister of Education, who as the former Commissioner of Education Jigawa participated in the ESSPIN study tour to China, is likely to widen the opportunities for influence at the policy level
 - 2011 will bring in new Governors and Commissioners. In order to influence this new batch of political leaders, ESSPIN is planning to organize an induction programme for Commissioners on “leading change”.
7. The second strand of the strategy is the organisational development of key parts of the federal structure. FME is currently not fit for purpose as the main driver of policy formulation, the gathering of information (EMIS) and monitoring against standards (monitoring of learning achievement (MLA) and the Federal Inspectorate).
- The organisational structures, management systems and procedures and staffing capacities of the Department of Policy, Planning, Management and Research (PPM&R) and FIS in FME and of UBEC, NCCE and NTI amongst the parastatals are inappropriate to the efficient execution of their core functions.
 - The approach is therefore to lead these institutions through a process of self-evaluation and diagnosis (a process that is in line with the Public Sector Management Work being developed by SPARC).
 - This “visioning” is expected to lead to a process of strategic or corporate planning and an alignment of activities (and budgets) to these plans.
 - A series of actions follow: departmental restructuring; the tighter definition of job descriptions; the examination of staffing levels; an audit of staff competencies; and personnel changes and/or training.
8. The third strand of the strategy involves working directly with the federal institutions to improve the ways in which they discharge their core functions.
- For PPM&R the aim is i) an improved policy formulation process; ii) capacity to advise states on how to manage the planning and implementation cycle and how to collect, manage and use data; and iii) capacity to manage assessments of learning achievement on a routine basis.
 - For FIS, the aim is the creation of a central coordinating capacity for setting quality standards, ensuring quality assurance evaluations are conducted to recognised standards and collating and analysing the results.
 - For UBEC the key aim is to ensure faster and more effective disbursement of funds, by: i) reforming the funding criteria; ii) making more use of mechanisms for getting funds directly to schools (e.g. self-help and imbalance funds); and iii) improving safeguards and monitoring.

- For NCCE, the aim is to strengthen the intellectual “authority” of the institution to;
 - i) improve the curriculum of teacher training; ii) properly regulate the Colleges of Education; and iii) disseminate learning and best practices amongst Colleges.
 - For NTI the aim is to i) improve the standard of the NCE training provided through distance learning; ii) strengthen delivery mechanisms and iii) support more effective monitoring of courses.
9. By necessity, not all of the strategy can be attempted at once. ESSPIN has moved forward with political engagement and organisational work with PPM&R, UBEC and FIS. ESSPIN has so far done little Organisational Development (OD) work with NCCE, although work on improving its core functions is proceeding. There has been little engagement with NTI so far.
10. In order of priority, improving the flow of funds through UBEC is of highest importance. The reforms in the other federal institutions, which are outlined above, are desirable for establishing an environment conducive to improvements in the provision of basic education, but the provision of more resources to schools is the critical objective and the criterion, against which the success of ESSPIN activity at the federal level should mainly be judged.

Progress to date

11. The work to date has focused on the following key areas:
- Institutional/Organisational development of key Departments namely PPM&R in FME and parastatals namely UBEC and NCCE
 - In PPM&R specifically, institutional strengthening of the policy and planning process, EMIS and MLA
 - Standards and Quality Assurance – the reform of the Federal Inspectorate Services (FIS) through the establishment of a new agency, the National Agency for Education Quality Assurance (NAEQA) that uses a QA approach to school inspection (see paper on Quality Assurance) and plays a complementary and coordinating role in respect of QA at State level
 - Improving funding flows and public financial management
12. With regard to the PPM&R Department, the OD work started with a retreat in August 2009 and follow up session in Abuja. To date Stages 1-3 of the Corporate Planning Framework, developed by SPARC (see diagram below) has been implemented. Stage 4 which is the functional review of the Divisions followed by the Systems, Process and Structural Reviews has commenced. National Consultants for the OD work have been engaged and started work in April 2010.

The Key Stages of the Corporate Planning Process (courtesy of SPARC)



13. Another significant development is the establishment of the “Technical Committee on ESSPIN” by the FME Permanent Secretary. This committee is providing a means for advancing the ESSPIN agenda on items such as EMIS and MLA and is providing a regular and routine means of briefing senior managers.
14. With regard to policy formulation Technical Assistance will be provided by ESSPIN to drive a change management programme. In the area of planning, a draft National Policy on Planning is being articulated with ESSPIN’s support. The aim is to standardize the process of planning at the three levels – Education Sector Planning (Strategic Planning); Operational Planning (MTSS) and School Based Planning (Whole School Planning) and disseminate these policy guidelines across the states.
15. The draft Bill for the proposed National Commission for Education Quality Assurance (NAEQA) has been reviewed. It has been sent to the Federal Ministry of Justice for onward transmission to the National Assembly. A Harmonization Team has been established to review the Quality Assurance Handbook to ensure that it conforms to best practice.

16. The work with UBEC covers two key areas namely Public Financial Management and Organisational Development. At a retreat in the last quarter of 2009 ESSPIN facilitated the emergence of a modified Vision and Mission Statement that speaks to the changes UBEC wishes to effect within the organisation. Clearly defined strategic goals and objectives were also agreed that would change how funds are accessed by states, improve the relationship between UBEC and SUBEBs and develop internal and external accountability mechanisms aimed at streamlining federal funding flows and making them more transparent.
17. After the retreat and a series of follow-up working sessions a paper was presented to the Executive Secretary, UBEC highlighting observations made at the series of working sessions, particularly organisational culture issues at UBEC and strained relations between UBEC and the SUBEBs, which has influenced UBEC's strategic priorities. A review of functional systems commences in the second quarter of 2010.
18. NCCE reform priorities have been agreed in the areas of curriculum reform, college quality assurance and college institutional restructuring. A new Quality Assurance "Toolkit" that NCCE is proposing to use is being reviewed by ESSPIN.

Future challenges

19. One of the challenges cited in the Inception Report was the cessation of the Roadmap if the political leadership changed at Ministerial level. Fortunately, the new Minister has committed herself to the implementation of significant parts of the Roadmap. The main challenge, however, is to ensure that these parts of the plan are in fact implemented.
20. A second challenge is to ensure the effective transition from one administration to the next after the 2011 elections.
21. A third challenge is the possible internal resistance to change in departments such as PPM&R and UBEC. These are organisations in which the balance of incentives favours the status quo. By intensifying organisational development work in these bodies, through the on-site work of national consultants ESSPIN intends to keep the momentum for change going.
22. Perhaps the greatest challenge is that despite all the effort to improve the policy and funding environment set by the federal institutions, these changes actually make no difference to the management of basic education and the quality of education in schools. Improved policy formulation, data collection or improved disbursement rates of federal funds require better state and local government structures, systems and safeguards. Changes at the federal level are therefore mutually dependent on corresponding changes in governance and service delivery throughout the education system

Strategic Planning & Medium Term Sector Strategy (MTSS)

Issues and Objectives

23. The absence of a clear planning framework in any of the states with which ESSPIN is working provided a major challenge at the Programme's outset. This was addressed by the preparation of a three-year strategic planning framework or medium term sector strategy (MTSS) as a basis for setting priorities and targeting resources to meet those priorities. This relates to the ESSPIN logframe purpose that: "the planning, financing and delivery of sustainable and replicable basic education services in terms of access, equity and quality are improved"; and Output 2 - "State-level and local government-level governance and management of basic education strengthened".
24. More specifically, the logframe's OVI's include:

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Issues</i>
<i>O2.1 Measure of variation of total allocation between MTSS Year 1 and annual budget</i>	Analysis currently under way for 2010 budget, indicating close correlation of MTSS Year 1 & annual budget in some states and MDAs, but late budget additions in some states & MDAs increased the variance.
<i>O2.2 Institutional functionality of State bodies of:</i> <i>a. policy and planning</i> <i>b. financing of basic education</i> <i>c. teacher professional development</i> <i>d. quality assurance</i>	Baseline of very low functionality in each state with MDA Departments of Planning, Research & Statistics taking little or no responsibility for system policy & planning. Substantial changes in most states already after capacity-building impact of 1 st year MTSS preparation – learning by doing.

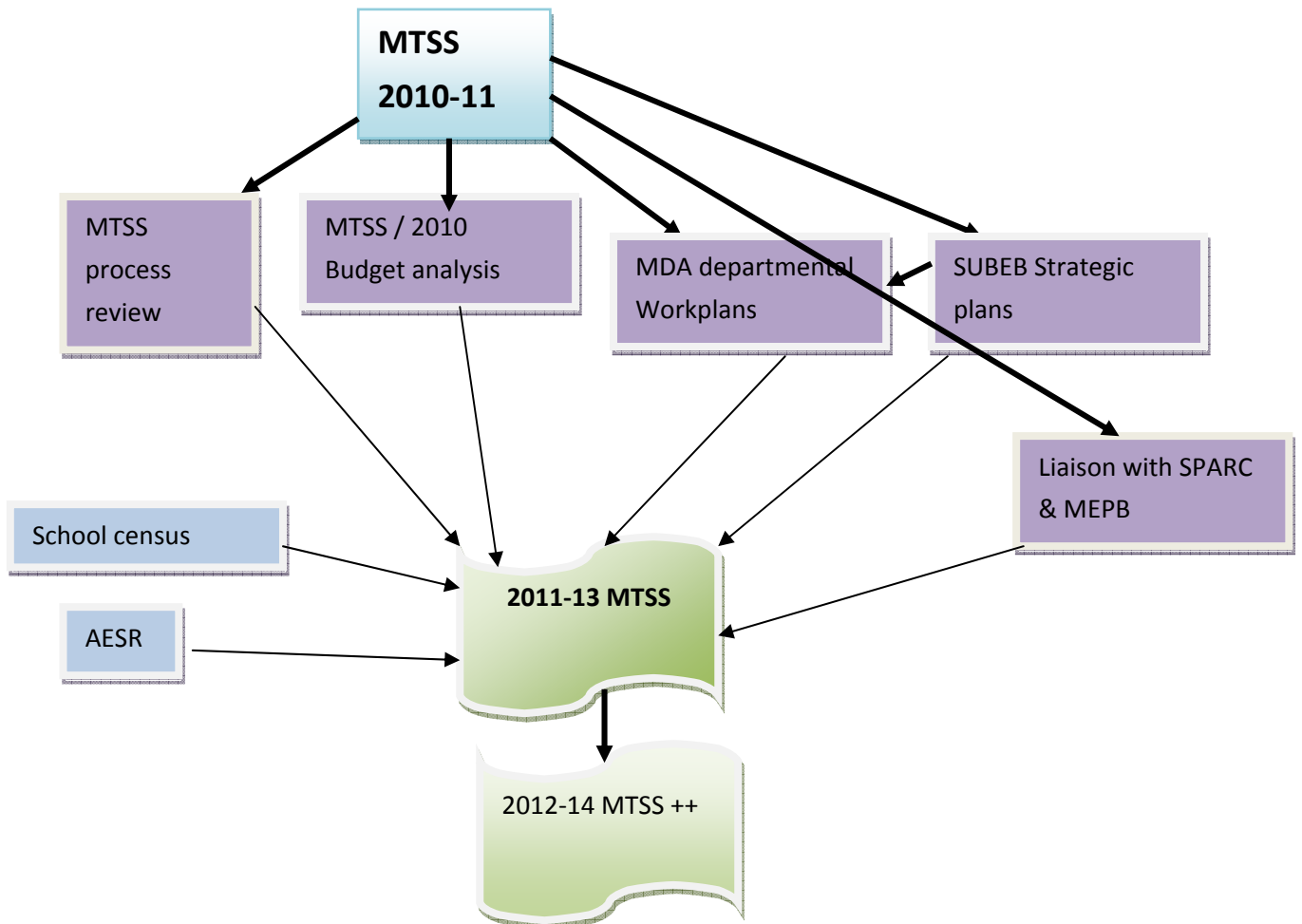
25. A key issue in 2009 was the poor quality of the available data on which plans could be based. This has been addressed through the November 2009 annual school census and the preparation in each state of an Annual Education Sector Performance Report (AESPR). As indicated in the diagram below, the outputs of these will support the preparation of 2011-13 and subsequent MTSS. In particular it will enable more effective utilisation of budget simulation models such as the EPSSim model currently being used to generate MTSS scenarios.
26. This technical paper has been prepared in the context of two other technical papers: Public Financial Management and Organisational Development. Since all three papers are addressing aspects of state and local government governance, there is a degree of overlap amongst them.

Strategy

27. The short/medium term strategic planning (including MTSS) strategy builds upon the substantial investment in MTSS development in five states in 2009. The diagram below indicates the follow-up activities in early to mid-2010, evaluating both the processes employed in MTSS development and the impact of that development on the eventual state education budgets.

28. It is acknowledged that there are lessons to be learned from the experience of leading states through the MTSS process in 2009. Some of these are discussed in the section on Future Challenges below. Two of the major positive consequences are, firstly, that the process forced the various state actors to talk to one another and agree common plans. Secondly that it forged a conceptual link between detailed operational plans and budgets, whereas these had previously been thought of as wholly divorced exercises. The extent to which the MTSS succeeded in its first year is debatable, but it is an iterative process and the first year has laid a solid foundation for subsequent years.

29. Other direct consequences of the first MTSS include capacity-building support for MDA strategic planning through the development of a vision, mission statement, strategic plan and action plan for each SUBEB, along with departmental workplans for the major MDAs involved in MTSS planning. This work is being undertaken with senior MDA managers and particularly the Departments of Planning, Research & Statistics (PRS). The underpinning objective is to enhance the capacity of managers and the PRS so that strategic planning, including annual MTSS preparation, SUBEB strategic plans (bidding for UBEC resources) and departmental workplans will be integrated into the central work programmes of PRS and related departments. (See the technical paper on Organisational Development).



30. The current plan is for TA support for the MTSS to be reduced in 2010 and 2011 and minimised thereafter, once the new political administrations are established and the processes become self-maintaining. This is a vital requirement if the strategic and operational planning reforms are to be sustainable across the MDAs. Close liaison with SPARC is an essential component of this work in enabling the central State Ministries to develop an activity budgeting framework and aligning Education MDA MTSS preparation with the requirements of those central Ministries and other Ministries preparing medium term sector strategies.

31. The ESSPIN Strategic Planning team worked in 2009 with UBEC, supporting it to identify its vision, mission and strategic plan. Part of this work involved rationalising relationships between UBEC and the SUBEBs. In working with the SUBEBs in similar activities, a strong focus has been on rationalising SUBEB/ LGEA linkages. With the end purpose of adhering to the Mandate of both levels of service delivery in order to promote and support devolution of responsibilities and funds to the appropriate level. A study of the current and recent experiences of states in the provision of funds directly to schools is currently under way.

32. This will inform the devolution strategy, with the objectives of reducing leakages and motivating schools and communities by taking responsibilities for significant planning and resource decisions. This work is being undertaken in cooperation with ESSPIN Outputs 3 & 4, so that work with School Improvement Teams and SBMC committees will be located within a state-wide organisational structure where policy, operations and M&E are integrated to maximise service delivery and effective resource deployment.
33. The longer-term strategy is for the individual organisations, with the help of ESSPIN OD/HRM support, to review their structures and re-align them to match changing requirements. Capacity-building support can then be directed at the key nodes where inter-organisational cooperation e.g. between SUBEB, LGEAs and SBMCs is problematic.

Progress to date

34. The main achievements in the area of strategic planning/ MTSS so far have been the completion of five MTSS reports that specify in details the goals, objectives and costed activities required to improve state education services over the next three years. A strategy “from ESP to MTSS” was agreed in February 2009 and has been pursued as the framework for MTSS development in each state. The approach has centred on an assessment of each state’s planning capacity and the development of a work programme with the dual objectives of preparing a functional MTSS and enhancing the planning capacity within each MDA. The work has been undertaken by substantial cross-departmental teams in each state and has had a substantial capacity-building component. In consequence, MDA officers bring both expertise and enthusiasm to the tasks involved in the next annual MTSS.
35. The experience in 2009 has also been of great value in working with SPARC in extending the MTSS/MTEF approach to other sectors and in linking more closely with the central Finance and Economic Planning Ministries. The review and budget analysis of the first year MTSS is providing valuable guidelines for not only the 2011-13 MTSS preparation but more generally for SLPs and MDAs in preparing medium-term strategies. Joint meetings with SPARC, MoEP representatives and other SLPs will enable the lessons from the first year of MTSS preparation to inform not only work in the education sector but also the work of the central Ministries. SPARC’s own position on MTEF/MTSS has developed and increased in flexibility over the last year and we are confident that we are now following a single common approach.

Future challenges

36. This section focuses, initially, on two non-financial challenges facing ESSPIN and its State partners and then examines a third area of challenge relating to the relationship between plans and budgets.

