

TRANSFORMING BASIC  
EDUCATION IN NIGERIA



## Medium Term Sector Strategy

ESSPIN 002

December, 2008

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This document is one of the series to be produced by Cambridge Education in support of their contract with the Department for International Development for the Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria

The documents include:

ESSPIN 001      ESSPIN 1<sup>st</sup> Quarterly Report

ESSPIN 002      MTSS Strategy

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| CUBE   | Capacity   |
| DFID   | Department for International Development                             |
| ESA    | Education Sector Analysis  |
| ESOP   | Education Sector Operational Plan                                    |
| ESP    | Education Sector Plan  |
| ESSPIN | Education Sector Support Programme In Nigeria                        |
| ETF    | Education Trust Fund   |
| FME    | Federal Ministry of Education  |
| GEP    | Girls Education Project  |
| LS     | Lead Specialist  |
| MDG    | Millennium Development Goal  |
| MTEF   | Medium Term Expenditure Framework                                    |
| MTSS   | Medium Term Sector Strategy  |
| NEEDS  | National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy                   |
| PSA    | Programme Support Activities   |
| SEEDS  | State Economic Empowerment Development Strategy                      |
| SLGP   | State and Local Government Programme                                 |
| SLP    | State Level Programme  |
| SPARC  | State Partnerships for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability |
| STL    | State Team Leader  |
| TA     | Technical Assistance   |
| UBE    | Universal Basic Education  |
| UBEC   | Universal Basic Education Commission                                 |

## Introduction

1. This document presents a proposed strategy for working with States over the next 6 months to help them formulate a 3-year costed, rolling operational plan derived from the Education Sector Plan (ESP) that in turn should inform the ESSPIN investment plan for each State. Specifically, this document proposes:
  - Specific processes to inform the work over the coming months in assisting States to move from ESPs to operational plans (MTSS/ESOP) and to subsequently develop annual budgets based upon these plans;
  - A set of principles and processes to inform how we operate and a set of specific tasks that we will need to undertake;
  - Invites State Team Leaders (STLs) and Lead Specialists (LSs) to consider how these principles, processes and tasks might be applied in each state and at the Federal level in order to agree on next steps. The document does not prescribe what MTSS these plans will look like although some ideas can be gained on this from the MTSS documents already prepared by Lagos State and the FME.

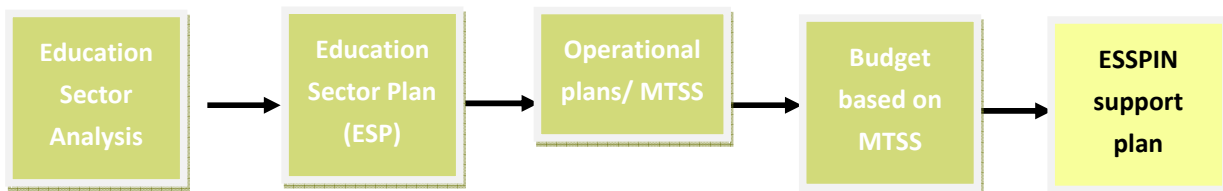
## Current Context

2. As part of on-going public financial management reform in Nigeria in support of the NEEDS and SEEDS planning processes, the Federal Government requires States to produce a Medium- Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) that is informed by sector specific three-year, rolling Medium Term Sector Strategies (MTSS). An MTSS should present policy priorities or strategic objectives, define specific activities and propose an appropriate budget envelope to achieve these. This in turn should allow States to produce annual budgets that are strategic, realistic and forward-looking rather than, as at present, continuing to produce annual budgets that are incremental and essentially backward-looking.
3. In the education sector the achievement of broad strategic objectives, such as the MDGs, is clearly not possible unless a strategic approach is developed and financed appropriately. The Education Sector Analysis documents developed in some States provide a detailed situational analysis taking into consideration demographic, economic, financial and educational data that have informed the development of 10-year ESPs. These in turn seek to define how a State can achieve the MDG/UBE. Where States have conducted an ESA and developed and approved an ESP, the next step is to develop the ESOP/MTSS that in turn will inform the annual budget process.
4. The current approach to budgeting in the education sector is historical rather than strategic– that is based upon a review of allocations from previous years and then adding a percentage to take into consideration inflation. Examination of the current budgeting process and analysis of spending suggests that not only is such an approach not strategic but neither is it realistic. Furthermore, as many allocations are in the wrong place, significant amounts of money that have been allocated are often left unspent. An obvious example of this is the approximately Naira 50 billion sitting in UBEC and ETF that should have been disbursed and deployed around the country to support education reform

