

Feb-Mar 2022

NCAER NEWS



Welcome to the NCAER newsletter, in which we showcase all the activities and outputs of our researchers and faculty over the last two months.

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NCAER Research Outputs

Present and Potential Contribution of Microfinance to India's Economy

This study by NCAER provides an assessment of the impact of microfinance on the macroeconomy, focusing on the activities of Nonbanking Finance Companies (NBFC-MFIs). The report has been authored by Shashanka Bhide, D.B. Gupta, Bornali Bhandari, Sanjukta Das, Madhura Dasgupta, Samarth Gupta, Devender Pratap, Ajaya Kumar Sahu, Jaskirat Singh Kohli, and Ruchi Avtar.

Monthly Review of the Economy - February and March 2022

The Review of the Economy released every month summarises the economic and policy developments in India; monitors global developments of relevance to India; and showcases the pulse of the economy through an analysis of high-frequency indicators and the heat map.

India Human Development Survey Forum, February and March 2022

The IHDS Forum is a monthly update of publications, op-eds, and data news based on the India Human Development Survey (IHDS), which was jointly conducted by NCAER and the University of Maryland in two waves, in 2004-05 and 2011-12. Preparations are underway for launching the third wave soon.

NCAER researchers published the following opinion and journal articles during the months of February and March 2022:

Opinion Articles

How RBI's status quo on key policy rates is appropriate for India

Poonam Gupta

The Economic Times, February 14, 2022

Budget steers clear of drama in complex economic environment

Poonam Gupta

The Economic Times, February 2, 2022

Unpaid female workers and employment rate

Palash Baruah and D.L. Wankhar

Deccan Herald, March 15, 2022

Why men are more equal than women

Anupma Mehta

The Pioneer, March 8, 2022

Go green, Calcutta

Sanjib Pohit

The Telegraph, February 28, 2022

Education should be priority, not banning of hijab

Sonalde Desai

The Indian Express, February 26, 2022

Does the Budget give a leg-up to agriculture?

Bornali Bhandari and Ajaya K. Sahu

Business Line, February 25, 2022

State financial management systems are bringing checks and balances to public finance...

Bornali Bhandari and Pawan Kadyan

Qrius (online), February 18, 2022

The real buzz behind the fizz—The Truth about Alcohol Consumption in India

Sanjib Pohit, Anupma Mehta, Samarth Gupta, and Soumi Roy Chowdhury

Qrius (online), February 18, 2022

Unlocking India's solar potential: Phased restrictions on solar inputs will allow redressal of land, labour & capital constraints

Prerna Prabhakar and Divy Rangan

Financial Express, February 16, 2022

Crypto tax: A laudable move but government should engage in meaningful deliberations with stakeholders

Sudipto Banerjee

Firstpost.com (online), February 12, 2022

Articles on NCAER Research published in *Insight*, *The Hindustan Times*

NCAER Study: A Blueprint for recovery after pandemic: DMAS Findings

March 18, 2022

NCAER Study: Agricultural Diagnostics for Bihar

March 4, 2022

NCAER Study: Value the knowledge of the Ganga's riverine communities for river's development

March 3, 2022

Journal Articles, Working Papers, and Book Chapters

Global Perspective

Poonam Gupta and Abhinav Tyagi

Yojana, Special Issue on Union Budget 2022-23, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, March 2022

Clearing the Air: Interventions to limit vehicular emissions

Sanjib Pohit and Soumi Roy Chowdhury

Renewable Watch, March, 2022

Measuring Export Related Port Logistics in India: An Attempt to Rank Major Ports

Dripto Mukhopadhyay, Sanjib Pohit, and Devendra B. Gupta

Foreign Trade Review, March 29, 2022

Quantifying the Transport, Regulatory and Other Costs of Exporting through Petrapole Land Port

Dripto Mukhopadhyay, Devendra B. Gupta, and Sanjib Pohit

Journal of Land Ports and Border Economy, Issue 1, Routledge, March 2022

Building Capacity for Leveraging Longitudinal Data for Evaluation

Sonalde Desai

M&E @70: Strengthening India's Evidence Systems for Accelerated Reforms and Inclusive Growth, A Compendium of Essays, NITI Aayog, March 2022

