INFORMALITY, POVERTY, AND GROWTH:
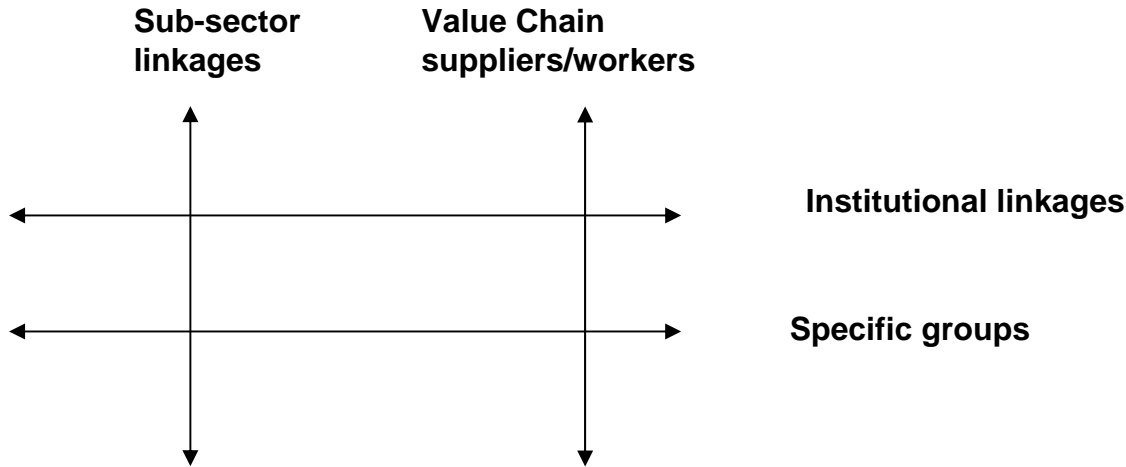# THE LABOUR FORCE IN CHINA AND INDIA

COMPONENT # 3
QUALITATIVE CASE STUDIES

Selection of studies will try and provide insights into the situation in China and India in the same sectors or for the same occupational groups, although any direct comparisons may be difficult given the uniqueness of each case study. The case studies will provide insights into processes and dynamics that cannot be captured in macro analysis.

These components will investigate specific sub-sectors or occupational groups by identifying a) the tasks-functions, backward-forward linkages, and hierarchy of suppliers/workers in the sub-sector, value chain, or occupational group and b) value added-productivity, earnings-wages, benefits-production, skills-technology, costs-risks, institutional linkages, and other characteristics of different workers/units in the sub-sector, value chain, or occupation.

QUALITATIVE CASE STUDIES

Sub-sector linkages **Value Chain suppliers/workers**

Institutional linkages

Specific groups

Sub-Sector: explores a sub-sector as a whole within a given locale

Value-chain: explores the supply chain to a specific buyer or manufacturer

Specific groups: by employment status (e.g. home-based workers) or by occupation (e.g. waste collectors)

Institutional Linkages: include the following –
allied markets
sector policies and programs
laws and norms: worker + commercial + property
social protection
maternity benefits and child care
organizations and associations
advocacy, negotiating, bargaining bodies/processes
household, kinship, and community norms and relationships

OBJECTIVES

1. Collect more in-depth information on employment and employment relations to illuminate:

    range of employment and contractual arrangements in labor market

    different patterns of inclusion-exclusion, including adverse inclusion:

        informal employment and formal production system

        informal employment and global restructuring of production

        informal employment and institutional support

  linkages between informal employment and poverty

  linkages between informal employment and growth

2. Bring a labor perspective and focus on workers into value chain and sub-sector analyses

3. Provide relevant feed-back on different employment arrangements to inform national
data collection

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the tasks-functions, backward-forward linkages, and trends-dynamics associated with the sub-sector, value chain, or occupation?

2. What are the value added-productivity, skills-technology, needs-constraints, and costs-risks associated with the different categories of workers/units within this sub-sector, value chain, or occupation? who captures the value-added and who absorbs the costs and risks?

3. Whether and how do various workers/units within this sub-sector, value chain, or occupation have access to institutional support? formal or informal?

PRESENTATIONS OF PRIOR STUDIES:
   Yuan, Ratna, Yao, Jufen, Shalini

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Activity # 1 – Literature Review and Framing of Issues for Selected Sub-Sectors. Value Chains, or Occupational Groups (2-3 in both countries) (2007)

Activity # 2 - Methodology and Research Design Workshop: to review methods and findings of previous studies + to design methods to be used in new studies (late 2007)

Activity # 3 -Training Workshop: immediately after Methodology and Research Design Workshop for those who need training in methods to be used (sub-sector, value chain, or industrial cluster analysis) (late 2007)

Activity # 4 – Sub-Sector, Value Chain, and Occupation Studies (2008)

Activity # 5 – Publication and Dissemination (2009)

PROPOSED SECTORS

URBAN
> **waste collectors**
> **street vendors**

RURAL
> **vegetable growers**

MANUFACTURING
> **automobile parts**
> **footwear**
> **garments: selected regions or products or**
>> **employment statuses**

SERVICES
> **domestic workers**
> **ICT**

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING SUB-SECTOR, VALUE CHAIN, OR OCCUPATIONAL GROUP

a.   significance for economy
      dynamic
      export-oriented

b.   significance for working poor, especially women
      concentration of working poor
      existing or future interventions for working poor, including organizing efforts

c.   illustrative of production processes and institutional relationships

d.   building on existing studies of sub-sectors, value chains, or occupational groups

e.   representative of:
      self-employment + wage employment
      manufacturing + services
      rural + urban

KEY QUESTIONS

1. **What are the key big picture questions?**
    a. global restructuring: incorporation of working poor
    b. reduced scope of state: protection of working poor
    c. decent work: pathway to poverty reduction
    d. other?

2. **What methods – or mix of methods – can best illuminate the processes and relationships associated with these key questions?**

3. **What should be the criteria in selecting sub-sectors, value chains, or occupational groups?**