efforts. We can conclude that the current approach is (i) not strategic in that it does address policy objectives; (ii) is ineffective in guiding the appropriate allocation of resources; and (iii) fails to support the utilisation of these resources accordingly. The consequences are the desperate situation to be found in schools and colleges around the country.

5. The DFID funded State Lead Programmes (SLPs) have been formulated to support the Nigerian Government to undertake essential reforms to address the need to significantly improve delivery of basic services. A particular objective is to help Government to make better use of its own resources and, with this in mind, ESSPIN therefore is tasked with working with the FME and State governments in the development of strategic plans and budgets to facilitate this process. It is also the case that the satisfactory completion of the ESSPIN Inception period is contingent upon the production of 2-year costed workplans that demonstrate how ESSPIN is going to support States to make better use of their own resources in the education sector. In other words, it is critical to ESSPIN that we are able to assist States to develop ESOPs/MTSS that inform future budgets. Possibly the single biggest risk that we face is not having a coherent link between State plans and budgets and ESSPIN plans and budgets as this would completely undermine what we are tasked with achieving by DFID. Therefore THE major thrust of the ESSPIN Inception Phase must be (i) to support the States produce their ESOP/MTSS; and (ii) to produce an ESSPIN investment plan that reflects the State plans. Table 1 below presents a flow chart describing the strategic planning process that you will recognize from the ESSPIN Technical Proposal.

**Figure 1: Strategic education planning process**



### Working with States to undertake this process

6. Under CUBE and GEP a number of States have more or less successfully undertaken and completed the development and production of ESAs and ESPs that are now endorsed by States as their official education sector reform plans. In Kwara work has already been undertaken to attempt to develop a budget that is based upon the ESP, whilst in Lagos a draft MTSS has already been produced. In Kano an ESOP of sorts has been developed but this is not one fit for purpose. In other States there is less appreciation of the overall process described above, and in none of the ESSPIN States has the entire process been successfully completed. Therefore, the first step to take in supporting States will need to be an engagement with key education sector officials to build their awareness and understanding of what is required, why this is required and how the task can successfully be completed. Once the States are committed we can move forward with practical steps such as developing a work programme and nominating staff accordingly.

