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Still Invisible: Enumeration of Indigenous Peoples in Census Questionnaires Internationally[1]

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Abstract: *The international attention increasingly being paid to Indigenous peoples culminated in the 2007 adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the United Nations General Assembly. Nevertheless, the lack of accurate and consistent data on Indigenous peoples hinders the creation of concrete benchmarks and monitoring mechanisms for their development. Based on the most recent census questionnaires available for 231 countries and regions for which the United Nations Statistics Division collects statistics, this study identifies the proportion and geographic distribution of questionnaires that enumerated Indigenous peoples and variations in the questions used to enumerate them. The fact is that relatively few census questionnaires enumerate Indigenous peoples. Where they were enumerated, Indigenous cultures and identities were homogenized by many censuses, and classified as minorities rather than as distinct peoples. As a result, Indigenous peoples remain invisible in large areas of the globe and the United Nations, various governmental and non-governmental organizations, and Indigenous people themselves all face overwhelming challenges in their attempts to document the existence and circumstances of Indigenous peoples.*

Indigenous[2] issues and peoples have received growing amounts of international attention since the early 1970s (Niezen 2003), culminating in the 2007 adoption of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* by the United Nations General Assembly. While much debate and conflict marks their identification, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), established in 2000, estimated that there were more than 370 million Indigenous peoples living in ninety or

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more countries around the world (UNPFII 2006a). Despite this number, limited information exists about the situation of many of these peoples, and the *Draft Programme of Action for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples* included the objectives of adopting concrete benchmarks for the development of Indigenous peoples and developing strong monitoring mechanisms (United Nations 2005, 4). The UNPFII (2006b) views "inadequate data collection and disaggregation concerning indigenous peoples as a major methodological challenge."

This paper documents one aspect of data availability concerning Indigenous populations by exploring the enumeration of Indigenous peoples in censuses internationally. Currently, no systematic exploration has been done on this topic. Bartlett et al. (2007) provided a good overview of issues associated with the definition of "Indigenous," but they did not provide a systematic overview of census practices for enumerating them. Morning's international study of census enumeration by ethnicity (2008, 247) found that about 15 percent of national censuses asked about Indigenous status. While this work provides a valuable introduction, Morning's approach is limited to identifying the presence of the terms "Aboriginal," "Indigenous," or "tribe" in census questionnaires. Censuses in a number of countries use other approaches to enumerating Indigenous peoples, like including particular Indigenous groups as census categories that participants can check off under questions about ethnicity or nationality, for example. This study employs a more detailed approach to the analysis of census enumeration of Indigenous peoples internationally.

Based on the most recent census available for 231 countries and regions for which the United Nations Statistics Division collects statistics, this study addresses two main research questions:

1. How many countries and areas enumerate Indigenous peoples and what geographic patterns accompany this enumeration?
2. What variations exist in approaches to the enumeration of Indigenous peoples among census questionnaires that do address this issue?

It documents patterns of coverage and under-coverage of Indigenous peoples in censuses, providing a snapshot of data availability for monitoring the situation of Indigenous people. This paper also provides demographers with detailed information concerning international enumeration practices for Indigenous populations. The information here informs a discussion about

comparability and might be a source of potential innovation that could contribute to national preparations for future censuses.

Defining "Indigenous"

Defining the term "Indigenous" is complex and contentious. Probably the two most well-known definitions are those proposed in the Martinéz Cobo Report and in the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention no. 169 (Martinéz Cobo 1987, 29; International Labour Organization 1991). According to Martinéz Cobo, Indigenous people have a historical continuity with pre-colonial societies, consider themselves distinct from societies now in those territories, and are non-dominant sectors of society. He indicates that Indigenous people "are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories and their ethnic identity." The ILO definition emphasizes descent from inhabitants at the time of colonization and the retention of some or all of their social, economic, cultural, and political institutions, and self-identification. The ILO definition also recognizes the situation of some tribal peoples who have been displaced from the countries in which they originally lived, but who retain characteristics that distinguish them from other national populations and who define themselves as Indigenous.

Despite changing definitions and attempts to address the differing circumstances of Indigenous peoples, a single, all-encompassing definition presents challenges. An emphasis on settler colonization, for example, is not applicable to cases such as India and other Asian countries where Indigenous majority communities may attempt to assimilate Indigenous minorities within their own country. There are questions about the level of "distinctness" required for people to be considered Indigenous, especially since, in many countries, they are increasingly becoming urban dwellers and participating in mainstream society. Defining "traditional lands, territories, and natural resources" may also be difficult since the territories used by some Indigenous people changed historically and continue to change in contemporary times. Coates (2004) argues that an emphasis in many definitions on non-dominance and powerlessness is Eurocentric, and defines Indigenous people primarily in relation to outsiders. He suggested that Indigenous people should be defined by "who they are, not who they are not," and identified "small size, attachment to the land, value system and culture rooted in the environment, commitment to a sustainable lifestyle,

mobility, and cultural conservatism" as central characteristics of Indigenous peoples (14).

In United Nations forums, Indigenous peoples have often challenged the need for a worldwide definition, arguing that seeking one "right" definition is both counterproductive and damaging. In her 1996 working paper on the concept of Indigenous peoples, the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations noted that, in her opinion, "the concept of 'indigenous' is not capable of a precise, inclusive definition which can be applied in the same manner to all regions of the world" (United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations 1996, 6). In 1997, the Working Group concluded that a definition was not necessary for the drafting of a declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples. The *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,* adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007, did not define Indigenous peoples.[3] Instead, Article 33 stated that "Indigenous peoples have the right to determine their own identity or membership in accordance with their customs and traditions" (United Nations General Assembly 2007).

