

The coverage of preschool education in Haiti is relatively high. However, it is a service provided primarily by the private sector and faces challenges such as unequal access, low quality, and malnutrition of its young children. Greater public spending and oversight by the State are essential to promote better early childhood programs in the long run.

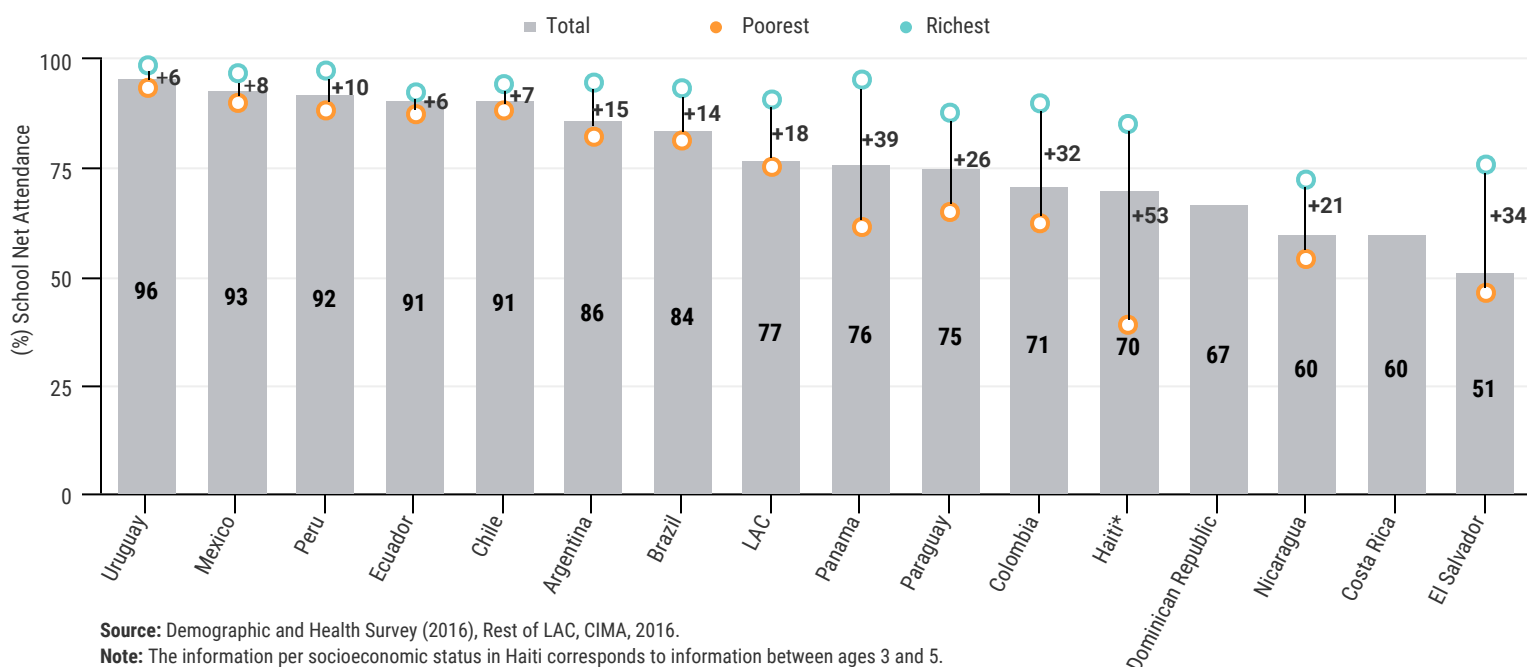
In Haiti 3 out of every 5 children attend preschool education

- According to the VI Demographic and Health Survey, 63% of 3 to 5-year-old children attended preschool in 2016, even though it is not mandatory.
- This percentage varies depending on children's age group: 54% of 3 to 4-year-old children attended preschool education, compared to 70% of 4-5 years old.
- The percentage of children between the ages of 4 and 5 who attended preschool in Haiti was below the Latin America and Caribbean's (LAC) average in 2016 (77%) but exceeded countries such as Costa Rica (60%), El Salvador (51%) and the Dominican Republic (67%).