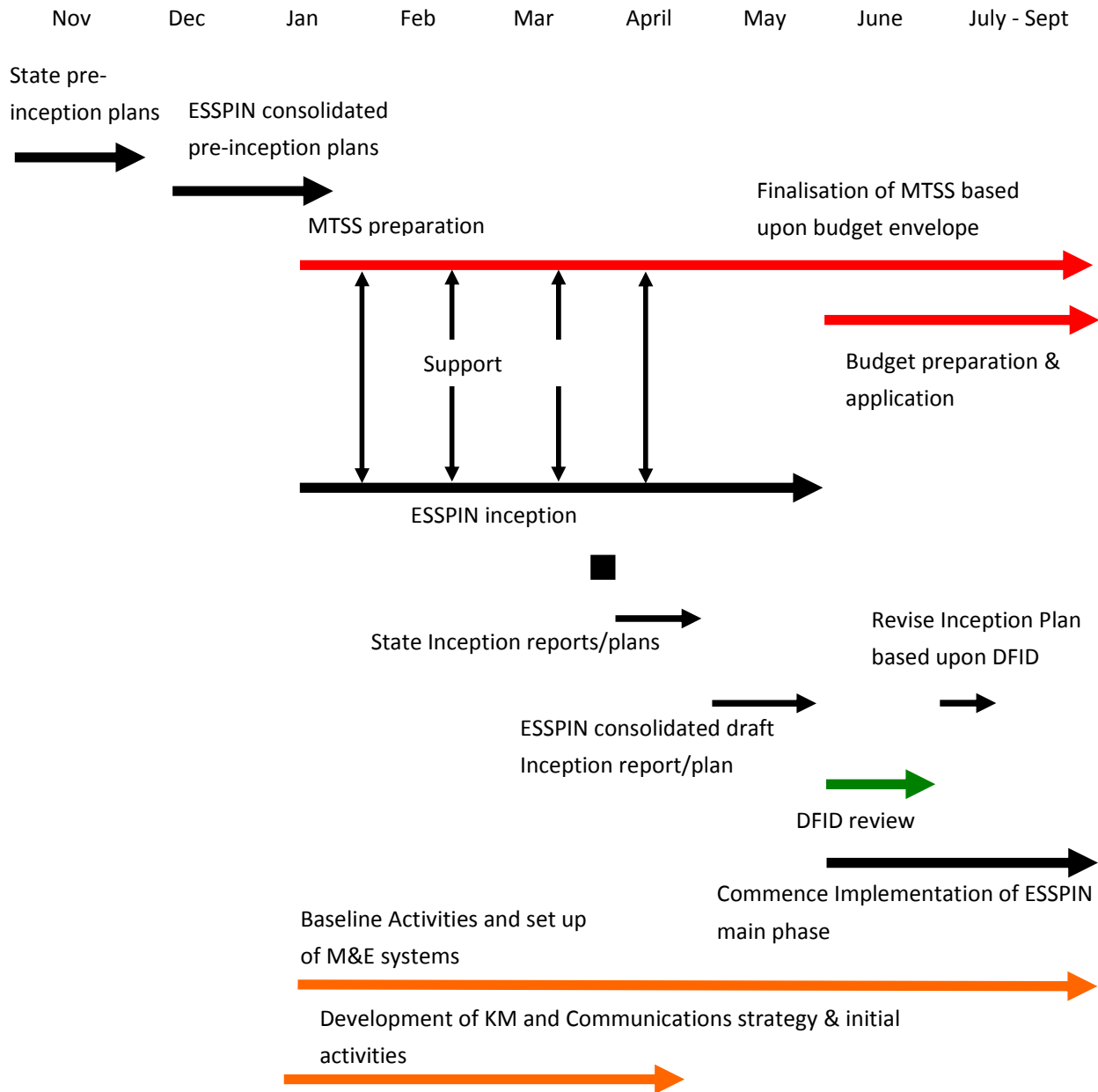
7. The ESSPIN Introductory Workshops have provided an opportunity to engage with key stakeholders in the States and to start a conversation about how ESSPIN will work over the medium term with State teams. At this point we now need to undertake detailed, specific discussions with the States to agree on an action plan to move forward in developing the MTSS and the ESSPIN support plan. However there are a number of constraints that we need to bear in mind before proceeding.
8. First, we know from experience that developing any type of plans in the States in a manner that is consistent with building ownership can be difficult, unpredictable and time-consuming. Second, in ESSPIN we are working to a pre-determined time frame that requires us to produce an Inception Report by the end of May 2009. So whilst in an ideal world we would aim to first help States complete their MTSS, after which we would develop and agree on the ESSPIN Investment Plan, in reality we will need to work on the two processes in parallel. Similarly, whilst up until now we have been working in an exploratory and investigative mode but we now need to quickly move to a more intensive, planning mode. The task up to December is to plan what will happen between January and May. Everything that happens in that period should relate to this process. This will be complex, will inevitably lead to levels of uncertainty and potentially cause some degree of tension and stress amongst our team. Nevertheless, we have to move forward as best we can. Table 2 below presents a schedule for working towards (i) ESSPIN Inception Plans; (ii) State MTSS; and (iii) ESSPIN Investment Plan and is intended for further discussion at the Technical Team Meeting on 12 November.
  - Timelines: The chart above shows the various stages and major activities which need to take place between now and the end of May. This is extended to September for the MTSS and budget process.
  - ESSPIN must submit a draft Inception Report and two year workplan for DFID by 31 May 2009. This will require the development of a supporting budget that is likely to take at least 4 weeks to do AFTER STLs have submitted workplans. ESSPIN State workplans therefore need to be completed by end of April.
  - State log frames will need to be developed before the finalisation of workplans and this in turn means that State level log frame workshops will need to take place in late March/early April.
  - Given that we have already noted that it is unlikely that the State MTSS will have been completed in advance of the development of the ESSPIN plans, the challenge will be to consider a methodology for the preparation of the ESSPIN plans while those of the States are only partially complete.
  - Finally note that DFID expects ESSPIN to commence full scale implementation from June onwards, and not to wait for their comments on the Inception Plan. They are assuming these will be a light touch rather than major restructure of what we have proposed.

