

Access to quality jobs for young women and men in Africa and Asia: Lessons from ILO's School to Work Transition Survey

Andy McKay, Chiara Mussida, Julia Szamely
and Leticia Veruete

Presented by Andy McKay, University of Sussex

WIDER Conference on Transforming Economies
for Better Jobs, Bangkok, September 2019

Introduction

- ◆ Youth population of 1.2 billion in 2015 → 1.3 billion by 2030
- ◆ Increasingly educated, reduced gender gaps
- ◆ But employment issues
 - ◆ Often high youth unemployment
 - ◆ Work which may not use workers' skills: quality of jobs
- ◆ Poor quality work and youth unemployment both major policy concerns for governments

Introduction (2)

- ◆ This paper seeks to look at quality of work undertaken by 22 to 29 year olds, based on ILO School to Work Transition Surveys for some countries in Africa and Asia
- ◆ Quality of work for wage jobs depends on both supply and demand factors; though much of work is not in wage jobs

School to Work Transition Surveys

- ◆ Conducted by ILO in partnership with MasterCard Foundation in 34 countries in 2009 to 2015 period
- ◆ Surveys of young people aged 15 to 29 years
- ◆ Individual and household characteristics; detailed information on current work and work history; information on unemployment
- ◆ Firm surveys conducted in some countries to try to understand demand for wage jobs ... but these not linked to surveys of young people (not studied here)

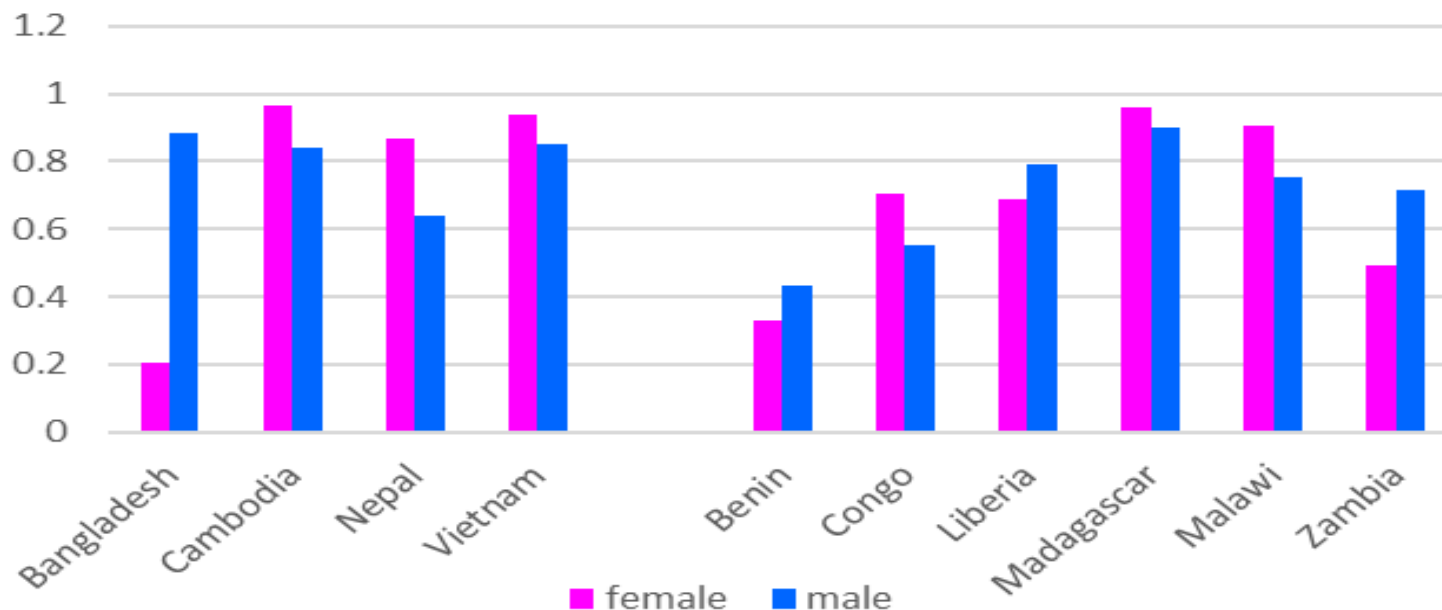
School to Work Transition Surveys (2)