37. The major non-financial challenges are: firstly, the devolution of authority and responsibility within states to the levels where planning and resource provision are integrated, so as to utilise resources most effectively and transparently; and secondly the development of sufficient capacity at each level to manage these processes efficiently. These challenges are related.
38. If schools are to obtain equitably and efficiently the resources needed for them to deliver quality education, there need to be fewer gaps in the planning framework extending from UBEC/ Federal Government through the SUBEBs/Ministries of Education to the LGEAs, District Education Committees and School-Based Management Committees. Greater fluidity in the planning process implies the devolution of greater autonomy to lower levels. As a part of that process, District Education Committees or some district forum of SBMCs, will need to be in place to provide the link between LGEAs and schools. This is an enormous challenge given the large numbers of LGEAs and schools in the six states and the generally low planning capacity therein.
39. This is the second challenge. Stakeholders at sub-State levels have clear and strong views as to the needs of their schools, teachers and pupils. The mechanisms for articulating those needs are not yet in place. The MTSS and other strategic planning approaches need to be sufficiently open to build upwards from those grass-root needs, so that local priorities are consolidated at LGEA then State levels and represented not only in the State MTSS but also in Government policy agendas and the SUBEB action plan. This is an even greater challenge than generating the technical planning competence within MDAs & LGEAs, and it requires close collaboration not only with SLPs, particularly SAVI and SPARC but also with other IDPs and Civil Society Organisations.
40. The third major challenge is to broaden the MTSS to address a wider range of issues of policy and of efficiency in resource allocation. There are several issues relating to the linkage between planning, budgetary management and public financial management. (This section should be read in conjunction with the Technical Paper on PFM²).
41. In the 2011-2013 cycle of the MTSS it will be important to achieve a better fit between the MTSS, which is a planning process, and the preparation of the annual budget for 2011. The 2009 MTSS exercise, as a first round of the MTSS, concentrated on the strategic level and the identification of prioritised development objectives, targets and new activities. It was only partially informed about the starting point in terms of existing demands on the sector budget, whether in terms of the capital budget (the

² The Technical Paper on PFM sets out a number of on-going initiatives aimed at improved efficiency through supporting strengthened financial management systems in key sector organisations (initially SUBEBs and the LGEAs).

status of on-going projects) or the recurrent budget (the extent to which the utilisation of the recurrent budget is committed in advance to routine activities of a non-developmental nature). In addition, the serious implications of the misfit in terms of classification between the MTSS (activity-based) and the recurrent state budget (standard economic input-based) were not fully appreciated. As a result, in most states there was not a smooth progression from MTSS to budget. The support of SPARC in effecting a change to activity-based budgeting is crucial in addressing this problem.

42. In the MTSS preparation cycle (for 2011 to 2013) these issues are being addressed, through a systematic review of the existing (2010) budget and through support for the development of Departmental Work Plans in all MDAs in the 5 states. As a result it is confidently expected that the 2011-13 MTSS will be based on a more realistic appraisal of the appropriate budget constraint. This will happen both through support from SPARC to the MEPBs to issue sectoral and MDA budget ceilings in advance of the MTSS exercise, and through a better understanding of the existing commitments in the budget (whether capital projects or unavoidable routine activities).
43. With this strengthened appraisal of the starting-point, the 2010 MTSS exercise will be more explicit in seeking to achieve greater development impact from the recurrent budget (in addition to prioritisation of capital investments). This will concentrate initially on the utilisation of the Overheads component of the recurrent budget. The more deep-rooted and politically sensitive issues relating to the Personnel side of the recurrent budget - overstaffing and ineffective staff deployment in the MDAs - are best left to the 2011 MTSS preparation exercise, after the elections are over.
44. As the MTSS matures, it needs to give greater attention to policy issues and to systemic and organisational reforms aimed at improved efficiency and effectiveness of resource use. There are also wider issues which need to be addressed, such as problems of staff complements (both in teaching and MDAs) and reforms to the system for sector financing, which should be addressed through the MTSS strategic planning process.

Public Financial Management

Issues and Objectives

45. Issues relating to public financial management (PFM) lie at the core of the Purpose of the ESSPIN program. Based on oil wealth Nigeria has substantial resources which can be directed to achieving the MDGs, and while significant resources have for some time flowed from federal level to the state governments, these resources have not been effectively applied to achieving feasible gains in the basic education system. ESSPIN activities under PFM are primarily addressing the issues covered by Indicators 01.1, 02.1 and 02.2 in the program logframe.
46. PFM is not a separately delineated area of activities within ESSPIN. Rather PFM addresses a wide range of issues which relate to financial management. This PFM Technical Paper needs to be read in close conjunction with the Technical Papers on Strategic Planning & the Medium Term Sector Strategy (MTSS) and on Organisational Development and Management.
47. In the area of PFM, ESSPIN is seeking to support the federal and state level authorities in addressing four major issues:
 - The budgeting system in the education sector MDAs is not based on planning and strategic priorities: although planning processes have existed for many years (including Education Sector Plans), the linkage between plans and the annual budgetary preparation and approval has been very weak, lacking strategic direction and mechanisms to ensure that plans are reflected in the allocation of resources. The result has been the waste of available public financial resources on low priority activities or, worse, the diversion of funds from the sector to extraneous purposes;
 - Wastage in the application of funds earmarked for education: the lack of cost control in major areas of expenditure, over-manning and a prevailing culture of corruption in the utilization of public funds take a heavy toll on the education sector. Corruption occurs through many mechanisms including misapplication in the system for payment of teachers' salaries, non-transparent and non-competitive procurement practices and unsupervised capital projects. As a result only a fraction of the appropriated funds actually reaches the destined beneficiaries in the education system.
 - Inadequate systems of financial management, monitoring and reporting in the MDAs and parastatals: a large proportion of the funds for basic education flow through the SUBEBs. However, these statutory bodies are characterised by inadequate systems for financial management, poorly trained staff, deficient or absent oversight and a long-established practice of failing to meet statutory

reporting requirements. Even where external audits are undertaken (for example by state Auditor-Generals) the deficiencies reported are rarely corrected.

- Systems of paternalistic funding mechanisms which are disempowering of both states and schools; the system for the financing of basic education denies LGEAs and schools access to and control over funds. Goods and services are provided in kind, where they are provided at all, and as a result many schools have no budget to manage. This undermines the ability of the LGEA, schools, headteachers and the communities they serve to plan and implement school improvement programmes.

48. ESSPIN's objectives in the field of PFM are to:

- Support the overhaul of the planning and budget preparation system in MDAs and parastatals (in line with SPARC MTEF/MTSS work with central ministries) and to create a system in the MDAs of the sector where strategies drive priorities, priorities drive budget appropriation, and the approved budget is faithfully executed.
- Increase the systemic constraints on waste and corruption. ESSPIN believes that corruption as manifested in the basic education sector is largely the result of systemic weaknesses which open the door to corrupt practices;
- Support the establishment of adequate systems of financial management, concentrating on the institutions through which the bulk of the funding for basic education flows, namely the SUBEBs and the LGEAs at state level and UBEC at the federal level;
- Reform the funding system for basic education to extend greater autonomy to schools/communities, with appropriate institutional strengthening to allow these reforms to work.

Strategy

49. The major elements of the ESSPIN Strategy in PFM are:

- Decentralisation of the funding chain for basic education through:
 - Relaxation of UBEC IF financing rules;
 - Converting UBEC into a capacity-building agency for SUBEBs;
 - Converting SUBEBs into capacity-building institutions for local tiers of State governments;
 - Strengthening the capacity of the LGEAs to support school level transformation;
 - Developing and advocating Direct Funding of Schools (DFS) as an element of the systemic transformation.
- Concentrate on the major flows: the major part of the financing for the basic education sector flows through just two or three institutions. At the state level

these are the SUBEB, but also the LGEAs and the State Ministry of Education. Earlier project initiatives (notably CUBE) concentrated largely on the SMOEs with little attention paid to the SUBEBs which are the conduit for the bulk of BE funding. ESSPIN is paying particular attention to the SUBEBs.

- Strengthen the planning, budget preparation, budget execution, reporting cycle, in collaboration with SPARC. The strategy is based on development of the MTSS as the centrepiece of sector planning for the basic education sector, the building of political constituencies to ensure that priorities established in the MTSS are reflected in the state budget, and the strengthening of budget execution through support for the development of Departmental Work Plans in each department in each MDA to form the basis for the release of approved budgeted funds and for the monitoring of budget execution.
- Identify and patch the weakest links in the financial control/management systems to limit the leakages to corruption. The ESSPIN strategy is concentrating on the SUBEBs (which control the major capital flows to the basic education sector) and the LGEAs, (which are intimately involved in the processing of teachers salaries). Strengthening procurement systems within all major spending agencies is a specific thrust.
- Support the organisational overhaul of the central agencies which provide or oversee service delivery (esp. SUBEB, LGEAs, SMOEs). This element of the ESSPIN strategy is addressed in more detail in the Technical Paper on Organisational Development. OD reform has, however, an important bearing on the ability of the major organisations to implement improvements to their financial management systems.

Progress to date

50. Significant progress is being achieved in all the elements of the strategy outlined above. There has been successful development of annual State budgets in 5 states, including prioritised Action Plans designed to guide the budget formulation process. In 2010 the emphasis has progressed to include design of formats for Departmental Work Plans which have been welcomed by the MDAs in all states and detailed DWPs are currently under preparation in the MDAs of all the 5 ESSPIN states.
51. Financial management systems (FMS) reviews have been completed in Kwara and Lagos SUBEBs and planned to commence later in the year in Kano SUBEB. These reviews have pointed to major weaknesses in financial management systems including procurement processes. In Kwara and Lagos SUBEBs recommendations from the reviews are now under implementation by State-led Task Teams.

52. Support for the preparation of DWPs is a major task (there are roughly 500 departments in the MDAs in the sector in the 5 states) but is promising to yield significant benefits, including:
- Increasing the proportion of MTSS planned actions which are being fitted into the approved 2010 recurrent budgets;
 - Clarifying the routine and developmental activities being undertaken by MDA departments in 2010;
 - Providing a basis for monitoring of budget execution by education sector MDAs;
 - Providing an improved baseline understanding of utilisation of the budget for the up-coming 2011-13 MTSS preparation;
 - Taking the first critical steps towards introduction of activity-based budgeting for the recurrent budget (it is already used for the capital side of the budget).
53. It should be understood that the DWP activity is currently focused on the utilisation of the Overheads component of the state recurrent budget. The complex issues relating to achieving improved efficiency and effectiveness in the use of the Personnel component of the recurrent budget will need to be addressed at some point in the future. Nevertheless, the clarification of the activities which the existing staff complements are supposed to undertake through the DWPs is a step in the right direction.
54. In the area of the basic education funding system good progress has been made in working with UBEC on the modalities for relaxation of use of IF funds. In addition progress has been made in building a constituency of support at both federal and state levels for reforms aimed at ensuring a flow of funds down to the school level.

Future Challenges

55. There are constraints on progressing from planning (MTSS) to Budget in the absence/advance of systemic reform on budget preparation. ESSPIN would benefit from an increased attention by SPARC on systemic reform of the formats for the state budgets to accommodate activity-based budgets.
56. There are powerful vested interests in maintaining large block flows through SUBEB.
57. Low levels of institutional and human capacity at school/SBMC level will limit the speed of roll-out of direct funding for schools.
58. Reform of the SUBEBs calls for a simultaneous process of reform of the LGEAs, since the relation between SUBEB and LGEA is symbiotic. This poses a challenge in terms of the sheer number of LGEAs to be supported and reformed and the capacity problems at this level.

Organisational Development and Management

Issues and Objectives

59. ESSPIN addresses Organisational Development for education sector agencies under ESSPIN Output 1 (strengthening the federal governance framework) and Output 2 (strengthening governance and management of basic education at State and local government levels).
60. Overlapping roles and responsibilities, due in part to weak legal frameworks, create waste and leakages. Both the substance and the interpretation of the legal bases of the various agencies responsible for the delivery of education have contributed to this situation.
61. A lack of trust pervades the system. This has discouraged the devolution of decision making and inhibited rational resource allocation. The higher levels in the system, such as UBEC and SUBEB regard the problem in terms of a lack of capacity and reliability at lower levels. Their response to this has not been to address capacity building in the next level down or to strengthen the delivery systems but to bypass what they see as weaker agencies and attempt to deliver services directly to schools. SUBEBs have been regarded by UBEC, and LGEAs by SUBEBs, as incapable of planning and managing resources and needing close supervision to function as mere delivery bodies. LGEAs are not actively consulting schools and communities for the same basic reasons.
62. The ability of communities and schools to address their local needs and priorities are restricted by the prevailing centralised provision of resources. Infrastructure, maintenance, instructional materials are centrally determined at state level and provided in kind with little or no direct cash funding going to schools. This approach to school resourcing inhibits local ownership of activities and restricts the local direction of resources to local priorities, as there is little consultation and planning from the bottom up. Centralised procurement and deliveries in kind have been justified on the grounds of 'efficiency' but they have allowed the exercise of patronage and other forms of corruption. This has further restricted the availability of resources for schools.
63. The major objectives of the organisational development component of ESSPIN attempt to address these issues by providing support to develop the capacity and systems at Federal, State and local government levels, to devolve responsibilities and provide accountable cash and other resources to improve the functioning of schools by supporting:
 - The development of strategic and corporate planning processes that refocus the State and local level agencies to carrying out their current legal mandates;

- The integration of agency planning with state education sector MTSS planning and execution, including SPARC- led central ministry processes;
- Financial and organisational audits to identify problems (including overlapping roles and responsibilities) within the existing systems at state and local government levels;
- Reform and/or development of systems to address the shortcomings in accountability and transparency;
- The rationalisation of management structures, roles and responsibilities and HR management processes to improve personnel efficiency;
- Capacity building that is integrated as part of a reform process rather than stand-alone training;
- Improved working relationships and communications among the Federal and state MDAs and local governments.

Strategy

64. The basic strategic approach of ESSPIN to the issues raised starts with a focus on the main deliverers of Basic Education in states. With limited resources ESSPIN is focusing on agencies that will have the most direct influence on the desired outcomes. The two agencies within states that are keys to change in Basic Education are the SUBEBs and the LGEAs. SUBEBs are the channel for resources from the Federal and State level to LGEAs and the schools, while LGEAs are the main local managers of service delivery. SMOEs do not deliver Basic Education but have functional roles and structures that are relevant, such as Planning Research and Statistics, Finance and Quality Assurance. The intermingling of roles and responsibilities is longstanding and embedded in legal frameworks that are difficult to change. The opaqueness of lines of delineation tends to compound the ODM problems.
65. At the federal level, ESSPIN is concentrating ODM work initially on the PPM&R Department of the FME and UBEC, the main channel for federal funds to basic education.
66. ESSPIN seeks to apply a coordinated approach of reforming Public Sector Management and Public Financial Management. While it might appear that the most directly relevant effort would simply be to reform the financial management systems in SUBEBs and LGEAs, sustainable reform also requires attention to the core functions of the organisations and the structures in which the financial and other systems are embedded. Therefore ESSPIN's strategy is to embed the financial reform within a coordinated approach, which involves a refocused organisation with a revised vision and mission and a corresponding corporate plan. The refocused organisation would then be structured and staffed to carry out its activities efficiently and effectively.

67. The ESSPIN integrated ODM approach has two strands. Firstly, it involves strategic planning at Federal (UBEC) level and at State (SUBEB) levels. A refocused UBEC will be in a position to support SUBEBs as they themselves undergo a process of self examination and reform and to change the funding environment to allow devolution of responsibility to the State level. SUBEBs are being encouraged to view the capacity limitations of LGEAs as opportunities for support and capacity building, rather than reasons for bypassing them. Similarly LGEAs will be encouraged to develop the dormant District Education Committees so that school priorities can be determined and addressed in manageable forums, and so that schools and communities - through School Based Management Committees (SBMCs) - can contribute meaningfully to the development of medium term plans and budgets.
68. The second way in which ESSPIN's ODM work is integrated relates to the Public Sector Management component of SPARC. In the states, ESSPIN is attempting to introduce organisational reforms in the education sector that reflect those that SPARC is promoting with the central MDAs, the Office of the Head of Service, the Ministries of Economic Planning and Finance. This parallel approach is mutually reinforcing.
69. ESSPIN is supporting organisational reviews to match structure to strategy. Following development of the Strategic Plans, the next step is to match systems and structures to the goals and objectives set in those plans so that the human and financial resources can be used most effectively. The major activities that arise from this are reviews of the financial and HR systems and the potential restructuring of the organisations to match the goals and objectives defined in the strategic plans. A further step in the review process is to study the legal framework in the sector and support reform. However, experience to date has suggested that legal reform is a long and involved process and an avenue that may not be appropriate at the current point in the electoral cycle. The promotion of MOUs amongst all the agencies involved in basic education, such as the one developed in Kwara, may be a necessary interim step to full legal rationalisation.