Service Sector Performance in Karnataka

Shashanka Bhide and B.P. Vani

Chapter in *Economic Survey of Karnataka 2021-22*,

Planning, Programme Monitoring & Statistics Department, Government of Karnataka, March 2022

Records of Rights of Indian States as Title Registers: An Assessment

Vijay Singh Bangari, Apoorva, Aswani Munnangi, Deepak Sanan, and Somnath Sen

NCAER Working Paper No. WP 133, February 2022

Webinar on “Long-term Impact of the Pandemic on People’s Lives and Lessons for Developing an Inclusive Social Protection Programme”, March 23, 2022

This webinar focused on the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of loss of lives and livelihoods, decline in income, school closures, and lack of access to routine healthcare services. The webinar was a follow-up to the launch of the **India COVID-19 Poverty Monitor Bulletin**, published by the NCAER National Data Innovation Centre in collaboration with the Chronic Poverty Advisory Network. The panellists at the webinar included Dr Tanuka Endow, Professor, Institute for Human Development; Dr Paromita Sen, Research Manager, SEWA Bharat; Dr Manjistha Banerji, Fellow, NCAER; and Dr S.M. Vijayanand, former Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala.

Webinar on “Health Data Ecosystem and Pandemic Preparedness”, March 16, 2022

The discussion at this webinar examined the lessons learnt during COVID-19 and innovative approaches in health data ecosystems for tackling future pandemic outbreaks. The panellists included Dr Gagandeep Kang, Professor, CMC Vellore; and Dr Peter Lloyd-Sherlock, Professor, University of East Anglia. Dr Aravinda Meera Guntupalli, Senior Lecturer in Global Health, University of Aberdeen, was the discussant. The discussion was moderated by Dr Arokiasamy Perianayagam, Professor, NCAER.

‘Conversations with NCAER’—“Implications of the Haryana Government’s job quota for locals”, March 14, 2022

This webinar, the fourth in the webinar series titled ‘Conversations with NCAER’, was organised to discuss the implications of the Haryana Government’s job quota for locals in the light of recent judicial pronouncements. The panellists included Dr Neeraj Kaushal, Professor, Columbia University; Dr Santosh Mehrotra, Visiting Professor, Centre for Development Studies, University of Bath; and Dr Arghya Sengupta, Founder and Research Director, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy. The discussion was moderated by Ms Mythili Bhusnurmath, Senior Adviser, NCAER.

Webinar on “Re-imagining Data Systems as if Women Counted”, March 8, 2022

NCAER organised a discussion on re-imagining data systems from a gendered perspective to celebrate International Women’s Day. The discussion pointed out that after decades of feminist advocacy, conventional wisdom suggests that all data collection systems should provide gender-disaggregated data. However, this ‘add gender and stir’ approach often fails to capture data that is critical for developing gender-friendly policies, especially data on care responsibilities, access to public spaces, and, discrimination in employment.

NCAER Report Release: Present and Potential Contribution of Microfinance to India’s Economy, March 2, 2022

NCAER and Microfinance Institutions Network (MFIN) jointly organised this virtual report release. While the report was released by Dr Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog, the other panellists at the event included Dr Poonam Gupta, Director General, NCAER; Dr Shashanka Bhide, Senior Adviser, NCAER; Dr Alok Misra, CEO and Director, MFIN; Mr Devesh Sachdev, Chairperson MFIN, MD and CEO, Fusion Micro Finance Ltd; and Mr Vivek Tiwari, Vice Chairperson MFIN, MD, CEO and Chief Information Officer, Satya MicroCapital Ltd.

NCAER Webinar on “Tracking Lives and Livelihoods through the Pandemic”, March 2, 2022

This webinar focused on the findings from the Delhi Metropolitan Area Study (DMAS) conducted by the NCAER National Data Innovation Centre team. The team interviewed over 5,200 households in the National Capital Region (NCR) in 2019, with samples drawn from Delhi as well as districts in the neighbouring States of Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh. The DMAS survey was conducted from early 2019 until November 2021, allowing the team to assess the changes brought about by the COVID -19 pandemic in the lives of people during this period.

