



4 August 2017 – Girls with higher levels of education are less likely to have an early and unintended pregnancy. Pregnancy and childbirth complications are the [second cause of death](#) amongst 15 to 19 year-old girls, with approximately 70,000 adolescents affected annually.

In a recent report, [UNESCO](#) published a series of recommendations for the education sector. Early and unintended pregnancy is a risk for the young mother and the child. Detrimental effects impact on health, education and the social and economic state of adolescent girls.

The report aims to help governments and education actors understand the effects of early and unintended pregnancy and the actions necessary to prevent it. The aim is also to ensure that all girls, including those who are pregnant and parenting, can realize their right to education in a safe and supportive school environment.

“Pregnancy has to be integrated into the wider subject of life skills or sexuality education, not as a short, stand-alone topic,” said Joanna Herat, a UNESCO official. “By integrating it into life skills or sexuality education, it also means that it is taught to both boys and girls – recognizing

that both male and female learners have a role to play in making decisions about healthy sexual relationships, now and in the future.”

In addition to the direct benefit for girls and their families, addressing the problem also contributes to achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)), including [Goal 1](#)

on eliminating poverty,

[Goal 3](#)

on promoting healthier lives,

[Goal 5](#)

on achieving gender equality and

[Goal 16](#)

on building peaceful and inclusive societies.