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DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT



Welcome to the India Human Development Survey Forum

A monthly update of socio-economic developments in India by the

IHDS research community.

November 2021

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Welcome to the fifth anniversary edition of the IHDS newsletter. As we look forward with anticipation and excitement to the next round of the IHDS, we would like to thank all our subscribers for sustained support to the newsletter over the last five years. In this special issue, we draw attention to the diverse ways in which IHDS data have been used to inform public policy by showcasing some key IHDS-based research outputs.

The policy relevance and popularity of IHDS data among users can be observed from the IHDS download and usage statistics given below.*

[IHDS 1](#) (release date 7/30/08)

Unique Users	17,915
Publications	701

[IHDS 2](#) (release date 6/25/15)

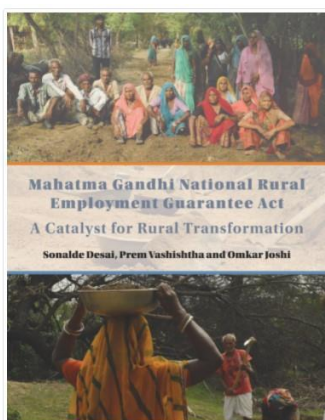
Unique Users	16,090
Publications	567

[IHDS Panel Data](#) (release date 11/18/18)

Unique users	1,218
Publications	15

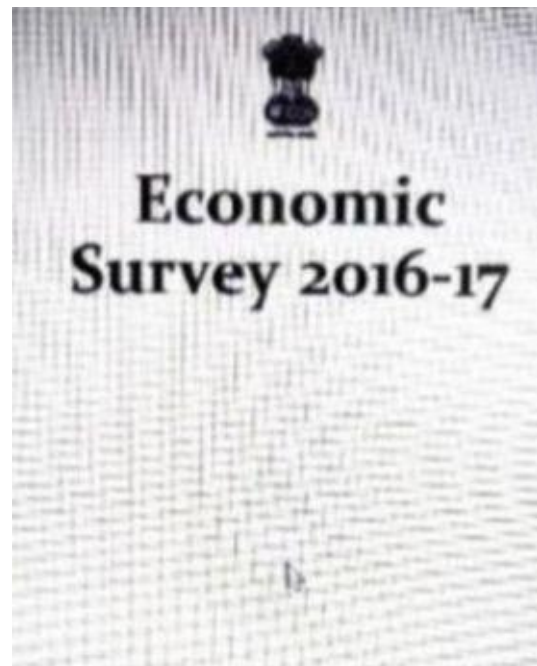
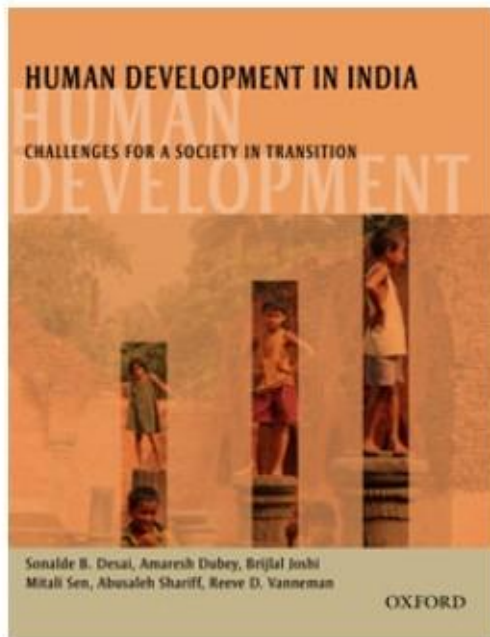
* From [Data Sharing for Demographic Research \(DSDR\)](#). Generated on 11/11/21.

Notable IHDS Policy Reports

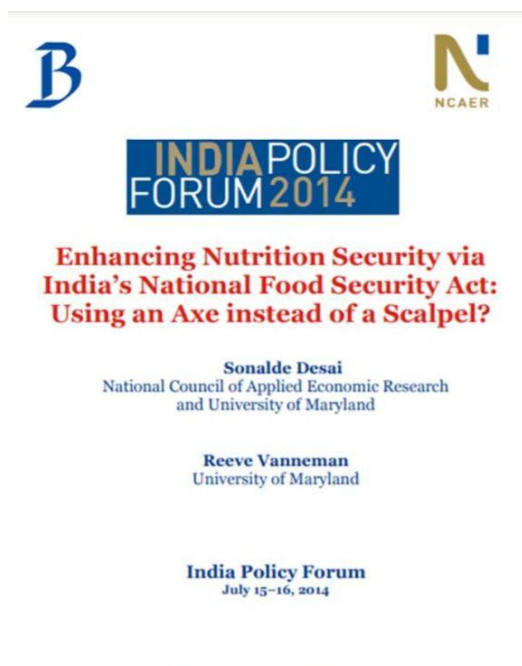
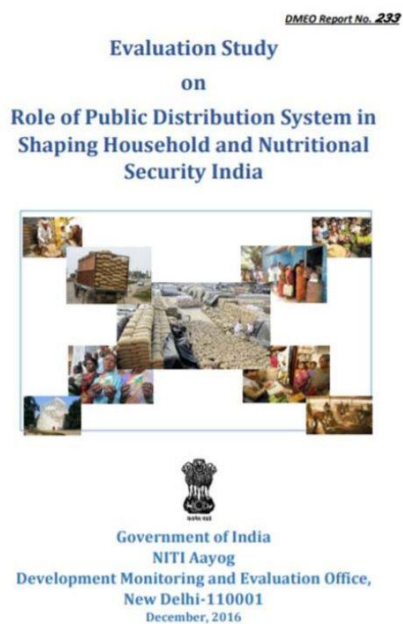