- ◆ Relatively few good quality comparable labour market survey for developing countries .. this survey an important resource
- ◆ Here have taken data from 10 countries in Africa and Asia; not exactly same surveys but can define many comparable variables
 - ◆ Africa: Benin, Congo, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Zambia
 - ◆ Asia: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, Vietnam
- ◆ Try to define quality of work and identify its correlates ... work in progress

Some basic job characteristics

- ◆ Majority of surveyed 22-29 year olds work except Benin and females in Bangladesh and Zambia
- ◆ $F > M$ in 6/10 cases

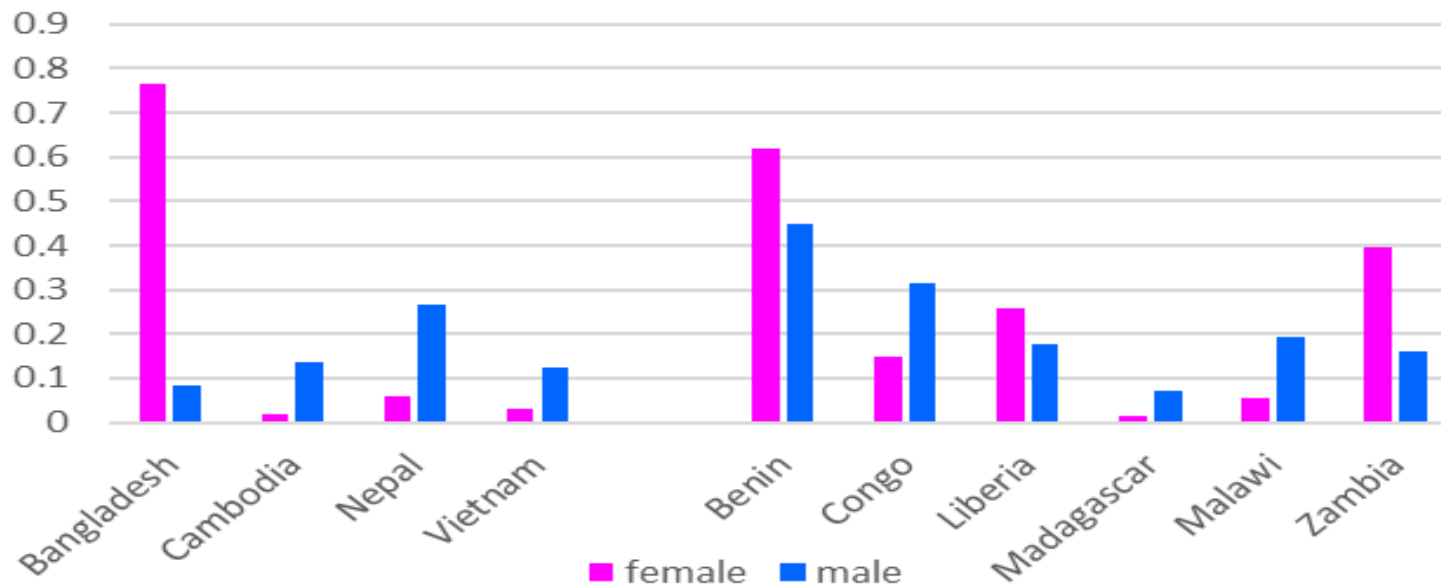
Proportion of 22 to 29 year olds who work, by gender



Some basic characteristics (2)