### Devising an MTSS: A proposed strategy

9. This section aims to present some thoughts and ideas on
  - how the MTSS might be developed;
  - what it might look like; and (iii) how the ESSPIN teams can assist and guide this process.



Figure 2: Proposed Schedule



10. Structure of MTSS: There are essentially two ways to build the MTSS either by:

- Inviting individual departments to develop plans and budgets and then combining these to produce a overall sector plan and budget; or
- Basing the MTSS on the ESP and translating the long term goals and strategies into medium- term objectives, outcomes and activities which contribute to milestones within the ESP.

11. The obvious problem with the first approach is that, uninformed by strategic objectives, it is likely to lead to more of the same. Therefore we must consider the alternative, namely to encourage and help

the States to prepare and cost the MTSS according to the major policy objectives or themes presented in the ESP and to allocate responsibilities and budgets to the appropriate MDAs. Box 1 below presents a possible approach to undertaking the MTSS using experience drawn from Lagos State. Table 3 describes how ESSPIN team members might engage with State Task Teams.

12. Methodology: In order for ESSPIN to work with States on this process the following must occur:

- The State must commit itself to producing an ESOP/MTSS to support its reform agenda;
- An appropriate cross-departmental structure needs to be put in place by the State to engage its personnel with the process of developing the MTSS;
- A structure and a format for developing the MTSS will need to be agreed upon in advance;
- ESSPIN must agree with the State how ESSPIN technical teams are to engage in the process. It is fundamental that ESSPIN teams should not be operating outside of this structure but within it.