One out of every 5 children from the most vulnerable households attends a preschool education program

- In 2016, while 84% of boys and girls in the highest socioeconomic level attended some preschool program, only 31% of those in the lowest did so.¹
- In 2016, this difference was the highest in the region (53 percentage points), followed by Panama (39 p.p.), El Salvador (34 p.p.) and Colombia (32 p.p.).
- In terms of gender, no gap in attendance was observed: 62% of boys and 63% of girls between the ages of 3 and 5 attended some preschool education program in 2016.

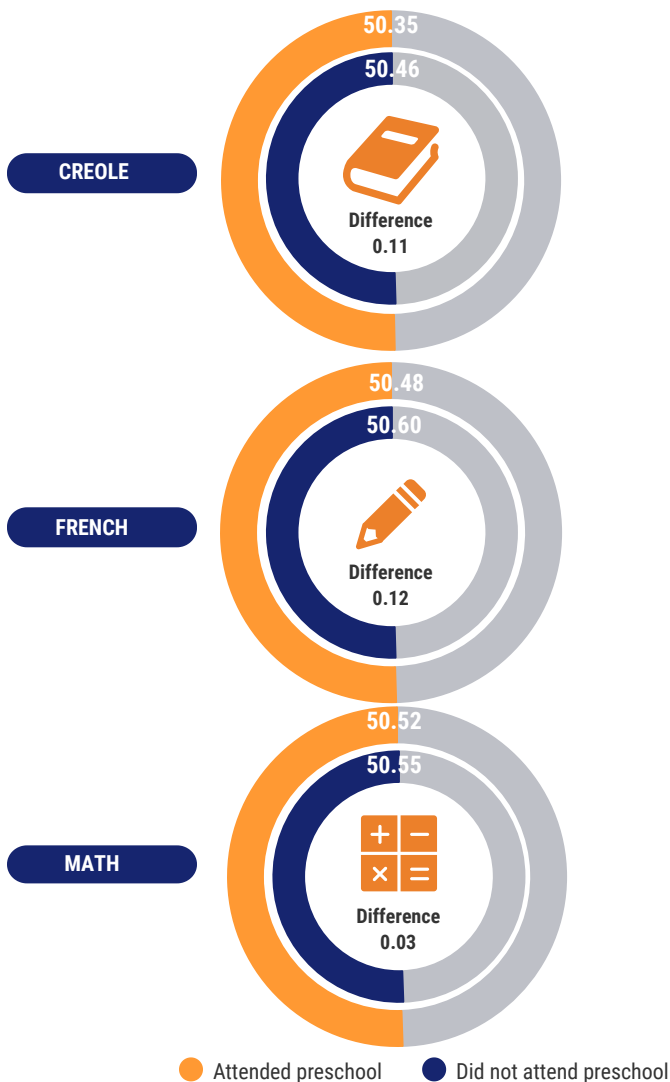
SCHOOL NET ATTENDANCE RATE OF CHILDREN AGED 4-5 TOTAL AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, 2016



Preschool education in Haiti is provided primarily by the private sector

- According to data from the Ministry of Education, 86% of preschools in Haiti were private and only 14% were public in 2016.
- Compared to other countries in the LAC region, where the percentage of private schools is below 35%, Haiti is far above average. For example, in Ecuador 34% of early education schools are financed by private sector providers, while in Mexico this percentage is even lower, at 17% (CIMA, 2015).
- This low expenditure on public education is seen throughout the whole system. Haiti is the country in the region that spends the least in education. In 2017, only 2% of its GDP was allocated to education, whereas, on average, the region spends more than 5% (CIMA, 2017).