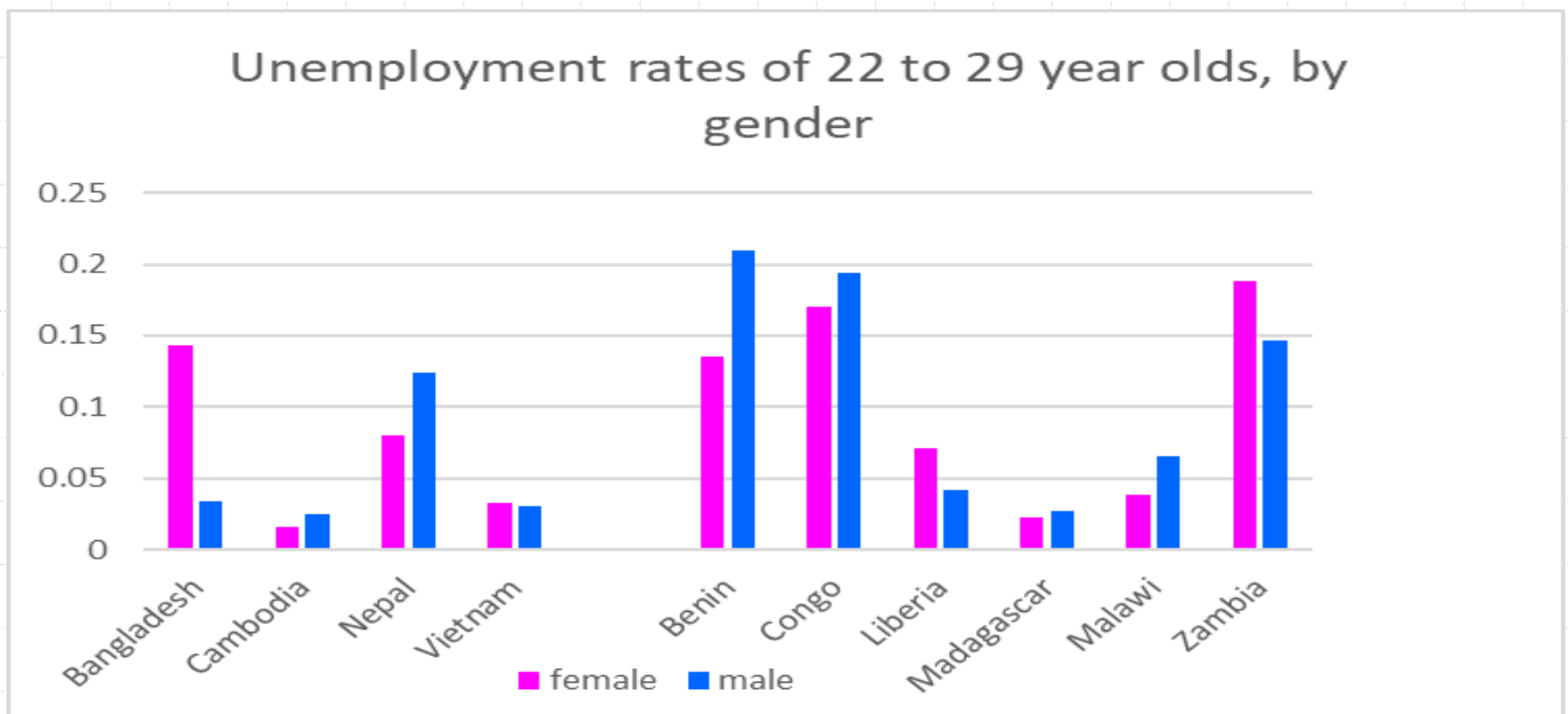
- ◆ High inactivity rates in Benin and among females in Bangladesh and Zambia
- ◆ Few 22-29 year olds still in school, except for Nepal