Progress to date

70. Most of the calendar year 2009 was taken up in establishing the MTSS process with all major MDAs in the ESSPIN States. As SUBEBs, and to a lesser extent LGEAs, took part in this process, ESSPIN has had many opportunities to interact with state and local government level organisations. Over the past few months the focus has shifted to organisational development. The key elements of the strategy are being implemented, though progress in different states depends on their peculiar political and organisational environments. A common strategy underlies the process but the scope of implementation varies between states. Activities completed or underway at this stage include:

- UBEC Strategic Plan completed. The new Strategic Plan identified the main responsibilities of UBEC as the mobilisation of resources and the provision of support to SUBEBs and there is already an evident change in approach allowing more flexibility for state SUBEBs to determine appropriate priorities for funding based on State needs.
- Five state SUBEBs are now most of the way through the self evaluation process in that they have developed the framework structure identifying the Vision, Mission, Goals, Objectives and Actions. They are now proceeding to final report stage and some are ready to undertake structural review
- Reviews of financial systems have now been completed in two states and final reports are available.
- The LGEA process has commenced though it is much less advanced at this stage depending as it does on the completion of the two levels above to identify new directions and responsibilities. In Kwara, the LGEAs have completed a planning exercise to produce monthly activity plans for the current financial year following an organisational development consultant input.
- An MOU has been developed and signed In Kwara State by all the principal stakeholders in the education sector. This has spelled out roles, responsibilities and communication channels in the sector.

Future challenges

71. The main challenges foreseen at this point include:

- Matching Strategic Plan implementation with organisational and financial reform – this depends to a great extent on political and managerial will at all levels. SLPs cannot bring about organisational change. They can only support change brought about by the people in the system. This will require ESSPIN maintaining close ties with policymakers and senior staff in the relevant agencies and with associated central Ministries and their technical support, especially SPARC.
- Providing sufficient resources to support the six state SUBEBs and the much more numerous LGEAs – potentially there are a large number of agencies to be supported especially at the local government level. One way of managing this is to maintain the focus on the SUBEBs, so they can sustainably support and guide the LGEAs, rather than trying to address directly all LGEA organisational development needs.
- Maintaining momentum for change, particularly through a period in which attention will be distracted by the electoral process. Enabling senior managers to manage the change process, refocusing organisations, changing the structures and also changing financial and human resources systems are challenging tasks. It will be important to ensure that UBEC plays its new role and provides resources to support the enlargement of management capacity at the state level, as envisaged in their new Strategic Plan.

School Improvement and Teacher Professional Development

Issues and Objectives

72. ESSPIN Output 3 has an explicit change agenda, at the heart of which lies transforming schools into institutions able to develop literate, numerate, self reliant pupils equipped with the skills to participate fully in Nigeria’s culture, governance and economy. It is recognised that no “quick fix” is available to rectify the systemic failure of the past couple of decades. However, what can be done is to put the school at the centre of change: to focus on school management and classroom/teaching conditions, and factors which support development in these areas that will lead to enhanced learning outcomes for pupils through improved schools and more effective teaching.
73. The work is based on a clear and compelling argument for change. The fundamental problem that ESSPIN faces in addressing issues of school improvement and teacher professional development is how to turn around a fragmented education system where systemic failure is the norm and where there is little incentive to change. Federal and sector analyses show that the problems are recognized at all levels, and visions and plans as to ways forward have been expressed ad infinitum; little, however, has happened in the way of implementation, and sustained change to address the quality of education delivery in Nigerian schools has so far remained a distant dream.
74. Schooling, in terms of pupils achieving appropriate learning outcomes for their age, exists only for the few. Monitoring of Learning Achievement assessments (UNESCO 1996, 2003), (Johnson and Hsieh, 2007), and assessments in pilot form in Kano and Lagos carried out under ESSPIN (Holbrooke, 2009), show consistent low scores in literacy and numeracy levels and almost no change in pupil performance over the period. Nigerian children consistently underachieve.
75. Teachers are also failing. A recent study of all primary and junior secondary teachers in Kwara (Johnson and Gabrscek, 2008), showed that few teachers meet the minimum knowledge and competency levels to deliver the primary curriculum. Furthermore, a classroom research study (Davison, 2009) shows teachers lack even basic teaching skills. Pre-service and in-service education courses are geared to producing qualified teachers with a National Certificate of Education, which is subject and secondary education focused. In the Colleges of Education in the ESSPIN States only 5 – 10% of students follow primary education courses. However, as the Johnson and Davison studies show that no matter what course teachers follow training is ineffective in preparing them for the classroom.

Strategy

76. Previous quality improvement initiatives in Nigeria have concentrated on large scale teacher upgrading and curriculum reform projects. These initiatives, as illustrated above, have had little impact on improved learning outcomes. Putting the school at the centre of change as advocated by ESSPIN requires a major shift in thinking by decision makers within the education system and requires a radical approach at all levels. The conceptual model put forward by ESSPIN (Position Paper Component 3) to address school and teacher issues is rooted in school improvement research. The model highlights the factors and processes that need to be in place at school level if desired pupil outcomes are to be achieved. The model also illustrates that change at school level cannot take place in isolation, and that school reform can only take place alongside governance and system reform which supports schools. As a result, activities relating to school improvement and teacher professional development under ESSPIN are focused on areas both internal and external to the school.
77. At school level, the approach is to put in place activities which would enable schools to take charge of their own development. Here, the emphasis is on training headteachers to effectively lead and manage and to plan for their school's development. Teacher activities are directed at improving generic teaching skills, teaching to improve literacy and numeracy and school-based staff development. External to the school, the focus is to develop governance systems that support the school: the establishment of an advisory cadre which is linked to quality assurance systems; a school grants scheme to give schools some autonomy so enabling schools to have some responsibility for their own development as well as fostering some accountability; strategies to promote a more capable teaching force through better initial training, a defined career structure, and a teacher deployment system which is responsive to needs; a school infrastructure programme which demonstrates better school build; and a school water and sanitation programme which provides for a healthier school environment.
78. In practice, while the conceptual model has provided a framework within which to work, the strategy adopted has been influenced by particular State needs and by what is realisable from their Education Sector Plans. In Kwara, in response to the "Teacher Needs Assessment," the approach has been to address classroom conditions and teacher effectiveness by developing a literacy and numeracy programme, which will be implemented in all schools. Other elements of the model, for example headteacher training, schools grants, support systems, are being built around this. In Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano, a pilot approach has been taken, with the programme being implemented in selected Local Government Areas (LGEAs). In Lagos, implementation is being linked to a school renovation programme being carried out in all LGEAs. In these States, the focus is on improving school and classroom conditions through better school management

and school-based teacher development, again with support systems and other elements of the model built in.

79. While many of the activities being supported by ESSPIN are in the form of pilot initiatives, these are not being conducted simply for the purposes of demonstration, in the hope that they will be taken up by States, but on the basis that States have already made a level of commitment to their expansion. The intention is that these activities become institutionalised in the next few years.
80. This is not without risks. Success involves the interplay of many factors. Ultimately, the degree of achievable change at school level will depend not just on the activities being put in place to address school improvement and teacher professional development mentioned above, but on the success of all other elements of ESSPIN and other State Led Programmes to have impact on and turn round a failing system.

Progress to date

81. Much of the early work in relation to school improvement and teacher professional development involved engaging with the States, through seminars, workshops, meetings etc, on what the problems were and how to address them. This early work also clarified who in the States ESSPIN would work with. Unlike other donor initiatives, ESSPIN is not working through a project management unit, and, as a result, in the initial stages there was no clear locus within the State MDAs with which to engage. However, emerging from these initial discussions and from groups established as part of the MTSS process, Quality Management Teams (QMTs) have been established in each State to lead and manage the school improvement process. These teams are made up of senior people from State MDAs, and, being drawn from different agencies, bring a broad perspective to the development process. A capacity-building programme has been established for QMTs, with the aim of embedding the leadership and management of the school improvement initiatives in State systems.
82. Working with the QMTs, ESSPIN is implementing a programme of direct support for school improvement and teacher development at school level, implemented by State School Improvement Teams (SSIT). A SSIT has been established in each State and is intended to become a permanent task force within an established institutional “home”. This programme consists of three interlocking strands:
 - Improved school leadership and management by headteachers;
 - Improved use of learner-centred teaching methods by primary and junior secondary teachers, focusing on literacy and numeracy;
 - Improved support for head teachers and teachers through a reformed advisory service.

83. Progress to date on the above activities varies from State to State. As mentioned previously, the major difference is Kwara's initial focus on literacy and numeracy, while in the other States the focus is on school management. At a later stage the focus will be changed so that Kwara concentrates on school management and other states benefit from the literacy and numeracy work.
84. In Kwara, a 23-strong State School Improvement Team has been recruited through an open competitive process from across the education sector. Selected personnel have been seconded to the programme for two years in the first instance, and they report to and are managed by the State QMT. The SSIT have received three months of intensive training in school management, planning, coaching, mentoring, literacy, numeracy, and materials development. They have had school placements to familiarise them with both conditions in primary schools and the support services working with schools. In addition, they have had placements in the LGEAs working alongside Education Secretaries and LGEA Heads of School Services. Following on from this, and supported by both national and international TA, formats and lesson plans for Primary Grades 1-3 literacy and numeracy have been developed, and tested. 50 days of lesson-plans for literacy and numeracy have been developed. 300 School Support Officers have been inducted by the SSIT in order to enable them to support the implementation of the new lesson plans, and these in turn have inducted 1,400 headteachers and 8,000 teachers. A schedule for the roll-out of the lesson plans and details of follow-up support has been drawn up, and implementation will start once the materials have been printed. Further support is ongoing. Training of the SSIT is also linking in to training for lecturers at the State College of Education Oro.
85. In the other States, the SSITs have been recruited, again following a similar transparent process, and again, with the exception of Kaduna, drawing on personnel from across the education sector. In Kaduna, the SSIT has been recruited from lecturers at the State College of Education. Numbers in the SSITs vary from 22 in Lagos to 30 in Kano. All have been seconded to work with the programme for two years and throughout this time they will participate in a programme to strengthen their professional understanding and the skills necessary to deliver training and support. Specifically, it will enable them to deliver a modular two-year training and support programme based on the three strands mentioned above which will be implemented in the pilot LGEAs.
86. To date, the SSITs have delivered the first module to 767 headteachers and 416 school support officers across the four States. Follow-up visits providing direct support to the schools and school support officers are being implemented. The follow-up and school support visits are considered vital to ensure change at school level. The follow-up visits focus on supporting tasks set for the headteachers, classroom teachers and school support officers during the training.

87. Out of the initial discussions with the States on teacher education, there arose the question of the effectiveness of existing pre-service education provision and the ability of State Colleges of Education to deliver capable teachers. Responding to this, ESSPIN carried out a situational analysis of the State Colleges, and with the Colleges came up with development plans to move the Colleges forward. All the plans were completed by the end of 2009.
88. With the exception of Kwara, movement on the plans has been limited, although the plans have assisted the Colleges in their activity planning and budgeting in the MTSS process. In Kwara there has been the political will to move things forward and implement recommendations arising from the plan. Both institutional and curriculum reform are taking place at the college as part of a new strategic framework for higher education within the State which has developed out of this initial work. The reform approaches and the strategy documents arising from the work in Kwara are also having a wider impact nationally through the collaboration with the National Council for Colleges of Education on curriculum review, college structure, and college quality assurance and accreditation processes.
89. A key tipping point in the developments at the College in Kwara has been the decision to drastically reduce the total intake of students (and to determine that they take appropriate courses which prepare them to for a career as a basic cycle teacher) so that intake is now more in line with the real demand for teachers in the State. This decision has opened a wider debate on teacher education and has promoted work on a “teacher career path,” linking professional standards to performance and salary levels. Work in this area is ongoing. Once finalised and implemented, it is hoped to introduce the model in the other ESSPIN States.
90. One of the supporting inputs influencing teaching and learning in the schools is the provision of adequate facilities in terms of classrooms, toilets and potable water. While ESSPIN has little money for the provision of classrooms, a major proportion of PSA funds have been allocated for the provision of water and sanitation facilities.
91. With regards to infrastructure provision, the aim is to demonstrate good build allied to cost effectiveness, which can serve as a model for future State infrastructure programmes. Although the ESSPIN input is small, it will allow access to and potential influence over state procurement and supervision systems. It will also provide opportunities for lessons in community monitoring of construction projects.
92. To date, with regards to school water facilities, site visits and baseline studies have been completed, and plans are in place to issue EOIs, Bidding Documents and award contracts for the water supply installation by the end of April. With regard to the sanitation work and construction of classrooms, the scope of work has been finalised, and requests for proposals from consultants have been issued. It is planned that consultants will be

appointed by the end of April 2010. The implementation of the water supplies and sanitation/ classrooms will be implemented through RUWASSA and SUBEB respectively in the five States. It is expected that the work planned for this year will be completed on schedule.

93. Another supporting input impacting on school improvement is the funding provision for schools. Little or no money trickles down to schools, and consequently even if a school wanted to improve the resources are not there to make it happen. This acts as a major disincentive, and as a result most schools have no plans in place for improvement, or indeed, plans for anything.
94. ESSPIN is intending to give a modest stipend (grant), to schools in the pilot LGEAs. The funding is linked to schools having a development plan, and should help schools to realise at least some aspects of their plans, particularly those related to supporting teaching and learning. As schools are only at the initial stages in the planning process (a school-based task arising from Modules 1 and 2 of the training programme), it is not expected that funds will be released until the next school year i.e. September 2010. In addition, ways are being explored with UBEC as to whether the grant funds could be used to leverage additional funding through the UBE Community initiated self-help programme.

Future challenges

95. Making implementation happen is the biggest challenge. People are happy to formulate policy and plans but when it comes to putting those plans and policies into action the default mode is to revert to the status quo.
96. Political will to change is the key, as decision making is deferred to the highest levels. In Kwara, for example, where the Commissioner is driving change, progress has been rapid. Here ESSPIN is well on the way to fulfilling its remit. Technical support by ESSPIN has worked with the State in developing strategies for change, and the State is implementing and funding the change.
97. In other States, where there is less of an engagement at the political level, change is slower. Here the challenge is to supplement direct approaches to politicians by creating a critical mass within senior and middle management within the State MDAs so that they encourage/demand political engagement. To do this, there is a need to demonstrate that the change and practices ESSPIN is advocating work, and this takes more time. To quote Milton Friedman when his views on monetarism were being mocked in the 70s: “our basic function is to develop alternatives to existing policies and practices, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes the politically inevitable.”

Quality Assurance

Issues and Objectives

98. Most of Nigeria currently has a wholly ineffective system of school inspection. In ESSPIN-supported states some progress is being made. The main problems with the system are:
- It focuses on compliance with laws, rules and procedures, rather than the quality of education and in particular the learning of Nigerian children.
 - Responsibility for the conduct of school inspections is spread across a number of agencies and departments at State level, resulting in a fragmented and incoherent system.
 - There is a lack of clarity about the role of the Federal Inspection Service (FIS) and how its responsibilities relate to those at State level.
 - The volume of inspection activity is limited, partly because of low budgetary provision, but also because of lack of accountability.
 - School inspection reports are not generally in the public domain.
 - The findings from school inspection reports are not used on a systematic basis for school improvement; indeed the roles of quality assurance and school support are not clearly differentiated by State MDAs.
99. The objectives of the ESSPIN intervention are essentially threefold.
- The Programme aims to assist the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) to establish a National Agency for Education Quality Assurance that supports a system of quality assurance inspection in the States. It will do this through clear guidelines and monitoring of State QA inspections to promote standardisation of practice and judgements. It will also publish regular national reports on the quality of school education based on data from States, and makes recommendations on steps required for school improvement.
 - ESSPIN will build the capacity of inspectors in ESSPIN-supported states and at Federal level to manage and conduct quality assurance inspections (see below for definition) and produce clear, accurate and useful reports. The lessons from this process will be disseminated to other states through the federal quality assurance body.
 - The Programme will encourage the development of effective institutional arrangements. In some states this will be in the form of State quality assurance agencies, while others will involve a rationalisation of existing structures. The aim is to ensure that: a systematic programme of quality assurance inspections is carried out; reports are produced and stored in State EMIS; and reports made available to schools, State School Improvement Teams (SSITs), advisory services (School Support

Officers/Local School Supervisors) and other relevant bodies to support school improvement.

Strategy

100. The foundation of the strategy is the development of an understanding of the concept of 'quality assurance inspection'. This objective will be pursued through training and on-job mentoring of school inspection teams.