NCAER’s IEPF Chair Webinar on “Role of NGOs in Educating India Financially”, February 26, 2022

This discussion, which was part of the Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF) Chair Unit’s webinar series, highlighted the role of NGOs in financial education in India, with special reference to changing dynamics in women’s empowerment. The NCAER IEPF Chair Unit was established in 2020, with funding from the Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority, Ministry of Corporate Affairs. The Unit conducts research on contemporary issues related to investor education and protection, and an analysis of related economic and regulatory issues.

NCAER Webinar on “Report on Global Economic Prospects, January 2022”, February 24, 2022

NCAER organised a webinar to discuss the report on Global Economic Prospects, January 2022, with Dr Indermit Gill, Vice President, World Bank, and Mr Ayhan Kose, Chief Economist and Director of the Prospects Group in the Equitable Growth, Finance, and Institutions Practice Group of the World Bank. Professor Manoj Pant, Director and Vice Chancellor, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, and Dr Poonam Gupta, Director General, NCAER, were the discussants. The discussion was moderated by Ms Mythili Bhusnurmath, Senior Adviser, NCAER.

The 16th 5-Institute Budget Seminar 2022, February 7, 2022

The heads of the five Institutes, the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), the India Development Foundation (IDF), the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), and the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP), came together again, as they have been doing since March 2007, to discuss and present a reform and development perspective on the 2022-23 Union Budget.

Voices of our Researchers

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- In an article titled, “Unlicensed liquor boosts revenues, ruins lives”, in *Deccan Herald*, dated January 30, 2022, Dr Sanjib Pohit, Professor, NCAER, highlighted the need for alternative sources of revenue for States in lieu of revenue from alcohol sales as “under the current federal set-up, there is no substitute for alcohol revenues.” [Weblink.](#)
- A report titled, “Equitably Decarbonising India's Transportation Sector” by The Energy and Resources Institute School of Advanced Studies (TERI SAS), carries detailed comments by Dr Sanjib Pohit, Professor, NCAER, February 15, 2022.
- In an article titled, “GoI tracks the money trail: How PFMS will pull plug on spending slippages”, in *Business Standard*, dated March 15, 2022, Dr Bornali Bhandari, Senior Fellow, NCAER points out the need for overcoming conceptual challenges in the Public Financial Management System (PFMS). [Weblink.](#)
- An article in *Business World*, titled, “Home Left In Ruins, Lost All Belongings: Unaware Of Shram Card Benefits, Ali Seeks Help”, dated February 25, 2022, had comments on the Aadhaar-phone linkage scheme by Dr Bornali Bhandari, Senior Fellow, NCAER. [Weblink.](#)
- In an article in *BloombergQuint*, titled, “Budget 2022: Housing To Power, How Narendra Modi Government Has Fared on Key Promises”, dated January 30, 2022, Mr Deepak Sanan,

Senior Adviser, NCAER, suggested that the Central Government should look towards rewarding performance with regard to electrification and power supply. In the same article, Dr Bornali Bhandari, Senior Fellow, NCAER, noted that data shows that road construction has performed relatively well as compared to other infrastructure sectors, with the pace of construction increasing from 12 km per day in 2014-15 to 37 km per day in 2020-21. [Weblink](#).

Faculty Activities

Following are details of the activities and engagements of NCAER staff and faculty during February- March 2022:

Dr Poonam Gupta, Director General

- Presentation, Paper on “Growth with Stability”, Columbia India Economy Summit 2021-22, organised by Deepak and Neera Raj Center on Indian Economic Policies, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University, March 31, 2022.
- Lecture on “The Growth Slowdown during 2019-20: An Enigma or an Aberration” at Institute of Economic Growth, March 3, 2022.
- Opening remarks at the launch of the Microfinance Institutions’ Network (MFIN)-NCAER Report on “Present and Potential Contribution of Microfinance to India’s Economy”, March 2, 2022.
- Presentation during webinar held to discuss the *Report on Global Economic Prospects, January 2022*, on February 24, 2022.
- Presentation at the Meeting of the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce, Rajya Sabha Secretariat, February 14, 2022.
- Presentation at NITI Aayog, “Discussion with Leading Think Tanks: The Union Budget 2022-23: Macroeconomic Context”, February 8, 2022.
- Presentation at the 16th 5-Institute Budget Seminar 2022: *Unpacking the Union Budget 2022-23*, February 7, 2022.