The debates surrounding the definition of "Indigenous" demonstrate the futility of attempting to derive one definition that applies to all of the groups who identify themselves as such. In order to undertake this study, though, it was necessary to adapt a clear set of standards and apply them consistently. In line with the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,* one criterion was self-identification as Indigenous as recognized by the UNPFII and other international NGOs working on Indigenous issues. Clearly there are challenges associated with this approach and a more detailed description of the way decisions were made is described in more detail in the methods section and in Appendix B. The second criterion, non-dominance, was introduced because it identified situations where Indigenous peoples do not have power to define the content of census questionnaires. The standards adopted for the purpose of this study are not meant to define Indigenous people internationally. Instead, they are standards meant to help readers understand the way decisions were made in developing counts, enabling them to come up with alternative counts if they adopt different definitions.

Census Enumeration of Indigenous Peoples

The rationale behind, and history of, different questions and terminology in national censuses is extremely varied. Censuses do not simply count

existing groups of people. Instead, enumeration in the census is often the result of state objectives and citizen lobbying (Andersen 2008; Kertzer and Arel 2002; Peterson 1987; Urla 1993). Rallu et al. (2006, 534) describe four types of state objectives in enumerating or failing to enumerate according to ethnic population categories: "counting to dominate," "not counting in the name of national integration," "counting or not counting in the name of multiculturalism," and "counting to justify positive action." Rationales for counting Indigenous peoples in early censuses included enumeration for political control, often with the expectation that Indigenous peoples would soon disappear (Appadurai 1996; Peterson 1987; Scott 1998). Government rejection of the use of cultural markers to differentiate between citizens in order to promote national unity and cohesion has been documented by a number of researchers (see Blum 2002; Goldschieder 2002). An example is the controversy surrounding the 2004 census of New Caledonia as organized by France. New Caledonian political parties supported a questionnaire that would identify Kanak Indigenous peoples in order to address socio-economic differences between them and other populations. President Chirac opposed this on the grounds that France simply regarded its citizens as French, effectively contributing to the state-sanctioned invisibility of Indigenous peoples (Vinding and Stidsen 2005, 261–62). In Latin American countries, in particular, state discourses view "racial mixing" as a result in census questionnaires that introduce categories for many different population groups (Rallu et al. 2006, 536). In more contemporary times, anti-discrimination legislation and pressure from various groups for equality have encouraged some governments to introduce categories supporting policy initiatives that address the socio-economic status of marginalized groups in society (Kertzer and Arel 2002).

Identification in the census can have important implications for Indigenous peoples as the way terms are defined can affect population counts (Forbes 1990; World Bank 2004). In an era where modern states are often providers of social and economic benefits, group-differentiated programs and services might be directed towards particular areas depending on population size and proportion (Kertzer and Arel 2002; Urla 1993). Research can identify socio-economic disadvantage leading to demands for remedial policies, enable researchers to evaluate stereotypes that need to be combated, or explore unique situations that require differentiated policy responses. Population numbers can lead to claims for political representation and funding. Data about poor socio-economic conditions

can be an important basis for lobbying in both national and international forums.

However, there are important challenges in using national censuses to enumerate Indigenous populations. Data collected by censuses often reflect official government policies and priorities, and may not represent how Indigenous people identify themselves (Broughten 1993). Morphy (2007) noted that the Australian census measurement of households was based on assumptions about nuclear families, suppressing Aboriginal understandings of household formations. Similarly, Taylor (2009, 115) argued that the "categories and contexts deployed [in the Australian census] are uncritically those of the mainstream, and not those reflective of Indigenous social structures or life projects." These observations are not limited to the Australian census: Donahoe et al. (2008) described how Indigenous people in the Russian Federation challenged state definitions of Indigeneity.

Reflecting mainstream understandings, census categories may homogenize Indigenous identities. For example, Pacific representatives to the 2007 Expert Group Meeting on Urban Indigenous Peoples and Migration warned against the creation of categories that would homogenize diverse Pacific indigenous community experiences (United Nations Human Settlements Programme et al. 2007, 8). Peters et al. (forthcoming) found in their research on urban Aboriginal identities in Saskatoon, Canada, that Aboriginal people identified with their particular nation of origin (e.g. Cree, Saulteaux, Dene) rather than with the aggregate census categories of Aboriginal, First Nations, Metis, and Inuit in the Canadian census. In this context, commentators have argued that the quantitative data available from census questionnaires needs to be supplemented by qualitative research (Taylor 2009, 125; United Nations Human Settlements Programme et al. 2007, 6, 8).

Finally, Indigenous peoples may, for a variety of reasons, choose not to identify themselves in national censuses. Some may prefer not to be identified because they fear discrimination (Bartlett et al. 2007, 299). Pettersen (2006, 4) argued that some Sami are reluctant to lobby for Sami enumeration in the census both because of historic stigmatization associated with Sami affiliation and because of the abuse of ethnic registers in the Second World War. Indigenous people may not recognize state categories as representing their identities (Andersen 2008). There may be under-enumeration in areas where Indigenous peoples are concentrated because of

resistance to enumeration or because of the remoteness or isolation of areas where Indigenous peoples live (Bourne 2003, 22; World Bank 2004). While censuses may recognize some Indigenous peoples, others may be excluded and, as a result, censuses may not include categories through which they can be enumerated (Miller 2003). As a result, even where national censuses do enumerate Indigenous peoples, the results may not accurately represent Indigenous peoples' population numbers or their characteristics.

The materials documenting some of the challenges in constructing Indigenous enumeration strategies provide an important context for the overview of existing census enumeration practices that follows. Clearly, the existence of census enumeration does not ensure that censuses accurately represent Indigenous numbers or their ways of life in terms that they understand and are useful for them. However, censuses can make major contributions to the goal of monitoring Indigenous population characteristics over time and providing a basis for comparison between countries. An overview of censuses in different countries and regions can provide an indication of the extent to which these data are collected in different parts of the globe. This overview might also provide governments, academic researchers, NGOs, and Indigenous organizations with information about the existing range of options and strategies for enumeration.