The guiding principles of this new (to Nigeria) approach to school inspection are:-

- All quality assurance inspections are based on the same quality standards.
- Quality assurance is an open process with transparent standards, indicators and processes.
- Quality assurance is based on a combination of school self-evaluation and external evaluation by QA inspectors.
- The process of quality assurance promotes inclusion of all learners.
- The findings of quality assurance evaluations must be valid, reliable and consistent.
- The findings of quality assurance evaluation should contribute to school improvement.
- The reports of quality assurance evaluations should be publically available.
- The outcome of evaluations must inform state policy, planning and training.

101. The outcomes of external quality assurance inspection are short, easily understood reports that are disseminated to all stakeholders, including school headteachers, teachers, school based management committees, parents, Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs), State School Improvement Teams and SUBEBs. Open publication and good communication of inspection judgements emphasises the accountability of those with responsibility for the quality of children's education.

102. The second plank of the strategy is the development of institutional arrangements and capacity to implement a quality assurance inspection system. This involves working with:

- FME to establish the NAEQA and develop and implement a strategy for transition from FIS to NAEQA.
- States to establish a single body responsible for quality assurance (whether a Quality Assurance Bureau or single Ministry Department) or operational guidelines governing how the various inspection bodies will implement an integrated programme of QA inspections and reporting.
- States to develop processes for collation of QA inspection report data on State EMIS and systematic dissemination of findings and recommendations to all stakeholders.

Progress to date

Federal level

103. There was an early focus on work at Federal level which led to the development of a Federal QA Handbook, based on sound QA principles. Engagement with FIS has not always been easy or consistent, because of frequent changes of senior management and shifts of attitude, but the current leadership has welcomed renewed ESSPIN engagement with the department.
104. The draft Bill for the proposed National Commission for Education Quality Assurance (NAEQA) has been reviewed and now offers a sound institutional basis for a Federal QA inspection system. The new Federal Minister of Education has indicated that passage of the Bill is one of her top priorities.
105. The Quality Assurance Handbook is currently being worked on to iron out inconsistencies that have been introduced as it has passed through various hands and to ensure compatibility with the draft Law and the fundamental principles of QA evaluation. The FIS has agreed that it would also like ESSPIN assistance in developing a strategic plan and that ESSPIN should provide training of FIS inspectors in QA inspection. This combination of measures should, for the first time, provide the basis for a sound national QA system with clearly demarcated (but linked) roles for Federal and State agencies.

Jigawa

106. Jigawa has an agency responsible for school inspection – the State Education Inspection and Monitoring Unit (SEIMU). However, it has no legal underpinning, a fact that may be adversely affecting budget release. A total of 52 inspectors from SEIMU, zonal offices and SUBEB have been trained in the QA inspection processes. School evaluations based on the QA approach have been organised, but only commenced in March 2010, due to late release of SEIMU's overhead budget. A SEIMU work plan for the period January-July 2010 has been produced. As more funds become available for school evaluations, ESSPIN will provide further technical support in the form of mentoring of inspectors in the field, through the deployment of a national QA consultant working as required in Jigawa and Kano. Training in self evaluation and school development planning, linking in with the school improvement pilots, will also be provided for inspectors. A problem to be addressed is that the Director General of SEIMU is drawn into very many other activities in the State which inhibits his capacity to be a 'driver' of QA reform.

Kaduna

107. The first phase of ESSPIN support involved training the 20-member Quality Assurance (QA) Task Team in QA inspection and School Self Evaluation processes (this training including work-based practice). The Task Team have since trained 90 School Inspectors from the SME and SUBEB in the same processes. A 6-person Committee has been

formed to draft a Bill and operational guidelines for the establishment and management of the proposed State Education Quality Assurance Service (SEQAS), which will be a unified QA inspection body with over 300 school inspectors. The State is being encouraged to distinguish the QA and school support functions, to allocate these roles to separate bodies, and to establish arrangements whereby school support services assist schools to address the recommendations in QA reports. The Programme will provide mentoring and further training through the deployment of a national consultant.

Kano

108. Training was provided for twenty five senior members of the MDA Inspectorate teams in October 2009. However, there was a lack of follow through in terms of implementing a QA inspection programme. A refresher course was provided in early March 2010, to enable the senior team to implement step-down training for other inspectors in the State. The SME and other parastatals have agreed to provide the necessary funds for this step-down training. The Ministry has expressed its preference to upgrade the Kano Education Resource Division (KERD) rather than create a new Quality Assurance parastatal. The first step, of preparing an EXCO Memo, has been completed, although a commitment to fund this in the 2011 Budget is also necessary. When the QA inspection programme begins to be implemented, ESSPIN will provide mentoring and further training as required, through the deployment of a national consultant (shared with Jigawa).

Kwara

109. A unified Quality Assurance Bureau (QAB) was created early in the life of ESSPIN as one of the pillars of the Commissioner's 'Every Child Counts' programme. While considerable support and encouragement was required to make QAB operational, a routine pattern of work has now been established. Officers in all the zonal offices normally inspect two schools weekly. Desktop computers have been provided to all QA Offices to aid production of reports and sixty QA Officers have received ICT training to standardise report writing and improve report storage and accessibility. Over 100 schools have been inspected and reports produced. The regular and routine use of word processing and electronic storage will greatly improve the effectiveness of the inspectors and facilitate greater use of inspection reports. ESSPIN will provide mentoring and further training mainly through the deployment of a national consultant shared with Lagos.

Lagos

110. Three hundred Inspectors have been trained in the new methods of Quality Assurance. Training took place between October and February 2010 in three batches and the last batch of the training included four persons from the previous two batches as assistant facilitators to build local capacity. In order to reinforce the training, ESSPIN supported a

study tour for Lagos inspection managers to Kwara Quality Assurance Bureau. While the creation of a similar unified agency for school inspection is still under discussion, the Quality Assurance Task Team made up of Directors of Inspectorate in MOE, SUBEB, Education Districts and Head of Sections of Monitoring and Evaluation in LGEAs have agreed to meet monthly and to work together in preparing joint schedules of visits to schools and collating reports centrally. One inhibiting factor in implementing a full-scale QA inspection programme is that inspectors also have extensive examination supervision duties. ESSPIN will provide mentoring and further training mainly through the deployment of a national consultant shared with Kwara.

Future challenges

111. At Federal level, the key challenge (and opportunity) is to consolidate QA reforms before the next election. This entails ensuring the passage of the Law establishing NAEQA and implementing a strategic plan (including training) preparing the current FIS for its new role.
112. In the States, the main task now is to maintain pressure and support on the State inspection bodies to implement full QA inspection programmes and produce and disseminate good quality reports. The challenge is that (to varying degrees across the States) there is a culture of passivity and dependency. This problem is linked to another, namely that inspection is not seen as a high status activity, resulting in poor motivation among some inspectors.
113. The ESSPIN objective is to provide support through the early phases of implementation, reducing in level as the States gain confidence. It will be pursued through regular ongoing inputs from the three national consultants, under the oversight of the Lead Specialist and with periodic contributions from other international TA as required. The focus is therefore shifting from awareness raising and capacity building to consolidation of institutional development. The goal in all States (which may however be difficult to achieve) is to have a single body responsible for quality assurance. In some States (Kaduna and perhaps Lagos) this will involve enacting legislation to establish a quality assurance bureau.
114. An immediate challenge is to support the implementation of QA reforms in Enugu. The Commissioner has indicated a strong interest in improving quality assurance arrangements and the STL is in discussions with him on the timing of an intervention in this area.
115. A further set of longer-term challenges relate to the use of the information from inspection reports. At the system level there are as yet unresolved questions about the storage, distribution and accessibility of inspection reports and how the information contained in them can be integrated into a broad EMIS. At a technical level there is still

a need to work out mechanisms for ensuring that inspection findings are fed through to local school advisory services and for ensuring they are used to drive school improvement.

Access and Equity

Issues and Objectives

116. As set out in the Inception Report, poor quality lies at the heart of Nigeria's public education problem. As a result, the causes of poor quality provide the primary agenda for ESSPIN. At the same time, issues of gender and social exclusion, access for all and equity of provision are important to ESSPIN's approach. How education systems are organised, explicit or informal school policies and what happens in the classroom all contribute to gender inequalities and other forms of exclusion in learning. To respond to these problems at all levels of the system, a cross-cutting and opportunistic approach has been taken to identify specific measures to address inequality and social exclusion.

117. At the heart of the approach is a recognition of a number of issues that emerge from the initial analysis of access and equity issues in Nigeria:

- There are no accurate data and there is little knowledge on the number of out of school children. While the analysis of the available figures can suggest some patterns of inequality, there is little or no information on the groups that are out of school and their reasons for being out of school.
- Alternative forms of education, particularly IQTE in the North and private education play very significant roles in making up for the deficiencies of the public education system, but there is considerable variation in the quality of this provision.
- Educational opportunities for disabled children are limited.
- The scale of the gender imbalance, particularly at the post-primary level in the northern states is a major concern.

Strategy

118. In order to address the issues of lack of data and lack of analysis a number of approaches have been taken in the first year of implementation:

- Seeking to develop a better understanding of the demand for alternative forms of education as a first step to assessing the numbers of out of school children;
- Using this understanding to assess and influence existing government strategies and the approaches and strategies of non-governmental actors, including the private sector, religious bodies and NGOs/CSOs;

- A considered assessment of the relative roles of government and non-government sectors in addressing diverse needs and demands for education;
 - The development and implementation of a set of approaches to address issues of access and equity.
119. The areas where progress has been made are in the collection of better quality information and support to analyse and use information in planning processes. The areas where further work is required are in assessing ways of responding to diverse needs and the development of more targeted and coordinated responses.
120. The strategy in relation to IQTE is explained below. Work in this area could constitute a programme in its own right and ESSPIN is conscious that a great deal more could be done. Similarly more could be done in relation to private schools. Work in this sub-sector has been hampered by the ambivalence of the state governments which are ESSPIN's main interlocutors.
121. Specific measures targeted at improving girls' attendance at schools have so far been dominated by preparations for the Kano Conditional Cash Transfer pilot. ESSPIN recognises that there are lessons to be learned and applied on special provision for girls' education. The approach to date has been largely driven by the need to address quality issues in relation to the education system as a whole. Thus the education of girls has been subsumed within the general push for school improvement. Recent discussions with UNICEF, however, have been useful in highlighting lessons from the Girls' Education Project (GEP), which could be applied in ESSPIN pilot areas.
122. A strategy for working on exclusion issues related to disability is beginning to emerge. This will involve partnering with NGOs already working in the field. ESSPIN, however, realises that only limited resources will be available for this aspect of the work.

Progress to date

123. Work was begun during the inception phase of ESSPIN to develop a better understanding of the demand for alternative forms of education: looking at forms of Islamic education in the northern states and at unregistered private schools in Lagos state. Whilst the initial situation analyses of IQTE in Kaduna, Kano and Jigawa states have been influential and have led to a demand for further support, in Lagos the state government response has been rather less enthusiastic.
124. The main area where significant progress has been made has been in the work on IQTE in Kano, and to a lesser extent Kaduna and Jigawa – see separate technical update on IQTE for details. The initial situation analyses of IQTE in Kano, Kaduna and Jigawa have been widely disseminated within the states and have provided a welcome, objective perspective on the scale of provision and the problems, in some places, of engagement

with the state government. The situation analysis for Kano and subsequent more detailed work have been used to influence the development of the MTSS, which included improving the quality of education in IQTE schools as one of its four major goals.

125. Work has continued in Kano to collect more detailed information on the demand for Islamic forms of education, the factors affecting the successful provision of IQTE in the state and the scale of provision in the three pilot LGAs. The first research was a baseline survey of public perceptions and approaches to state and IQTE schools in Kano and showed that: the community was acutely aware of the problems with the state schools in terms of infrastructure and quality of education; and, there was a general consensus that the IQTE schools are providing better education than state schools. A second, follow-up piece of research was designed to understand why some schools work, in a context where majority are failing to meet parental expectations. The general conclusion was that the combination of Islamiyya education and state support enhances the chances of establishing a successful school. The results of the research have been used in the development of planned initiatives to support IQTE schools in the pilot LGAs.
126. Further information collection continues, with: a detailed census of IQTE provision in the three pilot LGAs in Kano, which was carried out in December 2009 and January 2010 in order to contribute to the state school census carried out around the same time; and, initial research to gain a better understanding of the Almajiri system of IQTE, with a view to carrying out larger scale research across the three northern states.
127. A situational analysis of the unregistered private primary school sector in Lagos was carried out at the request of the state government. The analysis found that regulation consists of registration of schools, in line with guidelines issued by government. This has resulted in only 2,276 schools registering, compared to an estimated 7,511 private schools. The state Department for Private Education is finding it difficult to cope with the registration process and many schools are able to operate for years without being registered. The study looked particularly at schools catering to some of the poorest areas of the city and found that the majority of the private schools in the State are for the poor, with most of them being unregistered. School fees are very low, teachers are paid very badly and most of the schools have very poor quality infrastructure. Those children in these private primary schools, who transit to secondary education, do so to the public secondary schools in the neighbourhood.
128. Efforts have been made to disseminate the findings of the situation analysis and to work with the state government to map out a way forward. An initial meeting was held in September 2009 with some of the main private school stakeholders, and particularly the numerous associations representing them, to identify the key issues that they wished to raise with the state government. A further workshop, which brought together the

associations with the Department for Private Education, was held in November 2009 with the aim of discussing the roles of public and private sectors in the delivery of high quality education in Lagos state. Whilst the workshop concluded with a list of issues to be further explored and next steps, there has been little progress since. Indeed, when Lagos state carried out the annual school census, only funds to cover the state schools were made available. Work continues to find ways in which the state and the private schools might engage more constructively.

129. All of the states where ESSPIN works have made commitments on improving access and equity in basic education and on strategies to reduce gender inequalities. During the inception phase of the programme significant support was given to the state governments to begin the process of turning the objectives in the Education Sector Plans (ESP) into prioritised and costed Medium-Term Sector Strategies (MTSS). There are three areas where progress was made in addressing access and equity issues during the initial stages of implementation: involving civil society in the planning process; reviewing gender-focused commitments in the draft MTSSs; and the use of sex-disaggregated data in the initial Annual Education Performance Report.
130. The ESSPIN team in Kaduna worked closely with the SAVI programme (State Accountability and Voice Initiative) to develop and implement an advocacy project aimed at mainstreaming gender issues in the MTSS. SAVI initially identified gender mainstreaming in the MTSS as a CSO advocacy initiative with two objectives: to ensure gender concerns were addressed across the MTSS; and to demonstrate that CSOs could engage collaboratively with government to influence policy making. A brief review of the process identified a number of gender policy-capable CSOs with prior experience of working with government and of results-based planning. ESSPIN and SAVI were able to create opportunities for CSO engagement in the MTSS process; the CSOs worked collectively to identify the issues that they would take to the MTSS process; they also used the ESP as a starting point to identify specific concrete suggestions for integrating gender issues. ESSPIN and PATHS2 will be working together closely to facilitate active and sustainable CSO involvement in the MTSS process, looking for opportunities to replicate the approach used in Kaduna in other ESSPIN supported states.
131. In September 2009, when the first drafts of the MTSSs for Kaduna, Jigawa and Lagos were available, a review of how effectively gender inequalities had been addressed was carried out. A checklist was developed to help the ESSPIN state specialists and their government counterparts to assess how far the strategies had been engendered and specific comments were made on the three drafts. The checklist covered issues including: how far clear and transparent criteria have been used to prioritize activities and budgets; use of data for planning and ensuring that targets and inputs are sex-disaggregated; and measures taken to include CSOs participation in the MTSS process.

132. The Annual Education Sector Performance Review is being piloted in Kano and Kwara, using data from the school census carried out at the end of 2009 and other data collated during the MTSS development. The first draft review for Kano was produced in March 2010 and is already showing the value of more reliable data. In particular the school census data shows that Kano State has achieved gender parity in participation at the primary level, although a large gender gap exists at the secondary level. The gender parity index, for the state as a whole, is 1.02 at the primary level but only 0.75 at the junior secondary level suggesting a lower transition rate to junior secondary level for girls. In primary education, the gender parity index is below 0.9 in 19 out of 44 LGAs, whereas in junior secondary education, the gender parity index score is below 0.9 in 38 LGAs. These figures, taken alongside data on the poor quality of schools and classrooms and the relatively small proportion of female teachers, provide clear guidance on where efforts are needed to reduce gender inequalities in the later years of basic education in Kano.

