

## Illustrative Interview Guides Used in Value Chain Analysis

The following presents an interview guide used in undertaking value chain analysis. This interview guide, “**Interview Guide for Value Chain Analysis**” is conducted with value chain participants at all levels of the chain, and is designed to:

- identify the primary actors in the value chain, their roles, and interrelationships
- identify market channels and trends within the value chain
- identify constraints and opportunities that are holding back growth and competitiveness

The completion of this interview guide is illustrated on the following pages.

Note: This guide should be used as a tool to conduct interviews, rather than given to individuals to fill out on their own.

# **Illustrative Interview Guide for Value Chain Analysis**

## **Contact Information**

Interviewer / Date of interview / Firm Name / Principal product or service

No. of employees / Owner (or contact) / Legal status / Address / Telephone / Email

## **Market Access, Trends, and Governance**

1. What do you see as your main needs/opportunities in accessing markets?
2. To whom do you sell your product or service (large firms, small firms, wholesalers, exporters, retailers, direct to consumers, etc.)? What percentage goes to each?
3. Describe the relationships you have with these buyers (who determines what to produce, product specifications, prices, and amount purchased?). How much input do you have?
4. How do you promote and market your products/services?
5. How strong is the market for your products/services right now? Next year? What trends do you see?
6. Are some customer groups better than others in terms of sales and revenue growth? Which ones?
7. Do you ever collaborate with other firms on promotion and/or marketing?
8. Who are your major competitors?
9. Do you have a means of communicating information about your firm to others?  
(*Attach any brochures, list of products, etc.*)

## **Standards and Certifications**

1. What standards or certification requirements do your products need to conform to?
2. Who sets these standards and requirements?
3. Who helps you to conform to these standards and requirements?
4. Do you have any problems in this regard?

## **Technology / Product Development**

1. What are your major needs/ opportunities in product design and manufacturing (or service delivery)?
2. What other products do you produce/sell? What percentage does each product represent in terms of your gross revenue?
3. What have you done recently to improve your products or services?
4. Is your current equipment or machinery an impediment to growth? Explain. If so, what kind of equipment or machinery could improve your business?
5. Is the current level of your workers training holding back growth? If so, what additional training do they need?

## **Management/Organization**

1. In the area of organization and management, what are your major needs/opportunities?
2. Who does most of the work in the areas of: general management/supervision, product design, purchasing, production, shipping, accounting, marketing, repairs, etc. (owner, employees, or external)?
3. What functions do you subcontract/outsource?
4. Do you sometimes collaborate with other firms to produce and deliver customer orders?
5. Which aspects of your business do you intend to change in the next 2 years (machinery, equipment, computers, new products, marketing strategy, quality control, management system, worker skills, etc.)?
6. What management skills would you like to strengthen in order to grow your business?

## **Input Supply**

1. What are your major needs/opportunities in the areas of input cost, quality, and availability?
2. Who are your *most important suppliers* and what do you buy from each?
3. Are there problems in obtaining some important inputs? Explain.
4. Have you ever purchased inputs jointly with other business? Explain.

### **Finance**

1. Where do you go when you need money for your business?
2. Do you get credit from input suppliers? What are the terms?
3. Do you get production financing from your buyers? What are the terms?
4. Do you have need for additional financing at the moment? If so, what would it be used for?
5. What sources (formal or informal) have you approached for loans, and what have been the key problems, if any?
6. Other (repayment rates in the sector, risk management insurance, etc.)

### **Policy/Regulation**

1. What government policies/regulations benefit your business (registrations, inspections, subsidies, incentives, etc.)?
2. What government policies/regulations are obstacles to growing your business?

### **Infrastructure**

1. What are the most important infrastructure constraints affecting your business' growth and profitability (road/transport conditions, telephone service, electric supply, crime/corruption, storage, etc.)?
2. What is your industry doing about these problems?

### **Business Membership Organizations**

1. Is your industry/trade sector represented by national or local business associations?  
If so, please name them.
2. Are you a member? If not, why?
3. What are the primary functions and benefits of these associations?
4. What additional services should they provide?

### **Final Open Ended Questions**

1. What are the major incentives you have for investing in / promoting change in the value chain?
2. What risks or constraints do you face in making these investments?
3. What do you think are the strengths of your industry locally and/or internationally?\*
4. What are the main weaknesses of your industry?
5. What do you think is the greatest challenge facing your industry today?
6. Can you name some business owners in your industry who are leaders –for example, in terms of technology, product design, quality, or marketing?
7. How did you get into your business?

*\* If success factors for international competitiveness have been pre-determined then respondents can be asked to rank their country on a scale of 1 - 5.*