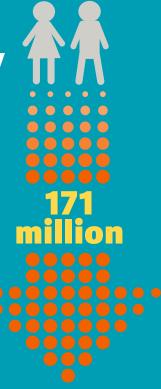
# The Benefits of Literacy

### Less Poverty

■ If all children globally learned to read, 171 million fewer people would live in poverty. That's the population of Spain, Italy, and the UK combined. 1



#### Lower Early Mortality Rates

- Japan, a country with a literacy rate of 99%, has the world's lowest infant mortality rate (2 for every 1,000 live births). <sup>2</sup>
- During the past four decades, under-five child mortality has been reduced by more than half—a fact that can be attributed to the increase in women's literacy. <sup>3</sup>

## **Stronger Economies**

- Society recoups \$7.14 for every \$1 invested in adult literacy. <sup>4</sup>
- One extra year of schooling increases an individual's earnings by up to 10%. 5
- No country has achieved continuous and rapid economic growth without at least 40% of adults being able to read and write. <sup>6</sup>



#### **More Community Involvement**

- Literacy program participants in the United States reported an increase in community participation and were more likely than nonparticipants to register to vote. <sup>7</sup>
- Participation in adult literacy programs correlates with increased participation in trade unions, community action, and national political life.

### **Improved Personal Well-Being**

- In the United Kingdom, 78% of literate people are satisfied with their lives, compared to 50% of illiterate people. <sup>8</sup>
- Educated mothers are 50% more likely to immunize their children than mothers with no schooling. 9
- The better older adults are able to read, understand, and use health and medical information, the happier they are. <sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/GMR/pdf/gmr2010/MDG2010\_Facts\_and\_Figures\_EN.pdf; <sup>2</sup> data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN .IMRT.IN; <sup>3</sup> litworld.org/10000globalgirls/; <sup>4</sup> literacypartners.org/literacy-in-america/literacy-facts; <sup>5</sup> unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/GMR/pdf/gmr2010/MDG2010\_Facts\_and\_Figures\_EN.pdf; <sup>6</sup> oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/1goal-back-to-school-sept-2010.pdf; <sup>7</sup> unesco.org/education/GMR2006/full/chapt5\_eng.pdf; <sup>8</sup> readforgood.org/docs/literacychangeslives.pdf; <sup>9</sup> web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTOED/EXTPRIEDUC/0,,contentMDK:21107605~menuPK:4619611~pagePK:64829573~piPK:64829550~theSitePK:4434642,00.html; <sup>10</sup> archive.ahrq.gov/news/newsletters/research-activities/oct09/1009RA18.html