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How to improve the human capital of rural youth in Africa: Invest in education and technical skills

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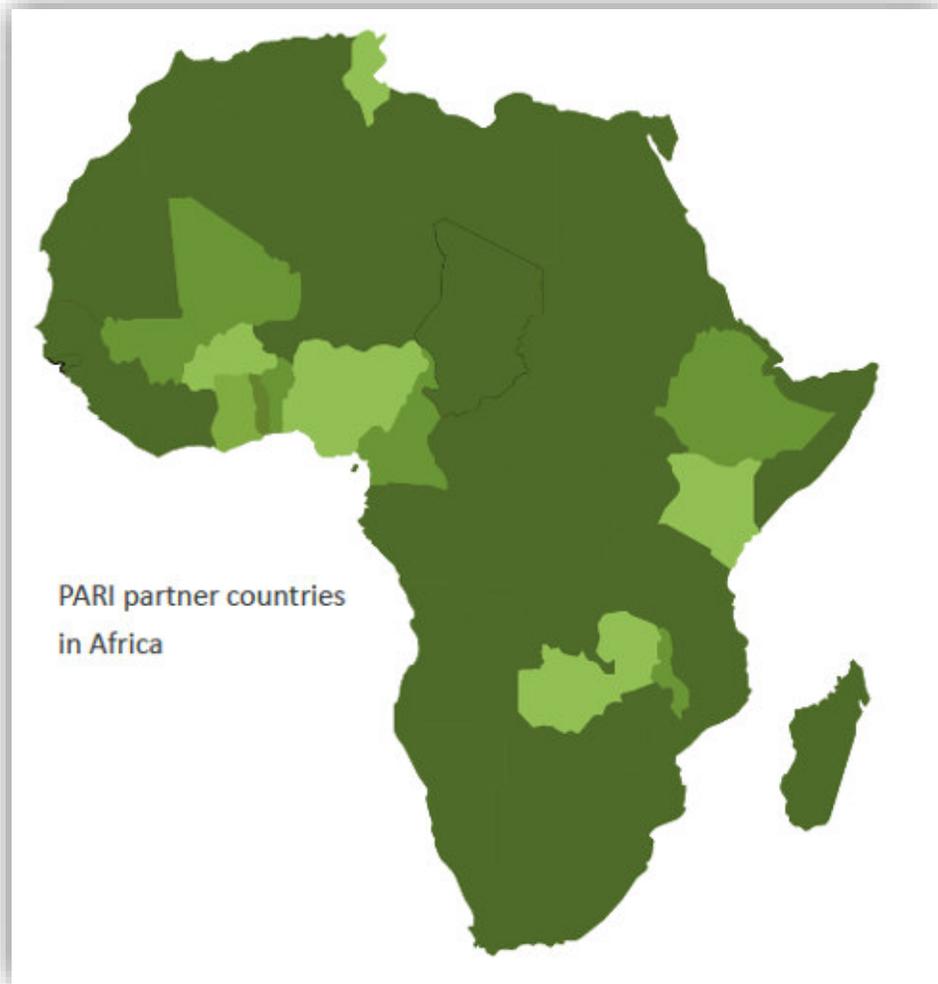
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Outline



- Introduction and motivation
- Role of education and skills development
- Aspirations of the youth
- Status of educational attainment and skill development in SSA
- Salient features of ATVET in Africa
- Conclusions & implications

The youth `challenge´ in Africa

- In 2015 about **60%** of SSA population was young (<25 years) (von Braun & Kofol, 2017)
- Africa is the only continent where youth population is increasing
- By 2035, **220** million youth are expected to enter the labor market; yet the market can absorb only about a quarter (von Braun and Kofol, 2017)
- Youth unemployment is about **50%**, more than **50** million young people have insecure employment, **10** million more enter labour market annually (OECD, 2016)
- 20 million new jobs are needed annually (IMF, 2016)