Inactivity rate of 22 to 29 year olds not in school, by gender



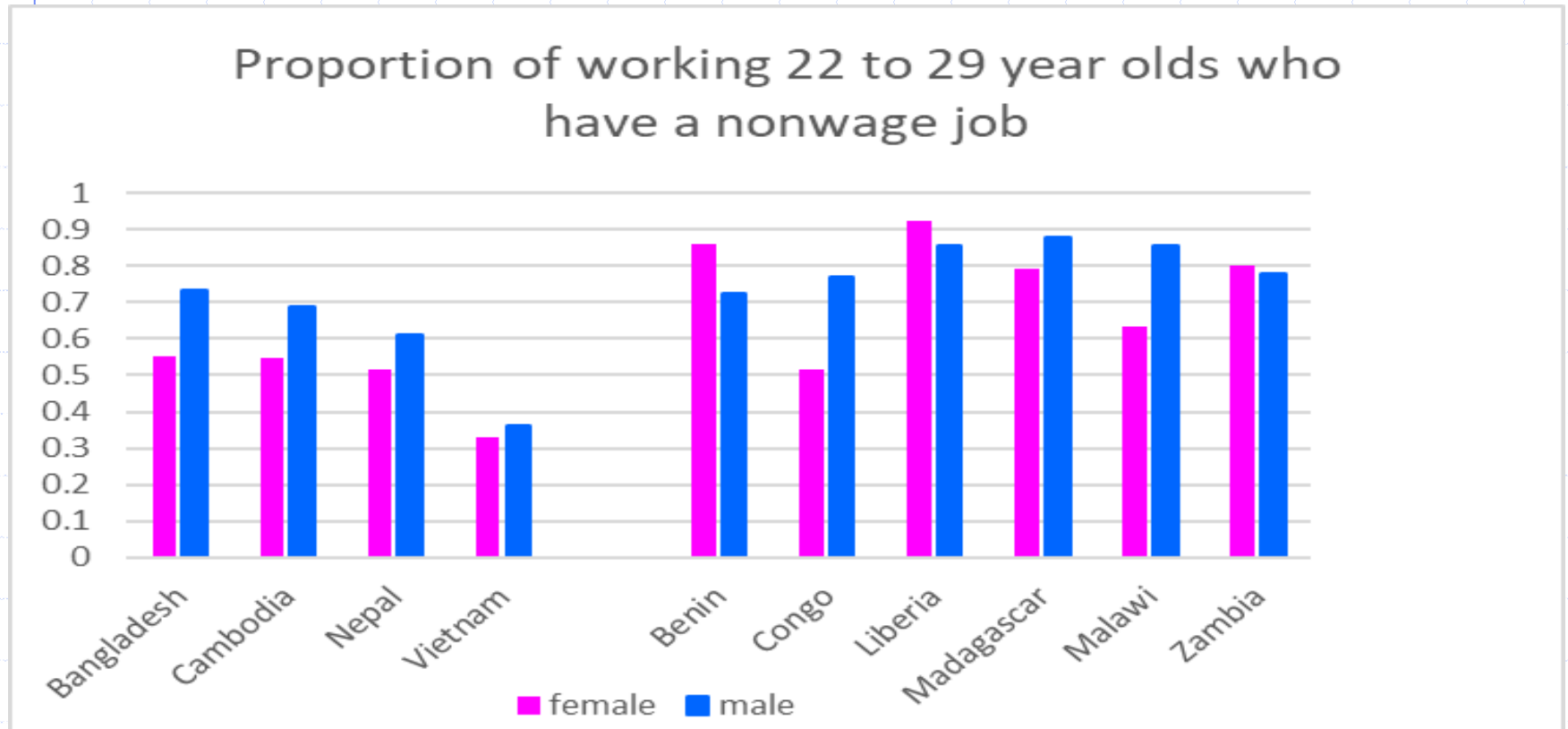
Some basic characteristics (3)

- ◆ Youth unemployment rates mostly low, higher in Benin and Congo; also females in Bangladesh and Zambia
- ◆ Very low in some cases



Some basic characteristics (4)

- ◆ Everywhere except Vietnam majority work in non-wage jobs
- ◆ In most African countries a large majority
- ◆ Often $M > F$