Dr Shashanka Bhide, Senior Adviser, Research Programmes

- Presented the NCAER report on “Present and Potential Contribution of Microfinance to India's Economy” on the occasion of the release of the report by Dr Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog, March 2, 2022.
- Presentation on the “The Covid-19 Pandemic and the Indian Economy: An Exploratory Assessment of Production Sectors”, at a virtual Workshop on the Indian Economy, NCAER and Policy Research Institute, Tokyo, February 18, 2022.

Dr Anil Sharma, Secretary and Operations Director

- Panellist at a virtual Workshop on the Indian Economy, NCAER and Policy Research Institute, Tokyo, February 18, 2022.

Dr Sonalde Desai, Professor

- Panellist at a Roundtable discussion on “World Bank Development Report – 2021: Data for Better Lives”, organised by NITI Aayog, March 29, 2022.
- Moderated a webinar on “Long-term Impact of the Pandemic on People’s Lives and Lessons for Developing an Inclusive Social Protection Programme”, organised by NCAER, March 23, 2022.

- Participated in Technical Advisory Committee Meeting on “Evaluation of National Food Security Act (NFSA)”, organised by Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), NITI Aayog, March 9, 2022.
- Organiser and Moderator in a seminar, “Re-imagining Data Systems as if Women Counted”, organised by NCAER for Launching the NCAER Gender Data Hub, March 8, 2022.
- Panellist in a webinar on “Data Matters: Why, How Often, and What Kind?”, organised by Centre for Economic Data and Analysis and India International Centre, March 4, 2022.
- Moderator for webinar on “Tracking Lives and Livelihoods through the Pandemic: Results from the Delhi Metropolitan Area Study” and presentation on “Beyond Lockdown: Fragile Employment Recovery” at the webinar, organised by NCAER, March 2, 2022.
- Organised webinar on “Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection”, in collaboration with Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), NITI Aayog, February 3, 2022.

Dr Sanjib Pohit, Professor

- Presentation at Discussion on “India’s 2070 Net Zero Pathway” with Shakti Foundation Climate Change team, February 16, 2022.
- Presentation on NCAER’s “Faceless Assessment Scheme” Study with Central Board of Direct Taxes team, February 8, 2022.
- Panellist, Webinar on “Economics of Energy Innovation and System Transition”, organised by World Resource Institute, March 24, 2022.

Dr Bornali Bhandari, Senior Fellow

- Presentation at “Vikararth Conversations 2022: Economic Reforms and the Growth and Development of Kerala”, organised by Centre for Public Policy Research and Institute for New Economics Thinking, New York, March 10, 2022.
- Presentation at “Tata Steel Expert Speak - State of the Economy Series”, March 9, 2022.
- Presentation to Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), HR Group, “Contribution to Overall Employment by the Auto Industry: Jobs and Skills”, February 11, 2022.
- Panellist, Webinar on “Budget 2022 and the Indian Economy: Prospects for Growth and Macroeconomic Stability”, organised by Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), National University of Singapore-Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, February 8, 2022.

Dr Poonam Munjal, Senior Fellow

- Presentation on “India and the Coronavirus Pandemic: Economic Losses for Households Engaged in Tourism and Policies for Recovery”, at a virtual Workshop on the Indian Economy, NCAER and Policy Research Institute, Tokyo, February 18, 2022.
- Presented Findings and Assessment of the Study, “Economic Impact of Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru” to the Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) Board, chaired by Shri P. Ravi Kumar, Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka, February 11, 2022.

Dr Santanu Pramanik, Senior Fellow

- Presentation on the Methodology of NCAER’s Delhi Metropolitan Area Study (DMAS), at the webinar “Tracking Lives and Livelihoods through the Pandemic: Results from the Delhi Metropolitan Area Study”, organised by NCAER, March 2, 2022.

- Delivered a Talk on “Remote Mode of Data Collection during the Pandemic”, at a Workshop on “Faculty Development Programme on Research Methodology and Publication Ethics”, organised by the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Islamic University of Science and Technology, Awantipora, February 10, 2022.
- Participant in Discussion on “Adult Vaccination Progress in India”, at the CORE Net Coffee Hour Session on “The COVID-19 Vaccine Story: On Uptake and Hesitancy”, February 3, 2022.

