



Measuring Indigenous Populations Across Nations: Challenges for Methodological Alignment

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The social and political importance of the world's Indigenous peoples is highlighted by the United Nations and by a range of National Statistical Organisations and government agencies internationally who aim to identify and address some of the distinct social and economic characteristics observed in Indigenous populations. Currently, comparisons between nations with Indigenous populations on the basis of policy outcomes, relative disadvantage, societal contribution and other measures of interest are limited due to varying conceptual bases for measurement. Definitions of Indigenous groups, enumeration methodology and other factors differ significantly between (and at times within) countries, limiting the ability of researchers and governments to compare outcomes for Indigenous populations. It is proposed that a more internationally consistent approach to the collection of Indigenous statistics would offer a range of opportunities for meaningful comparison, international collaboration and establishment of best practice in policy development. This presentation will encourage discussion around approaches to Indigenous statistics amongst nations, opportunities arising from more consistent enumeration methodologies between (and within) nations and the challenges in achieving international consistency. An overview of current differences between enumeration methodologies in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States of America will be presented. Views will be sought from discussion participants on the value of encouraging movement toward international methodological alignment, opportunities for aligning existing approaches and challenges involved in developing an international consistent model for comparing Indigenous populations.

Keywords: Population, First peoples, Census.