Defining job quality

- ◆ Need a measure for non-wage jobs too!
- ◆ Some standard approaches for wage jobs which can be implemented with this data
 - ◆ Having a written and/or unlimited contract
 - ◆ Having non-pecuniary benefits: annual leave, overtime, social security benefits, pension
 - ◆ Work in a firm which is registered for taxes
- ◆ We implemented a definition where workers needed at least 2 of (i) unlimited contract; (ii) being in a registered firm; (iii) having at least two of the above benefits

Defining job quality (2)

- ◆ Alternative definition implemented of having a written and unlimited contract
- ◆ Defining quality of non-wage job less clear
- ◆ Could require activity to be registered .. but very few are
- ◆ Question about why individuals are self employed or unpaid family workers
 - ◆ One option may be it was forced (wage work not available, required by family)
 - ◆ But also positive reasons: earn more money, greater flexibility, continuing family business

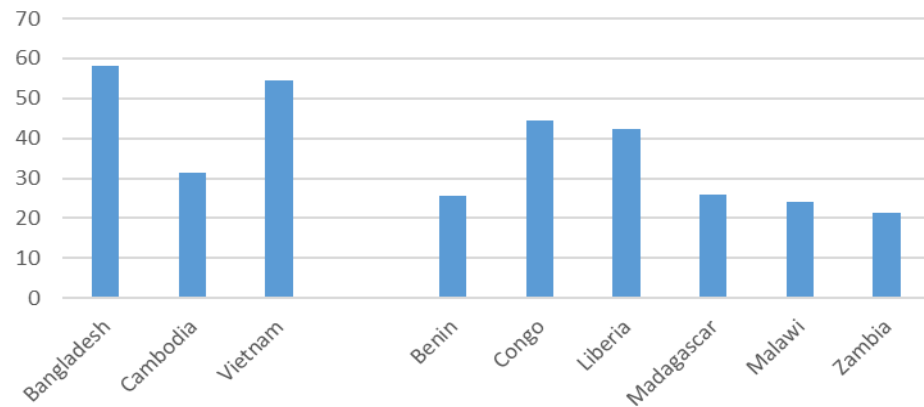
Defining job quality (3)

- ◆ Have defined nonwage work as better quality if a positive choice or if activity is registered
- ◆ Definitions of quality jobs subjective and alternative definitions can easily be justified .. need for sensitivity analysis

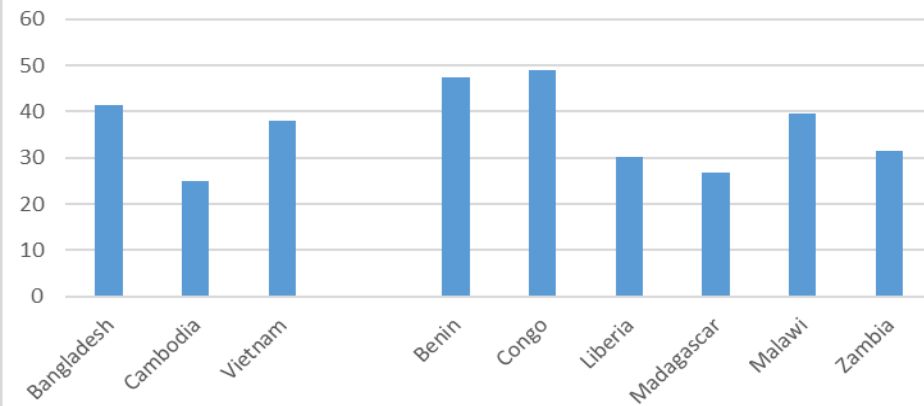
Quality of work by country

- More quality wage jobs in Asian than African countries, but no systematic difference in nonwage jobs

