



SINCE

1956

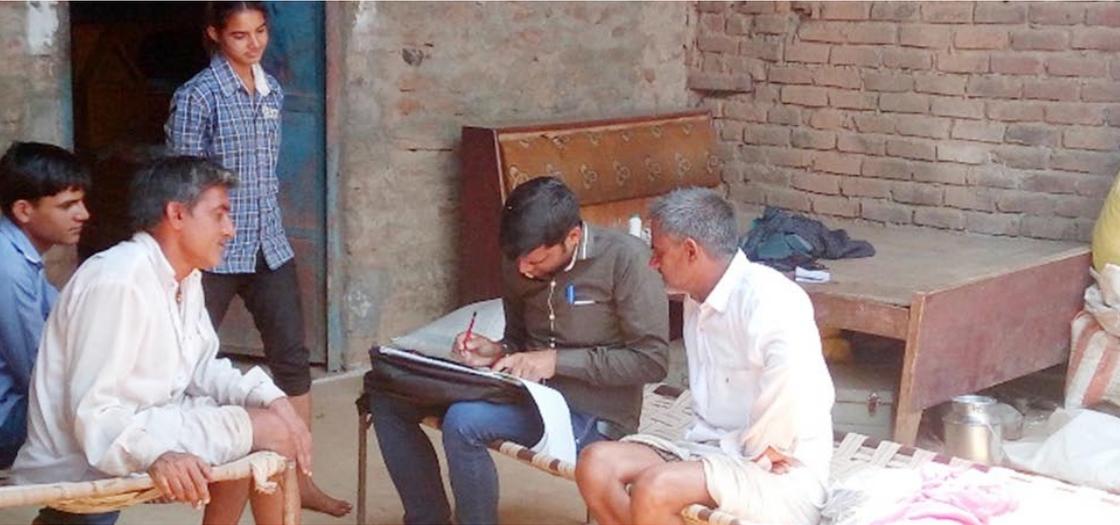
QUALITY. RELEVANCE. IMPACT



NCAER-NDIC

National Data Innovation Centre

The National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), New Delhi, with its consortium partners, University of Maryland and University of Michigan, has set up a new National Data Innovation Centre (NDIC). Initial funding for NDIC is provided by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.



BACKGROUND

An independent India invested heavily in a statistical apparatus including a decennial census, a vital registration system and annual National Sample Surveys as well as a variety of special purpose surveys. In recent years, these activities have been supplemented by an enormous amount of administrative data collection. However, India's rapid transformation has led to a growing demand from researchers and policymakers for rapid, high quality and policy-relevant data. Changing socio-economic conditions also necessitate rethinking of the kind of data that are collected, as also ways in which they are collated and made accessible to users. In this context, NDIC has been set up as a national centre of innovation and excellence in data collection for building research capacity to strengthen India's data ecosystem to meet the 21st Century challenges.

The NDIC has three goals:

1. To pilot innovative data collection methods and to mainstream successful pilots into larger data collection efforts; data collection innovations will focus both on household surveys and big data, particularly uses of administrative data;
2. To impart formal and informal training to a new generation of data scientists; and
3. To serve as a resource for diverse stakeholders including government data agencies and ministries.

NDIC PLANNED ACTIVITIES

1. Grant Competition

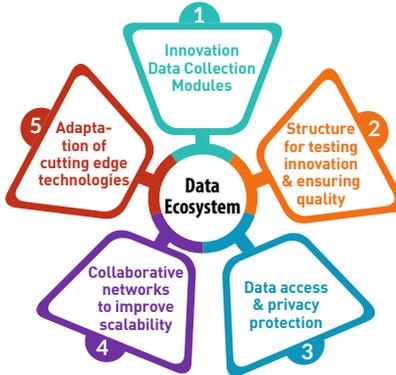
Thematic competition for students/faculty teams and researchers to develop and test innovative data collection strategies.

5. Collaboration & Training

NCAER, Maryland and Michigan groups will experiment with and mentor researchers in use of advanced technologies with a focus on Indian conditions and needs (e.g., remote sensing, audio interviews, smartphone based time diaries).

4. Visiting Fellowships & Workshops

Visiting fellowships for mid career members of statistical establishment and data collection agencies. Workshops to foster exchange of learning.



2. Delhi Metropolitan Area Study

Ongoing survey for testing and evaluating innovation and demonstrating remote supervision using paradata to ensure high quality data collection and minimizing interviewer effects.

3. Geospatial Linkages and Privacy Protection

Linking administrative and remote sensing data to survey data to answer innovation questions while ensuring respondent privacy and anonymity.

Developing and testing classification system from remote sensing data to understand agricultural transformation and preparation of timely urban and peri-urban sampling frames.

Dr Sonalde Desai, Senior Fellow, NCAER and Professor, University of Maryland, is serving as its first director. The Centre is being advised by a Centre Programme Advisory Panel, chaired by Dr Pronab Sen.

NDIC RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

NDIC's mandate is to experiment with a variety of survey instruments and modes of

data collection to address shortcomings in the existing data collection approaches identified by an eminent panel of advisors. These areas are: (1) Women's economic empowerment and time use; (2) Financial inclusion and the strategies through which the poor make ends meet; (3) Health care expenditure in a climate of increasingly complex insurance



mechanisms; (4) Collection of sensitive data including contraceptive use; (5) Use of geospatial data to understand transformation in agricultural activities; and (6) Use of administrative data and linkages between survey and administrative data.

Data collection will be located within the Delhi Metropolitan Area Study (DMAS), covering both urban and rural areas. The DMAS will serve as an incubator for experimentation with a variety of data collection techniques including CAPI, ACASI, CATI and IVR.

TRAINING OF A NEW GENERATION OF DATA SCIENTISTS

The activities being undertaken at NDIC entail imparting of formal and informal training to Indian researchers and mid-career scholars as well as international researchers interested in working in India. This is sought to be accomplished via a variety of mechanisms

including formal coursework through a Joint Program in Survey Methodology, a collaborative initiative of the University of Maryland, University of Michigan and Westat; an internship programme for early career graduate students; visiting fellowships for mid-career scholars including members of statistical agencies; and, a small grants programme aimed at supporting fieldwork by students.

SERVING AS A HUB FOR INDIA'S DATA INFRASTRUCTURE

The NDIC is envisaged as a hub for data related innovations in India and for providing expertise to policymakers, government statistical agencies and private data collection agencies. Other capacity building activities that will enable NDIC to serve as a key partner in India's evolving data infrastructure include regular workshops and lectures addressing critical issues related to statistical data collection, and an annual data collectors' conference.



NCAER-NDIC

National Data Innovation Centre

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF APPLIED ECONOMIC RESEARCH
Parisila Bhawan, 11 Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi-110002
Tel: +91-11-23379861-63, Website: www.ncaer.org

For further information on NDIC publications, please contact:

Anupma Mehta, Editor, NCAER, and Communications Lead, NCAER-NDIC, Email: amehta@ncaer.org