

Programme

Seminar and Workshop on Digital Governance, Social Policy and Welfare Frameworks

Organized by: Sociology Unit, Institute of Economic Growth |

Friday, July 25, 2025 | 11:15 AM – 4:15 PM IST

Hybrid Mode | A.M. Khusro Room, Institute of Economic Growth (IEG), Delhi

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Morning Session

(Part of the IEG Seminar Series)

Time: **11:15 AM – 1:00 PM IST**

Theme: **Revisiting Universal Health Coverage (UHC): Key Principles and Practices**

Speaker: **Dr. Amrit Virk**, School of Public Policy, University of Edinburgh

Moderator : Dr. Sandhya Garg, IEG

Abstract:

In recent years, Universal Health Coverage (UHC) has been high on the policy agendas of governments and the international development community. This commitment has been reaffirmed in the UN's 2015 Sustainable Development Goals, signalling the continuing prominence of UHC. As a concept, UHC holds moral and practical appeal for nations seeking greater equity amongst populations and accompanying economic productivity.

Pathways to UHC, however, differ as countries tailor their approaches to local contexts. Technological, demographic, and epidemiological shifts are prompting a rethink of current strategies and financing models. Against this backdrop, this talk revisits UHC's legacy, its core principles, and relevance for fairness, equity, and health system effectiveness. It traces the origins of UHC, explores key health financing models and case studies, and concludes with lessons and remaining challenges—framing a group discussion on India's options for advancing affordable, quality care.

1:00 PM – 1:45 PM | Lunch Break

Afternoon Session

Time: **1:45 PM – 4:15 PM IST**

Theme: **Digital Governance, Targeted Delivery, and Welfare Access**

Chair: **Dr. William Joe**, IEG-Delhi

2:15 PM – 2:50 PM | Presentation

Speaker: **Prof. Shankar Prinja**, Professor and Head, Department of Community Medicine, School of Public Health, PGIMER- Chandigarh

Title: **Ayushman Bharat Programme and Universal Health Coverage: Progress, Challenges, and the Road Ahead**

2:50 PM – 3:30 PM | Presentation

Speaker: **Prof. Veena Naregal**, Sociology Unit, IEG

Title: **Digitalizing Welfare: The 'One Nation One Ration Card' and Reshaping of Social Security in Post-Covid India**

Abstract:

In post-Covid India, an ever-growing range of domains—ranging from economic and financial infrastructure to criminal justice, agriculture, elections, and welfare—has been subsumed under rapidly expanding digital systems. Notably, the Public Distribution System (PDS), central to food security, has also been restructured through digitalisation initiatives like the 'One Nation One Ration Card' (ONORC).

This digital turn has occurred in parallel with the systematic dismantling of national data collection agencies, repositories, and long-standing survey mechanisms developed over the post-Independence decades. This presentation explores how we might critically analyse contemporary data frameworks and governance logics with respect to social security entitlements—particularly for interstate migrants—within this digitally mediated welfare regime.

3:30 PM – 4:15 PM | Open Discussion & Closing Reflections

Note: This event also serves as a grounding exercise for an upcoming week-long research training module focused on health, food security, welfare, and public policy, with a special emphasis on digital infrastructures and emerging accountability frameworks.