Education and skills `challenges` in Africa

- Rural youth are least prepared/equipped to adapt to agri. transformation (quality of education and skills they have acquired) (Kirui and Kozicka, 2018)
 - There are still far too few training opportunities for young people
 - When training is available, often what is offered does not match the needs of the market
- In the era of rapid technological change, globalization of info, trade, and change in views on gender roles, youth require skills to:
 - Mechanize entire agri. value chains (non-labour-intensive)
 - Leverage emerging technologies
 - Seize new kinds employment opportunities

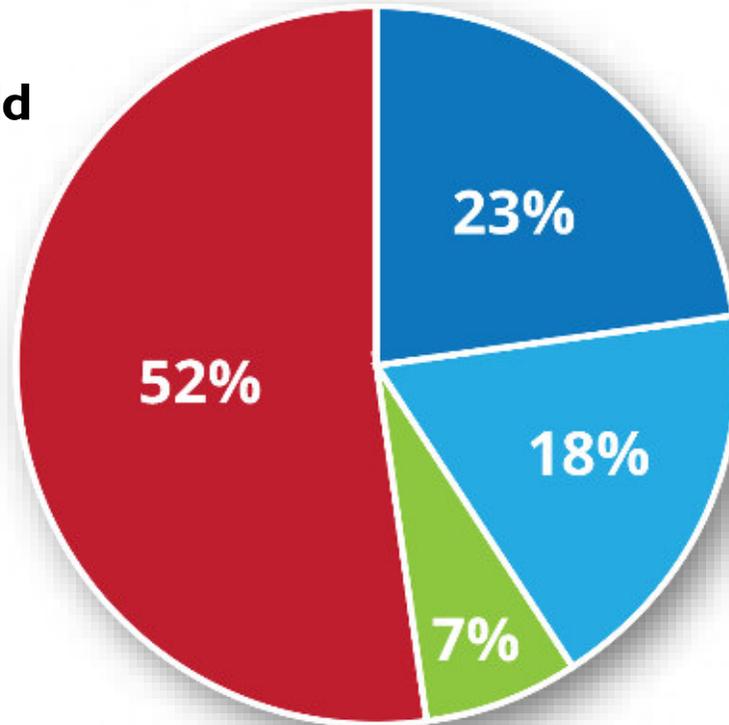
Role of education and skill development

- Properly structured and well delivered education is beneficial for both the individual and society (WDR, 2018)
 - Individuals: promotes employment, earnings, health, and poverty reduction
 - Society: spurs innovation, strengthens institutions, and fosters social cohesion
- Human capital & skill development could significantly affect farmers' performance and their disposition to adopt innovations (Ghadim & Pannell, 1999; Abay et al., 2016)
- Schooling empowers farmers to become dynamic partners in development rather than passive beneficiaries