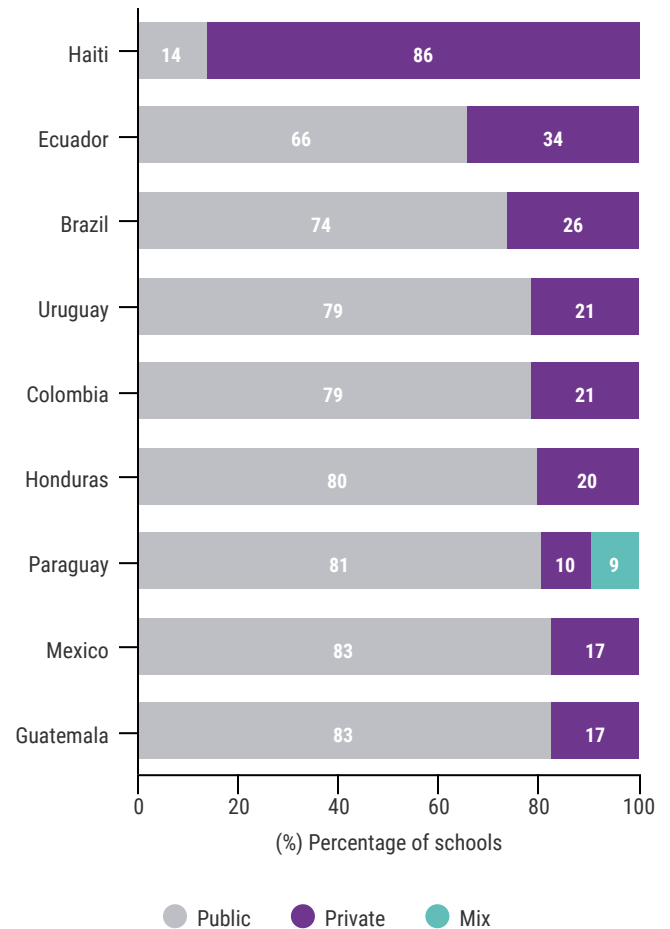
AVERAGE SCORES, BY PRESCHOOL ATTENDANCE



Source: Haiti National Evaluation, 2016

Note: The scores of the assessment are based on a scale of 0 to 100.

PERCENTAGE OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION SCHOOLS, BY TYPE OF FUNDING



Source: Haiti: Situation de la petite enfance; Rest of LAC, CIMA 2015-2016.

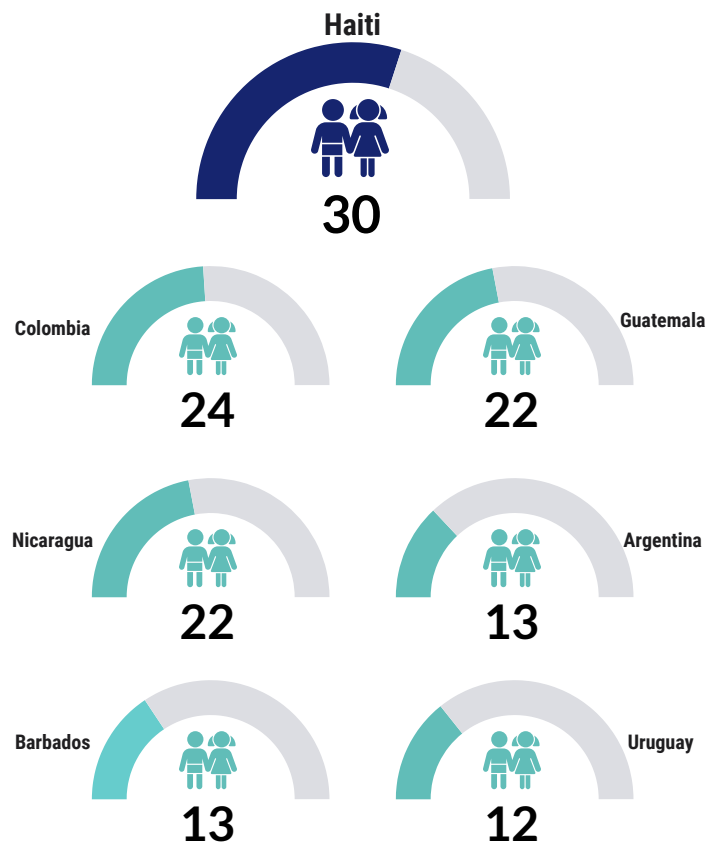
Getting children into preschool classrooms does not guarantee better future learning outcomes

- The 2016 Haiti National Evaluation is a learning assessment for 4th graders, administered by the Ministry of Education and developed jointly with the IDB and IEA.³
- 70% of students who took the assessment reported having attended preschool.
- For these, performance was low and did not differ much from students who did not attend preschool. The differences were not statistically significant which might indicate that the quality of preschool education is low.

