



## **NCAER launches Round 3 of the Delhi NCR Coronavirus Telephone Survey** conducted by its National Data Innovation Centre

**New Delhi (Monday, June 15, 2020):** NCAER, The National Council of Applied Economic Research, launched **Round 3 of its Delhi National Capital Region Coronavirus Telephone Survey (DCVTS)** today. This rapid telephone survey, being carried out by NCAER's *National Data Innovation Centre*, covers a representative random household sample covering both rural and urban parts of the four-state Delhi National Capital Region (NCR) spread across Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

The DCVTS-3 will build in crucial ways on the important and timely findings of the first two NCAER DCVTS Rounds. Most importantly, DCVTS-3 will resurvey all households contacted in both Rounds 1 and 2, doubling the size of its sample and increasing the precision of its findings. Talking to the same households again after a gap (of between 73 and 53 days from Round 1 and 2) will also allow NCAER researchers to identify changes in the way the households have adjusted under the lockdowns between March and June. DCVTS-3 is being fielded at a crucial moment when the lockdowns are being eased, but Coronavirus infections in the NCR are accelerating rapidly and the region's healthcare infrastructure and testing facilities are coming under historically unprecedented stress.

Through its ongoing data collection, the DCVTS-3 will seek to understand:

- ways in which the lockdowns have affected different occupational groups
- household access to welfare measures during the lockdowns, including their coverage, targeting, delivery mechanisms and bottlenecks
- difficulties after the lockdowns in getting back to work and remaining safe
- trends in social distancing and risk perceptions as the lockdowns are eased.

Round 1 and 2 of the DCVTS were carried out during April 3-6 and April 23-26, 2020. Interviewing 1,756 and 1,885 adults on the telephone, the Rounds spoke to two different sets of households randomly selected from the urban blocks and villages of Delhi NCR. Both rounds were conducted about a week prior to the announced end of each lockdown period to generate evidence to support policymakers on the crucial decisions facing them then.

DCVTS Round 1 assessed people's knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions about the virus, the feasibility of preventive measures such as social distancing, and the impact of the first lockdown on livelihoods, incomes, social life and access to essential items. The results showed that people in Delhi NCR were very aware of the threat of the virus and its modes of transmission, and were mostly trying to practise social distancing while coping with the challenges imposed by the lockdown, particularly income losses and supply shortages.

DCVTS Round 2 focused on understanding the cumulative, household-level impact of the lockdowns, attitudes towards extending the lockdown in the face of deepening social and economic hardships, and the practicing of social distancing. The

findings showed that even as the economic costs of the lockdowns had risen, a substantial number continued to practice social distancing, testifying to the deep and pervasive fear of being infected. While many respondents expressed support for a two-week extension of the lockdown (until May 7, 2020), those in support were more likely to be employed in cultivation and salaried work, occupations that probably suffered the least in the early period.

A significant majority (82 per cent) of the DCVTS-2 respondents reported at least some level of income or wage reduction, and, as expected, these were the highest for casual wage workers across both Rounds. Findings on government relief measures revealed that almost half of the surveyed households received extra rations, with a larger share of rural households (52 per cent) receiving them as compared to urban households (42 per cent). Additional direct cash transfers covered only 29 per cent households, and were modest relative to household incomes and needs. Lastly, the perception of the risk of being infected fell between Round 1 and 2 of the DVCTS, possibly reflecting greater confidence in and comfort with social distancing, and some complacency brought about by not being infected.

DCVTS-3 will report results from Delhi NCR at a turning point in India's experience with the Coronavirus pandemic. India is reopening its economy even as infections surge. The cost of remaining closed has proved to be just too great. From one of the most stringent lockdowns in the world imposed at short notice in March when India had registered some 500 positive cases, the country is rapidly swinging to a sharp easing of restrictions when the peak still seems far and total infections to date have crossed the 320,000 mark and are growing. DCVTS-3 will seek to report on how rural and urban NCR households are prepared for this difficult transition and for what might lie ahead.

### **About NCAER | The National Council of Applied Economic Research**

Established in 1956, NCAER is India's oldest and largest independent, non-profit, economic policy research institute. NCAER's work cuts across many sectors, including growth, macro, trade, infrastructure, logistics, labour, urban, agriculture and rural development, human development, poverty, and consumers. The focus of NCAER's work is on generating and analysing empirical evidence to support and inform policy choices. It is also one of a handful of think tanks globally that combine rigorous analysis and policy outreach with deep data collection capabilities, especially for household surveys, in its National Data Innovation Centre. More on NCAER and NDIC is available on [www.ncaer.org](http://www.ncaer.org).

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