Data and Methodology

The United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) regularly collects international census information for a variety of countries and regions. This study is based on 184 census questionnaires, available in May and June 2008, of the 231 countries and regions in the UNSD collection.[4] Appendix A identifies questionnaires that were missing from the collection. Most of the census questionnaires had been administered in the year 2000 or later. However, twenty-four (13.7%) questionnaires had dates in the 1990s, and three countries had dates that were even earlier (Democratic Republic of Congo—1984, Afghanistan—1979, Sweden—1990). The latter three were omitted from the analysis to preserve temporal comparability. While many of the censuses were either conducted in English or translated for the data base, it was necessary to translate eleven Spanish questionnaires, seventeen French questionnaires, three Russian questionnaires, and four Arabic questionnaires for this research. Portuguese questionnaires for two countries (Cape Verde and Mozambique) were not translated.[5] In addition to

the two untranslated questionnaires, forty-seven countries/regions were not part of the study. For most of these countries/regions it was not possible to locate a census questionnaire, but for a few others, missing sections made it impossible to identify their approach to enumerating Indigenous peoples. Missing questionnaires were not randomly spread out geographically, as Table 1 shows. The most complete coverage was for censuses in Oceania (96.0%), followed by South America (92.9%), Asia (82.0%), and North America[6] (82.1%). Europe (74.5%) was next. The most incomplete coverage was for Africa, where slightly fewer than two thirds (63.2%) of the census questionnaires could be located. Consequently, Africa, which should comprise about one quarter of the countries and regions surveyed, actually comprises less than one fifth (19.6%). The resulting gaps in the data base meant that the results offered a good representation of census enumeration practices in Oceania, Asia, and North America, fairly good representation for South America and Europe, and poor representation for Africa.

Using a variety of terms known to refer to Indigenous peoples (e.g., Aboriginal, Indigenous, tribal, scheduled tribes), available census forms were examined to locate questions about respondents' Indigenous status. Census questionnaires were also examined to see whether particular Indigenous groups were listed as possible check-offs or suggestions for write-in spaces. Indigenous groups were identified from a variety of sources, including various years of *The Indigenous World* (Stidsen 2006, 2007; Vinding and Stidsen 2005; Wessendorf 2009, 2008), *The World Guide* (New Internationalist 2005), and the web sites of the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee (IPACC), the International Work Group for

Table 1: Countries and regions included in the study

	North America		South America		Africa		Europe		Asia		Oceania		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Included in study	32	82.1	13	92.9	36	63.2	38	74.5	41	82.0	24	96.0	184	78.0
Missing questionnaire	7	17.9	1	7.1	18	31.6	12	23.5	8	16.0	1	4.0	47	19.9
Not translated	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.8
Earlier than the 1994-2005 round	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.8	1	2.0	1	2.0	0	0.0	3	1.3
Share of countries and regions in total UN database	39	16.5	14	5.9	57	24.2	51	21.6	50	21.2	25	10.6	236	
Share of countries and regions in study		17.4		7.1		19.6		20.6		22.3		13.0		

Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), and the Minority Rights Group International. Because this step involved decisions that could be contested by other researchers, a detailed list of questions identified on census forms in respect to Indigenous peoples appears in Appendix B.

The criterion of non-dominance was also used to identify Indigenous peoples. In some countries, Indigenous peoples comprise a majority of the population (e.g., Guatemala and Bolivia) but they are not politically dominant. These countries were included in this study. The situation in Oceania created the most challenging situation because many formerly colonized nations with majority Indigenous populations identified in the census have since gained independence. In Oceania, the study did not include questionnaires from independent countries with majority Indigenous populations. The study did include countries and regions with majority Indigenous populations that were still under foreign control and where minority Indigenous peoples have put forward claims for Indigenous recognition.

These two steps did not identify censuses that enumerated Indigenous peoples by coding write-in responses to questions about identity, ethnicity, nationality, et cetera. For example, the Russian census has a space for participants to write in their "national citizenship," from which Russia identifies groups it considers to be Indigenous (Petrov 2008).[7] This possibility was addressed by examining official census websites for countries with questionnaires that coded write-in responses to explore whether they identified Indigenous populations in official statistics. Five such questionnaires were identified (Kenya, Malaysia, Niger, Uganda, and the Russian Federation). It may be that this method missed some countries that employ this strategy. For example, some countries that were formerly part of the Soviet Union may still use the Soviet Union census questionnaire (Petrov 2008). A more in-depth exploration of coding practices that identify Indigenous populations is an important question for future research.

Results of Analysis of Census Questionnaires

The following sections describe the number and location of countries enumerating Indigenous peoples, questionnaire terminology, patterns of aggregation and disaggregation of particular Indigenous groups, and strategies of enumeration by self-identification or ancestry.

Frequency and Distribution of Indigenous Enumeration

Only forty-three (23.1%) of the countries and areas in the study attempted to enumerate some or all of the Indigenous populations living within their boundaries (Table 2). South America had the highest proportion (69.2%), followed by North America (50.0%), and Oceania (30.4%). In Africa and Asia very few censuses enumerated Indigenous populations (18.9% and 7.1% respectively). Two African countries, Ethiopia and Gambia, are included in these counts but it is important to point out that they each only identified one Indigenous group in their lists. Using these counts would serious underestimate the Indigenous populations of these countries. Similarly, the census questionnaire for the Lao People's Democratic Republic suggested only one Indigenous group, the Hmong, despite the identification of a number of Indigenous peoples in Laos (Wessendorf 2008, 319). In Europe, only one census (2.6%) identified Indigenous peoples.

While Indigenous peoples have been identified in every country in South America, there are large variations in their histories and in policies directed toward them. In some countries, only small remnant Indigenous populations remain; in others, Indigenous peoples are numerically, although not politically, dominant. Only four countries in South America did not identify Indigenous peoples in their census questionnaires. Suriname's questionnaire identified different nationalities, but it did not enumerate its Indigenous peoples (Stidsen 2007, 137–42). Peru listed some Indigenous languages under its language question, but it also did not enumerate Indigenous peoples. Uruguayan official policy is that there are no Indigenous peoples living in Uruguay, despite the existence of Guarani and Charrua-descended communities (Miller 2003, 202). Following France's policy of not identifying particular ethnic, minority, or Indigenous groups, French Guiana's census has no question that identified its Indigenous peoples.