Where youth in SSA would like to be in 5 years

Where youth in SSA would like to be in 5 years

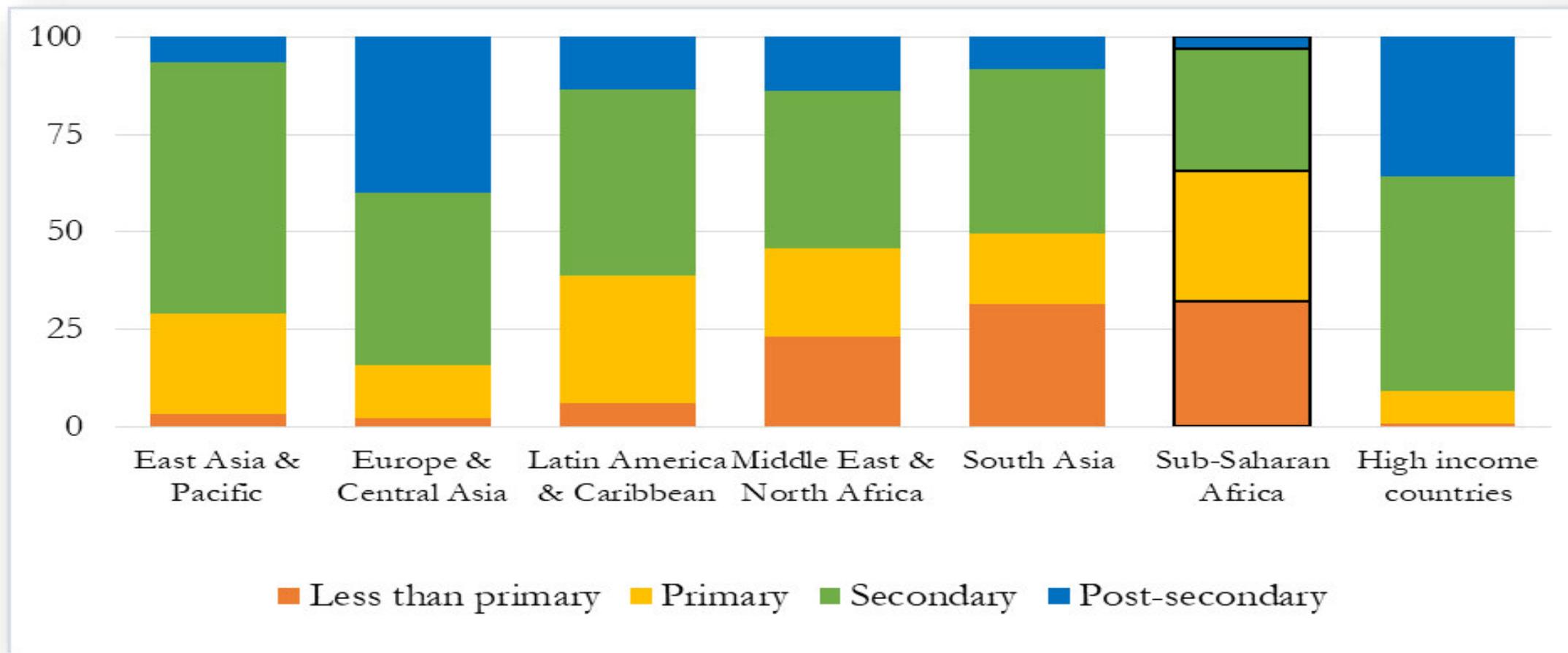
- In the capital or a big city
- In another city
- In the village/rural area
- It depends on the conditions



Factors that would make rural life more attractive

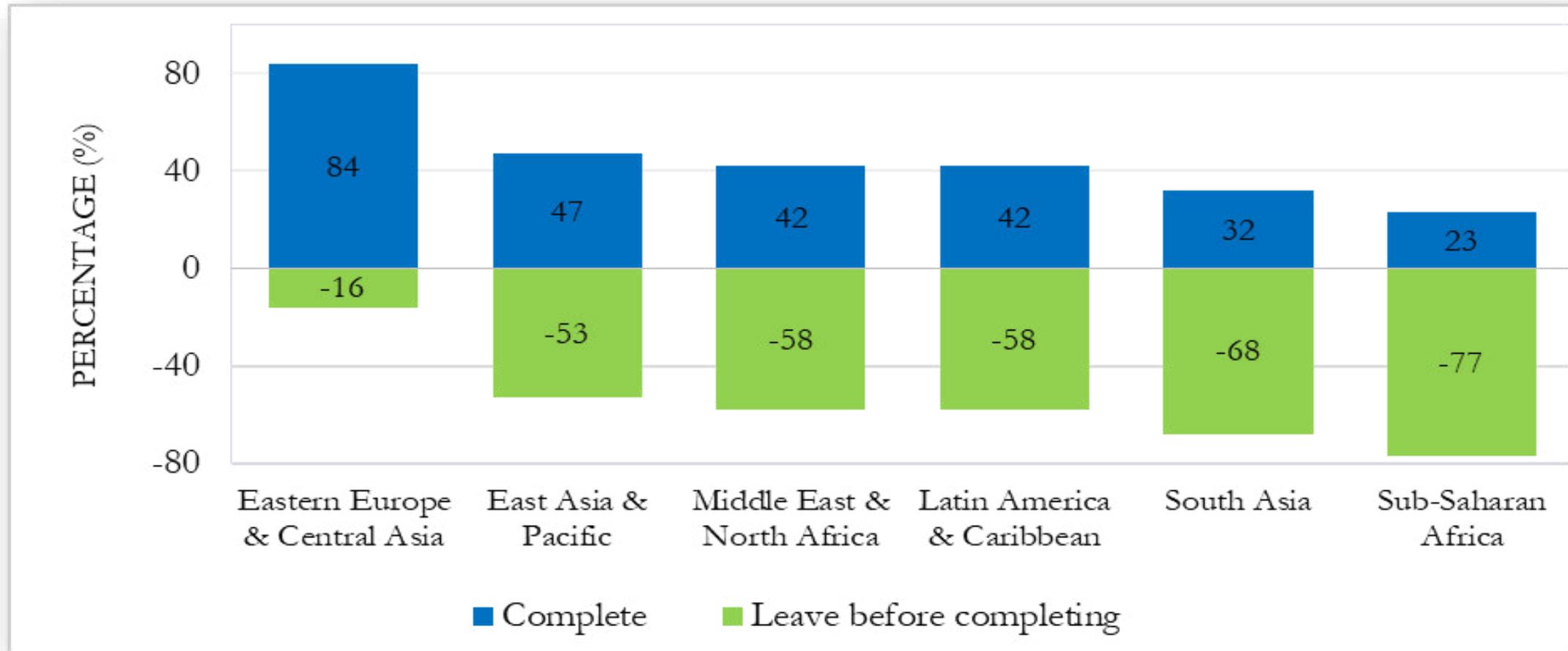
- **More employment – 37%**
- **Further edu opportunities – 35%**
- Infrastructure development – 18%
- Support for agriculture – 15%