1. IHDS researchers Sonalde Desai, Prem Vashishtha, and Omkar Joshi analysed how the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Scheme (MGNREGS) has been a catalyst in transforming the rural economy and has the potential for serving as an employer of the last resort. This research was published in a [Report on MGNREGA](#) that was released by Shri Bibek Debroy, Member, NITI Aayog, and Shri Jugal Kishore Mohapatra, then Secretary, Rural Development. The report found that the implementation of MGNREGA:

- Reduced poverty and the incidence of borrowing from moneylenders;
- Increased women's participation in wage work and enhanced their decision-making power within households; and
- Improved children's educational outcomes.



2. IHDS data has shown that while circumstances of birth lead to chronic poverty, as many as 40 per cent of the poor, especially among the marginalised sections such as Dalits and Adivasis, fell into poverty due to circumstances of life ([Thorat et al. 2017](#)). This paper relies on IHDS data to examine the dynamic nature of movements into and out of poverty over a period when poverty had fallen substantially in India. In keeping with these observations, the [Economic Survey](#) of 2016-17 used IHDS data to derive estimates of the targeting efficiency of welfare programmes and to calculate financial requirements for providing basic income to households instead of relying on pre-identification of the poor via Below the Poverty Line (BPL) cards.



3. In an [evaluation](#) of the Public Distribution System (PDS) for NITI Aayog, the IHDS data showed that access to subsidised grains via the PDS provided a source of cheap calories to the households. It was particularly useful in protecting food consumption for households that were facing a drop in income. However, it also skewed food consumption towards cereals instead of a diversified diet, which in turn leads to poor nutritional outcomes (also see [Research Paper on PDS in NCAER's India Policy Forum](#)).

Please see below interviews of two key personalities associated with IHDS—project leader and eminent academic Dr. Sonalde Desai, and policymaker and member of India’s premier public policy think tank, NITI Aayog, Dr. Ramesh Chand—on the uses, impact, and long-term intrinsic value of IHDS data.



Dr. Sonalde Desai on IHDS.



Dr. Ramesh Chand from NITI Aayog on the impact of IHDS.

Recent publications from IHDS users:

Shrinivas, A., S. Jalota, A. Mahajan, and G. Miller. 2021. "Illness and Wage Loss: Longitudinal Evidence from India (and Implications for the Universal Health Coverage Agenda)." *medRxiv*; DOI: 10.1101/2021.11.04.21265892. [Link](#).

Brahmanandam, N. and R. Nagarajan. 2021. "The Transition in Household Energy Use for Cooking in India: Evidence from a Longitudinal Survey." *Margin: The Journal of Applied Economic Research*. 15(4): 433-455. [Link](#).

Reed, M.N. 2021. "The Gendered Practices of the Upwardly Mobile in India." *Social Science Research*. [Link](#).

Chatterjee, E. and C. Sennott. 2021. "Fertility Intentions and Child Health in India: Women's Use of Health Services, Breastfeeding, and Official Birth Documentation Following an Unwanted Birth." *PLOS One* 16(11): e0259311. [Link](#).

Helms, B., S.S. Pandya, and S. Sekhri. 2021. "Bartering Bureaucrats: FDI Weakens Governance." *theopenscholar.com*. [Link](#).

Nolan, S. 2021. "Roll Call: The Social Origins of India's Engineering Students." Unpublished paper. [Link](#).

Johnson, D. and A. Parrado. (2021). "Assessing the Assessments: Taking Stock of India's 'Learning Outcomes' Data." *Int'l Journal of Educational Development*. [Link](#).

Soni, A., N. Fahey, Z.A. Bhutta, W. Li, J.A. Frazier, T.M. Simas, and S.M. Nimbalkar. 2021. "Early Childhood Undernutrition, Pre-adolescent Physical Growth, and Cognitive Achievement in India: A Population-based Cohort Study." *PLOS Medicine* 18(10): e1003838. [Link](#).

Ladusingh, L. and M. Thangjam. 2021. "Policy Reforms and Changing Intergenerational Support of Elderly in India." *J Pop Research*, 38, 401-416. [Link](#).

Das, U. and K. Singhal. 2021. "Solving It Correctly Prevalence and Persistence of Gender Gap in Basic Mathematics in Rural India." Unpublished paper. [Link](#).

Diwakar, V. 2021. "Armed Conflict, Poverty and Education in Naxal-affected Areas of India: Gendered Impacts and Intersecting Pathways." Ph.D. Thesis. Cambridge University. [Link](#).





Please visit our updated IHDS website

for all your IHDS related questions:

ihds.umd.edu

ABOUT IHDS

The India Human Development Survey (IHDS) is a nationally representative, multi-topic survey of 41,554 households in 1503 villages and 971 urban neighbourhoods across India. The first round of interviews was completed in 2004-05; data are publicly available through ICPSR. A second round of IHDS re-interviewed most of these households in 2011-12 (N=42,152) and data for the same can be found here. IHDS 3 is in development and expected to be in the field in 2021.

IHDS 3 has been jointly organised by researchers from the University of Maryland, the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), Indiana University and the University of Michigan. Funding for the second round of this survey is provided by the National Institutes of Health, grants R01HD041455 and R01HD061048. Additional funding is provided by The Ford Foundation, IDRC and DFID.

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