In Haiti, school learning is spread over three levels:

1. The pre-school level, where children aged 3 to 5 years take their first steps in the school system. They learn to read and write. This level generally consists of three sections: small, medium and large.

2. The basic level receives children from pre-school who are accompanied for nine years. This new level is divided into three cycles, the first two of which constitute primary education, while the third cycle introduces the child to secondary level.

3. The secondary level lasts four years and is aimed in principle at 15-18 year olds. Education at the secondary level is provided in secondary schools and colleges.

**2013-2014:**

Haiti has 17,828 schools, 56% of which are in rural areas and 44% in urban areas;

88% of these schools are non-public as opposed to only 12% public;

88,227 teachers are in the Haitian education system;

teachers for 36 students (on average);

77% of children are enrolled in school (2013);

72% of students are over-aged;

26.73% of teachers in the public sector are normal compared to 13% in the non-public sector.

***Source: Ministry of National Education.***

1.2 Education The literacy level of the population aged 10 years and over is 61.0 per cent in the country as a whole. It is higher among men than among women: 63.8 per cent compared to 58.3 per cent. The level of literacy is far better in urban than in rural areas (80.5% as against 47.1%). Of the total population aged five (5) years and over, 37.4% have no level, 35.2% have reached primary level, 21.5% have reached secondary level and the proportion of persons with university level is only 1.1% (1.4% of men as against 0.7% of women). In the academic year 2001-2002, 45.9 per cent of the population aged 6-24 years attended school or university. Moreover, the figures show very little difference between boys (46.6 per cent) and girls (45.3 per cent).

# **HAITI**

"Haiti is a country with a young age structure. The 15 to 65 year olds make up 60% of the population. In a context of demographic transition, young people (15-24 years) have reached 21% of the population. Approximately 220,000 young people of both sexes will have reached the age of 15 each year, which is the age to enter the labour market or to engage in vocational training. Adolescents between the ages of 10 and 19 make up about 22% of the population.

"- the average age at first sexual intercourse is 13;

- 3% of teenage girls have already had 3 children;

- the maximum number of pregnancies is 5;

- 57% of the mothers of the teenage girls surveyed have already been fertile before the age of 20;

- only 12% of sexual information is provided by family and 29% by friends;

- only 16% of the progenitors are adolescents and 47% are over 28 years of age;

- 93% of adolescent girls do not use condoms or use them only sometimes;

- 90% do not know about family planning methods and how they work;

- 92% do not know their menstrual cycle and 88% do not know their fertile period".

According to WHO, nearly 16 million girls aged 15-19 years and some 1 million girls under 15 years give birth every year, most of them in low- and middle-income countries. Complications of pregnancy and childbirth are the second leading cause of death for girls aged 15-19 worldwide. Every year, nearly 3 million girls aged 15-19 undergo unsafe abortions. Children of adolescent mothers are at significantly higher risk of mortality than children of women aged 20-24.

**EARLY PREGNANCY**

Nearly 16 million girls between the ages of 15 and 19 give birth every year. 70,000 adolescent girls die each year from complications of pregnancy and childbirth.

**CAUSES OF EARLY PREGNANCY**

In the world 1 in 5 girls gives birth to their first child before the age of 18. This phenomenon can be explained by:

- Lack of sexual information and education - Due to lack of resources and gender taboos, children and young girls do not receive sexual and reproductive education. They do not know or know little about contraception and the risks of early pregnancy. The lack of family planning, which is free in some developing countries, reinforces this situation of ignorance and lack of access to care.

- Forced and early marriages - 9 out of 10 early pregnancies occur within marriage or cohabitation. Once married, girls are forced to have sex with their husbands and become pregnant.

- Sexual violence and abuse - On the way to and from school, in schools, in emergencies, within the family - girls are vulnerable to unprotected sexual violence and abuse.

- Cultural taboos - In some developing countries, talking about sex is taboo. Girls who become pregnant as a result of sex or sexual abuse are ashamed to talk about it and therefore do nothing to stop it.

- The law - In most developing countries, abortion and sometimes even contraception are considered a crime and are punishable.

- Access to contraception - Access to contraception can be hindered by poverty, taboos and/or distances too great to reach a shop or health center distributing them.

**CONSEQUENCES OF EARLY PREGNANCY**

Early pregnancy has catastrophic consequences not only for the mother, but also for the child and the development of their community and the country as a whole:

- Health Risks - These early pregnancies are very dangerous for both mother and child: Every day, 194 girls die as a result of early pregnancy. Yet 90 per cent of the causes of these deaths are preventable. Complications of pregnancy and childbirth are the second leading cause of death for girls aged 15-19 worldwide. These deaths are usually caused by a lack of health facilities to monitor these high-risk pregnancies, or a lack of money to access them.

- Dropping out of school - According to a study we conducted, 58 per cent of girls never or rarely return to school after having a child. This figure increases when girls are also married.

- Marginalization - In many societies, family honour is based on girls' virginity. Girls who are pregnant out of wedlock are therefore discriminated against and marginalized. They may be rejected by their families and thus become vulnerable to violence and abuse, domestic slavery and sexual exploitation.

- Perpetuation of women's low status and poverty - Early marriages and pregnancies keep girls in their inferior status to men and do not enable them to escape poverty. This is an unjust situation and a huge lost potential for the development of communities and countries.

**EVENTUAL CONCLUSION**

A girl's pregnancy can radically change her life. She may be forced to drop out of school, reducing her employment prospects. She also becomes more vulnerable to poverty and exclusion. Her health can also suffer, as complications related to pregnancy and childbirth are one of the leading causes of death among adolescents.

Adolescent pregnancy is usually less a deliberate choice than a lack of choice: it is the consequence of little or no access to education, information and health care.