Stock of educational attainment (in %) (ages 15–64) in 2010



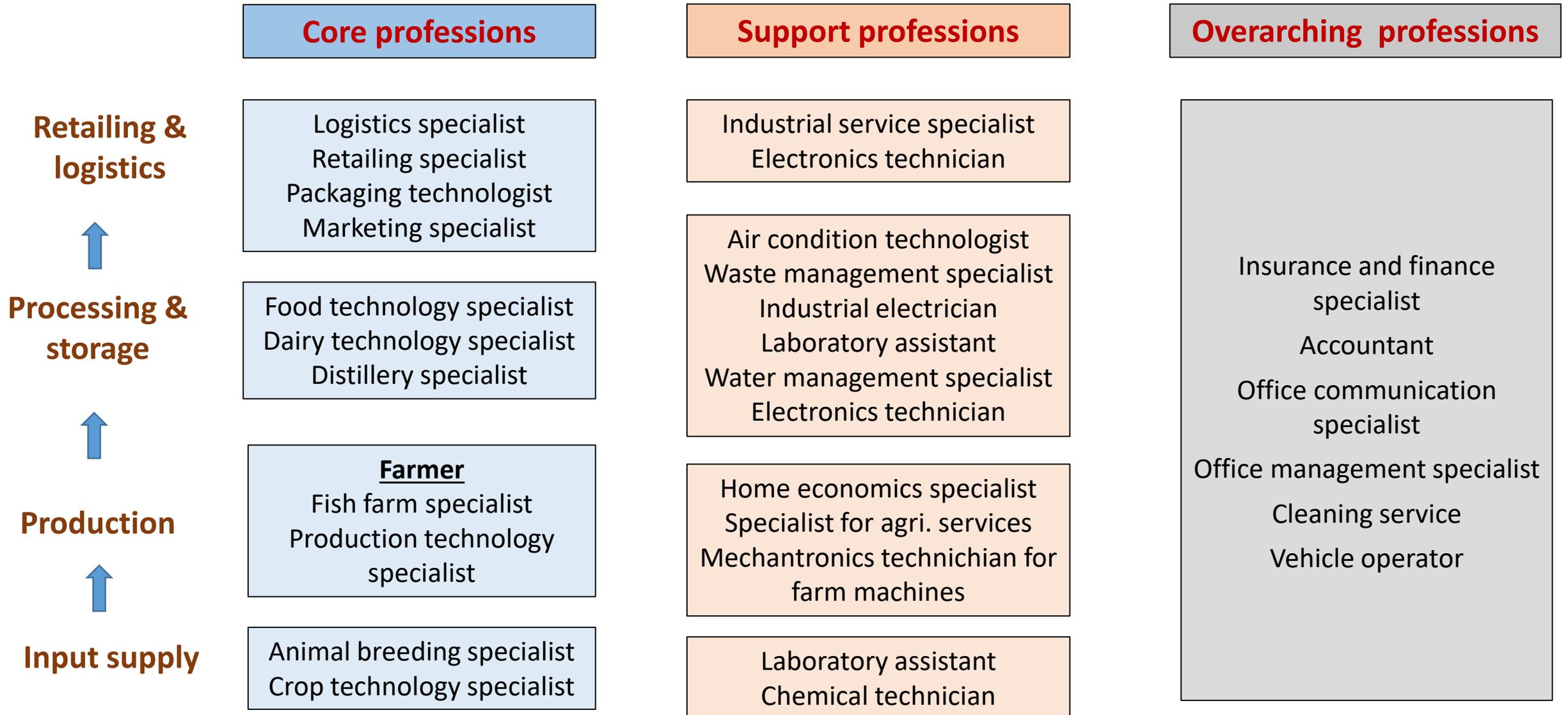
Source: Kirui (forthcoming) – using data from Lee & Lee (2016)

