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BMGF Partners Meet  
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# **Making UPI Universal, Accessible and Affordable for all Indians**

## **A multi-stage field study for rural India**

Project team: Deepak Mishra, Mansi Kedia, Aarti Reddy and Krithika Ramnath  
May 2024 onwards

# Project overview

- This is a multi-stage field study to (i) assess the level of UPI adoption in rural areas, (ii) identify barriers to adoption and (iii) recommend practicable policies for improving adoption
- The methodological design allows for action-based research. A three stage field study divided into (i) base line survey (ii) pilot implementation (iii) endline survey
- Project in the first phase – sampling across the rural areas of Jharkhand, Odisha, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu (n=4800 across 240 villages in 16 districts)
- Thematic areas are – a) Building Trust in the technology, b) Strengthening Diffusion and c) Digital Public Infrastructure.

## Stakeholders

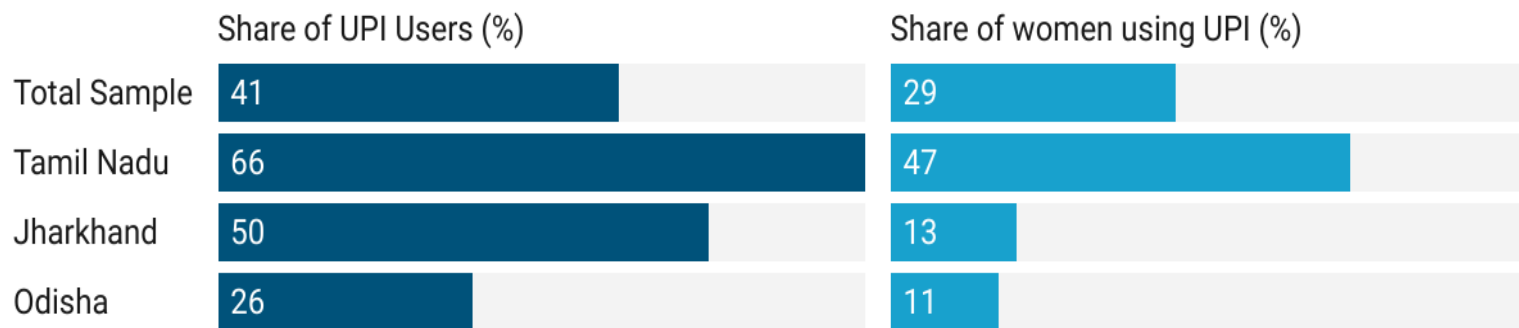
- Individuals and Households
- Merchants and Kirana store owners
- MSMEs
- Self Help Groups
- Village Panchayats
- Banks and Banking Correspondent
- Common Service Centres

# Project Outcomes Achieved

- **Project Status**

- Testing of questionnaire across households, other stakeholders interviewed including banks, common service centres, self help groups, shop owners, MSMEs, village panchayat, etc. in the states of Jharkhand, Odisha and Tamil Nadu
- **On going baseline** study with 1700+ responses collected from rural households in Jharkhand and Odisha.

- **Key Findings**



Source: IPCIDE Research • Created with Datawrapper

Some interesting findings from the pilot vis a vis impact of UPI on women:

All SHG members have bank accounts and most also have their phone numbers and Aadhaar linked to their bank accounts, in order to avail other government schemes. SHGs are also an effective mechanism for providing credit to women.

# Key Learnings and Insights

## Things that worked

- Collaboration with local partners – Collaborated with Kumaraguru College of Liberal Arts and Science in Tamil Nadu, Fakir Mohan University in Odisha, and Air Jaldi – who facilitated stakeholder interaction
- Collaboration with a survey agency to conduct the survey at scale and with local geography expertise.
- Linguistically diverse team of researchers from ICRIER.

## Challenges

- Inaccessibility still remains a major constraint – accessibility to identified remote areas is a binding constraint, mainly rural tribal areas in Jharkhand and Odisha.

# Opportunities for collaboration

- Collaborating with other organizations carrying out field work on financial behavior and the adoption of UPI
- Private sector and government partnerships will be important in the intervention stage

# Team Information



Deepak Mishra is the Director and Chief Executive of the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER). Prior to joining ICRIER, he was the Practice Manager at the World Bank's Macroeconomics, Trade, and Investment Global Practice, responsible for East Asia and Pacific region. Deepak has held various positions at the World Bank, including the Co-director of the WDR 2016 (Digital Dividends), Country Economist for Ethiopia, Pakistan, Sudan and Vietnam. His research work has been published in various academic journals including the Journal of Development Economics, the Journal of International Economics and the Journal of Agriculture Economics.



Mansi Kedia is a Senior Fellow at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations. She has over 14 years of experience in policy research. Her areas of research include telecommunication policy, trade and industrial policy. She has published papers/ reports on telecom and Internet regulations, impact of information technology including emerging technologies such as AI and industrial policy in India.



Aarti Reddy is a Fellow (Consultant) with the Digital Economy, Startups and Innovation team at ICRIER. Her research interests include the digital economy, small and medium enterprises, urban informality, decent employment, and climate change. Prior to joining ICRIER, she worked at the International Finance Corporation (World Bank Group) on research related to small and medium enterprises, impact investing and e-commerce.



Krithika Ramnath is a Research Assistant at the Digital Economy, Start-ups and Innovation Team at ICRIER. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Jai Hind College, Mumbai and holds a Post-Graduate diploma in Economics and Public Policy from Meghnad Desai Academy of Economics, Mumbai. She has previously been a part of Mintz Group, Artha Global and had a short stint at Busara. Her research interests lie in digital financial inclusion and DPis.