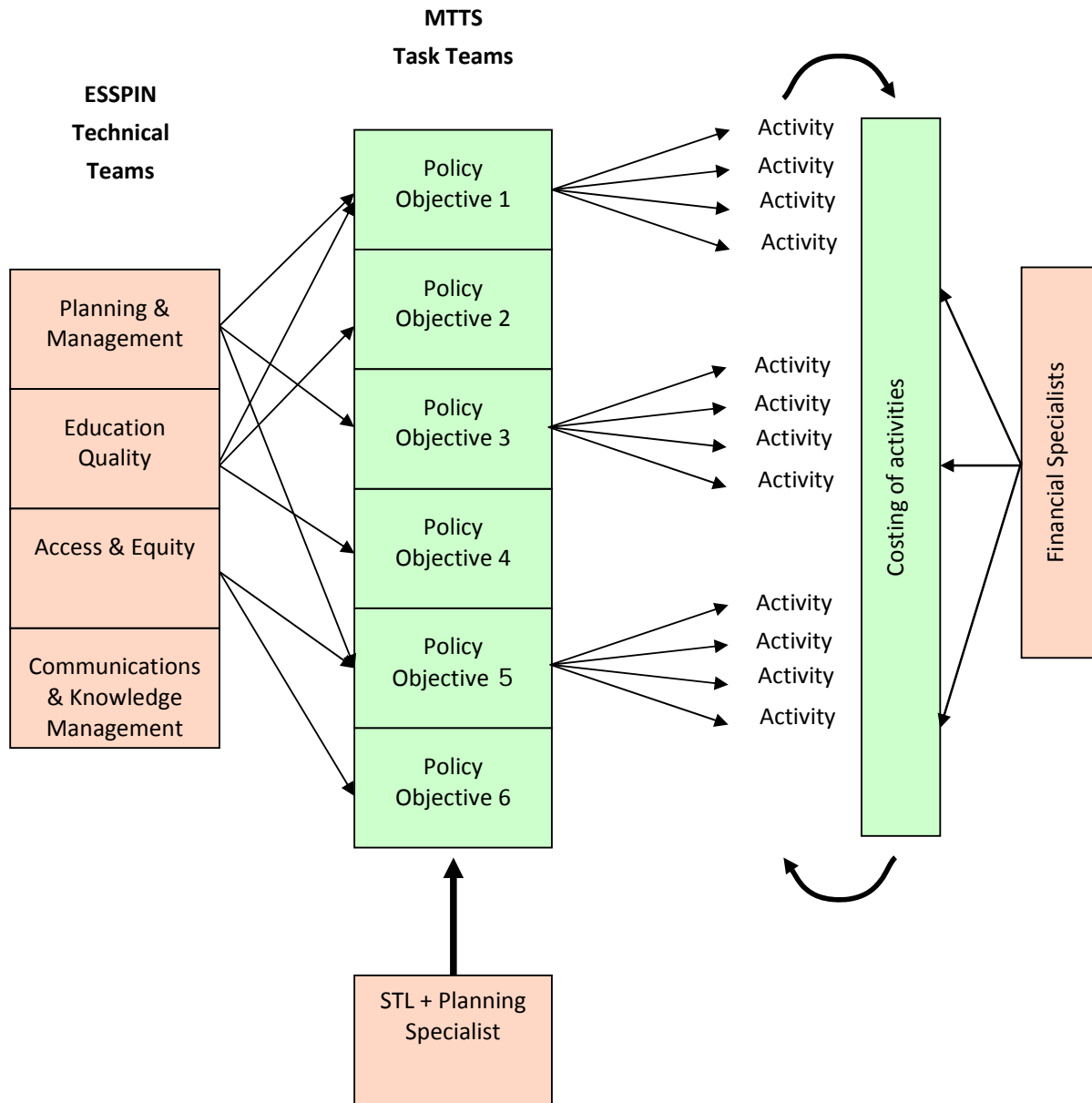
### *The MTSS Process*

#### **Box 1: The MTSS process: a possible approach** (based on experience from Lagos)

**Initial workshop:** An initial strategic workshop(s) held to make key decisions about the shape and form of the MTSS.

- **Task Teams:** Several task teams set up each tasked with addressing a key element/component of the MTSS. Other cross cutting teams may be necessary to consider special areas e.g. teacher development, water and sanitation etc.
- **Stakeholder meetings/forums:** These might take place under the auspices of the Task Teams/Committees.
- **Iterative development of plans:** These teams met regularly in a series of minuted meetings/workshops supported by consultants, who do most of the writing to develop detailed plans. Consultants can thus help to record decisions thereby avoiding repetition and circular arguments and ensuring a consistent format.
- **ESSPIN interaction with Task Teams:** ESSPIN State Specialists and Consultants can support these task teams with help to undertake activities such as workshop facilitation and drafting of sections of the MTSS. In this way the MTSS Task Teams/Committees will be the key points of interaction for our Technical Teams
- **Parallel finance consultancy:** Alongside this process of planning, finance specialists produce budgets to provide an indication of the costs of various options/activities being developed.
- **Aggregation of component plans:** Once the sub-plans are prepared they are collated and reviewed for gaps or overlap. They are costed and if necessary revisited to look for more affordable options.
- **Development of ESSPIN State/Federal Log Frame:** Log Frames based upon the emerging MTSS, ESSPIN support plan and two-year workplan complete by end of May 2009.