In North American history, Indigenous peoples in many countries were decimated through slavery, massacre, and contact with European

Table 2: Distribution of countries in study identifying Indigenous populations

	North America		South America		Africa		Europe		Asia		Oceania		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Countries enumerating Indigenous people	16	50.0	9	69.2	7	19.4	1	2.6	3	7.3	7	29.2	43	23.1
Countries in study	32		13		36		38		41		24		184	

diseases. Most of the census questionnaires which did not enumerate Indigenous peoples were from countries where these people were considered by the State to have been wiped out.

A history of colonization in Africa means that many people consider themselves to be Indigenous, having originated from that country and having achieved decolonization and self-determination from European powers. As a result, some governments are reluctant to identify particular groups within larger states as Indigenous peoples, viewing this as discriminatory. For his study of the situation of Indigenous peoples internationally, Martinéz Cobo (1987, 4–5) requested information from member states of the United Nations. He noted that in Africa, "data furnished . . . either denied the existence of such populations or stated that all groups in those countries were indigenous, or both."

Europe had only one country (Russia) that enumerated Indigenous peoples. Very few European countries collect data by ethnicity and this may be related in part to the abuse of ethnic registers in the Second World War mentioned earlier (Pettersen 2006), and the fact that most of Europe was never colonized by non-European nations. While most of Europe's population is "indigenous" in the sense that these populations live in their homelands, there are relatively few Indigenous peoples in the narrower sense of self-identification and non-dominance adopted for this paper. Indigenous peoples in Europe that would have met this paper's criteria included the Basques of France and Spain and the Sami of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia, as well as other Indigenous people of the former Soviet Union. None of these peoples were identified in European censuses.[8]

Bartlett et al. (2007, 300) noted that, despite estimates that three quarters of the world's Indigenous populations lived in Asia, Asian states have been reluctant to identify groups as Indigenous. The particular histories and politics of recognition of recognition and non-recognition of Indigenous peoples are varied, including identifying all population groups as Indigenous except for recent immigrants, officially recognizing some Indigenous peoples but not others, denying Indigenous peoples citizenship and therefore official recognition, and situating them as national minorities or ethnic groups (Miller 2003:157–71, 182–96). Bose (1996) argued that the main reasons Asian governments did not recognize Indigenous peoples rested on state appropriation of Indigenous and tribal peoples' homelands for resource use and state policies of assimilation and national integration. In Oceania, while many former colonies gained independence and local

control during the twentieth century, some groups have continued to assert Indigenous status where their islands are still under external administration, and several of the censuses for these countries enumerate Indigenous populations. For example, Nauru asked respondents to check off their grandmother's or mother's tribe, with the choices being Deiboe, Eaman, Eamwidamwit, Eamwidara, Eano, Eaoru, Emea, Eamwit, Iruwa, Ranibok, Iwi, or Irutsi. In other situations there are small Indigenous populations claiming Indigenous status because their interests are not recognized by politically dominant groups, such as the Chamarros of Guam and the Northern Marianas (New Internationalist 2005, 268, 423).

Less than one quarter of the questionnaires in this study enumerated Indigenous people and a number of these provided identification for only some of their Indigenous peoples. Focusing only on those countries that are recognized by the United Nations, only thirty-seven (19.1%) of the 194 countries in Appendix A enumerated Indigenous peoples—substantially fewer than the UNPFII estimate of ninety or more countries with Indigenous populations (UNPFII 2006a). The situation appears to be particularly problematic in Asia and Africa. The lack of enumeration of Indigenous peoples in censuses internationally creates major challenges in documenting their situation, in assessing changes over time, and in providing comparative statistical data. In short, it contributes to their invisibility. Clearly there are debates about the number of countries and regions in which Indigenous peoples are resident, but enumerating countries are small in number and proportion, despite more than four decades of attempts to draw Indigenous issues to the attention of the international community. Despite ratification by the United Nations General Assembly of the 2007 *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,* most state governments do not disaggregate census statistics in ways that identify Indigenous peoples.

Terminology

Enormous variations mark the ways different censuses classified Indigenous status (Table 3). Only slightly more than one quarter (29.31%) of censuses identified Indigenous peoples as distinct from other races, ethnicities, or nationalities. South American censuses stood out, with over two thirds using questions that defined Indigenous status as separate from other categories of identity. The terms and the structure of questions used varied by region. While Canada used the terminology "Aboriginal," most censuses in North

and South America used the term "Indigenous," with many South American countries using the terms "original or indigenous." For example, Panama asked "To which indigenous group do you belong?" For Bolivia the question was, "Does the person consider that he/she belongs to any of the following original or indigenous peoples?" In Asia, the Indian census asked about "Scheduled Tribes," viewed as the Indigenous peoples of India (Bartlett et al. 2007, 300). Australia's questions asked about Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origins. Finally, Ecuador and El Salvador used a question that allowed "Indigenous" to be checked off without subsuming the term under a different category.

The majority of censuses enumerated Indigenous people under some other population category, such as an ethnic group, a race, a nationality, a culture, or some combination of these terms. The most common category used to define Indigenous peoples was ethnicity, or a combination of ethnicity with other terms. The following are examples from different groups of countries:

- Belize: To what ethnic group do you/does . . . belong? ("Maya Mopan" and "Maya Yactec" included in check-off list).
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines: To what ethnic, racial or national group do you think . . . belongs? ("Indigenous Peoples" with "Amerindian/Carib" included in check-off list).
- Northern Mariana Islands: What is this person's ethnic origin or race? ("Chamarro" included as possible write-in).

Three countries used other terms other than ethnicity, race, or nationality, including culture and population:

- Colombia: In accordance with their culture, people, or physical characteristics (name) is or considers themselves as. . . . ("Indigenous" included in check-off list).