Future challenges

133. Whilst it has been possible to make some progress in the initial stages of implementation, there are some significant challenges ahead, including:

- Demonstrating to both government and the public the value of analysing and using information in planning processes and particularly in holding government to account.
- Ensuring that planning influences activities, that resources are targeted where they are most needed and that they have an impact.
- Building the capacity for effective implementation by government organisations and making the case for government to work with CSOs and the private sector, where they are more effective.

134. Now that more reliable and accurate data is becoming available a series of inputs are planned for the remainder of 2010. These inputs will focus on building capacity to develop strategies and activities to respond to identified needs and ensuring that the capacity for effective implementation and monitoring exists. The first inputs will be on developing: strategies for girls' education in Jigawa state, a conditional cash transfers pilot in Kano state, and an approach to disability mainstreaming in Kaduna state.

135. Work will be initiated in Jigawa state, where the DFID/UNICEF Girls' Education Programme was implemented, to build capacity among government stakeholders to analyse data on girls' enrolment and retention and to assess the success or otherwise of strategies and initiatives to reduce the gender gap in basic education. The next stage in these inputs will be to work through a process of assessing the implementation capacity within government and in CSOs, developing costed strategies for scaling up successful

initiatives, and setting out detailed work plans for implementation. The overall aim will be to provide costed inputs and work plans for the next round of the MTSS.

136. In developing a conditional cash transfers pilot in Kano the initial stage will be to ensure that the procedures that are being developed by Kano State/World Bank consultants for the selection, verification and monitoring of girls and households to receive CCTs are appropriate; that there is community participation in the selection, verification and monitoring systems; and that clear procedures and safeguards and sufficient capacity exist for implementation and monitoring.
137. The final input will aim to develop a pilot approach to inclusive education and mainstreaming around issues of disability, working with the state government, civil society organisations and the ESSPIN state team in Kaduna. The lack of accurate data on disability has been identified as a key factor, so that an initial stage will focus on how to assess levels of disability (using a number of pilot LGAs), and combining simple data gathering techniques to create a base-line. This will be followed up with work, in partnership with established NGOs, to train teachers and key officials on approaches to ‘mainstreaming’ inclusive education, drawing on experience elsewhere in Nigeria and, potentially, with work to refine existing state policies on inclusive education.

Islamiyya, Quranic and Tsangaya Education (IQTE)

Issues and Objectives

138. The Islamiyya, Quranic and Tsangaya Education (IQTE) system is an integral part of the education landscape in three northern ESSPIN states, i.e. Kano, Kaduna and Jigawa. The IQTE schools are large in number — Kano, for instance, has 23,000 IQTE schools as compared to 4,650 state schools. IQTE schools have strong community ownership, which helps raise additional finances for education and ensure active school monitoring. In this respect IQTE schools provide a model for secular education.
139. Because children from Tsangaya schools come from among the poorest families, and Islamiyya schools attract more girls—between 60-65 per cent of students in Islamiyya schools are girls—these schools also cater to the most vulnerable populations. The IQTE school sector thus presents opportunity to become a major partner in education provision in the northern states because of its scale, community participation, and focus on vulnerable population.
140. However, the sector also presents a challenge. Malams (Islamic teachers) running these schools, especially the Tsangaya schools, are at times resistant to secular education, because they associate it with colonial heritage and promotion of western values. Further, with changing economic patterns, Tsangaya schools are no longer able to

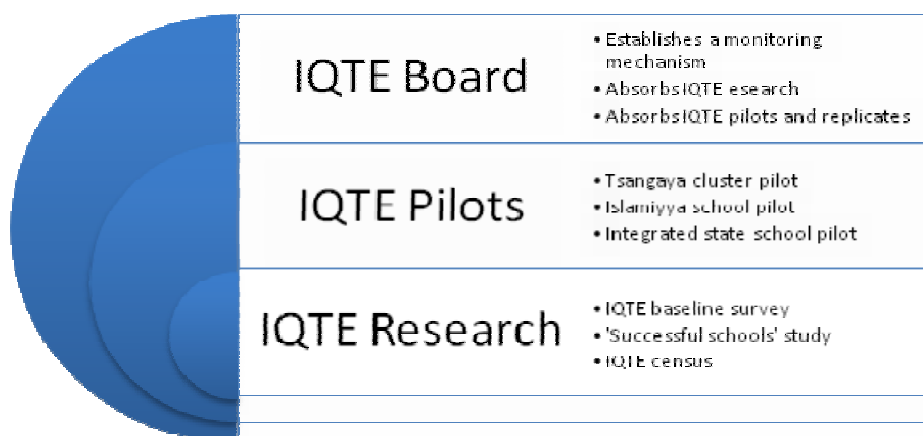
attract the financial contributions they enjoyed historically, especially during the period of Muslim empires. Thus, the system has faced serious deterioration whereby the old practice of travelling east in search of knowledge, now manifests itself in the form of a social problem, whereby the malam's pupils, on movement to urban areas, end up begging on the streets for survival. The Tsangaya school system and the children begging on the streets (Almajaris) thus have become a serious source of concern for federal and state governments.

141. The recognition of the opportunities and challenges posed by this sector has made the state governments realise the importance of engaging with it: all three northern ESSPIN states have asked for technical support for integrating IQTE schools. The federal government is also asking for solutions: currently UBEC is providing 6 million Naira per annum to nine northern states to trial integration models for Quranic schools. A 'Federal Madrasa Committee' has recently been established to develop a national level integration strategy.
142. The ability to work with these schools to ensure provision of integrated education is thus a critical part of ESSPIN. These schools require many of the same interventions to improve education quality as state schools. Since Islamiyya schools have more girls, ESSPIN is therefore helping improve quality of education in integrated Islamiyya schools as part of its IQTE interventions. The IQTE work also has an institutional development aspect, relevant to output 2, as there is demand for establishment of separate state institutional structures to help regulate and monitor these schools.

Strategy

143. Given the complexity of the IQTE sector, and the limited research available on it, ESSPIN started its IQTE work in all three northern states by engaging in a consultative process with all relevant actors within the state, civil society and the religious leadership to develop IQTE strategy papers for each of the three states. Each state indeed had some peculiar features, but the general needs identified across the three states as result of this process were the same:
- A need for better research and data on IQTE sector to understand its complexity and factors shaping the supply and demand;
 - Establishment of administrative structures, such as an IQTE Board (IQTEB) in Kano, both to better regulate and monitor this sector and also to support it in imparting quality education;
 - Trialling of innovative pilots to introduce integrated curriculum in IQTE schools (see IQTE position paper, 2009).

144. Each aspect of this three-pronged strategy is closely linked to the other. The research on IQTE sector to date has been critical in shaping of the pilots for introducing the integrated curriculum in IQTE schools; the pilots in turn are going to be constantly monitored and studied to adjust the model in response to the challenges faced, till they reach optimal level. This process of monitoring and observation will in turn enhance the understanding of the peculiarities of this sector. ESSPIN technical input in supporting this research and integration pilots will in turn get absorbed within the administrative unit that these states already have, such as Islamic Education Bureau (IEB) in Jigawa, or the proposed administrative units such as IQTEB in Kano and either a central committee or an agency for regulating IQTE schools in Kaduna.



145. A detailed work plan has been developed to put into operation this three-pronged strategy. Limited state resources to finance the integration process constitute the main challenge. The ESSPIN IQTE strategy therefore includes helping the state governments develop financial proposals to submit to federal government agencies, especially UBEC, to provide federal resources to help the integration process in IQTE schools. An IQTE conference will be organized to present the IQTE work and the financial needs to UBEC and other relevant government departments in the medium term.

146. The IQTE strategy is also designed to build capacity within the relevant state agencies to sustain the IQTE interventions. All IQTE interventions, including fieldwork for research, are being implemented through the relevant government staff especially members of the Office of the Special Advisor to the Governor on Education (Tsangaya).

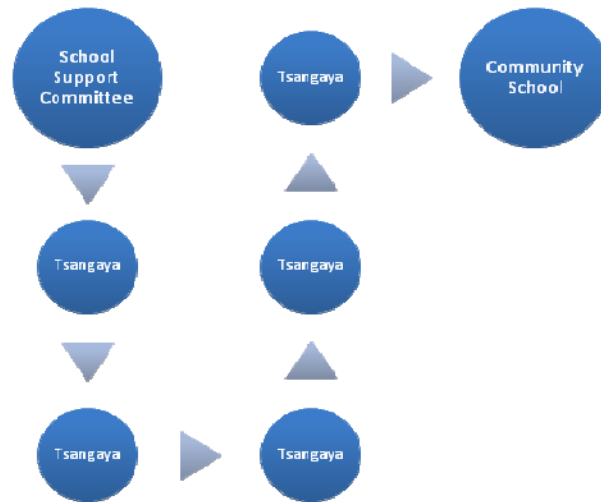
Progress to date

147. Since the formal initiation of the IQTE interventions in the three northern states under ESSPIN in October 2008, much progress has been made. Kano is the lead state as ESSPIN's IQTE interventions started from here. In order to ensure more efficient utilisation of ESSPIN resources, between October 2009 and March 2010, IQTE interventions were exclusively focused on Kano. The intention has been to consolidate

efforts and then replicate the learning to other two states, instead of trialling the interventions across the three states at the same time. Kaduna and Jigawa have been actively following the process and the pilots within these two states will also start within 2010.

Kano

148. In Kano, one of the areas where the state government sought active help from ESSPIN was to prepare an IQTE Board feasibility report. This report was completed in 2009 after active consultation with all actors, and is now to be presented to the Executive Council to secure approval. The memo has already been prepared and awaits presentation.
149. In order to improve monitoring of the IQTE sector and to measure the impact of IQTE integration pilots, an IQTE census was carried out in the three ESSPIN LGAs in Kano. This census report will be ready for circulation in May 2010 and will help test the reliability of 2003 census conducted by the Office of the Special Advisor, which is the main reference document to date; the census has already helped identify schools for piloting the integration models; and it will act as the baseline data for monitoring the performance of the pilots and tracing any inter-school migration that might occur as a result of these pilots. The IQTE questionnaire and software designed for this census is a permanent resource that will be useful if any state wants to replicate the process.
150. One of the biggest achievements of the IQTE work in Kano to date is the growing number of studies on the IQTE sector. Two important studies, a baseline survey capturing the factors shaping demand for IQTE schools, and a successful school study looking at why some schools work when the majority are failing, are already complete. The IQTE census is already done in three LGAs. An initial scoping study on the Almajiri system was also conducted in 2009, which will be systematically expanded over 2010. Another study which looks at the factors shaping higher demand for Islamiyya schools among females than secular schools is also being designed.
151. In March 2010, Kano also rolled out the Tsangaya Cluster Model. This model draws on many features of non-formal school models. A community school is being established to cater to children from five neighbouring Tsangaya schools. In this community school, the children from the Tsangaya schools will be provided modern education and simple vocational skills. The school teacher is being recruited from within the community, and a School Support Committee (SSC) is being formed to ensure active community participation. 32 Tsangaya clusters have been formed, while teacher training of 32 teachers has started. Each community school will take 30 students and the primary level curriculum is being condensed to four years. At the end of the four year cycle the children should be able to take the government primary exam and join junior secondary schools.



152. During 2010, two other integration models, one in Islamiyya schools and the other in state schools in Kano will also be rolled out (see IQTE Position Paper, 2009).

153. The ability to conduct the multiple research studies, including the census, and initiate the IQTE pilots, also indicates ESSPIN's success in developing credibility with the malams, which can be considered a big achievement, given that they normally do not engage in programmes involving western organisations.

Kaduna and Jigawa

154. In both Kaduna and Jigawa, the IQTE strategy papers have been finalized and through hosting of a selected number of workshops a good momentum has been developed for taking forward IQTE interventions in 2010 in line with the work done in Kano. The relevant government actors in both the states are keen to work with ESSPIN to trial the pilots and undertake further research and capacity building for relevant staff members.

Future challenges

155. The IQTE work has received a lot of attention from the present governments in the three states. It is hoped that the governments formed after elections next year will share the same enthusiasm for working with this sector; otherwise the progress might be impeded. The ability to retain the religious community's trust in ESSPIN will also be critical to the success of these pilots.

156. The sector requires a major resource commitment from the federal government if the integration process is to be replicated at a significant level. There will be a need to help the states secure funds for supporting the integration process. This is an area that presents major opportunities for future IDP support.

157. More immediately, the sector presents a major opportunity for replication of ESSPIN pilots as the timing is very good. The federal government, as well as the state governments, are actively looking for IQTE integration models that can be supported. If ESSPIN IQTE pilots are successful, they have a very high chance of being adopted by federal and state governments. The IQTE research also has potential to influence federal guidelines regarding IQTE schools.

Community Engagement and School Governance

Issues and Objectives

158. Public schools are falling to provide even minimum opportunities for learning, the education system is administratively top-heavy and there is a lack of engagement of communities in school activities. Other factors contributing to the poor state of affairs include negative attitudes of parents and communities towards education and the ineffective funding arrangements and governance structures of state and local governments. This is the context for activities under ESSPIN Output 4, which aim to deliver strengthened capacity of communities and civil society to support schools and effectively articulate demand for basic education services.

159. The specifics of what ESSPIN Output 4 aims to achieve are to:

- Increase the availability of information on education quality at the school level.
- Enhance community participation in the preparation and implementation of school development plans.
- Improve linkages between communities and civil society in making demands for better quality education.
- Strengthen government response to the demands made by communities and civil society.

160. ESSPIN has focused on the establishment and functioning of School-based Management Committees (SBMCs) as the main vehicle for strengthening the capacity of communities to support schools and articulate demand for better quality education. The fundamental issues in this regard lie in gaining general acceptance of the idea of SBMCs with active, distinct and valued governance and representational roles to play in schools and then creating the right environment that allows them to play these roles. Whereas community involvement is generally seen as a good thing, there is a range of opinions about what this means in practice. It is often confused with the fund-raising role of the PTA. The concept of schools being accountable to parents is far from commonly understood.

161. ESSPIN believes that SBMCs can provide a vital link between service users and service providers and have important functions as a mechanism for channelling voice and for improving accountability. However, these consequences are not automatic. Without intervention activity, SBMCs may not be established at all. They may develop in ways that do not contribute to school improvement or wider accountability. They may end up only representative of particular sectional interests. A lack of clarity over the role of the SBMC, whom they represent and the extent to which they should be involved in the running of schools has persisted since the idea was first floated in Nigeria. Continued vagueness and the expectation that they will be all things to all men, mean that the SBMC is susceptible to becoming an irrelevance, just another layer of bureaucracy and more of a problem than a solution.

Strategy

162. ESSPIN strategy is based on international experience and research carried out during the Inception phase. It is based on the premise that SBMCs, while not the answer to all the ills of education and community engagement, have the potential to contribute significantly to better school governance and improved education. The strategy centres on two related sets of activities:

- Work on establishing fully functioning SBMCs. This has involved:
 - Engaging stakeholders at state, LGA and school - community level in the formulation and implementation of state-specific school-based management policies.
 - Establishing an institutional framework in which SBMCs can operate. In each state an oversight and advocacy team (State Task Team-STT) has the task of liaising between the policy actors (SMoE and SUBEB senior managers), the implementers of the school- based management concept (SUBEB and LGEA Social Mobilisation staff), the SBMCs (school-community) and the larger community where the school is situated.
 - Raising the profile and motivation of the staff of Social Mobilisation Units in SUBEB and their counterpart desk officers in LGEAs.
- Establishing links between communities and civil society in facilitating effective demand on government for quality education. This has involved:
 - Strengthening the capacity of selected Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in each state to work with different groups within pilot school communities and to build the necessary relationships and trust on which engagement and advocacy can occur.
 - Supporting the establishment of partnerships between government and civil society. By engaging CSOs to work together with the Departments of Social Mobilisation in SUBEBs and LGEAs, ESSPIN is supporting a sustainable model for

the future support to school-community relations and a channel for community concerns.

