

Editorial

The entire March issue is dedicated to statistics for Indigenous peoples. With the theme: “Measuring Indigenous Identification,” we revisit a familiar topic. The idea of a special issue was first discussed and endorsed in October 2017 in Atlanta, Georgia at a meeting of the International Group for Indigenous Health Measurement (IGIHM). The IGIHM, established in 2005, includes representatives from national statistical agencies and Indigenous experts from the US, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. The group ‘meets’ regularly by monthly conference calls. I would like to thank Michele Connolly, Sam Notzon and Betty Jacobs for meeting with me in person to work out the details for the issue.

Manuscripts focusing on Indigenous peoples have found their way into our Journal quite frequently over the last several years. In his editorial to the Spring 2014 issue, editor-in-chief Fritz Scheuren wrote, “We begin in this issue with a discussion of Indigenous peoples using as a starting point the Australian paper, entitled “Measuring Indigenous Populations Across Nations: Challenges for Methodological Alignment.” He added that in the future there would be papers on the Indigenous peoples from other parts of the world.

Indeed, his prediction was accurate. Since 2014, SJIAOS has continued to publish manuscripts on this topic. A recent search of the IOS Press content list for the Journal yielded no fewer than 18 manuscripts of relevance here. I have attached the list at the end of the editorial in case you want to take a walk down memory lane. As you can see, some of the manuscripts were actually written by authors who are publishing in this issue. Many of the authors are Indigenous. It is a pleasure to welcome them back.

The common theme in the SJIAOS collection is the need for a sustained effort to encourage countries to collect statistics on their Indigenous populations, and to provide data standards and tools to assist this effort. Several manuscripts draw attention to the disadvantages suffered by Indigenous peoples across the world because of insufficient data to obtain a global assessment of Indigenous peoples and their communities.

This need and these disadvantages are recognized by the United Nations, human rights groups and official

statisticians. The United Nations identified the rights of Indigenous peoples to good information as a basic part of the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and in 2014, the UN General Assembly adopted the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the “World Conference on Indigenous Peoples” (see Article 10 of that document).

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development promises to leave no one behind and reach the furthest behind first. Many of the goals and targets are relevant for Indigenous peoples. The global indicator framework that will measure progress of implementation of the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) is also of relevance for Indigenous peoples.

I would also like to remind you of a 2018-OECD/IAOS-conference session chaired by Sam Notzon (US National Center for Health Statistics). It carried the title “Indigenous Statistics: Time for an International Response.”

There were four excellent presentations. If you missed the presentations, please go to <http://www.oecd.org/iaos2018/IAOS-2018-programme.pdf> where you will find links to:

1. “Official statistics and Indigenous peoples – the state of play and recent developments,” Per Axelsson (Umeå University, Sweden),
2. “Improving lives of Indigenous peoples through better statistics: Meeting policy and program needs,” Michele Connolly (Co-Chair, International Group for Indigenous Health Measurement, International Association of Official Statistics, Indigenous Editor),
3. “Statistics, rights and recognition: The identification of Indigenous peoples,” Kalinda Griffiths (Centre for Big Data Research in Health, University of New South Wales, Australia), and
4. “Visibility of Indigenous peoples in sustainable development indicators,” Richard Madden and Clare Coleman (University of Sydney, Australia).

This first presentation set the stage by pointing to the lack of data and the overall need for a global response. The Connolly presentation emphasized the need for

Indigenous statistics and talked about outstanding barriers to fulfilling the need. The focus of the third presentation was identification of Indigenous peoples and the need for approaches in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In the final presentation, Madden discussed indicators for Indigenous peoples for the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

There will be a second opportunity to hear more from the IGIHM about the international work on Indigenous statistics. SJIAOS will sponsor an invited session on this topic at the upcoming ISI World Statistical Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in August 2019. The session will focus on the need for an international response on Indigenous statistics. In particular, issues around the identification of Indigenous populations, the level of information available, and initiatives for improvement will be discussed.

Finally, SJIAOS associate editor, Michele Connolly is the guest-editor for this issue. Michele has a B.S. in Physics from the University of San Francisco, and a M.P.H. in Biostatistics from the University of California, Berkeley.