Table 3: Location of Indigenous question, check-off or suggestion

	North American		South America		Africa		Europe		Asia		Oceania		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
"Indigenous" as a separate category	4	25.0	6	66.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	1	14.3	12	27.9
Indigenous groups as ethnicity, race or nationality	10	62.5	2	22.2	6	85.7	1	100.0	2	66.7	6	85.7	27	62.8
Other approaches	2	12.5	1	11.1	1	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	9.3
Countries enumerating Indigenous people	16		9		7		1		3		7		43	

- Honduras: Which population group does the person belong to? ("Tolupán, Pech (Poya), Misquito, Lenco, Tawahka (Sumo), Chorti" included in check-off list).
- Central African Republic: Type of population. ("Mbororo" and "Pygmy" included in check-off list).

Both the United States and Brazil, as a result of their particular histories, enumerated Indigenous peoples as a race (Nobles 2002).[9] In the United States the questions was "What is your race?" (check-off list included "American Indian or Alaska Native"). In Brazil, the question was "Your color or race is . . . ?" (check-off list included "White, Black or Dark Brown, Brown or Light Brown, Yellow, Indigenous").

In summary, most census questionnaires classified Indigenous peoples as an ethnic, racial, national, cultural, or population group, along with other such groups in the country or region. Most of the questionnaires that presented Indigenous status as a "stand alone" category were from North and South America, where Indigenous groups have a long history of attempting to bring Indigenous issues to the attention of the global community (Bose 1996). In international law, Indigenous peoples have different rights than minority groups. According to the 1992 UN *Declaration of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,* minority groups have the right to enjoy their own cultures, languages, and religions and be free from discrimination (see also Venne 2004). According to the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous peoples have these rights but they also have additional rights, including significant rights to lands, territories, and resources that they traditionally used. Categorizing Indigenous peoples with other minority populations denies their unique rights and histories and allows governments to deny their responsibilities to Indigenous peoples under international law. The implication is that, even in countries and areas where Indigenous peoples are enumerated, many of them are not identified as Indigenous, reinforcing their invisibility and reflecting the fact that categories used in most census questionnaires reflect state perspectives rather than Indigenous peoples own definitions.

Aggregation and Disaggregation

Concerns about homogenizing Indigenous peoples suggest that it is important to examine strategies of aggregation and disaggregation in

census enumeration strategies. The majority of countries (68.3%) allowed for the identification of particular tribes or nations. India provided a list of Scheduled Tribes that respondents could record on the census questionnaire. Similarly, questionnaires in Oceania appeared to allow for the identification of particular Indigenous groups in census questionnaires. In North and South America, the lists provided appeared to include all of the Indigenous groups identified in the particular countries and regions (Wessendorf 2008). For example:

- Chile: Does the person belong to any of the following original or indigenous peoples? (Check-off list included "Alacalufe (Kawashkar), Atacameño, Aimara, Colla, Mapuche, Quechua, Rapa Nui, Yámana (Yagán)").
- Paraguay: Are there any persons in this household who consider themselves indigenous or belonging to an indigenous ethnic group? (Suggested write-ins included "Achéñe'e, Angaité, Ava-guaraníñe'e, Ayoreo, Enlhet norte, Enxet Sur, Guaraní occidentenal ñe'e, Maká, Manful, Maskoy, Mbyañe'e, Nivacié, Ñandevafie'e, Paiñe'e, Sanapaná, Toba, Toba-qom, Tomárãho, Ybytoso").

Less than one third of countries used aggregate categories to enumerate Indigenous peoples. In North America, this strategy represented the most commonly used approach (50.0%), compared to other regions where disaggregation was more common. Many of the census questionnaires in this category in North America were Caribbean islands, where respondents could check off combinations of "Indigenous peoples/Amerindian/Carib." This may reflect the small size and resulting little variation in Indigenous groups in these places. In Oceania, Australia's question differentiated between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, but it did not allow for the identification of particular Aboriginal groups, like the Anangu, Koori, Murri, Noongar, Nung, Palawah, Wangkai, M\Yamatji, Yapa, or Yolngu, who are some of Australia's Indigenous peoples. In South America, 44.4 percent of census questionnaires aggregated Indigenous populations, primarily by allowing individuals to check off the category "Indigenous." In Columbia, the questions was "In accordance with their culture, people, or physical characteristics (name) is or considers themselves as: . . . (Check-off list included "Indigenous"). " In Ecuador, it was "What do you consider yourself? (Check-off list included "Indigenous")."

Canada, the United States, and New Zealand took a slightly different approach to the issues of aggregation and disaggregation. Each country asked about both a more general aggregate category of Indigenous peoples, and provided opportunities for participants to indicate particular tribes or *iwi* to which individuals belonged. For example, the US question was "What is your race? " (the check-off list included "American Indian or Alaska Native"). If the respondent was American Indian or Alaska Native, they were asked to write in the name of their enrolled or principal tribe.

The cost of delivering, coding, and publishing detailed questions is substantial and the tendency in censuses is, therefore, to simplify (Andersen 2008). Aggregation of different Indigenous groups and cultures provides one way of reducing such costs. The employment of a general aggregate category for Indigenous populations in a country or region can also provide a place for self-identification of groups that are not recognized by the state. Miller (2003) documented the battle for official recognition of a number of First Nations and American Indian groups in Canada and the United States. If the enumerating question took the form of lists to check off, these groups would not be counted in the census. On the other hand, questionnaires that allowed individuals to identify with a more general category of "Aboriginal" or "Indigenous" would provide an opportunity to identify as part of this aggregate.

Nevertheless, aggregation has some less positive implications. For Indigenous tribes, nations, and cultures, aggregation denies them the details about their peoples that could allow them to argue for specific programs, services, and political representation (Kertzer and Arel 2002; Urla 1993). Aggregation also makes it impossible to support inter-group comparisons of, for example, socio-economic wellbeing or the health of particular Indigenous languages. Aggregation denies Indigenous people the opportunity to name themselves, and assigns them to undifferentiated categories that the mainstream recognizes as "other." It feeds into assumptions about their inevitable assimilation into national cultural, political, and economic systems, involving a loss of separate identity (Sahlins 1999), and helps to deny the fact that Indigenous peoples are reformulating western institutions and practices to support their particular Indigenous cultures and identities, which in turn allows them to survive as distinct people in contemporary societies (Newhouse 2000).