Figure 3: Methodology for ESSPIN Technical Teams to engage with State MTSS Task Teams



13. Table 4 below presents an analysis of the key priorities of the current State ESPs and shows that with differing priorities across different States, the detailed MTSS format will need to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate these.

**Table 1: Key Policy Objectives in ESSPIN State ESPs**

| <b>Kaduna</b>                           | <b>Kano</b>                        | <b>Kwara</b>                    | <b>Lagos</b>   |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Basic Education                         | Access and Equity                  | Equitable access                | Early Childhood Care and Development   |
| Secondary Education                     | Quality Education                  | Teacher Quality Improvement     | Basic Education (Primary and Junior Secondary);                              |
| Adult Education                         | Technical and Vocational Education | College of Education Turnaround | Senior Secondary Education   |
| Higher Education                        | Education Finance                  | Strengthening the inspectorate  | Tertiary Education   |
| Policy Planning and Resource Management | Education Planning and Management  | Institution building            | Adult and Non-formal Education and<br><br>Technical and Vocational Education |
| M&E                                     |                                    | Funding                         | Special Education  |

### Budgeting and Costing the MTSS

14. The budget envelopes used to inform the ESPs are based upon certain assumptions made at the time of writing about overall public expenditure in the State and about the education sector's share of that. Whilst the costing of the MTSS must be based upon the ESP, the latter cannot and does not take into consideration the current economic climate or current political priorities. Therefore, in each State we will need to establish what level of commitment there is to funding the education sector over the medium term. As a point to note SLGP/SPARC have been trying to make the point to State Government that Ministries which have well thought out budgets and plans should be given preference over Ministries which do not.
15. Costing of activities is an integral part of the MTSS and by so doing allows the State to subsequently produce detailed annual budgets. If the former is completed satisfactorily then the latter will be much more straightforward. However, experience from FME and from Kwara and Lagos States informs us that collecting data to determine unit costs is a time consuming and difficult task. The implication of this is that the sooner that this starts the better. If the costs can be seen emerging alongside the activities, it is easier to decide on what is affordable and/or prepare different scenarios, should the eventual budget envelope be insufficient.

## Role and Responsibilities in the ESSPIN Team

16. STLs will be responsible for leading the processes described above in their States and for the production of an ESSPIN State plan, supported by a State Log Frame by 31 May 2009. Whilst the STL needs to have a significant understand of both the process and the details, s/he should focus on managing the process - i.e. planning and coordinating technical inputs and providing strategic guidance to the technical teams, rather than trying to write every element of their plan themselves. The STL will work with local education officials to determine the appropriate timing of technical inputs and specific events, and the ESSPIN Technical Teams will have to arrange their schedules accordingly.
17. The key responsibilities for Lead Specialists will be to:
- Manage the teams of specialists working with State task teams to prepare components of the MTSS;
  - Develop packages of support activities which ESSPIN can provide during the Main Phase;
  - Customise these packages to meet different State requirements;
  - Liaise with STLs to ensure the required packages are included in the ESSPIN inception plans.
18. Lead Specialists are currently preparing draft Position Papers for submission at the November Technical Team Meeting that should seek to:
- Describe a core approach and a set of strategies within the relevant component area;
  - Outline packages of preparation activities, the resources required and timescales during the inception period;
  - Specify personnel required to deliver these;
  - Inform the STLs for inclusion in inception plans;
  - Inform ESSPIN Management to allow identification of specialists for mobilization from January onwards.
19. In developing the package of ESSPIN support activities, Lead Specialists are encouraged to reacquaint themselves with both the original DFID documentation and the ESSPIN technical proposal in order to give due consideration to all relevant options. This will allow them to determine core tasks and develop specific TORs for State specialists and additional consultants who may be required.
20. During the Inception Phase, it will be important for Lead Specialists to use their own time strategically in order to maintain an overview of progress in each State and to provide timely and appropriate technical guidance. Whilst some travel to States will be necessary, Lead Specialists will need to resist the urge to spend all their time on the road and instead focus on guiding and monitoring the work of State Specialists and Consultants. This suggests that for much of their time Lead Specialists will need to operate in a Team Leader type mode.

