Title: Staying Close When Apart: The Value of “Information Communication” during COVID-19 Pandemics

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Abstract:
Information-sharing and communication are key features of pandemics. In particular, people share information about the outbreaks, communicate with family and friends—be it either for support or not, including employers—be it formal and informal etc., with implications for welfare. We deploy and fielded high frequency phone surveys and interventions that provide either a “lump-sum phone calling credit” or “weekly phone calling credit” to households during COVID19 in Ghana. These allow us to relax binding communication barriers and estimate the causal impact of information-communication on households’ communication-risk sharing, expenditure, mental wellbeing and overall happiness.

Data description: Phone surveys and experimental data collected through research partners.

JEL codes for the project: O12, I31, L63

Keywords: COVID19, Communication, Value