Definition of Indigenous Identities

Censuses questionnaires varied in defining the sources of Indigenous identities (Table 5). Most (46.5%) enumerated Indigenous peoples by asking if they considered themselves to be part of an Indigenous or ethnic group. In Guatemala, for example, the relevant question is "Which ethnic group (people) does the person belong to? " In Chile, it is "Does the person belong to any of the following original or indigenous peoples? "

A few censuses addressed Indigenous identity as something that the participant "is" or considers him/herself to be. This approach included censuses that did not pose a particular question but merely had a title, as in the following:

- El Salvador: Are you? (Included "Indigenous" in check-off list)
- Congo: Ethnicity or Nationality. (Included "Pygmy" as suggested write-in).
- Russian Federation: Your National Identity (Write-in).

Some census questionnaires (17.1%) approached Indigenous identities with a question that focused on ancestry or origins. For Mexico, the question was: "Ethnicity. Is (name) of Náhuatl, Zapotecan or Mixtecan origin, or from another indigenous group?" The Northern Mariana Islands phrasing "What is this person's ethnic origin or race?" had Chamarros as one of a list of suggested write-ins.

Three census questionnaires (Canada, the US, and New Zealand) collected information about both Indigenous self-identification and origins. The Canadian questionnaire included the following.

- Q 17. What were the ethnic or cultural origins of this person's ancestors? (This question includes several Indigenous groups as suggestions: Cree, Mi'kmaq [Micmac], Métis, Inuit [Eskimo].)
- Q 18. Is this person an Aboriginal person, that is, North American Indian, Métis or Inuit (Eskimo)?

These different ways of framing questions about Indigenous identities demonstrate assumptions about the nature and sources of these identities. Questions that ask what a participant "is" characterize identity as an essentialist property belonging to an individual (Morning 2008, 249). In contrast, questions about being affiliated with or belonging to a group define Indigenous identity as the result of a membership in, or affiliation with,

a broader social group or collectivity. The latter are more congruent with perspectives that focus on Indigenous *peoples,* with collective relationships to lands and territories (Venne 2004, 128). A focus on Indigenous origins recognizes the historic continuity of Indigenous cultures, traditions, and relationships to land, but using only this criterion links Indigenous identities to a primordial past and denies contemporary negotiations of Indigenous identities "to express complex articulations of entitlement, power, and hope" (Anderson 2008, 1009).

Conclusion

The research conducted for this paper shows that, despite the large number of countries that endorsed the *Declaration,* relatively few enumerated their Indigenous residents. As a result, many Indigenous peoples remain invisible, and the implications of their histories of marginalization and exclusion are not often publicly documented in census statistics. Where questionnaires did enumerate Indigenous peoples, they often homogenized different cultures and Indigenous identities, failing to recognize the distinctive lifeways that different Indigenous peoples create in contemporary society. In many census questionnaires, Indigenous peoples were categorized as minorities, sweeping aside their unique rights and providing a basis for states to sidestep their responsibilities for safeguarding these rights. As a result, overwhelming challenges face the United Nations, various governmental and non-governmental organizations, and Indigenous people themselves in their attempts to document the circumstances of Indigenous populations and meet some of the information-related aims of the UNPFII.

The findings presented here suggest a number of issues for further research. First of all, it was not possible to fully establish whether some countries code write-in responses to enumerate Indigenous peoples even though they are not identified in census questionnaires. A number of these were identified by searching official websites, but there may be others. Second, more work is necessary to explore the decisions made by governments about whether or not to enumerate Indigenous peoples and, if they do, how they arrive at the various terminologies used for that purpose. This kind of research would require a much richer interpretation of the terms and definitions contained in census questionnaires than provided here and it would enable a more solid understanding of Indigenous enumeration internationally. Finally, there is a need to address in more depth the significant

question of whether census categories adequately reflect Indigenous peoples' perspectives about who they are and what their needs are in census enumerations. Taylor (2009,125) demonstrated the difficulty of measuring Australian Indigenous social, cultural, and economic systems using the tool and methods of mainstream demography, and emphasized the demand from Indigenous people for information based on "how people themselves view their social world." This relationship between census categories and terminology and the perceptions and aspirations of Indigenous groups is an important area for further research.

The invisibility of Indigenous peoples in the majority of census questionnaires internationally means that, at present, there is not even a remote possibility of providing complete and dependable data for monitoring, comparing, or even enumerating Indigenous peoples internationally. Clearly many more countries need to respond to the call from the UNPFII to disaggregate census categories in order to identify Indigenous peoples. In support of the 2007 *Declaration,* categories used in census questionnaires should reflect how Indigenous peoples define themselves.[10] The wide variety of terms and forms of questions in contemporary census questionnaires work against comparability between different countries. Indigenous peoples' heterogeneity and their varied relationships with the state may make it impossible to develop census questions that provide a reliable basis of comparison between countries. However, more similarities in question formats might improve capabilities to explore variation in Indigenous experiences in different countries. At the very least, it is worth exploring how Indigenous people respond to different forms of question in order to gauge the feasibility of a goal of comparable data.

There is a growing demand for information about the numbers and characteristics of Indigenous peoples around the world. This is necessary to support the implementation and assessment of developmental programs. It is also needed to support Indigenous peoples' attempts to assert their own identities and goals. Currently there are major gaps in coverage of such data and this paper has provided some insight into the scale and nature of these gaps, thereby providing a baseline for improvement.

Endnotes

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2. I capitalize the terms "Indigenous," "Native," and "Aboriginal" in the same manner that words such as "European" and "American" are capitalized when referring to specific peoples (cf. Johnson et al. 2007).

3. UN Doc.E/CN.4/Sub.s/1997/14, para.129.

4. These questionnaires are found at the UNSD website World Population and Housing Census Division (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/censusquest.htm). It was important to examine all of these census questionnaires, even though some of them were conducted in areas not widely recognized as countries, because countries may change the content of questionnaires for overseas territories in response to political negotiations (Blum 2002,130).

5. The Brazilian census was only available in Portuguese, but we were able to identify the question asking about Indigenous status and translate it with the help of an internet translator.

