

# Back to School in Guinea

(briefing note 04 14 2015)

## Issue

The Ebola outbreak that began in December 2013 and continues to spread across communities in Guinea is having a profound effect on the education of children.

The current school year, scheduled to begin in October 2014, began only on 19 January 2015. In the 7 months since the end of the previous school year, millions of children have missed out on schooling.

Unable to attend classes, children have been deprived of their right to education and exposed to risks that affect their well-being such as dropping out of school (particularly among girls) and child labor.

Thousands of children have lost one or both parents to Ebola; others suffered stigma and discrimination by their communities.

Retuning to schools staffed with fully trained teachers is helping provide children with a sense of normalcy and mitigate the psycho-social impact of the crisis. At the request of the Government of Guinea, UNICEF is provided support to help ensure that the reopening of schools - and the rest of the school year - is as safe as possible.

## Action

In October, UNICEF helped the Ministry of Education devise a set of guidelines to reduce the risk of Ebola transmission as schools reopen. The measures set out in *Safe Schools for the Fight against Ebola in Guinea* include taking the temperature of everyone who enters school premises, frequent hand washing and a response plan in the event of a suspected Ebola case. Teachers were also sensitized and trained on the guidelines so they adhered to the recommended measures and apply them in class.

## Provision of sanitation kits to schools

A total of 48,615 hygiene kits, containing soap and buckets, have been distributed to the country's 12,455 schools in which 2,704,477 children are expected UNICEF provided 25,818 of these kits to 7,176 schools serving 1,467,252 children.

## Training of trainers and teachers.

Based on the *Safe Schools* protocol, UNICEF supported the Government in training more than 148 trainers at national level and 1,363 instructors at prefecture level in addition to 80,657 teachers at schools from nursery all the way up to university level. UNICEF funds were utilized for training the 148 trainers, 377 trainers at prefectural level and 15 641 teachers.

From January 2014, trainers and teachers are being trained on psychosocial support. To date, 224 and 3 327 out of 510 targeted trainers and teachers of zones severely affected by the Ebola epidemic have been trained. The training process is expected to be completed by May and is being done in partnership with Save the Children.

## Radio and distance learning.

Radio programs were developed to support child learning of children where schools will eventually remain closed due to the epidemic and to reinforce learning achievements of schooled children. UNICEF has partnered with Search for Common Ground to improve the quality of programmes aired by the Ministry of Education and make them more child friendly. To date, 16 emissions have been produced and are being broadcasted.

## Printing of questionnaires for data collection and monitoring.

More than 3 million questionnaires were printed and distributed to schools countrywide to help school administrators determine if students had any exposed to Ebola while they were out of school. UNICEF printed more than half of these questionnaires.

## Weekly education coordination meeting.

In order to support the Ministry of Education in responding to basic educational needs in the emergency context, improving partnership among all education actors, information management and common planning,

UNICEF facilitated the setting up of a coordination mechanism and supported the revitalization of the IM unit of the ministry to ensure data collection and analysis. Weekly meeting involving all those partners operating in the field of education are being held. This "education cluster" procured and distributed the hygiene kits, chlorine and infrared thermos-flash required under the safe back-to-school protocol. The group also set out a number of steps to be taken in the lead-up to the reopening of schools.

### Results

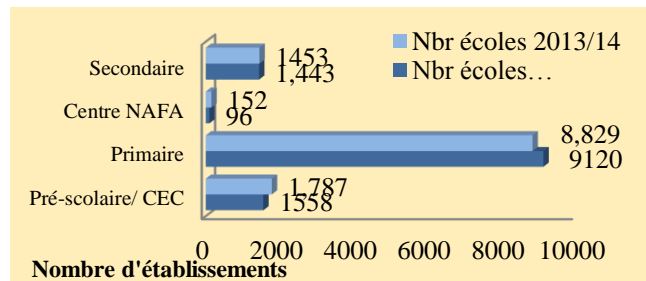
**A protocol for the safe reopening of schools** was developed with the Ministry of Education and other partners and disseminated among all education actors.

**All teachers in the country received training in this protocol** in addition to some parents' association representatives. UNICEF trained 19 per cent of all teachers.