Michele began her professional career as a Biostatistician at the California Urban Indian Health Clinics. She then transitioned from the state of California to the United States federal government. Her first job was at the National Center for Health Statistics. Later she worked at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, the Social Security Administration and the Department of Health and Human Services. She left the federal government in 2007 after more than 30 years of service. A common thread runs through her professional career. Her deep interest in (1) American Indian/Alaska Native policy and program issues; (2) health, disability and aging; and (3) creation of statistical measures.

Currently, Michele teaches High School Math and Science, including Advanced Placement level as a Home Hospital Teacher in the Howard County, Maryland Public School System. You will be able to read more in her interview with Katherine Condon.

May this special collection of manuscripts serve as a stepping stone on the road to achieving better official statistics for Indigenous peoples!

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List of SJIAOS manuscripts on Indigenous Peoples and Statistics.

“Recent challenges to the ethics underlying official statistics in New Zealand,” Forbes, Sharleen; Galvin, Vince; Hunter, Andrew; Maxwell, Paul; and Wereta, Whetu. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 27, no. 1,2, pp. 13-23, 2011.

“Partnership between national statistics offices and academics to increase official statistical literacy,” Harraway, J.A. and Forbes, S.D. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 31-40, 2013.

“Measuring indigenous populations across nations: Challenges for methodological alignment,” Petry, Bradley and Potts, Erica. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 55-63, 2014.

“Just get on with it. Linking data systems to report on infant mortality and the First Nations population in Manitoba (Canada),” Elias, B.; Hart, L.; Martens, P. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 30, no. 3, pp. 285-295, 2014.

“Ethnicity, race and Māori life expectancy in Aotearoa New Zealand,” Waldon, John and Dunstan, Kim. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 30, no. 4, pp. 399-410, 2014.

“Back to the basics: Identifying and addressing underlying challenges in achieving high quality and relevant health statistics for Indigenous populations in Canada,” Smylie, Janet and Firestone, Michelle. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 31, no. 1, pp. 67-87, 2015.

“Recognition and indigenizing official statistics: Reflections from Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia,” Kukutai, Tahu and Walter, Maggie. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 31, no. 2, pp. 317-326, 2015.

“Census transformation in New Zealand: Using administrative data without a population register,” Bycroft, Christine. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 31, no. 3, pp. 401-411, 2015.

“Statistics on indigenous peoples: International effort needed,” Madden, Richard; Axelsson, Per; Kukutai, Tahu; Griffiths, Kalinda; Storm Mienna; Christina Brown Ngaire; Coleman, Clare; Ring, Ian. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 32, no. 1, pp. 37-41, 2016.

“The Māori statistics framework: A tool for indigenous peoples development,” Coutts, Karen; Morris, John; Jones, Ngareta. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 223-230, 2016.

“Integrating statistical and geospatial information in New Zealand.” Morgan, Rochelle. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 32, no. 4, pp. 509-514, 2016.

“International Group for Indigenous Health Measurement: Recommendations for best practice for es-

timation of Indigenous mortality,” Coleman, Clare; Elias, Brenda, Lee, Vanessa; Smylie, Janet; Waldon, John; Hodge, Felicia Schanche; Ring, Ian. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 32, no. 4, pp. 729-738, 2016.

“Innovations on measuring the indigenous population in the 2010 Brazilian Population Census,” de Oliveira Martins Pereira, Nilza. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 33, no. 2, pp. 487-494, 2017.

“Geo-spatial data of indigenous lands and villages for the demographic Census 2020 in Brazil,” de Souza, André Lopes; Damasco, Fernando Souza; da Silva Medeiros, Gabriel Bias Fortes Pereira; da Silva Barbuda, Miriam Mattos. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 661-669, 2017.

“Differential undercount of Mexican immigrant families in the U.S. Census,” Kissam, Edward. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 797-816, 2017.

“Leave no one behind!” Ljones, Olav. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 33, no. 4, pp. 885-887, 2017.

“Building a pluralistic ecosystem of data to leave no one behind: A human rights perspective on monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals.” Feiring, Birgitte, Thornberry, Francesca, Hassler, Adrian. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 33, no. 4, pp. 919-942, 2017.

“Record linkage to advance Indigenous mortality statistics in Australia – sources of error and bias,” Choi, Ching and Smith, Len. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 215-222, 2018.