

## **A Note for the Users of Unit Level Data of HCES: 2023-24**

The objective of the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES):2023-24 has been to collect information on consumption of goods and services by the households for generation of indicators for understanding the consumption and expenditure pattern, standard of living and well-being of the households. The main indicator compiled on the basis of the data collected through HCES is the Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE) of the household.

Like all other NSS surveys, in this survey too, there has been provision to collect information on household characteristics e.g., social group, religion, household type, etc. along with demographic particulars of household members, namely, age, marital status, highest educational level attained, etc. in Section 3 and Section 4 of the questionnaire HCQ. Information on these items of Sections 3 & 4 have been recorded by the survey enumerators on the basis of reporting by the respondents and no cross-check/validation of these has been done with the relevant documents. The purpose of gathering information on these auxiliary variables has been to generate estimates of the indicators related to the variables of interest by different types cross-classifications and not to generate any estimates like sex ratio, literacy rates, percentage of population by various social groups etc. on the basis of these auxiliary information. Consequently, data related to these auxiliary variables were recorded as reported by the respondent and not verified with any administrative record(s). Hence, the users of the unit level data are advised not to make use of the auxiliary information for estimation of indicators, as such an exercise would result in misleading and inappropriate conclusions.

The survey has also gathered auxiliary information on the following items:

- (i) Online purchase/payment of some selected goods and services,
- (ii) Household's usual consumption expenditure in a month,
- (iii) Total expenditure incurred on online purchase/payment of food items/consumable & services items during the last 30 days and expenditure incurred on online purchase/payment of durable goods during the last 365 days etc.

The sole purpose of gathering on these items has been to check internal consistency and validation of the data and not to compile estimates/indicators based on this information.

States/UTs have been regarded as the basic stratum in HCES: 2023-24. Thus, any attempt to generate estimates of MPCE below State/UT level may lead to inaccurate/inappropriate figures in the absence of availability of sufficient number of sample observations at district level and users should refrain from generating such estimates.