Percentage of wage jobs classified as good quality



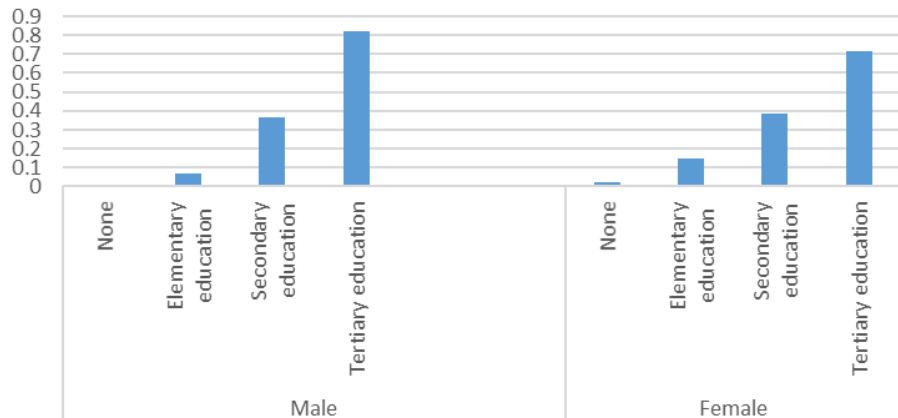
Percentage of nonwage jobs classified as good quality



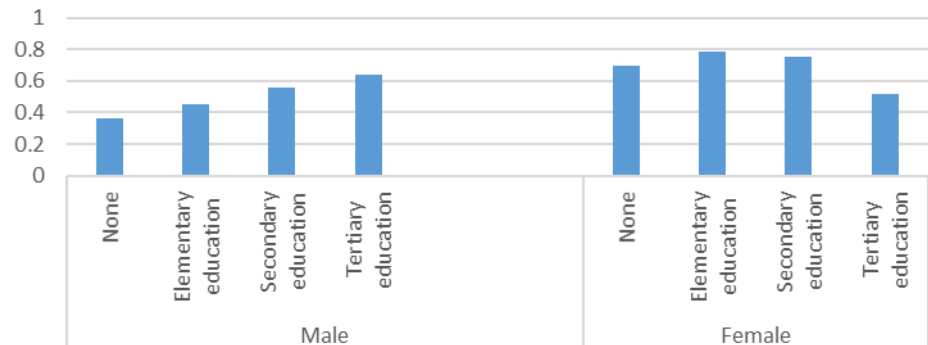
Quality of work by education level

- ◆ In many countries those with higher levels of education more likely to get quality jobs (e.g. Madagascar but not always (e.g. females in Bangladesh

Madagascar: proportion of wage earners with good quality job, by education and gender

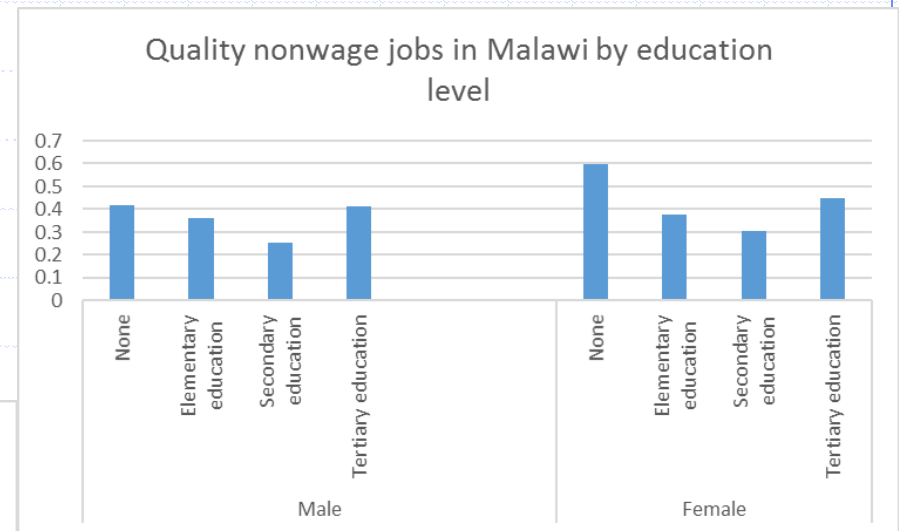
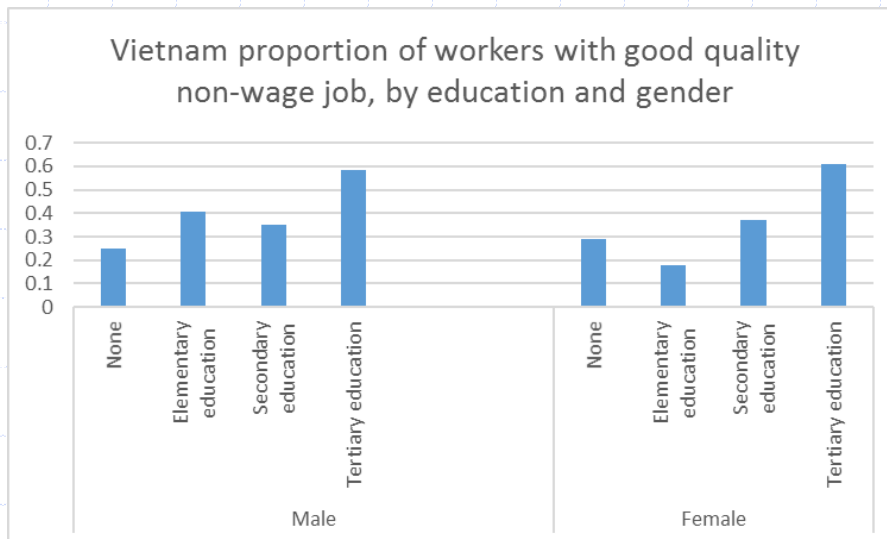