6. The North American category included countries and regions in Central America.

7. The Russian Federation employs four criteria to identify Indigenous peoples: location, traditional economic system, size of Indigenous group, and self-identification. Donahoe et al. (2008) described how these criteria are negotiated, employed, and contested.

8. Norway has a Sámi census in order to establish elections for its Sámi Parliament, but this census does not collect socio-economic information.

9. The Puerto Rican census used the same question as the US census, but since American Indians and Alaska Natives are not Indigenous to

that country, the Puerto Rican census questionnaire was not considered to enumerate Indigenous peoples in that area.

10. I recognize the challenges of such a recommendation in the context of the skills of Indigenous community members in "navigating the challenges and opportunities of national identity politics" (Schweitzer 2008, 1014), as well as many states' refusal to recognize Indigenous peoples within their borders.

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Appendix A. Questionnaires Missing from the UNSD Data Base

North America

British Virgin Islands
Greenland
Montserrat
Saint-Barthélemy
Saint Kitts and Nevis
Saint Martin
Saint Pierre and Miquelon

South America

Falkland Islands (Malvinas)

Africa

Angola
Burundi
Cameroon
Cape Verde
Chad
Comoros
Djibouti
Equatorial Guinea
Eritrea
Guinea Bissau
Liberia
Libya
Madagascar
Mali
Mayotte
Mozambique
São Tomé and Príncipe
Somalia

Togo
Western Sahara

Europe

Åland Islands
Andorra
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Denmark
Faeroe Islands
Finland
Germany
Holy See
Iceland
Netherlands
San Marino
Svalbard and Jan Mayan Islands

Asia

Bhutan
Brunei Darussalam
North Korea
Lebanon
Myanmar
Saudi Arabia
United Arab Emirates
Uzbekistan

Oceania

Pitcairn

Appendix B: Description of Census Question and Identification of Indigenous References

North America

Anguilla: Q40. To what ethnic/racial group does . . . belong? Possible check-off of Amerindian/Carib. Viewed as an Indigenous group (New Internationalist 2005, 95).

Antigua and Barbuda: Q44. To what ethnic, racial or national group do you think . . . belongs? Possible check-off of Amerindian/Carib. Caribs represent the original inhabitants (New Internationalist 2005, 96).

Belize: Q4.5. To what ethnic group do you/does . . . belong? Includes Maya Mopan and Maya Yactec as possible check-offs. Viewed as Indigenous (New Internationalist 2005, 128).

Canada: Q 17. What were the ethnic or cultural origins of this person's ancestors? Includes several Indigenous groups as suggestions (Cree, Mi'kmaq [Micmac], Métis, Inuit [Eskimo].)

Q 18. Is this person an Aboriginal person, that is, North American Indian, Métis or Inuit (Eskimo)? Includes check-offs for Indigenous groups. The government of Canada recognizes these groups as Aboriginal peoples in its constitution.

Q 20. Is this person a member of an Indian Band/First Nation? If yes, asked to write in name of band or First Nation.

Q 21. Is this person a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian as defined by the Indian Act of Canada? "Yes" or "No" response requested.

Costa Rica: Q6. Does ____ belong to any of the following cultures? Includes Indigenous as a possible check-off.

Dominica: Q44. To what ethnic, racial or national group do you think … belongs? Possible check-off of Amerindian/Carib. Viewed as Indigenous (New Internationalist 2005, 218).

El Salvador: Q6. a. Are you…? Includes check-offs of "Mixed white and indigenous" and "Indigenous."

Grenada: To what ethnic, racial or national group do you think . . . belongs? Includes "Indigenous People (Amerindian/Carib)" as possible check-off.

Guatemala: Q9. Which ethnic group (people) does the person belong to? Lists all of Guatemala's twenty-three identified Indigenous groups (Wessendorf 2008, 90).

Honduras: Q5. Which population group does the person belong to? Includes Tolupán, Pech (Poya), Misquito, Lenco, Tawahka (Sumo), Chorti, in possible check-off list. Identified as Indigenous peoples (New Internationalist 2005, 283).

Mexico: Q20. Ethnicity. Is (name) of Náhuatl, Zapotecan, or Mixtecan origin, or from another indigenous group?

Nicaragua: Q6. Do you consider yourself belonging to an indigenous peoples or an ethnicity?

Q7. To which of the following indigenous peoples or ethnicities do you belong? Includes Chorotega-Nahua-Mange, Cacaopera-Matagalpa, Nahoa-Nicarao, Miskitu, Mayangna-Sumu, Rama as possible check-offs. Identified as Indigenous peoples (Wessendorf 2008, 100).

Panama: Q6. To which indigenous group do you belong? Possible check-offs include Buglé, Bri Bri, Emberá, Kuna, Ngŏbe, Teribe, Wounaan. Identified as Indigneous (Wessendorf 2008, 111–15).
Saint Lucia: Q40. To what ethnic, racial or national group do you think . . . belongs? Includes possible check-off of "Indigenous People (Amerindian/Carib)."
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines: Q44. To what ethnic, racial or national group do you think . . . .belongs? Includes possible check-off of "Indigenous People (Amerindian/Carib)."
United States: Q6. What is your race? Check-off includes "American Indian or Alaska Native." Asked to print off the name of the enrolled or principle tribe Identified as Indigenous (Wessendorf 2008, 66).

