

LABE, Guinea, 3 April 2005 - Guinean girls turned out for a national football tournament this week in a bid to beat the boys at their own game and boost girl's education.

Guinea Conakry is one of 25 countries in which UNICEF is promoting The Go Girls! Education for Every Child, initiative, designed to get more girls into school.

In Guinea only 28 percent of secondary school students are girls. As a way of increasing that number, UNICEF Guinea and the local arm of FIFA, have taken the first step to establishing a permanent national girls' football league.

Love of the game has kickstarted the ambitions of the 18-year-old Doumbouya Bah, football star of Labe. She may wear plastic sandals on the dusty football field that give her bad blisters, but her dreams take her to the sporting glories of Paris and New York. As captain of her team she was among the first Guinean girls to take part in the national girl's football tournament which began this month.

"Sport is really great. It's good for your health and on top of that it gets you ahead. I'm number one here. I've been here for three years now and everybody knows me. And that's all because of sport," says Doumbouya.

While most girls in this West African country are thinking about babies and housework, Doumbouya's planning to go abroad when she finishes her schooling next year. "It's not good just to stay at home. Once you're the boss then you can have babies if you want but you must make money first. I want to be as good as the boys and sport helps," she says.

"Sports is a powerful vehicle to bring girls into the schools and to keep them there," says John Brittain, UNICEF Communication Officer in Guinea. "The pride that the whole society is taking in their ladies is one of the greatest things we're achieving here."

For government officials this is nothing short of a mini revolution for Guinean society. "We had a cultural barrier before which meant it was extremely difficult for girls to wear a football jersey -- that would have embarrassed the parents of the girl. Now we let girls to express themselves," says Ibrahima Barry, national director in the ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture.

1. WS Army band marching
2. WS Excited crowd
3. WS Army band leader
4. WS crowd cheering
5. WS Governor meeting team
6. WS team photo
7. MS team members shake hands
8. MS Governor kicking off the tournament
9. WS crowds cheering
10. WS match in progress
11. WS girl with soccer ball
12. CU ball
13. WS girl on soccer field

14. WS Team with plastic sandals
15. CU girl washing plastic sandals
16. CU sandals drying on rock
17. CU Girl cooking
18. CU girl cooking
19. Doumbouyo Bah, footballer looks at winning certificates
20. Doumbouyo Bah SOT (French with separate English translation)
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21. WS Doumbouyo riding motorbike
22. WS Doumbouyo pulls up outside gates
23. WS Team practice
24. Int: Ibrahima Barry, National Director in the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture. (French with English translation)
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25. WS Doumbouyo Bah playing soccer
26. WS ball being kicked
27. MS Young girls watching game
28. CU girls watching game
29. MS Girl scoring goal
30. WS team rejoices at goal scoring.

1. UNICEF video news footage 1 (copy and paste shotlist according to how video should be cut)

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