Improving access, school quality and learning outcomes in Kano’s schools

Schools that form part of Kano’s School Improvement Programme (SIP) are outperforming others, in terms of headteacher effectiveness, teacher competence, school development planning and overall quality, though not for student learning outcomes. This may reflect inconsistent funding for school support for two school years, increased teacher-pupil ratios due to successful enrolment drives, and periodically an environment of conflict. The effects of the large scale-up of the SIP intervention in 2013-14 are unlikely to have had time to take effect at the time of the second composite survey, however. There are challenges around inclusiveness, despite more effective School Based Management Committees (SBMCs). Continuous state financing for interventions is crucial to addressing these factors and ensuring all children learn more in Kano’s schools.

Kano is one of six focus states identified by the Nigerian and UK governments to form part of the Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN), which provides technical assistance to improve school access, quality and learning outcomes. ESSPIN’s support began in 317 of Kano’s public primary schools in 2009-10. The intervention was restarted and rolled out in 2013-14 to the remaining 5,238 public primary schools.

ESSPIN conducted surveys in 2012 and 2014 to understand how schools in Kano are performing. The full reports can be accessed on ESSPIN’s website www.esspin.org

THE KEY FINDINGS ARE:

The quality of schools in Kano is higher among those in the SIP but has remained largely unchanged since 2012

Schools that were targeted by the SIP generally function better than other schools. Over this period, the proportion of schools meeting the quality benchmark remained unchanged at 35%.

“Kano’s School Improvement Programme schools averaged almost half the quality criteria (49%) in 2014, compared with just one third (32%) in non-SIP schools.”

ESSPIN technical assistance is supplied by a consortium led by Cambridge Education; the Composite Survey 2 (2014) research summarised in this policy brief was conducted by Oxford Policy Management.
Learning outcomes are slightly higher among schools in the SIP, but have remained unchanged between 2012 and 2014

Average test scores in Kano have remained largely unchanged since 2012 despite large increases in enrolment. The only exception to this was in Grade 2 literacy, which fell from 45% to 35%. Schools that had been part of the School Improvement Programme had slightly higher average test scores, although the difference was not significant.

Head teachers and teachers in SIP schools are more effective

“They are more effective.”

“47% of schools in the Improvement Programme in Kano met at least five out of seven criteria for headteacher effectiveness.”

There is strong evidence that the SIP improves equitable access to better quality education for Nigeria’s children. State governments need to consistently fund SIP in their states to raise standards across schools and improve long-term prospects for Nigeria’s economic and social development.

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