

# THE PAYOFFS OF SCHOOLING

Findings from the STEP Skills Measurement Program, representative of urban demographics in 12 countries

**People with higher educational attainment HAVE higher reading proficiency**

- Tertiary
- Upper Secondary
- Lower Secondary
- Primary or less

Circle size represents the proportion of individuals at each education level

50      1

**PIAAC**

STEP average scores correspond to urban populations in developing countries, OECD average score corresponds to national adult populations in developed countries that applied PIAAC



# The complexity in the use of cognitive skills increases with educational attainment

**SKILLS**

- Reading
- Numeracy
- Writing

**LEVELS**

- not used
- low
- medium
- high

Most adults with primary education or less do not read documents more than 5 pages long.

from: GEORGIA 57%  
to: LAO PDR 97%

Adults who completed primary education or less are less likely to use numeracy skills at work or in their daily lives than those with higher educational levels.

More than 50% of adults with primary education or less do not use their writing skills in nine countries.

from: KENYA 52%  
to: UKRAINE 87%

In half of the countries the proportion of men who read complex texts is higher than that of women. The difference is particularly large in Ghana.

GHANA 16% 26%

The proportion of men who use complex numeracy skills is higher than the proportion of women in all countries.

13% 20%

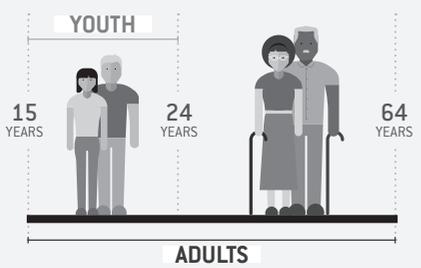
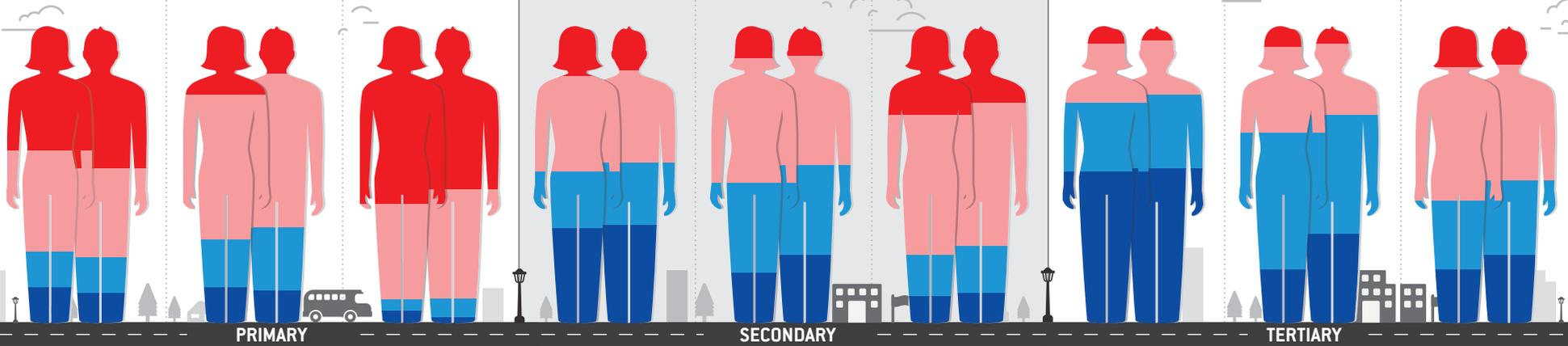
In six countries, the proportion of people who do not use their writing skills reduces by at least half between primary and lower secondary.

In most countries adults who have completed tertiary education report reading more and more complex texts.

In half of the countries the proportion of those who use numeracy skills with high complexity is highest for tertiary education graduates.

Complex writing skills are most used by tertiary education graduates.

from: KENYA 43%  
to: BOLIVIA 33%



While almost half of youth report reading complex texts, less than a third of adults do so.

The difference between youth and adults who report not using their reading skills is largest in Ghana (16% of youth, compared to 39% of adults).

While over a third of youth report using complex numeracy skills, only 10% of adults do so.

The differences in the use of complex numeracy skills between youth and adults are largest in Vietnam (53% of youth, 8% of adults) and Bolivia (61% of youth, 21% of adults).

The proportion of youth who report using complex writing skills is more than double the proportion of older adults.

The gap between youth and adults who report not using their writing skills is largest in Ghana (18% of youth compared with 44% of adults).

Now, how is this translated into labor market outcomes? Stay tuned...

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