



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 2022**

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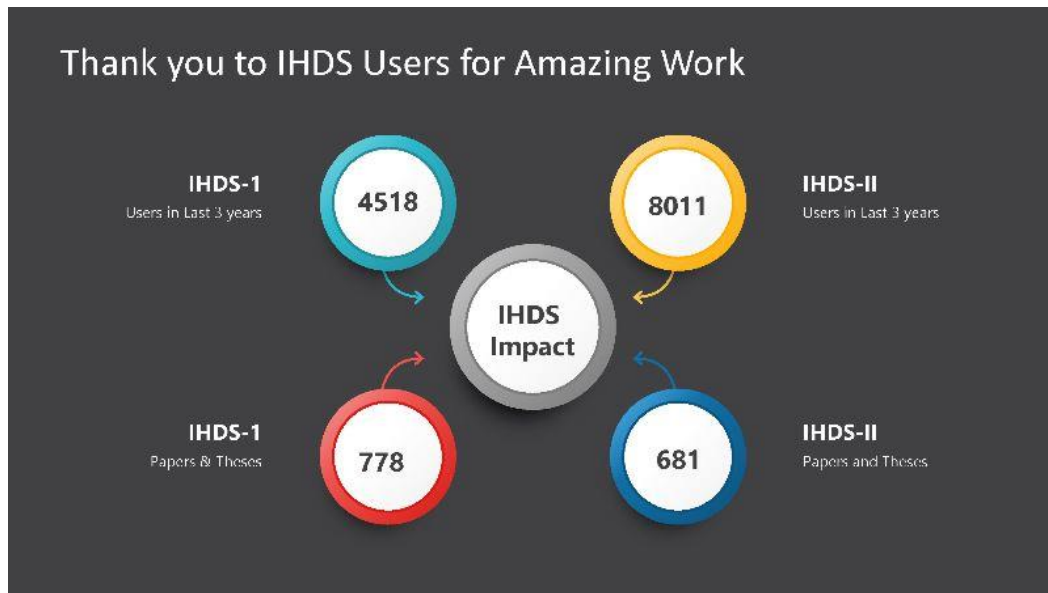
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**WELCOME** to the 6<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition of the IHDS Forum. In this issue, we present a sample of the IHDS team members' recollections and insights from over the years and offer a photo gallery from the field where data collection for IHDS-3 is underway. Remember, our website, [ihds.umd.edu](http://ihds.umd.edu), is always available with detailed information about the IHDS surveys.

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## Key Usage Statistics



### **IHDS-3 Takes Off:**

**There was a huge demand for initiation of IHDS-3 after the conclusion of IHDS-2 in 2011-12. There was a delay in starting the third round due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but now the survey is in the field with full force, and the IHDS team is raring to go to produce another round of high-quality data on major aspects of human development.**



### **IHDS-3 Innovations:**

- **Movement from paper-based surveys to Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI);**
- **Remote quality monitoring;**
- **Questions about the pandemic experience and impact inserted in the questionnaire; and**
- **Survey of migrants from the IHDS households on the anvil.**



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## What does the IHDS-3 field experience tell us?



### Sonalde Desai

*Distinguished University Professor,  
University of Maryland; Professor and  
Centre Director; NCAER National  
Data Innovation Centre*

Discipline: Sociology

Founding Director of IHDS

Q. What, in your opinion, are the highs and lows of keeping the IHDS programme going over three rounds and nearly two decades?



A. **Highs:** Learning from IHDS respondents. They are amazing in their diversity—shy, welcoming, annoyed, aggressive, curious—but always adding a different note to the song of ever-changing and yet eternal India that we are trying to record.

**Lows:** Keeping faith in building a long-term programme while we struggle for funding in each round.

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## Sharan Sharma

*Assistant Research Professor,  
Department of Sociology, and Joint  
Program in Survey Methodology,  
University of Maryland*

Discipline: Survey Methodology and Applied  
Statistics

Joined the IHDS Team: 2019

Q. How can remote monitoring be used to enhance data quality?

A. A good remote monitoring system enhances data quality by: (a) Leveraging the near real-time availability of rich field data including substantive data, audio recordings, paradata, etc. (b) Using these data synergistically, identifying interviewers needing improvement (typically based on pre-defined quality indicators), and (c) Evaluating the efficacy of previous interviewer interventions.