Senior sec school completion and attrition rates (%)



Source: Kirui (forthcoming) – using data from UIS (2017), UNESCO (2015), WIDE (2017).

Examples of VET professions/professionals in agro-value chains



Agri. education and training in post-primary school level

Country	Junior Secondary Level	Senior Secondary Level
Burkina Faso	Not offered, limited integration in Life and Earth Sciences	
Ethiopia	Not offered	Separate ATVET system
Ghana	Compulsory	Optional
Kenya	Optional	Optional
Malawi	Compulsory	
Mozambique	Not offered, limited integration in Natural Science	
Rwanda	Not offered, being piloted in some schools	
Nigeria	Optional	
South Africa	Not offered	Optional

Source: Authors' compilation based on several studies

Contents of post-primary agric. education

- The focus of agriculture education in (secondary and in tertiary institutions) in most countries is to train students on agri. and its disciplines as a subject
- Courses taught mainly focus on **agricultural production**
 - Important post-production aspects are missing – i.e. processing, value addition, packaging
- There are **fewer practical skills** as opposed to **theoretical learning**
 - Though timetable is often dotted by practical skills learning, the curricula is often not adequately to address the needs of current and future labor markets
- The studies target **new graduates** from primary/secondary school with almost **no experience** managing a farm nor possibility of taking farming as a **profession**

Salient features of TVET in Africa

- **Nature of TVET programs:** are formal school-based in most SSA countries:
 - However, in some countries (Kenya) some practical training is incorporated in the syllabus
- **Entry point:** In general, students enter TVET track at the end of basic education:
 - Primary school: corresponding to 6 – 8 years of education (Burkina Faso, Kenya)
 - Lower/junior sec school: 9 – 12 years of education (Ghana, Nigeria, Mali)
- **The duration** of school-based TVET: 3-6 six years; varies by country & model
 - Some countries (Ghana, Senegal, Swaziland) attempt to expose young people to pre-employment skills at lower or junior secondary school curriculum

Conclusions and implications

- Develop curricula linked to key priority areas:
 - Gainful employment to youth, develop rural areas by diversifying agri. production & markets, increasing manufacturing / services sectors, promoting private sector development
- Expand focus in technical training and skill development in both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors in rural areas so as to benefit all (women + men + youth)
- Provide incentives for private sector participation and adapt to emerging innovative training delivery and for private companies to hire the youth
- Widen the coverage and refine the quality of skills and competencies offered (combining both technical and business skills) to attract more youth into agri.

Thank you for your attention

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