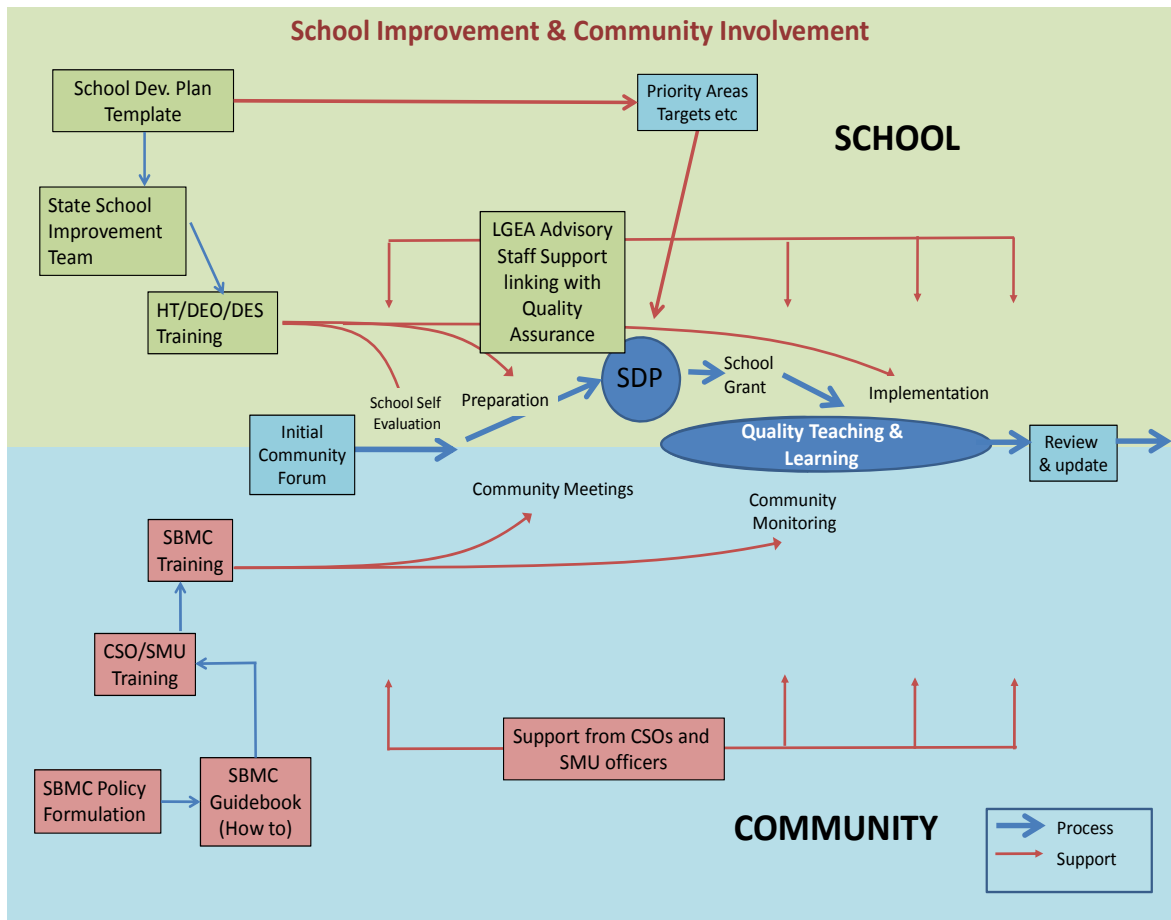
- Building the capacity of CSOs and SMUs as trainers for SBMCs and as providers of continuing mentoring and monitoring of SBMCs.

163. In order to establish state policies on SBMC development, ESSPIN engaged in a three phase consultation (visioning) process, culminating in the production of state specific policy documents. At the same time, the selection, orientation and induction of CSO partners has taken place. In the early stages of the programme, ESSPIN gained from the experience of SAVI and adapted the SAVI CSO assessment tool. The CSOs are currently in the field engaging with communities in the ESSPIN pilot LGAs (200-300 school communities in each state), establishing links with local groups and encouraging the formation of SBMCs in accordance with the state policy guidelines.

164. The next phase involves the production of documentation - simple “user” guides for SBMC members and a training manual for CSO/SMU trainers and mentors. A pair (CSO members and SMU officials) will be responsible for the initial training and follow-up mentoring of each SBMC. The distribution of the pilot SBMCs in the states is shown in the table below:

States	No of ESSPIN Pilot schools	No of SBMC Trainees (8 per school)	No of CSO + SMU officials as SBMC Trainers
Jigawa	200	1600	37
Kaduna	161	1288	27
Kano	300	2400	37
Kwara	210	1680	36
Lagos	100	1600 (Cluster based model)	38

165. The SBMC training will be supported by communication campaigns on the importance, functions and responsibilities of SBMCs. From this point on, SBMC-related activities under Output 4 will be synchronised with school-based activities under Output 3. The nodal point in this process is the work on school development plans, in which head teachers, teachers and SBMC members are all involved. This process is represented graphically in the diagram below.



166. The strategy beyond the initial set-up and training phase is to maintain contacts through a structured programme of CSO/SMU visits to communities, to provide mentoring for SBMCs and to promote ways in which communities can monitor school performance and teachers’ behaviours. This will be supported by facilitation of issue-based advocacy strengthening community demand for the provision of basic quality education.

167. In order to scale up this intervention to other schools, a roll out plan and budget will need to be developed by each State Task Team. It is these teams who will be responsible for securing the necessary resources through the MTSS and budgetary process. This initiative will thus be one of the foundations for a wider platform of school improvement, quality assurance and accountability.

Progress to date

168. ESSPIN has worked pro-actively with other SLPs on a structured approach Paper (SAP) on Voice and Accountability and has shared information and approaches regarding relations with civil society with SAVI and PATHS2. ESSPIN is also participating in a series of cross-programme discussions, convened by DFID, on the measurement of Voice and Accountability.

169. Four major ‘situation analysis’ studies were carried in each of the 5 states between 2009 and 2010: i) a review of Social Mobilization Units (SMU); ii) a research study of SBMCs; iii) a CSOs capacity assessment and iv) a baseline survey on community level activities. This last study was aimed at developing a better understanding of the current practices and issues, with a view to developing framework for support to states.

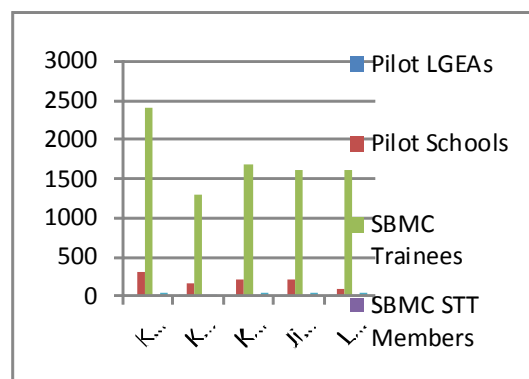
170. Between March 2009 and April 2010, the main achievements in the area of SBMC development have been:

- The completion of SBMC research in five states which highlighted, in detail concerns over SBMC policy and practices, along with key recommendations to improve the current status.
- The conduct of a three phase SBMC visioning process in each state in which key policy makers and stakeholders were engaged in the discussion and internal debate on the design of SBM structures and state-specific policy formulation. Nearly 1,250 people contributed to the SBMC internal debate. Consensus was reached on the structure, composition, roles and responsibilities of the SBMCs and governments. The significance of the debate was enhanced as a result of the participation of senior state policy actors and other important stakeholders, including children. The involvement of the key actors has raised the profile of SBMCs and community involvement and established school-community interaction as a priority for the planning and budgeting discussions for future years.

171. The process is delivering the following outcomes:

- Five state specific SBMC policy guidelines on the structure, composition, tenure, role and responsibilities of SBMCs. There is now a willingness to incorporate SBMC policy into existing state education laws and a potential for legislation on SBM, as part of the decentralisation process.
- A draft Guide Book for SBMC members. This essentially a ‘how to’ manual aimed at assisting in the day-to-day operation of the SBMCs in each state.
- A simple and practical SBMC training manual for the training of CSOs and SMU trainers and mentors. These trained personnel will responsible for the training of the SBMCs in the school-communities.

172. In terms of ESSPIN’s partnership with CSOs, in-depth capacity assessment in five states has been completed, the CSOs contracted and induction and initial training provided. A total of 41 CSOs have been contracted and trained (Lagos 10, Kano 6, Kwara 6, Kaduna 7 and Jigawa 8).



173. ESSPIN is about to commence a major programme of development and training for SBMCs within the 45 Pilot LGEAs. A total of 173 master trainers will undergo training of trainers and capacity strengthening to deliver initial training to 8,468 SBMC members across the states - the first step in a series of training events and follow-up visits.

Future challenges

174. Despite the efforts that have gone into the development of SBMC policies, these are still open to wide interpretation. There is also the possibility of wide variations in the ways in which SBMCs are constituted in practice and, despite the documentation, training and mentoring, of some schools and communities getting the wrong end of the stick. If these differences of interpretation and practice persist, the resulting confusion will reduce the effectiveness of the SBMCs.
175. ESSPIN is confident that, given the resources being brought to bear in the pilot LGAs, that functioning SBMCs can be established, which are capable of fulfilling an oversight and monitoring role and acting as a conduit for community concerns to service providers. By building the capacity of the STT, ESSPIN hopes to create a management capacity in government capable of promoting and directing the expansion of SBMCs. By fostering a close relationship between CSOs and the social mobilisation arm of government, ESSPIN is building a body of implementers capable of interacting with communities and supporting SBMCs. However, the driver for this process is currently ESSPIN. The development of SBMCs has not yet reached a point at which it is self-sustaining. If ESSPIN support ceased, there would be little effective push from state governments. The challenge therefore is to establish some proof of concept within the next twelve to eighteen months so that state governments can be persuaded to back up their vague interest in community participation with hard resources.
176. Whether the SBMCs flourish is partly dependent on the extent to which resources and decision making can be decentralised to schools. SBMCs will operate more effectively where they have things to do and some resources with which to do them. The fate of SBMCs is therefore intimately linked with the success or otherwise of the institutional changes that ESSPIN is promoting to decentralise resources, to free up funding flows and to increase the availability of funds to schools.
177. The ESSPIN strategy relies on the ability of Civil Society to partner with government and to pursue a common line both in terms of SBMCs and advocacy for community concerns. This may prove more difficult as the provision of government services becomes affected by the politicisation of the election period.
178. A key element of ESSPIN's approach at school and community levels is the importance of school development planning and the ability of schools communities to influence the quality of provision. This is itself a challenge, but a related challenge lies in ensuring that school level planning influences and contributes to the wider state education

planning activities so that, as a consequence, resources are channelled to school improvement and have an impact on learning outcomes.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Issues and Objectives

179. The M&E activities under ESSPIN have two objectives:

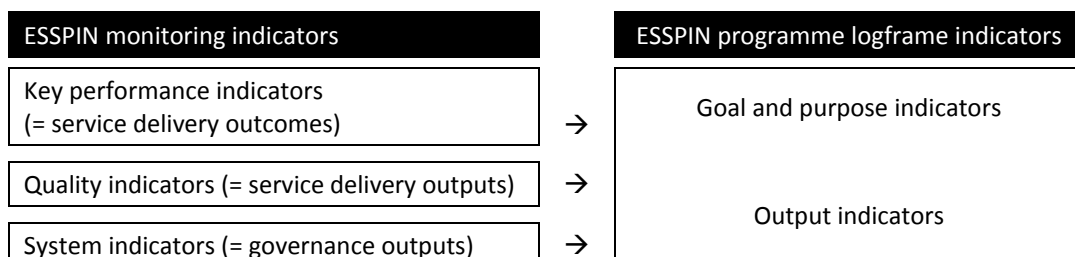
- In terms of ‘**input and output monitoring**’, M&E activities assess whether *work plans* (inputs, activities and short-term outputs) are being realised. These activities are the focus of *ESSPIN management* and the operations team.
- In terms of ‘**output to purpose monitoring**’ and ‘**impact monitoring**’, M&E activities assess whether *results* (medium- to long-term outputs, outcomes and impact) are being achieved. These activities, which are the focus of the *M&E technical area* team, are the subject of this technical paper and operate at two levels supporting in turn:
 - *ESSPIN* (i) at programme level by feeding information to help evidence-based decisions to be taken and (ii) at Output 2 level, by working on the annual review process, which is a critical link in the annual planning and budgeting calendar
 - *state* (and to a lesser extent *federal*) *education authorities* to monitor the results from the implementation of the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) and the Medium-Term Sector Strategy (MTSS) and help them take informed policy decisions

Strategy

180. The strategy of M&E activities is described in the Position Paper (Volume 3 of the ESSPIN Inception Report, May 2009). The paper had three main parts:

A. Performance assessment framework

181. ESSPIN is a *governance* programme with the ultimate goal that federal and state government basic education *service delivery* improves. This duality characterises the ESSPIN programme logframe: ESSPIN aims to introduce good governance practices (organisational *capability*, *accountability* and *responsiveness*) but, as these tend to be hard to observe, service delivery results (*access* and *equity*, *efficiency*, *quality* and *learning*) are monitored as well. The Position Paper drew a distinction between the (broader) M&E indicators and the (subset of) ESSPIN logframe indicators.



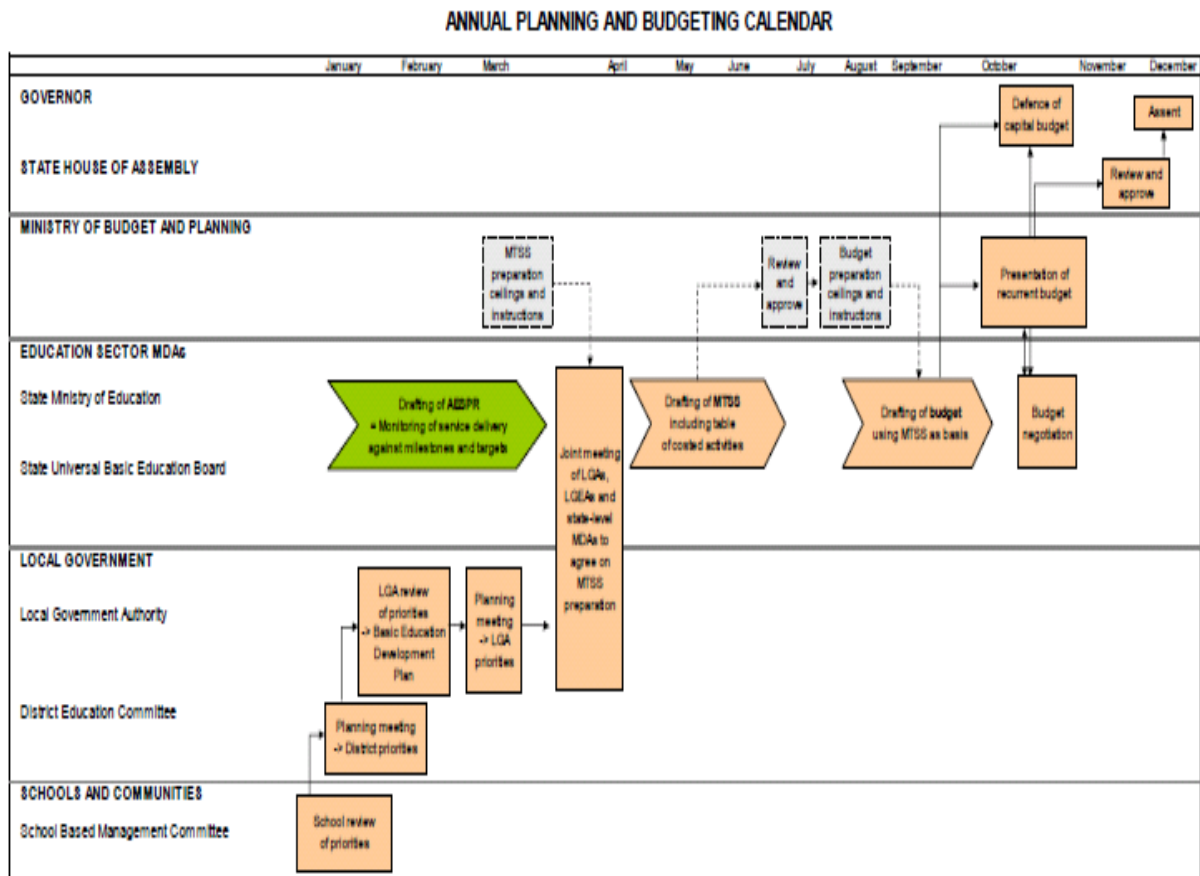
182. The specification of the *key performance* and *quality* indicators was based on the ESSPIN state ESP and MTSS documents, which constitute their own M&E frameworks for service delivery. ESSPIN adopts and supports these frameworks in agreement with the ESSPIN Programme Memorandum (§2.7), which states that ESSPIN will “to the greatest extent possible, use the same supervision structures and monitoring and evaluation arrangements. There will be a strong focus on building State Governments’ capacity to undertake monitoring and evaluation of their own policies and programmes and to use outputs from these improved State systems in order to meet ESSPIN reporting needs”. ESSPIN aims to steer states towards monitoring the indicators they themselves have set and is working with the states to report on these indicators and use them for planning.
183. The specification of the *system* indicators has aimed to align with SPARC both in terms of the scope of these governance indicators and the use of self-assessment (along the lines of the SEAT process, at least for those indicators that appear in the ESSPIN logframe).