Bangladesh: proportion of wage earners with good quality job, by education and gender



Quality of work by education level (2)

- ◆ But for nonwage jobs association with education weaker
- ◆ But in some cases e.g. Vietnam



Correlates of accessing quality jobs

- ◆ Can study correlates of accessing better quality work, separately for wage and nonwage positions
- ◆ Focus on 22 to 29 year olds, most of whom have now left full time education
- ◆ Have similar factors in each country: gender; education level; marital status and children; relationship to head; parental education; being in education; poverty status; sector; and lots of information on job history
- ◆ Can do similar analysis for each country

Correlates of quality wage jobs

- ◆ Gender mostly is not significant: for those with wage jobs, males and females equally likely to have quality jobs
- ◆ Education important; college education significant in 6/10 countries; higher level vocational education in 7/10 countries
- ◆ Marital status and children not associated with quality work, nor is position in family
- ◆ Being in school at same time often has negative influence
- ◆ Those from poor households less likely to access better quality wage jobs

Quality wage jobs (2)

- ◆ Strong association between working in large firm and job quality
- ◆ So far not a lot of evidence for job history variables having a significant influence ... but difficult to define clearly
- ◆ Main results not very sensitive to alternative definition of quality wage work

Correlates of quality nonwage jobs

- ◆ Again gender mostly not significant
- ◆ Education less important here but still has significant positive influence in some countries
- ◆ Being in school at same time often positively associated with better work outcomes
- ◆ Family factors mostly not relevant
- ◆ But being from a poor household has negative influence on likelihood of quality nonwage work in 9/10 countries
- ◆ Family workers less likely to have quality jobs

Quality nonwage jobs (2)

- ◆ Past periods of unemployment have negative influence on likelihood of quality non-wage job, but past inactivity often positive

Some tentative conclusions

- ◆ The majority of people engaged in nonwage jobs .. here particularly difficult to define quality activities
- ◆ Self employment frequently a positive choice .. and workers often more satisfied than in wage jobs
- ◆ Many people in wage and nonwage jobs are not in quality positions .. education and poverty appear to be very important factors
- ◆ There is not a strong gender story in access to quality work

Next steps

- ◆ This is work in progress
- ◆ Look at sensitivity of result to other definitions .. though hard for nonwage work
- ◆ Investigate more role of job history .. but these are young workers
- ◆ Those who work are a selected sample ... but hard to identify factors that affect participation/working that do not also affect job quality

Thank you!