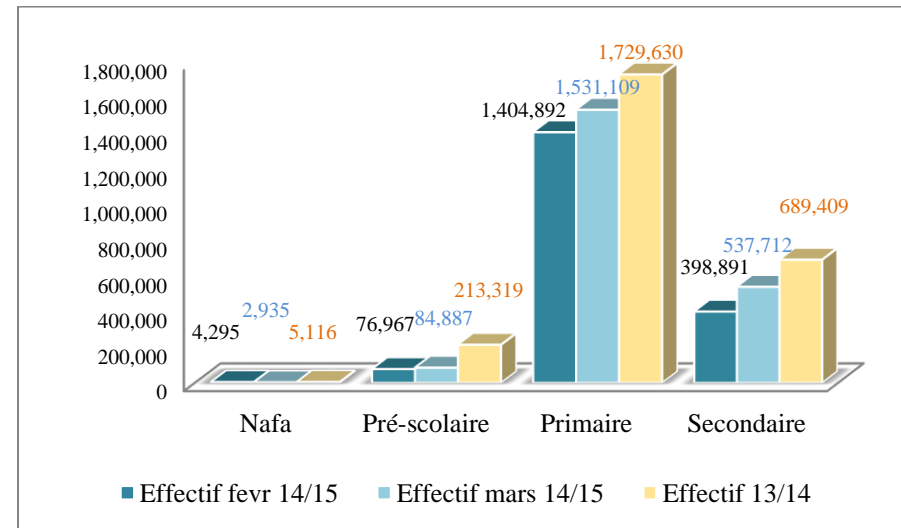
UNICEF distributed school materials, including 2,754 school-in-a-box kits to support schooling of 350,000 children.

The Ministry of Education provided 30,000 thermo-flash to the country's schools.

**Statistics of schools opened by the end of March 2014 compared to those of the 2013-2014 school year.**



**Statistics of pupils and students in school by the end of March 2014, compared to last years' figures (2013/14)**



# FACTSHEET



Table: Stories on UNICEF EVD Education response in Guinea

Date	Headlines	Link
16/01/2015	Ebola outbreak: Guinea to reopen schools	<a href="http://www.cbc.ca/news/health/ebola-outbreak-guinea-to-reopen-schools-1.2912949">http://www.cbc.ca/news/health/ebola-outbreak-guinea-to-reopen-schools-1.2912949</a>
19/01/2015	<a href="#">Guinea, Liberia to Reopen Schools Closed by Ebola - VOA</a>	<a href="http://www.voanews.com/content/guinea-liberia-to-reopen-schools-closed-by-ebola/2604261.html">http://www.voanews.com/content/guinea-liberia-to-reopen-schools-closed-by-ebola/2604261.html</a>
19/01/2015	<a href="#">Ebola crisis: Guinea schools reopen after five-month closure</a>	<a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-30879937">http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-30879937</a>
19/01/2015	Schools shut by Ebola reopen in Guinea, but rumours keep many at home	<a href="http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2015/01/19/schools-shut-by-ebola-reopen-in-guinea-but-rumours-keep-many-at-home.html">http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2015/01/19/schools-shut-by-ebola-reopen-in-guinea-but-rumours-keep-many-at-home.html</a>
19/01/2015	Guinea: Schools Reopen as Ebola Ebbs	<a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/20/world/africa/guinea-schools-reopen-as-ebola-ebbs.html?_r=0">http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/20/world/africa/guinea-schools-reopen-as-ebola-ebbs.html?_r=0</a>
19/01/2015	GUINEA / EBOLA SCHOOLS REOPENING	<a href="http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/unifeed/2015/01/guinea-ebola-schools-reopening/">http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/unifeed/2015/01/guinea-ebola-schools-reopening/</a>
January 2015	Schools Reopen in Guinea as Ebola Situation Improves	<a href="http://www.ryot.org/schools-reopen-guinea-ebola-situation-improves/916669">http://www.ryot.org/schools-reopen-guinea-ebola-situation-improves/916669</a>
20/01/2015	Guinea schools reopen, but Ebola fears still keep many home	<a href="http://www.enca.com/africa/guinea-schools-reopen-ebola-fears-still-keep-many-home">http://www.enca.com/africa/guinea-schools-reopen-ebola-fears-still-keep-many-home</a>
20/01/2015	Poor turnout as Guinea schools reopen after Ebola break	<a href="http://www.english.rfi.fr/africa/20150120-poor-turnout-guinea-schools-reopen-after-ebola-break">http://www.english.rfi.fr/africa/20150120-poor-turnout-guinea-schools-reopen-after-ebola-break</a>
20/01/2015	As schools reopen in Guinea, UNICEF helps efforts to reduce Ebola transmission risk	<a href="http://www.unicef.org/media/media_78731.html">http://www.unicef.org/media/media_78731.html</a>
20/01/2015	Ebola crisis: schools in Guinea begin to reopen for classes	<a href="http://www.aworldatschool.org/news/entry/ebola-crisis-schools-in-guinea-begin-to-reopen-1503">http://www.aworldatschool.org/news/entry/ebola-crisis-schools-in-guinea-begin-to-reopen-1503</a>
Feb.2015	Guinea: Reopening schools safely - partnering with families and communities	<a href="http://www.who.int/features/2015/guinea-schools-reopen/en/">http://www.who.int/features/2015/guinea-schools-reopen/en/</a>
26/02/2015	Schools reopen in Guinea as Ebola subsides	<a href="https://www.childfund.org.au/blog/guinea-schools-reopen-ebola-subsides">https://www.childfund.org.au/blog/guinea-schools-reopen-ebola-subsides</a>