B. Supply of information

184. The M&E technical area team coordinates a broad set of information collection activities:
- It collaborates with the EMIS, quality assurance and PFM technical areas to ensure that a body of *administrative data* evidence is brought together to aid decisions at state level.
 - It aims to utilise *household surveys* to improve education sector monitoring and participates in the design of the ESSPIN co-funded Nigeria Education Data Survey (NEDS) and Kano conditional cash transfer (CCT) impact evaluation study (with SESP).
 - It supports attempts to introduce *student surveys* of learning achievement.
 - It implements ESSPIN-supported *facility surveys* which fill in information gaps that other sources cannot provide.
 - It collaborates with other ESSPIN technical areas (teacher management, access and equity, community mobilisation, C&KM, IQTE) to advise on *other studies* and ensure that they add to the body of evidence upon which to base ESSPIN and state activities.
185. To implement the last four bullet point areas, a component of the Programme Support Activities (PSA) budget is dedicated to surveys and studies. The M&E technical area team advises on the allocation of this budget.

C. Demand for information

186. The ESSPIN approach to M&E will embed state education sector M&E operations, build capacity and help ensure sustainability. The approach focuses on a new process, an **annual education sector review (AESR)** which will bring together government and non-government stakeholders in each State to take stock of achievements and draw the main implications. The AESR process is based on an **annual education sector performance report (AESPR)** and will be combined with (i) scheduled annual state education sector *public events* ('forums', 'summits', 'conferences' etc) usually scheduled in the second quarter of the year in collaboration with SAVI and/or (ii) the cross-government *joint performance review process*, which SPARC is trying to introduce through the ministries of economic planning and budget. The aim in both cases is for the report and review process to be completed by May / June so that the MTSS update can take its findings into account. The following graph presents an indicative planning and budgeting calendar with the timing of the AESR.



187. The ESSPIN role is to assist states in preparing the AESPR and carrying out the AESR, facilitate the dissemination of the document and its use for planning, help introduce the M&E function and the corresponding institutional structures at the state level, and provide training for the states to take over the responsibility for the AESR/AESPR process.

Progress to date

188. Activities to date have followed the work plan outlined in Annex A of the Position Paper. Further information can be found in the M&E task leader's input visit reports, concept notes (on the school census follow-up survey, the community survey, the head teacher survey and the system/governance indicators) and manuals (for the school census follow-up and community surveys).

A. Performance assessment framework

189. The M&E technical area team worked on successive versions of the *ESSPIN programme logframe* to ensure that there are clear means of verification for each indicator. In addition, it has coordinated work on specifying the *system (governance) indicators*, including the definitions, measures of progress and methods of assessment. A process of self-assessment for key governance indicators of institutional functionality (on finance, planning, quality assurance, teacher professional development and teacher management) has begun.

B. Supply of information

190. Since June 2009, the M&E technical area team has supported the following activities:

- Supporting the school census process, through drafting the school and IQTE census instruments, organising the National EMIS Committee meeting (August 2009) and preparing templates for the school census report and the LGEA/school report cards.
- Contributing to the design of the 2010 NEDS questionnaire and participating in relevant workshops (October and November 2009).
- Advising on the design and implementation of the CCT impact evaluation survey.
- Designing and managing the school census follow-up survey (February-March 2010) on a random sample of 400 schools with the aim of validating the quality of the school census data and collect additional information (notably on attendance and textbooks).
- Designing and managing the community survey (March-April 2010) on a random sample of 330 schools and about 2000 households to assess the support communities provide to schools, gauge opinions on the quality of service delivery and understand how people receive information about education. The results will be used to advise the respective ESSPIN technical areas on the focus of their activities and to enable Output 4 logframe indicators to be monitored (on the basis of a follow-up survey in 2012-13).

C. Demand for information

191. Since June 2009, the M&E technical area team has supported the following activities:

- Introducing the AESR / AESPR process, in a pilot form in Kano and Kwara in late 2009 and in full scale in Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano and Kwara during the first quarter of 2010, through meetings with state officials, drafting workshops, and a provisional institutional structure (report, review and steering teams) using existing working groups if possible.
- Assisting the preparation of the AESPR in these four states: currently, there are first drafts in Kaduna and Kwara and full drafts in Jigawa and Kano.

Future challenges

192. The above approach is based on the assumption that there is an audience willing to absorb information and able to put it to good use for planning purposes. The main risk in achieving the objectives of the M&E technical area is that this assumption may be incorrect:

- MDA managers do not have sufficient incentives to invest efforts in using evidence for decision making because planning processes are still not functional and informed decisions are often overturned for other considerations.
- The capacity gaps identified in terms of the skills needed to interpret and utilise statistical data for decision making are large. Short training courses, in-country or abroad, tend not to be directly linked to everyday management problems. On-the-job mentoring within an existing planning process is necessary but it is a costly alternative.

193. There are no clear signs yet that education MDAs are ready to introduce an M&E function within existing PRS departments. In the absence of a dedicated team with responsibility for the preparation of an annual report, any attempts to build capacity and achieve sustainability, which remains the long-term objective of ESSPIN, will be thwarted.

Monitoring Learning Achievement

Issues and Objectives

194. Although Nigeria took part in the UNESCO-UNICEF Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) project in 1996 and in 2003, no institutional structure for assessment was set up. The FMOE Roadmap (March 2009) identified the establishment of “a standardised assessment system that annually monitors and reports academic achievement in the core subjects” as one of its priorities to guide policy and inform practice in classrooms and teacher colleges.

195. The MLA activities under ESSPIN have two objectives:

- reviewing the scope of a national assessment system in Nigeria and provide technical support to the FMOE as required (along the lines of the ESSPIN Position Paper).
- exploring the possibility for alternative approaches to monitoring learning achievement in ESSPIN states, which would complement those of the federal MLA unit.

Strategy

196. The FMOE completed two rounds of trial testing in 2008 and 2009 for a national assessment survey. Depending on budget availability, the FME had intended to conduct a national assessment survey in June 2010 on various subjects with a representative sample of schools at the primary (PRY 4 and 6), junior secondary (JSS2) and senior secondary (SSS2) level. All test items are multiple-choice questions (MCQ).

197. However, there are financial and technical factors that suggest the need to consider alternative approaches:

- The commitment of the FMOE to fund the national assessment system has been weak. The MLA unit was unable to access sufficient resources to manage a complicated survey. The target date for implementation has now slipped to September 2010
- The use of MCQs is seen by FME as a cost effective way to obtain comparable data. However, MCQs suffer from two defects in monitoring achievement in early grades:
 - The items depend on the ability to read in the language of the test at the level of competence expected given the class students are currently attending. When this is not the case, a very high proportion of students perform poorly and the distribution of results does not allow researchers to make an assessment. Successful responses are not very different to random guessing.

- The tests have limited scope to cover non-written aspects such as listening, speaking, reasoning and conducting activities. Compared to a standard written test, an enumerator interacting on a one-to-one basis with a student may be able to determine achievement gains through all forms of communication.

198. For these reasons, ESSPIN has, since June 2009, embarked on a parallel process to introduce monitoring of learning achievement in the six ESSPIN states, using an alternative approach based on enumerators interacting on a one-to-one basis with learners. The methodology is based on Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and opens up the possibility of making international comparisons.

Progress to date

199. At the **federal** level, ESSPIN helped prepare an *approach paper* (which clarified the plans of FMOE in terms of institutional structure, work plan and budget) for stakeholders who might be interested to contribute to the cost of this survey. ESSPIN convened a meeting of the national MLA Technical Committee in Abuja in November to discuss concerns with the current report on the FME MLA two trial tests:

- The need to comment on the strength of distractor items, not only on the index of difficulty and the index of discrimination.
- Even if these criteria were satisfied, the selected items could still be unacceptable if:
 - the items are not testing anything *meaningful* with respect to the subject
 - the *balance* of items in the test does not reflect curriculum intentions.

200. These concerns needed to be addressed so that stakeholders can be confident of the validity and reliability of the national assessment survey. However, progress in following up on these recommendations has been slow. The FMOE Technical Committee on ESSPIN was established in March, and is mandated to work on MLA.

201. At the **state** level, early grade assessment instruments in English and Mathematics were pre-tested in Kano and Lagos in November 2009 and the report was finalised in February. As the survey took place early in the school year, Class 3 and 5 students took part instead of the intended Class 2 and 4 students. The results confirmed that students should be tested not only at the expected level of competence but also at lower levels:

- Class 3 students could hardly cope with many of the English and Mathematics expectations at the Class 1 level in Kano, although outcomes were stronger in Lagos.
- Class 5 students in Kano had unexpected difficulties with the Class 1 English test and with the Class 2 tests in both English and Mathematics. Class 3 and 4 tests in both English and Mathematics were well beyond their general level of

comprehension. Students in Lagos could cope with Class 1 and 2 tests in both English and Mathematics.

202. Preparation for the survey, in cooperation with state institutional structures is now underway with the training to enumerators due to take place in May and the implementation of the survey in June. A sampling plan has been developed, which involves the testing of approximately 4000 students in 50 schools in each of the six ESSPIN states.

Future challenges

203. The main challenges are: (i) to ensure that the institutional structures at the state level can be sustained and (ii) to work with the federal authorities to adopt the lessons from early grade assessment and disseminate good practice across the country.

Education Management Information System (EMIS)

Issues and Objectives

204. The history of information management and the use of data in Nigeria is not a happy one. The last fully completed and documented school census was published in 2007 and related to the 2005/06 school year. The veracity of some of this information is in doubt. Subsequent attempts to produce updated census data have not been given sufficiently high priority and have been frustrated by low capacity and administrative muddle. As a consequence the immediate ESSPIN objective is a modest one. It is to raise the number of States which annually carry out an effective school census and disseminate timely and good quality statistics.

205. The Nigeria Educational Management Information System Policy, which was approved by the 54th National Council on Education meeting in Katsina in December 2007, envisaged the decentralisation of the system in 2009. Each State was then required to set up, staff and furnish education management information systems for their respective states. The policy document determined some coordination principles (in terms of organisation, operations and the transition period).

206. The shift in the onus of data collection and management envisaged in the decentralisation policy was not backed up by any plan or delineation of responsibilities for bringing it about. Consequently, very little was done to prepare for the change or arrange the necessary funding by either the NEMIS Unit in FMoE or most states.

Strategy

207. The EMIS strategy is to focus initially on getting an effective 2009/10 Annual School Census (ASC) and validation survey in the five ESSPIN States and support FMOE/UNICEF where practicable to get quality data in the remaining States. ESSPIN will support Enugu in data processing and analysis, but had no oversight of the enumeration. These data will provide the core body of information for EMIS in these States and provide a sampling frame for future work. We will then focus on publication and dissemination of results and upload to NEMIS. This includes training in States on effective use of the data available for planning.
208. The proposed outputs for the 2009/10 cycle include supporting reporting at the international level (UNESCO), at the Federal, State and LGA levels and some trials at school level. We also plan to make data sets and documentation available for research organisations. The data are already being used in a number of areas such as planning for provision of toilets, sampling frames and the AESR process.
209. This initial focus includes support for all additional 09/10 surveys and data feeds which become available through other ESSPIN work which will include IQTE in Kano, Community Survey, MLA and teacher quality assessments. Where practical we will link these to the core data sets to obtain more in depth analysis.
210. The longer strategic aims for EMIS are yet to be agreed in detail with the National and State EMIS Committees, but could potentially incorporate a much broader range of information than the data from the Annual School Census. This might include financial information, location data/school mapping, a full system for recording information on all teachers including training and results of quality assessments. A full EMIS would be extended to give States teacher management systems, which would allow them to identify future skills gaps, resource shortfalls, and training needs. In the private sector, EMIS could extend to record data on all private schools whether approved or not.
211. The immediate aims for ESSPIN are to support ESSPIN States to plan and execute all elements of the school census, while at the same time disseminating best practice, quality documentation and improved systems to other States. Key elements of this strategy to be implemented in the first cycle and improved upon in subsequent cycles include:
- Supporting effective budget planning for both the current ASC cycle and the subsequent cycle with State commitment to finance the process.
 - Co-ordinating and collaborating with the Federal Ministry of Education on all national aspects of the Census including agreement on operational strategy, timetable and questionnaire design with all agreements ratified by the National EMIS Committee.

- Using a much simplified questionnaire for the Annual School Census aimed at facilitating data collection, while retaining the essential information required for education planning.
- Producing a comprehensive operations manual, which includes a month by month plan of activities to be followed in all States. The key aim is to ensure that the Annual School Census returns are timely and validated, and trusted results produced which are analysed in time to be taken into account in the following years MTSS planning and budgeting cycle.
- Expending significant effort on training enumerators, supervisors, data entry staff etc. to improve the quality and return rate of Annual School Census questionnaires. The focus here in the first year is to determine the most cost effective method of accurate enumeration.
- Monitoring, measuring and recording of all census processes including quality of questionnaires, rates of return, errors noted in forms, errors encountered with data entry etc.
- Designing, developing and implementing a simple flexible data entry application based on Microsoft (MS) Access which reduces the dependence of States on complex, significant IT investment and recurring licensing costs. The simplified approach is to be supported with best practice in system documentation both in terms of design, documentation (data dictionary) and training.
- Promoting the use of this approach in all non ESSPIN States.
- Conducting independent validation of the Census exercise
- Developing an effective package for analysis and dissemination of results. This is to be centred on State ownership of the analysis and reporting processes at the State Level with detailed reporting at the LGEA and School levels and includes transfer of skills to States to enable them to embrace this new role.
- Producing a cost effective distribution and use of EMIS data, including promoting and training on the use of the data in planning. The aim of promoting the data available to all interested parties, including other SLPs, is to make widely available high quality, trusted data and analysis.
- Working with FMoE on the development and maintenance of a National EMIS, developing best practice in uploading individual State data and reporting and disseminating key education statistics at a national and international level.
- Developing a range of effective additional data feeds into the core data to enhance the range of analysis that can be carried out. These could include, finance, teacher quality assessment, location coordinates, training etc. The longer term strategy will potentially include the development of an effective data mining applications to assist in reporting of EMIS data.

Progress to date

212. In general terms the work on the 2009/10 Annual School Census Cycle in the five original ESSPIN States has followed the plan set out in the Operational Manual which was agreed by the National EMIS Committee last August. All training of enumerators and supervisors, promotion, enumeration, and document return/checking and data entry is complete in these States. Work is progressing on data cleaning and table production.
213. The number of schools taking part is significantly higher than in previous years. However some significant work is required on improving the process of maintaining effective school lists in States.
214. In non-ESSPIN States the actual census enumeration was spread over a four month period and one State, Plateau, has still not carried out enumeration. This was primarily due to planning and funding issues due to lack of support for transitional planning from federal to State responsibility. This is being addressed for the 2010/11 cycle by agreeing a transitional plan with FMoE.
215. Monitoring progress in the ESSPIN States shows that the approach being followed is effective, in terms of questionnaire quality, rates of return and timing of processes. The new approach to data entry is working well. Enugu State has recently started using this approach with ESSPIN's support after a four month delay in starting entry. The main issues being encountered are related to the poor electrical supplies/generator arrangements in States and the poorly maintained IT networks. Some further training is required for data entry supervisors. Generally, the ESSPIN States were required to adopt a stand-alone (individual PC) approach to data entry rather than the networked approach, preferred by ESSPIN
216. Data publication plans and output designs are in place and initial training has taken place in all five States to start to develop skills within the State teams responsible for cleaning and analysing data and producing statistical outputs. This training will continue to improve skills at a State level and help to establish capacity at State level.
217. Work is being delayed at the Federal level on the design of the IT process required to upload data to NEMIS. This is due to the NEMIS Unit's insistence on using the existing NEMIS software for data entry, rather than adopting the State level Access approach. They view using a simpler solution as a backward step despite the fact that the existing process has not worked effectively for the past four years. ESSPIN are currently working on securing the services of a VSO to support FMoE to develop the necessary NEMIS improvements and upload capabilities.
218. One negative issue in the ESSPIN States this year was the inability to carry out a census of private schools in Lagos State, due to the ambivalence of the State Government (in turn, a function of the absence of a clear policy on private education), a lack of basic

information such as a school list and insufficient funding. Efforts are being made to address this significant gap in the development of a comprehensive picture of education provision.

219. Work has progressed in a number of related EMIS feeds. An IQTE survey in Kano has taken place and the results entered. Data entry is complete on the separate, independent validation survey and the analysis is about to commence. Data entry planning has started for the Community Survey and initial meetings have taken place on capturing teacher quality data and integrating it into EMIS.

220. A significant amount of training has been provided in the ESSPIN States to support the ASC process. The numbers trained are as follows.

	Head Teachers / Principals	Trainers/Core	Enumerators	Field Coordinators	Data enterers	Data Analysts
Jigawa	None	Inc	190	54	16	6
Kaduna	3513	Inc	463	92	23	5
Kano	None	Inc	763	88	12	5
Kwara	None	25	448	143	12	10
Lagos	None	29	304	53	29	8

Future challenges

221. There are some technical improvements that can be made in future rounds of data collection, management and analysis. In particular, improvements can be made to the data entry process especially the management and monitoring of data entry.

