

## BRIEFING NOTE – LIBERIA BACK TO SCHOOL PROGRESS

(04 15 2015)

### **UNICEF support to the Government of Liberia’s efforts to reopen schools include the following:**

- Development of the **Protocols for Safe School Environments in the Ebola Outbreak in Liberia**
- Purchasing and distributing IPC materials to operationalize the Protocols for 4,038 schools.
- Providing support via the Education Cluster to map the NGOs who carried out the last mile distribution of IPC materials.
- Supporting the development of training materials and providing training to District Education Officers, teachers, PTAs and community leaders on the Protocols.
- Using social mobilization to support the back to school efforts throughout the country, including the production and broadcast of targeted awareness messages on 44 community radio stations nationwide.
- Rolling out RapidPro SMS monitoring systems to verify last-mile supply delivery and track emerging trends in student enrolment and implementation of the protocols.
- Procurement of IPC kits for schools omitted during the first round of distribution is ongoing simultaneously with verification of the existence of an additional 1,000+ schools (per multiple new lists submitted by the MOE)

### ISSUES

- Schools have reopened in two phases: 16 February and 2 March:
    - UNICEF has introduced SMS-based reporting platform (Rapidpro) to facilitate weekly sampling of schools opened (and accompanying enrolment rates in each of the 15 Counties). Information is being collected through Cluster partners, Ministry of Education (98 District Education Officers) and UNICEF County/District Mobilization Coordinators
    - In order to lay the groundwork for SMS data collection and establish a baseline for comparison, UNICEF and the MoE organized a temporary Back-to-School Call Center to obtain rapid data on school re-opening progress directly from principals and DEOs:
      - Out of 2,467 schools which have been contacted so far, 2,443 (99%) report that they are open.\*\*\*
      - 98% of schools responding have confirmed receipt of the Back to School IPC kits distributed by UNICEF and Education/Logistics Cluster partners
      - Registration figures indicate that enrolment has increased to approximately 92% of 2014 levels within the schools sampled.
      - Attendance estimates suggest that 88% of students registered in 2015 are attending classes each day.
      - While 99% of Schools contacted reported that they were open and 98% had received IPC kits, this data should be considered in terms of potential reporting biases subject to mobile network coverage, principal responsiveness, and sample size limitations (see below).
- \*\*\* The 2,467 schools reached via the call center represent 61% of the 4,038 total schools targeted for IPC Kit delivery by the MoE/UNICEF during the first phase of school reopening. The random sampling of urban and rural schools in all 15 counties provides a strong

indicative representation of the overall back to school picture within these targeted schools; however, school re-opening/enrolment percentages are subject to change pending ongoing data collection/verification; delivery of additional B2S IPC kits is ongoing at an additional 500-1000 schools not included in the 2014 EMIS data shared by the MoE, pending verification of each school's existence and current operational capacity).

- IPC kits have been delivered to all 98 districts in the 15 Counties. NGOs and UNICEF collaborated to support last-mile delivery directly to the schools:
  - As of 13 April, the Education Cluster confirmed that 99% (4,006) of the 4,038 schools targeted during phase 1 had received IPC kits.
- Though the MOE initially requested IPC supplies for 5,181 schools at the beginning of January, this request was revised to 4,038 schools on 31 January after verification of enrolment/location of numerous schools on the first list proved impossible. However, the MOE subsequently submitted another request for IPC kits to cover 5,181 schools:
  - Verification of the missing schools list has proved extremely problematic.
  - UNICEF met with the Minister of Education to determine the way forward on verification of additional schools. MOE has since sent the list of the additional schools to all 15 County Education Officers for verification (in collaboration with Cluster partners present in each County).
  - In coordination with the IMS (Incident Management System) back-to-school liaison, the MoE formally requested UNICEF to procure and distribute materials for schools in Montserrat County which were left out in the first phase of kit delivery; meanwhile, IFRC was requested to manage procurement and distribution for the remaining 14 counties.
  - The verification exercise in Montserrat County yielded a total of 581 schools and 200,899 learners that missed out on IPC kits in the six districts where UNICEF was requested to provide supplies; procurement has been initiated for these schools, with kitting and distribution ongoing from 13-24 April.