## Looking to the future: producing the ESSPIN Investment Plan

21. While not immediately relevant to your current planning, the ESSPIN support plan will eventually consist of two key areas, namely Technical Assistance (TA) and Programme Support Activities (PSA).

During the period from January to May, both STLs and LSs will need to keep this in mind in order that the work plans developed at that time include both elements.

#### TA

22. The majority of the support we can offer is in the form of people. Long term TA is, or will be, already hired by January. State TA is a given within each State and while these people need to be fitted into workplans they will automatically be costed whatever activities they are engaged in. The same is true of Lead Specialists although their time will be split between States and Abuja and it is useful to have an idea of where their time is being spent. The only additional costs above that which ESSPIN will spend anyway are the ST TA days, and it is these that are most important to try to estimate. Their actual cost can be worked out centrally so it is really only the number of days which needs to be estimated.
23. In our current workplans we have tried to be accurate both about the number of days and the timing of these days, but January to May it will be difficult to predict the exact timings accurately – which is not to say we should not try. What is most important is the number of TA days which might be required for each set of activities. These numbers can only be built up by the STL by aggregating estimated numbers from Lead Specialists, which they should develop in their position papers.

#### PSA

24. As part of the Inception Report and two-year workplan it will be necessary to give as much detail about activity in the following two years as possible, so this will need some serious attention and thought between now and end of April. The pre-inception plans need to ensure that the development activities and specialist assistance is available to help develop this.
25. In the Implementation phase we also have a very large pot of money to spend on Project Support Activities (approx £32 million) and ideas for this need to be thought out carefully, built into the Inception Plan and costed more accurately. These do not have to be spent all in one go but given they are very much aimed at piloting and innovating, there is an argument for spending significant amount in the early years.
26. To remind everyone, the headings for PSA are:
  - Capacity Development;
  - Research and Studies;
  - School Grants;
  - Challenge Fund;
  - Study Tours;
  - Media and Communications;
  - Innovative Construction;
  - Education Materials;
  - Water and Sanitation;
  - Teacher Deployment pilot

27. The size of these budgets is not directly relevant at the moment, as we are still in a position to vire between them at the end of Inception, depending on what we plan.

- Capacity development will be the most obvious for LSs and STLs to use as this refers to workshops, forums, trainings etc for which ESSPIN will pay. These will mostly to do with development, design and training of trainers etc, and we would expect the State to pay for large scale training. However we do not rule out paying for some actual training if it is a pilot, if numbers are relatively small and it is one off, or if there is an urgent need to pump prime an initiative. The understanding must always be that the State will fund a larger roll out.
- Consultants are being hired to scope out our strategy for Research and also how we might use the Challenge fund, but LSs and STLs are free to offer ideas of their own.
- The Communication Team will develop a strategy on which these funds might be spent BUT they will talk to STLs, especially concerning major public awareness strategies at the State level and where appropriate these plans can be integrated into State level plans.
- Study tours for personnel from several States at once are more likely than for individual States but this is not a hard and fast rule.
- ESSPIN would prefer that States fund School Grants but we can pump prime an initiative involving these, in selected pilot areas/LGEAs if we are confident that States will carry this forward in their own budgets.
- Spend of the Education Materials budget is likely to come later in the programme, if at all but this is open to suggestion.
- Water and Sanitation should be picked up in each State and Water Aid is ready to offer specialist assistance to develop activity in this area.
- An Innovative construction initiative and a Teacher Deployment Pilot are not yet certain to happen and if they do are likely to happen in only one State in the first instance. That is likely to be the State there is the most willingness/demand and where plans are best thought out.

28. Other ideas which do not fit in these categories are possible IF well thought out and justified.