



## PRESS RELEASE

### **“India’s largest think-tank NCAER and University of Michigan sign 5-year MoU for collaborative survey research”**

**New Delhi, November 13, 2013:** India’s oldest and largest economic think-tank, NCAER, the National Council of Applied Economic Research in New Delhi, today signed a five-year Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Michigan’s Survey Research Center (SRC) to promote collaborative survey research. SRC is a global leader in survey methodology and technology, and is part of Michigan’s Institute for Social Research (ISR). The MoU was signed by Dr Shekhar Shah, Director-General, NCAER, and Dr Mary Sue Coleman, President, University of Michigan and Dr William Axinn, Director, Survey Research Center. Shri M S Verma, Vice President of the NCAER Governing Body, was the Guest of Honour at the signing ceremony.

*“It is a very special moment when we bring together two powerful organizations committed to better understanding human behaviour. The partnership between the University of Michigan’s Institute for Social Research and NCAER will enrich academic discourse and public policy in both our countries”,* said Dr Mary Sue Coleman.

The MoU will promote cooperation in survey-based research, covering methodology, technology, and new research initiatives. Both institutions will jointly seek to develop sample survey infrastructure to support academically rigorous economic and other social science research in India. Other initiatives may include establishing a survey research laboratory at NCAER to test and advance new approaches for social science research and for training professionals in state-of-the-art, survey-based research methods. These cooperative activities are expected to benefit NCAER, University of Michigan faculty and students, and the larger empirical research community in India.

*“Today we launch a powerful partnership between NCAER and SRC Michigan that will allow NCAER to leverage its rich, six-decade long survey experience to make significant and rapid advances in methodology and technology. This will build on India’s rich tradition of large-scale surveys going back to P C Mahalanobis,”* said Dr Shekhar Shah.

Household and other surveys has been a distinctive part of NCAER’s work from its inception in 1956. NCAER’s surveys on consumer behavior starting in the mid-1960s (now called the National Survey on Household Income and Expenditure) and its Rural Economic and Demographic Surveys have been used extensively by scholars and policymakers all over the world. More recently, NCAER has mounted the India Human Development Surveys (IHDS-I and II). IHDS-II will be the first national longitudinal panel data set for India.

*“This collaborative partnership between NCAER and Michigan’s Institute for Social Research represents an unprecedented opportunity to harness the social sciences to improve the lives of hundreds of millions of people”,* said Professor William Axinn, Director of the SRC at Michigan.

ISR is a global leader in interdisciplinary survey-based search and its teaching and training. It conducts some of the most widely cited and influential studies in the US like the Survey of Consumer Attitudes, the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, the Monitoring the Future Study, and the Health and Retirement Study, which have become national resources for US social research and policy.

The signing ceremony was preceded by a NCAER symposium, done jointly with the University of Michigan, on “*Leapfrogging Methodology & Technology in Household Survey Research: Lessons from the US and India.*” The Chairman of the National Statistical Commission, Dr Pronab Sen, participated in the Symposium, as did the Government of India’s Chief Statistician, Dr T C A Anant, who also gave the opening keynote remarks in the Symposium.

### **About NCAER**

**NCAER**, the National Council of Applied Economic Research, is India’s oldest and largest independent economic think-tank, set up in 1956 at the behest of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to inform policy choices for both the public and private sectors. Over nearly six decades, NCAER has served the nation well with its rich offering of applied policy research, unique data sets, evaluations, and policy inputs to central and state governments, corporate India, the media, and informed citizens. It is one of a few independent think-tanks world-wide that combine rigorous economic analysis and policy outreach with deep data collection capabilities, particularly for large-scale household surveys. NCAER is currently led by its Director-General, Dr Shekhar Shah, and governed by an independent Governing Body chaired by Mr Nandan Nilekani, Chairman of the Unique Identification Authority of India.

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