To ensure the quality of preschool programs, having more qualified teachers is key

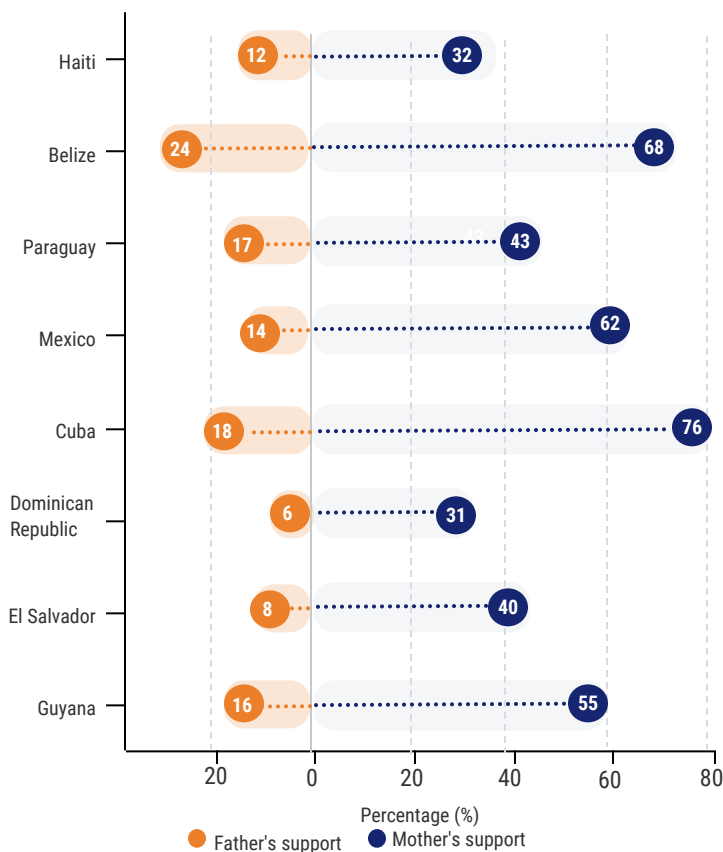
- There are several factors that influence the degree to which preschool program education affects child development and future learning. Among them, the quality of the program and the teachers is key.⁴
- Haiti has one of the highest ratios of students per teacher in early education in the region. In 2013, the ratio was 30 students per teacher, higher than in countries such as Colombia (24), Nicaragua (22) or Guatemala (22).
- From 2016-2017, only 35% of all teachers in Haiti had received training in preschool pedagogy.
- In 2012, less than 50% of teachers who were working in preschool institutions had any training in preschool pedagogy.⁵

NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER TEACHER IN EARLY EDUCATION, 2013



Source: CIMA, 2013.

PARENTAL LEARNING SUPPORT TO CHILDREN AGED 3-5



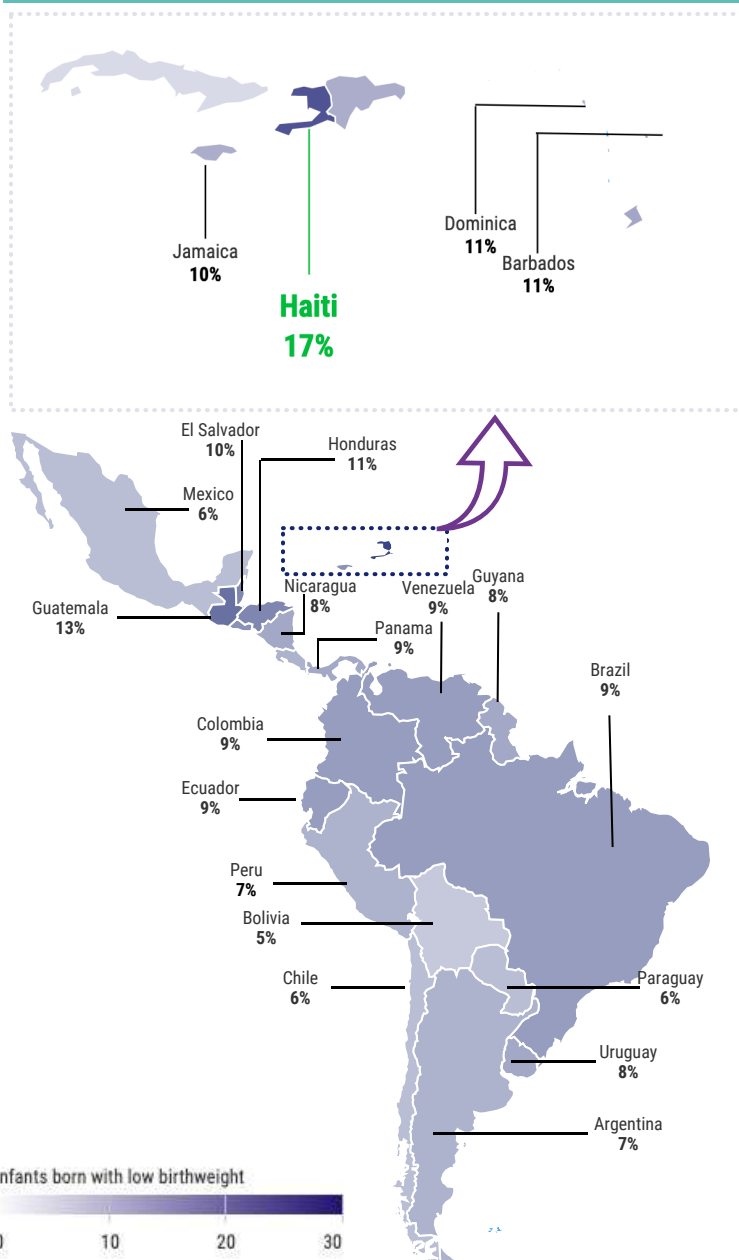
Source: Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), UNICEF, 2013-2017

