

For Favour of Publication

Patna. August 22. In an event organized by the Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI), Professor Ian Levely of the Department of Political Economy at King's College, London delivered an illuminating talk today on how economists use lab-in-the-field experiments in order to quantify and measure the social preferences of people.

As economies continue to evolve, finding innovative solutions to combat poverty, inequality, and limited access to resources is paramount. Development economics plays a pivotal role in this journey, and the boundaries of knowledge and understanding are pushed through rigorous experimentation.

The experiments in development economics focus on the different key areas such as microfinance and poverty alleviation, education and human capital development, agriculture and rural development, healthcare access and well-being, gender equality and empowerment.

One can use several games to conduct lab-in-the-field experiments. Some examples are dictator game, ultimatum game and public goods game that are used to identify causal relationships between variables. These games are cheaper than randomized controlled trials and can be done on a much smaller scale.

These experiments are conducted in collaboration with local governments, NGOs, and academic institutions across regions/countries, ensuring that the findings have real-world applicability and contribute to evidence-based policy-making.

Prof Levely has conducted lab-in-the-field experiments in the Netherlands, Tanzania, Uganda and Afghanistan. He is currently working in Bihar for a study that he is doing in collaboration with ADRI. Dr. Ashmita Gupta, Member-Secretary of ADRI presided over the session. Dr Ravi Shankar Singh, Medical Director, Medanta Hospital and eminent scholars from all across India attended the talk online.

(Anjani K Verma)