South America
Argentina: Q2. Does any member of this household descend from or belong to an indigenous group?
Suggested write-ins include "Chané, Chorote, Chulupi, Diaguita Calchaqui, Huarpe, Kolla, Mapuche, Mbyá,Mocovi, Ona, Pliagá, Rankulche, Tapiete, Toba, Tupí Guaraní, Wichi, other indigenous group." Identified as Indigenous (Wessendorf 2008, 207).
Bolivia: Q49. Does the person consider that he/she belongs to any of the following original or indigenous peoples? Suggested write-ins include "Aymara, Chiquitano, Guaraní, Mojeño, Quechua, Other native group." Identified as Indigenous (Wessendorf 2008, 171).
Brazil: Your color or race is . . . ? (Check-offs include White, Black or dark brown, Brown or Light Brown, Yellow, Indigenous).
Chile: Q21. Does the person belong to any of the following original or indigenous peoples? Possible check-offs include "Alacalufe (Kawashkar), Atacameño, Aimara, Colla, Mapuche, Quechua, Rapa Nui, Yámana (Yagán)." Identified as Indigenous (Wessendorf 2008, 218).
Columbia: Q33. In accordance with their culture, people, or physical characteristics (name) is or considers themselves as … Includes Indigenous check-off.
Ecuador: Q6. What do you consider yourself? Check-offs include Indigenous, Negro (Afro-Ecuadorian), Mestizo, Mulato, White, or Other.
Guyana: To what ethnic group do you belong? Possible check-off is "Amerindian."

Paraguay: Q37. Are there any persons in this household who consider themselves indigenous or belonging to an indigenous ethnic group? Suggested write-ins include "Aché ñe'e, Angaité, Ava- guaraní ñe'e, Ayoreo, Enlhet norte, Enxet Sur, Guaraní occidentenal ñe'e, Maká, Manful, Maskoy, Mbya ñe'e, Nivacié, Ñandevafie'e, Pai ñe'e, Sanapaná, Toba, Toba-qom, Tomárãho, Ybytoso**."** Identified as Indigenous (Wessendorf 2008, 195).
Venezuela: Q7. Do you belong to any indigenous group? Write-in requested.

Africa
Central African Republic: QA11. Type of population. Possible check-offs include Mbororo and Pygmy. Identified as Indigenous (Wessendorf 2008, 487).
Congo: QP12. Ethnicity or Nationality. Includes Pygmy as suggested write-in. Identified as Indigenous (Wessendorf 2008, 464).
Ethiopia: Q10. What is (Name's) Ethnic group? Oromo, Amhara, Somali, Tigrie, Sidama, Guragie, Welaita,, Hadiya, Afar, Gamo listed. Mark-off list. Afar identified as one of the Indigenous peoples of that region (IPACC).
Gambia: Ethnicity. What is your Ethnic Origin? List includes Mandinka/ Jahanka, Fula/Lorobo, Wollof, Jola/Karoninka, Serahuli, Serere, Creole & Aku, Manjago, Bambara, Other Gambians. Write-in. Fula refers to Fulani pastoralists, recognized as Indigenous (IPACC).
Kenya: Q76. Tribe Nationality. What is …. 's tribe or nationality? (Write tribe code for Kenyan African and country of origin code for other Kenyans and non-Kenyans.) Published census data include Ogiek, Sengwer, Yaaku, Watta, Maasai, Samburu, Elmolo, Turkana, Rendille, Borana, Somali, Gabra, Pokot and Endorois (Bushan, 1997–98, Kurian 1992, 970). Identified as Indigenous (Wessendorf 2008, 415).
Niger: Q07. Nationality or Ethnicity. What is the nationality of (Name)?—If foreign, indicate the name of the country of nationality. If Nigerian indicate the declared ethnicity. IPACC identifies the Tuareg as Indigenous (http://www.ipacc.org.za/eng/regional_westafrica.asp). Tuareg was identified from census data (https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/NG.html).
Uganda: Q P7. Ethnic group or Citizenship: Is (Name) a Ugandan? If Ugandan, write ethnicity code,
otherwise, write the country code of citizenship. The Batwa were counted in the 2002 Ugandan census. IPACC identifies them as Indigenous (http://www.ipacc.org.za/eng/regional_centralafrica.asp).

Asia

India: Q9. If Scheduled Tribe, write name of the Scheduled Tribe from the list supplied. Identified as Indigenous (Wessendorf 2008, 358).

Lao People's Democratic Republic: Q8. What is (name's) ethnic origin? Includes "Hmong" in suggested list. Identified as one of the Indigenous peoples in that country (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, n.d.).

Malaysia: QC8. Which ethnic group or dialect group do you belong to? Enter in code and write in answer. *Malaysia People 2009, CIA World Factbook* website summarizes the ethnic composition of the Malaysian population as being comprised of 11 percent Indigenous peoples. (http://www.theodora.com/wfbcurrent/malaysia/malaysia_people.html).

Europe

Russian Federation: Q7. Your National Identity (as defined by the respondent). Write-in. Particular national identities are recognized as Indigenous (Donahoe et al. 2008; Petrov 2008).

Oceania

American Samoa: Q5. What is this person's ethnic origin or race? (For example: Chamorro, Samoan, White, Black, Carolinian, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Palauan, Tongan, and so on.) Write-in. External territory of the USA; Samoans are Indigenous (Minority Rights Group International 2007).

Australia: Q7. Is the person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin? Check-off. Identified as Indigenous (New Internationalist 2005, 107).

Cook Islands: Q7. Ethnic Origin. Check-offs include Cook Island Maori. Identified as Indigenous (New Internationalist 2005, 412).

Guam: Q5. What is this person's ethnic origin or race? Suggested write-ins include Chamorro. US territory; Chamorro identified as Indigenous (New Internationalist 2005, 268).

New Zealand: Q11.Which ethnic group do you belong to? Check-offs include Mäori and Cook Island Mäori.

Q14. Are you descended from a Mäori (did you have a Mäori birth parent, grandparent or great-grandparent)?

Q15. Do you know the name(s) of your *iwi* (tribe or tribes)? Identified as Indigenous (New Internationalist 2005, 411).

Northern Mariana Islands: Q5. What is this person's ethnic origin or race? Suggested write-ins include Chamarro and Carolinian. Commonwealth

of the USA; Chamorro and Carolinian identified as Indigenous (Minority Rights Group International 2007).

Tokelau: Q11. What is *name's* ethnic origin? Check-offs include Tokelauan, Tokelauan/Samoan, Part Tokelauan/ Tuvaluan, Part Tokelauan/ Other Pacific Island, Part Tokelauan/ European, Samoan, Tuvaluan, Other Pacific Islands, European, Other. New Zealand dependent territory; Tokelauans are Indigenous (Stidsen 2007).

Endnotes