222. The main immediate challenge is persuading FME to accept the approach being followed in the ESSPIN States, with regards to all State led census processes, and in particular data entry and analysis. This is largely a problem of the management of the NEMIS Unit within PPM&R, but the effect is that FME appears reluctant to embrace the decentralisation policy. This may change with a new Federal Minister of Education in post.

223. Dissemination of lessons learned is hampered by the lack of enthusiasm coming from FMoE. This is being addressed through the federal level “Technical Committee on ESSPIN” that is working in FMoE. ESSPIN has also proposed a workshop involving all states and FMoE to review the successes and failures of the 2009/10 ASC cycle.

224. The level of skill available in the States to analyse data effectively and produce quality valid outputs and take full ownership of the publication process has yet to be fully

addressed. Similarly, ESSPIN is only beginning the process of helping the States to use data in planning. A lot of work is required in developing the capacity to establish and run a quality, credible education information service in each State.

225. One of the barriers to the use of data is the persistent and understandable distrust of much of the education data produced, due to the past unreliability and lack of currency. The habit of commissioning additional surveys, which significantly overlap with the ASC will be hard to break until there is greater acceptance of the quality and timeliness of the information from the ASC.

Communications and Knowledge Management

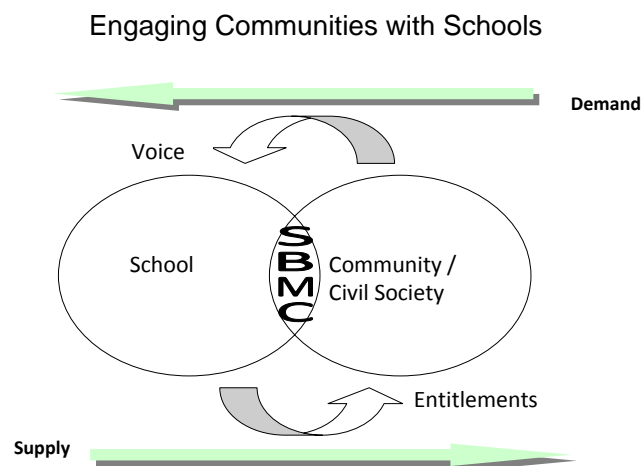
Issues and Objectives

226. The Approach Paper in the Inception Report outlines the position of the Communications and Knowledge Management (C&KM) work stream as a set of activities supporting the delivery of the ESSPIN outputs, rather than as programme outputs themselves. In cutting across the programme, it is therefore appropriate to look from outputs to purpose and consider C&KM as essentially promoting and leveraging support for the supply and demand of quality basic education in Nigeria and engendering proactive support for comprehensive education sector reform. The main issue is to identify the knowledge (i.e. relevant information combined with experience, context, interpretation and reflection) of how the education system is currently broken and what is required to fix it and communicate this to a range of stakeholders/audiences who can bring about the necessary change through direct or indirect action.
227. These audiences, like the Programme, operate at different levels and have previously been identified as being within ESSPIN, at Federal (and therefore national), State, School and Community levels. ESSPIN is committed to the principle of replication by sharing knowledge, programme learning and best practice with other SLPs (principally through the Knowledge Management Working Group (KMWG)), to non-SLP States and with a wider, international community of development practitioners and DFID's UK constituency. The choice of messages and media must be appropriate to the diverse audiences and reflect the progression of activities under the Output work streams over the duration of the Programme.
228. There is a weak organisational culture and limited institutional capacity for C&KM within the Federal and State MDAs that ESSPIN supports with a resultant lack (or loss) of data that would inform policy making and planning. Whilst ESSPIN provides assistance in areas like EMIS and MLA and research is undertaken across the sector by various agencies there is need to enhance the management and dissemination of this knowledge. While government recognises the value or necessity of two-way

communication with non- government education sector stakeholders, the methods used (large gatherings such as education summits, National Council on Education etc) may not be the most effective means of achieving this.

229. The main priority of ESSPIN’s C&KM efforts is in and around schools. The knowledge, further learning and advocacy around school improvement are especially relevant to those working in schools.

230. Inextricably linked to this and of paramount importance for ESSPIN C&KM, are the demand side issues of voice and accountability and the connectivity between school and community. The interface of this relationship is the SBMC which represents the key institution to advocate for better teaching and learning and for grass-roots governance of education. Communications to advise of rights, to promote mobilisation around SBMCs and to stimulate and articulate community demand may offer ESSPIN the best chance for creating a critical and sustainable mass of change agents within civil society and government. The diagram below shows the pivotal position of SBMCs in transferring relevant information and power between supply and demand sides of the education system. This is reflected in the logframe indicators O4.1 and O4.2 for output 4.



Strategy

231. The C&KM Approach Paper provides conceptual background, highlights main themes and key messages, and outlines areas of activity. It is intended that significant ESSPIN C&KM activities are subsumed within the activities under the four Outputs, i.e. plans for activities under the four work-streams should include a C&KM component and State C&KM Officers (SCKMO) will work with the Federal and State Team Leaders and Lead and State Specialists, backstopped by the Abuja C&KM Unit and TA, to deliver these C&KM elements.

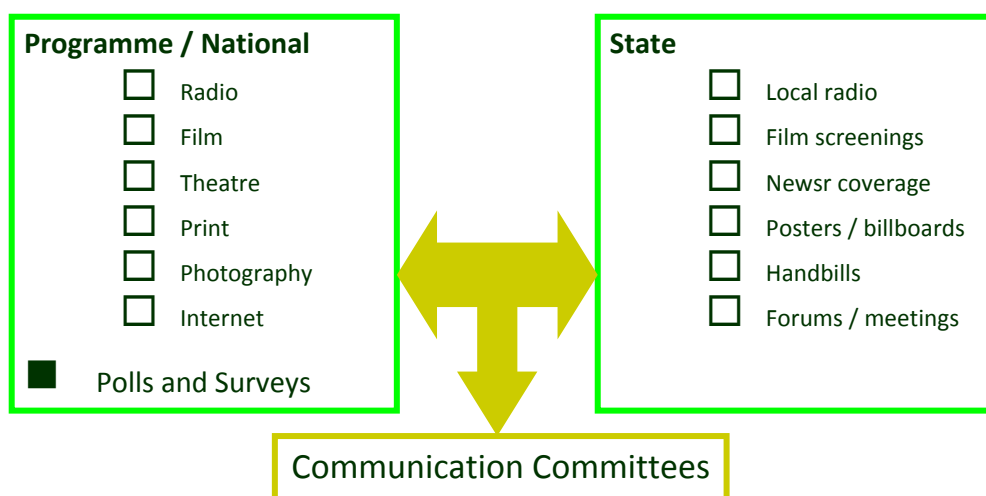
232. C&KM collaboration with Federal and State partners is mainly through the institutionalisation of Federal and State Communication Committees which represent internal FMOE and SMOE stakeholders and present the public face of Ministries. Increasingly, SUBEB Social Mobilisation Units are seen as important partners for work under Output 4, especially for SBMC development. The deployment of VSOs to SMUs will enhance this relationship. We will collaborate with SAVI and PATHS2 to build the critical relationships and communications with communities and civil society organisations.

Programme Support Activities

233. More distinct C&KM activities are planned to support state or federal education reform initiatives which are not so intrinsic to activity under any one of the Outputs. The Programme Support Activities (PSA) are managed centrally at Programme level, as well as at state team level.

234. The use of a comprehensive package of communication products across a mix of mass media maximises the impact of ESSPIN’s C&KM and gives us reach across the social, cultural, economic and political spectrum, and a wide geographic area (including non-ESSPIN states), with a range of messages to inform, mobilise and engage stakeholders. The State and Federal Communications Committees will be involved in the development of the media mix. Audiences will be monitored through surveys and polls.

235. C&KM PSAs covering radio, television/video, print (newspaper journalism), theatre for development, photographic studies and use of the internet are planned to complement state and federal level activities for the first implementation phase, 2009-2011, and beyond. The following diagram highlights the main areas of ESSPIN C&KM PSA at national and state level.



Radio

236. Radio is the central plank of ESSPIN’s media platform with by far the largest and most widespread audience and increasingly reaching the most disadvantaged and excluded. We will produce and broadcast a long running radio drama centred on a “typical” local school and characters from the surrounding community. The drama will raise issues pertinent to the state and federal reform agendas and the ESSPIN programme, coinciding with programme initiatives and other media work. It will particularly encourage engagement with the education sector at the immediate school level, notably through the SBMCs, and will also raise broader governance issues.

Film

237. ESSPIN will produce a range of film material to provide a public forum for policy makers and service providers to highlight critical issues around basic education in Nigeria and present the challenges and successes of their reform programmes. The films will provide a longitudinal study of key areas of ESSPIN support to state initiatives and document the status of education service delivery in Nigeria over the course of the programme,. The films are intended for a national and state television audience and public screening on DVD at community level, as well as a range of other forums, to inform and stimulate debate.

Print Journalists

238. ESSPIN will work with a selected but sizeable group of journalists at state then national level to develop their professionalism and the quality of their reporting. We will raise their awareness and understanding of education sector issues and develop their capacity to identify, investigate and present education stories to the public. This approach aims to elicit a stream of informed stories and articles over an 18 months period.

Theatre for Development

239. In keeping with a strong tradition of drama and story-telling throughout Nigerian communities, we will present the trials, tribulations and triumphs of basic education to a live audience in public places. The plays will seek to prompt immediate discussion and debate. It is intended to use local drama groups in the states. Plays will be presented in local languages. Live theatre will complement radio drama allowing us to strategically consolidate messages across different media. Future plans include the filming of stage versions for TV broadcast and more widespread community screening.

Photographic Studies

240. ESSPIN needs high quality photographic imagery to convey information about the Programme through print and electronic media to a diverse audience. We plan a long-term longitudinal study tracking the development of selected schools and communities

from each of the ESSPIN focal states, documenting the lives of individuals and their environments over the course of the Programme.

Internet and other Electronic Media

241. The use of the internet, notably the ESSPIN website, is an integral component of the C&KM strategy. It will carry all other media output. One feature to be developed is the use of related web pages to gather feedback on other communication / media activities. (We are also committed to low level support to the development of the FMOE website). In addition, we seek to improve the utilisation of two common ICTs – email and mobile phone text messaging, both to disseminate information and provide feedback. SMS has the potential to allow us to conduct simple and quick opinion surveys on key topics or products.

Distinct KM initiatives

242. ESSPIN remains committed to the management of knowledge and learning derived from the programme itself. The mainstay of the KM strategy remains the availability of all Programme-generated documentation on the ESSPIN website and archived on the ESSPIN intranet. The dissemination of key documents and summaries, and reader friendly versions, through various media will continue. We also understand the need to tap in to the store of tacit knowledge held by Programme colleagues and partners and an element of the KM strategy under development is the establishment of web based “social networking” and MS Workspace type professional interaction hosted on the intranet. The SLP KMWG extends this approach by facilitating the coordination of knowledge sharing across the suite of DFID programmes, providing a forum for discussion and the possibility of joint initiatives such as a common web platform.³

243. KM interventions originally envisaged with state partners have been rationalised in the light of Programme priorities, TA limitations, and review of state demand and capacity for change. Plans for a network of state (electronic) libraries and databases referred to in the Approach Paper are therefore largely abandoned. Instead greater emphasis is placed on the development of a Federal / national, sector wide, Nigerian Education Knowledge Network (NEKNet) based at the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) – a searchable, electronic document database offering summarised versions and loosely based on the id21 concept⁴. ESSPIN documentation will also be made available here during and after the life of the programme.

244. Commissioned education sector research by national and international institutions was originally part of the ESSPIN KM strategy but this was revised at the end of the Inception phase. Instead bespoke studies and surveys directly relating to delivery of Programme

³ See SLP KMWG Terms of Reference and the SLP KMWG Structured Approach Paper for details.

⁴ Though much simplified, streamlined and cheaper – and, by definition, managed in-country.

outputs are seen as more relevant. At Federal level, there is greater concern to develop the *processes and capacity* for commissioning and coordinating research, rather than doing it, and how that can be directly linked to the formulation of education sector policy – notably through the PPM&R division of the FMOE. The strategy is therefore to move from a supply driven to a demand driven research agenda.

C&KM for Replication

245. ESSPIN encourages and drives replication in all states by sharing learning and best practice through federal MDAs. In addition to work through PPMR⁵ and NERDC outlined above, collaboration with the National Commission for Colleges of Education facilitates dissemination of the positive experience of institutional reform at Oro College in Kwara. The National Council for Education, the Joint Consultative Council for Education and the Commissioners Quarterly Forum provide a platform for promoting a national education reform agenda.

246. Similarly, engagement with national CSOs such as CSACEFA and the NUT allows knowledge gained from ESSPIN to be transferred to other States. Work with the Nigerian media is essential to ensure messages reach beyond the geographical boundaries of the programme and ESSPIN's C&KM PSAs are consciously being developed with national broadcast and distribution in mind.

Supporting DFID C&KM

247. DFID must make a connection between the work they do and the UK public's everyday concerns. DFID therefore needs to demonstrate that its assistance delivers real impact and value for money and that its work benefits people in the UK. ESSPIN is committed to promoting DFID's support for education sector reform in Nigeria by ensuring DFID is recognised as a key development partner in Nigeria through proper branding and accreditation in all communication products. We are collaborating with DFID communications teams in Nigeria and the UK and ensuring all ESSPIN communications products are available to DFID. (There is a consensus that maximum use should be made of existing or planned ESSPIN C&KM output rather bespoke production for DFID). ESSPIN pro-actively and consciously develops communications products with DFID and DFID's audiences in mind and in accordance with DFID communications guidelines.

248. Further efforts beyond the programme remit have seen ESSPIN supporting the 1Goal campaign and exploring possibilities for promoting ESSPIN, DFID and education in Nigeria through links with the Global Schools Programme.

⁵ Including the development of a National Education Management Information Systems

Progress to date

249. The establishment of ESSPIN's own C&KM team and infrastructure and the conceptualisation of C&KM within the programme has been a necessary pre-requisite to developing the C&KM strategy. This has included the rationalisation of TA arrangements to secure better value for money and the post-inception appointment of key technical staff to support SCKMOs. Inception phase C&KM situation analyses in the states have been supplemented by a comprehensive Communications baseline survey.
250. The ESSPIN website has been operating for a year and is currently undergoing a major restructuring to improve the resource management capacity. The intranet is also functional though only available to staff at present pending further development and testing. A range of ESSPIN and DFID branded communication products sharing a consistent visual identity have been developed, including regular newsletters, e-bulletins, brochures and website content. Printed communication materials have been designed and produced in bulk to support key activities with schools and communities under the Output 3 and 4 work streams. Over 300 technical reports have been produced and processed for dissemination by email and on the website since programme start-up.
251. Support to the FMOE includes the production of printed materials and radio jingles for the Federal Access to Education Campaign. Promotional materials were produced for the Annual School Census in ESSPIN states in November 2009. 23,000 copies of a summarised version of the FMOE Road Map document were produced for national distribution.
252. Negotiations with potential PSA service providers in all media have been undertaken. Despite delays in determining the process for commissioning PSA work, five state documentary films were made between October 2009 and March 2010 and are available on DVD and for national and state broadcasting. Editable tapes have been made available to DFID. The first phase of the photographic study is complete. The contract for radio production is signed and the selection process for theatre producers begun.
253. Communication Committees are well established at State and Federal level and all have participated in capacity building workshops to enable them to develop communication strategies around key issues.

Future challenges

254. Communication Committees have yet to come near to reaching their full potential for gathering and disseminating information or for managing communications strategies. (Provision for C&KM under MTSS is required). Review of the Communication Committees functionality is planned with restructuring a possibility. Linkages between

Communication Committees, especially between Federal and States, would improve the flow of information across the sector and allow for co-ordinated campaigns. Exchange visits and a representative national forum are planned to facilitate this.

255. NEKNET progress is dependent on effective NERDC management funding systems and robust technical infrastructure being available. ESSPIN's C&KM adviser to the FMOE is well placed to monitor progress and to press for the necessary institutional developments while ESSPIN will provide support to capacity building and technical development.

256. All communications work is susceptible to political challenges at state and federal level, especially in times of heightened sensitivity such as election campaigns. This may affect both the production and dissemination of the products in collaboration with state and federal partners. ESSPIN's governance mandate requires us to remain objective and, to some extent, making education sector reform a public and political issue defines what we do. However, long term working relationships with partners must be preserved and therefore the content of messages, choice of media and timing of communication can be judiciously selected to avoid compromising ESSPIN or our partners.