Dr Saurabh Bandyopadhyay, Fellow

- Presentation at the Capacity Building Workshop on Research Methodology at the National Tribal Research Institute, February 18, 2022.
- Presentation at the Ministry of Panchayati Raj on “Field Assessment of the Status of Devolution of Powers and Resources to the Panchayati Raj Institutions across States and Union Territories in the Country for 2020-21 to Develop Indicative Evidence-based Ranking”, February 10, 2022.

Dr Manjistha Banerji, Fellow

- Panellist at a webinar on “Long-term Impact of the Pandemic on People’s Lives and Lessons for Developing an Inclusive Social Protection Programme”, organised by NCAER, March 23, 2022.
- Presentation on “Learning Disruptions in Times of COVID”, at a webinar on “Tracking Lives and Livelihoods through the Pandemic: Results from the Delhi Metropolitan Area Study”, organised by NCAER, March 2, 2022.
- Presentation on “Embedding Qualitative Inquiry into Statistical Analyses: Some Examples”, at a Workshop on Research and Analysis Work, organised by Development and Monitoring Evaluation Office (DMEO), NITI Aayog, February 3, 2022.

Dr Debasis Barik, Fellow

- Participant at the Expert Group meeting on “Reviewing Household Out-of-Pocket Expenditure on Health Care to be Used in the National Health Accounts 2017-18 Report”, organised by the National Health Systems Resource Centre, unit of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, February 22, 2022.
- Presentation on “Findings of Medical Compliance for Routine Health Care in Delhi-NCR during the COVID-19 Pandemic” at a webinar on “Tracking Lives and Livelihoods through the Pandemic: Results from the Delhi Metropolitan Area Study”, organised by NCAER, March 2, 2022.

Dr Pallavi Choudhuri, Fellow

- Paper Presentation, with Santanu Pramanik and Sonalde Desai on “Urban Exclusion: Rethinking Social Protection in the Wake of the Pandemic in India”, at the Third Economics Conference, Ahmedabad University, March 11, 2022.
- Panellist at seminar on "Re-imagining Data Systems as if Women Counted", organised by NCAER for Launching the NCAER Gender Data Hub, March 8, 2022.
- Presentation on “Consumption and Food Subsidy”, at a webinar on “Tracking Lives and Livelihoods through the Pandemic: Results from the Delhi Metropolitan Area Study”, organised by NCAER, March 2, 2022.

Dr Ruchi Jain, Senior Research Analyst

- Presentation on “Experience of COVID-19 Infection and Its Severity”, at a webinar on “Tracking Lives and Livelihoods through the Pandemic: Results from the Delhi Metropolitan Area Study”, organised by NCAER, March 2, 2022.

Dr Reem Ashraf, Consultant

- Presentation on “Perceptions about Initial Lockdown in Retrospect”, at a webinar on “Tracking Lives and Livelihoods through the Pandemic: Results from the Delhi Metropolitan Area Study”, organised by NCAER, March 2, 2022.

Mr M. Abhinav Saikrishna, Research Analyst

- Presentation on “Vaccination in Delhi-NCR”, at a webinar on “Tracking Lives and Livelihoods through the Pandemic: Results from Delhi Metropolitan Area Study”, organised by NCAER, March 2, 2022.

Institutional News

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Study on Demand for the Fisheries Sector in India

A new project on estimating the demand for the fisheries sector has been initiated at NCAER. This unique study aims to capture the demand for a variety of fishes across States and their implications in terms of generating income and contribution of the fisheries sector to the general food economy. The project team includes Saurabh Bandyopadhyay, Laxmi Joshi, Palash Baruah, Gargi Pal, Falak Naz, Raman Trivedi, Bimal Chand, and Sameer Kumar Mondal.

IHDS-3 Field Testing (Final Round)

The NCAER NDIC team, led by Sonalde Desai, Sharan Sharma, Dinesh Tiwari, and Om Prakash Sharma, conducted the final round of field testing of the India Human Development Survey-3 (IHDS-3) CAPI household and community survey instruments in two villages in Alwar district of Rajasthan during February 22-25, 2022. The team expects to launch the third round of IHDS data collection from early May 2022.

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