#### **SOCIAL MOBILIZATION/TRAINING ACTIVITY/INNOVATION UPDATES**

- Training on the protocols for master trainers ran from 3-6 Feb for all 98 District Education Officers, 99 Environmental Health Technicians/District Health Officers, and 100 NGO partners. This included registration of their mobile phone numbers into RapidPro.
- A cascade model ensued to train teachers, administrators and PTA members on the implementation of the Protocols. As of April 3<sup>rd</sup>, at least 3,460 of 4,038 targeted schools (86%) had 3 stakeholders (a teacher, administrator and PTA member in most cases) trained in the Safe School Reopening protocol through Education Cluster partners.
- SMS messages sent to all registered District Education Officers to confirm if IPC kits have been received.
- Surveys verifying implementation of the Protocols are being sent via SMS questionnaires to all school administrators. If any of the protocols are not met, the school administrator is told his/her school is not ready for reopening and the appropriate County Education Officers is automatically alerted.
- With UNICEF support, Search for Common Ground (SfCG) supported the MOE in their Teaching by Radio programme and developed radio spots to disseminate the B2S messages targeting four key stakeholder groups – students, teachers, parents and communities in all 15 Counties. These spots which began on 13 February, will air for a period of one month.
- UNICEF has trained 115 religious leaders on their role in the safe reopening of schools. Each religious leader will train 20 other religious leaders across all Districts on how to effectively engage and mobilize their communities on Ebola prevention.

- Liberian Crusaders for Peace (NGO-partner with UNICEF) implemented social mobilization activities in cross border communities with Sierra Leone and Guinea through a two-days training exercise on Ebola prevention.

### EDUCATION CLUSTER STATISTICS

# of schools being provided IPC kits:	4,038 public & private schools (pre-school to secondary)
# of kits packaged & delivered by UNICEF	7,256 (Kits A + B + C depending on student population)
# of students enrolled:	1,024,811 at 4,038 schools in 2014 (MOE data)
Modes of delivery:	Helicopter, commercial trucks, UN & NGO vehicles, barge
Date of IPC kits delivery in all 98 education districts:	20 February
Date of IPC kits delivery from 98 districts to 4,038 schools:	6 March
# of teachers/PTA members/Community members to be trained:	10,000 out of 12,114 (3 per school), have been completed as of 03 April
# of NGOs supporting the last mile delivery:	30 organized by the Education Cluster with 12 serving as leads for the 15 Counties

### Back to School call center-phase2 report

School Open		Kits Rcvd	Enrolment 2014	Enrolment 2015	Attendance
Yes	2443 (99%)	2418 (98%)	496239	458512	403462 (88%)
No	29 (1%)	45 (2%)			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2443</b>	<b>2467</b>			

County	School Open		Kits Rcvd		2014 Enrolment	2015 Enrolment	Attendance	Schools Reported Enrolment
	Yes	No	Yes	No				
Bomi	86	0	82	4	21904	27206	17242	86
Bong	129	5	129	0	36319	33574	29562	124
Gbarpolu	123	0	121	2	4336	3398	3012	18
Grand Bassa	185	0	182	2	45416	32057	29705	182
GCM	133	2	135	0	15652	13318	10637	57
Grand Gedeh	115	0	115	0	18992	24024	22906	87
Grand Kru	60	2	62	0	6934	6789	6280	41
Lofa	219	1	204	2	24227	21109	18911	80
Margibi	133	2	131	4	50097	44844	38163	132
Maryland	73	0	73	0	17050	15800	15155	56
Montserrado	634	8	619	13	182031	170316	155263	609
Nimba	252	0	269	4	50879	44565	38259	165
River Gee	103	0	102	1	3069	3353	2741	15
RiverCess	112	6	107	11	7515	7313	6309	44
Sinoe	86	3	87	2	11818	10846	9317	76
<b>Total</b>	<b>2443</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>2418</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>496239</b>	<b>458512</b>	<b>403462</b>	<b>1772</b>