3 Messages

1. STEP Skills Measurement
2. Key Findings
3. Lessons Learned
Limited information

- Proficiency of adults' skills (stock)
- Extent of skills use, and intensity of skills use at the workplace and in daily life
- Payoffs of skills beyond years of education attained
- Role of different types skills —cognitive, socioemotional, job specific—on employability and labor market trajectory
- Household surveys were paired with employer surveys

Premium placed on comparable data across countries—STEP collaborated with PIAAC-OECD
Unpacking “mismatch” in the labor market

Key Findings

**Workforce Gaps**
- Insufficient **Quantity** of general education
- Poor **quality** of general education
- Insufficient supply of **relevant** field of study

**Job Shortages**
- Low level economic activity
- **Insufficient demand** for supply of skills available

**Information asymmetries Socio-cultural biases**
- Information barriers prevent job matches
- Biases in hiring and promotion practices

ECOSYSTEM
Fiscal, Societal, Cultural, Location, Entrepreneurship and investment Climate
Granular skills data supports policy decisions in developing countries in ways that were not possible before; helping in tailoring solutions based on actual skills profiles not just schooling.

Schooling is a helpful proxy for skills, but not a very precise one—leaves a lot of variation unexplained.

Substantial increase in school enrollment and attainment, but narrow and uneven improvements in literacy skills.

Too many young people exit school early without robust literacy skills—on average, only 35% of primary entrants' complete upper secondary education; in SSA fewer than 25%.

“Early skills gaps” become “long-lasting skills gaps” with adverse implications throughout life—unless skills deficits are remediated, low literacy is not transitional, it is a destination.

More than half of adults in Bolivia, Ghana and Kenya score below level 2 literacy; a sizable share of adults are not “job ready” or “training ready”.

The number of “schooling years” required to reach Level 2 literacy ranges from 9 years in Armenia, Finland, and Vietnam to 16 years in Bolivia, Ghana and Kenya.

New insights on correlations between workers’ literacy proficiency and skills use at work, skills use and worker productivity, and “match” rates between worker and job-required education.
Schools are not delivering learning for all

**Literacy**
A critical ingredient to develop numeracy, socio-emotional, and higher order skills for work and life

**# Schooling Years required to reach Level 2 of literacy in PIAAC/STEP**

- **9** Armenia, Finland, Serbia, Vietnam
- **12** Chile, Colombia, Turkey
- **16** Bolivia, Ghana, Kenya
Literacy makes for “learning-ready” workers

Problem Solving and Learning “Skills Use at Work”, by Educational Attainment and Literacy Proficiency Level

Individual (Actual) Match Rates between Worker and Job-Required Education

Key Findings


**REPORTS:** https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/

**DATASETS:** https://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/step
At this literacy proficiency level respondents can:

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

Circle size represents the proportion of individuals at each education level.

**Literacy assessment average scores**

- **PMAC average (273)**

Key Findings:

- **0**: Read brief texts on familiar topics to locate a single piece of specific information. Only basic vocabulary is required.
- **1**: Read short texts to locate a single piece of information. Recognize basic vocabulary and evaluate sentence meaning.
- **2**: Read somewhat complex text, make matches between text and information, paraphrase and make low-level inferences.
- **3**: Read dense or lengthy text pieces, make inferences, identify, interpret and evaluate one or more pieces of information.
- **4**: Read complex, lengthy and multiple types of text and perform multiple-step operations to integrate, interpret, and synthesize information.
- **5**: Read multiple and dense texts, search for and integrate information, construct syntheses of ideas and evaluate evidence-based arguments.

**Countries**:
- Armenia
- Bolivia
- Colombia
- Georgia
- Ghana
- Kenya
- Ukraine
- Vietnam
STEP surveys are intended to shine light on the size and magnitude of skills deficits in the population; however, ideally, they should be paired with analyses on institutional policies, training provision practices, and overall job growth and innovation ecosystem.

Having a shared definition of “literacy” and comparative measurement approaches is very powerful in discussions with policy makers to inform skills development policy, strategy and investment choices.

Measuring adult skills is complex; it requires enough funding, time, patience, and expertise at all stages.

Global comparative standards are often very different from the conventional standards used in most countries for household surveys.

Training, training, and more training is needed to safeguard data quality and overall survey integrity.

Measuring socioemotional skills remains an unconquered frontier.

Making data files and supporting materials available online stimulates independent research; though research uptake remains relatively low, especially in developing countries.
Thank you

https://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/step/about

*Education, Skills, and Labor Market Outcomes: Results from Large-Scale Adult Skills Surveys in Urban Areas in 12 Countries*