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## Santanu Pramanik

*Senior Fellow, NCAER, and Deputy Director, NCAER National Data Innovation Centre*

Discipline: Statistics and Survey Methodology

Joined the IHDS Team: 2018

**Q. Please briefly share your feelings about and experience of the recent training for IHDS-3 in your home State of West Bengal.**

A. I have been involved in primary data collection for quite some time now but never had the opportunity to work closely in my home state, West Bengal, as most of my engagements have been in North India and Assam. It was such a satisfying experience to train the field staff in my mother tongue, Bengali, for IHDS-3 and finalise Bengali translations of different questionnaires. The team mobilised by the data collection agency EIT was superb. Most of them are smart, interested, argumentative, and super-competitive during quizzes.

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## Pallavi Choudhuri

*Senior Fellow, NCAER*

Discipline: Economics

Joined the IHDS Team: 2017

**Q. What, according to you, was the hardest part of training the interviewers during IHDS-3?**

- *Farming*: Training interviewers on land held/cultivated, leased in/out, taking into account different patterns of ownership; agricultural production linked to cultivated land across different seasons, consistency across local conversion rates for land, unit of production and price per unit of crop.
  - *Work*: Women's economic engagement is often invisibilised. Training interviewers on what constitutes women's work, and the prompts that interviewers need to use in the field so that women's work gets counted.
  - *Types of Work*: What gets counted as self-employment versus piece-work versus contractual (wage and salaried) work.
  - *Consumption*: Training interviewers on quantity of food consumed by household members versus amount purchased/ home produced.
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## O.P. Sharma

*Fellow, NCAER*

Discipline: Primary Data Collection, Field Training, Field Management, Coding, Editing, and Data Cleaning

Joined the IHDS Team: 2004-05 (IHDS-I)

Q. What do you miss about paper-based surveys since they have been replaced by CAPI?

A. First, for better clarity, cross-checking of information and consistency checks, cross-checks are much easier to do on paper as compared to CAPI.



Secondly, if the interviewer had some problem while coding the response, then he would write a note along with the question in paper-based surveys whereas in CAPI, notes are available but we go there only when any doubt arises.

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## Dinesh Tiwari

*Fellow, NCAER*

Discipline: Anthropology

Joined the IHDS Team: 2010

**Q. How has quality monitoring changed between IHDS-2 and IHDS-3?**

A. IHDS-2 was on paper and pencil and we used decentralised tools for monitoring, such as direct interview observation, spot checking, and back checking. But the overall understanding of trends and patterns was not possible due to a time lag. In IHDS-3, we are doing computerised data collection where checks and skips are inbuilt. In addition, direct observation and centralised real-time monitoring are done based on dashboards; progress, negative screening, important count variables, and audio recordings are more useful in IHDS-3 than in IHDS-2. The powerful softwares used for data collection in IHDS-3 generate a lot of survey process data, which could be effective for methodological research.

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## Bipasa Banerjee

*Research Associate, NCAER*

Discipline: Economics and Women's Studies

Joined the IHDS Team: 2022

**Q. Please tell us about your first field survey experience.**

A. I believe that most people with an interest in this area but with no exposure to field experience are mostly terrified of it but I am grateful that despite my fears, I got this opportunity which provided me with a new perspective. This exposure showed me how interviewing is an art and is not just filling up a form. The way the interviewers befriended the family members, sympathised with them, and managed to get the data as well was very fascinating for me.



## Anupma Mehta

*Editor, NCAER*

Discipline: Communications, Editing, and Feature Writing

Joined the IHDS Team: 2015

**Q. What keeps you going in producing the monthly IHDS newsletters?**

A. The IHDS newsletter is one of my pet projects and very close to my heart. Since the day Dr. Sonalde Desai and I conceptualised it over an informal office lunch in the summer of 2016, we have not looked back and the newsletter has become part of our DNA, achieving widespread traction and popularity across the IHDS community. It is this response as well as the heartening engagement

with a vast body of authors and researchers that has kept me going in producing the IHDS newsletter month after month without a break over 6 years!

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### 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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