Note: Learning support refers to boys and girls between the ages of 3 and 5 whose parents engaged in 4 or more activities that promote their learning and prepare them for school.

Parental involvement is important to promote better learning amongst infants

- One of the most important predictors of child development, other than the household's socioeconomic level, is home learning environments. This refers to parenting practices and engagement in children's learning activities, such as reading books, telling stories or playing with children.⁶
- In Haiti, father's support for child learning, measured as the percentage of children between the ages of 3 and 5 whose father engaged in 4 or more activities that promote learning, is low. Between 2016 and 2017, 12% of infants received support from their fathers.⁷
- This result exceeds some countries' percentages, such as the Dominican Republic (6.1), and El Salvador (7.9), but is below others such as Mexico (14), Guyana (16), and Paraguay (17).
- Mother's support for child learning in Haiti is also amongst the lowest in the region: 32% of children receive mother support, placing Haiti below countries such as El Salvador (40), Paraguay (43), and Guyana (55).

PERCENTAGE OF INFANTS WITH LOW BIRTHWEIGHT, CIRCA 2017



Source: Haiti: Situation de la petite enfance; Rest of LAC: Health Situation in the Americas, Core Indicators 2018. PAHO

Note: Low birthweight refers to all infants that were born with less than 2,500 grams of weight

Good health and nutrition ensure better early childhood development

- Low birthweight (less than 2,500 grams) and growth delay resulting from malnutrition are associated with low learning achievement at school.⁸
- Haiti has the highest percentage of infants born with low birthweight in the region: 17%, compared to 13% in Guatemala, and 11% in Honduras. In Haiti, chronic malnutrition affects 22% of children under the age of 6.⁹
- The risk of suffering growth delay (resulting from malnutrition) is higher amongst vulnerable households: boys and girls whose mothers did not attend primary school have five times greater risk of suffering growth delay, compared to children whose mothers completed secondary school or more.

Public spending in early childhood development is key to overcome Haiti's challenges

- In recent years, the country has made important efforts to implement policies aimed at improving preschool education.
- The Ministry of Education has:
- Integrated a new curriculum for preschool education in 2014.⁹
 - Built/rehabilitated more than 300 new public preschool institutions, thus ensuring that minimum school infrastructure standards are met.
 - Developed a national strategy for preschool teacher training, but has not implemented it to date.
 - Nevertheless, greater public spending is required to guarantee the well-being of Haiti's youngest children, and to ensure greater quality of preschool education in the country.

The Information Center for Improvement in Learning (CIMA, for its acronym in Spanish) of the Education Division of the Inter-American Development Bank seeks to promote the use of data and indicators in evidence-based decision-making when developing education policy, with the goal of providing a quality education for all. With this objective, CIMA publishes a series of briefs that analyze indicators that contribute to the improvement of education quality in the region.

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