Data Dissemination to Communities of Color
The Role of the Census Information Centers

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Census Information Centers
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1 Data Dissemination in Communities of Color:

Introduction

The challenges of Census-related data dissemination in communities of color in the United States and its territories have many similarities with those in the developing world. These challenges center on lack of infrastructure and limited human and financial resources in these underserved communities. These deficiencies limit within communities the amount and scope of critical social scientific activities. However, as people of color are projected to become a majority of the US population in the not too distant future, the need to provide these populations with timely and useful data and tools for analysis increases in urgency if they are to have a greater voice in public policy discussions. As the leading producer of socioeconomic scientific data in the United States, the Census Bureau has a major role to play in addressing this problem, especially with the increased demand for data that will be generated by the 2010 Census and the 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) next year. One effort within the Census Bureau to address these informational needs is its Census Information Center (CIC) Program.

This year the CIC Program is celebrating its 20th anniversary since becoming an on-going program in 1990. Outside of some internal analyses of annual reports submitted by its member organizations and Census Bureau staff, no independent systematic description or evaluation of the program has been conducted to date. A review of the literature on the dissemination and use of Census data reveals only occasional references made to individual CICs but very little on the CIC Program itself.

This survey by the National Institute for Latino Policy (NiLP), a member organization of the CIC Program, was conducted as an independent and completely pro-bono study of the CICs and their views on matters including their experiences with the CIC program and ongoing needs, serves as an initial analysis of the program. The 57 member organizations of the CIC Program were surveyed, with 49 responding for an 86 percent response rate.

The expectation is that this analysis can assist in the CIC Program’s future planning and provide a better understanding of its role within the Census Bureau. The survey was conducted to address NiLP’s concerns about developing an effective national program of Census data dissemination and analysis for communities of color following the 2010 Census. Please note that the views expressed in this report beyond the survey results are solely the opinions of the author and not those of the CIC Program and its member organizations, the United States Census Bureau, or the United States Government.

History. Planning to develop the CIC Program was initiated by the Census Bureau in 1988 as a pilot project. After an assessment of the pilot project, the CIC Program became an ongoing program in 1990 consisting of 5 national organizations: to improve access to census data by racial-ethnic minority groups and economically disadvantaged segments of the population who had been traditionally undercounted in censuses and surveys. The original five participating organizations were: the National Urban League, the National Council of La Raza, the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project (SVREP), the Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum and the Americans for Indian Opportunity (replaced by Native America Public Telecommunications).

For more than a decade, from 1988 to April 2000, an entry in Wikipedia reports that the CIC Program initially did not grow beyond the original five organizations and languished due to a lack of funding and support. In April 2000, the Census Bureau renewed its commitment to close the racial-ethnic minority and economic gap in data access by expanding the CIC Program to include 54 additional organizations representing under-served communities. This brought the number of Program participants to 59 organizations, at which time funding was made available for training, data products, postage and staff to help ensure the success of the program. Between 2000 and 2005, 15 organizations left the program for various reasons. In September 2006, the Census Bureau admitted an additional 13 organizations in an open and competitive process to bring the membership back up to the year 2000 level. In 2009, there were 57 CICs listed on the Census Bureau’s website.
In 2010, the CIC Program is undertaking a strategic planning process in collaboration with the Census Bureau’s Customer Liaison and Marketing Services Office (CLMSO). In so doing, the Program will be addressing such issues as the development of collaborative projects between the CIC member organizations, the possible expansion of the size of the membership, and developing strategies for attracting outside funding, to name but a few initiatives. With the 2010 Census on the horizon, the CIC Program will be looking at how to maximize its strategic role in Census data dissemination and analysis following 2010.

**Mission.** The mission of the CIC Program, as articulated by the Census Bureau, is to provide efficient access to Census data products through a wide data dissemination network of organizations. Those organizations effectively process and disseminate Census data to underserved population groups in easily understandable formats.

CICs have provided training and technical assistance to local governments, businesses, community groups, and other interested data users in how to access and use Census Bureau data for research, program administration, planning, and decision making purposes. Each CIC has its own target audience often requiring unique analysis of census information. The CIC Program includes a wide variety of non-profit organizations, including chambers of commerce, minority-serving colleges and universities, civil rights, social justice, and social service groups, think tanks, and research organizations.

CICs have successfully used census data and local information to support activities promoting change in underserved communities. They have used census data and local statistics to help local communities and minority businesses qualify for reconstruction resources in the wake of the September 11 attack on New York City; establish empowerment zones and revitalization areas in Brooklyn, NY, and Shreveport, LA; establish youth services programs and construct after school facilities in local communities in Nashville, TN, and Oakland, CA; provide baseline data to measure the effectiveness of national programs on crime in Washington, DC, public housing; develop ways to link children in need with public services in Minnesota; help local organizations draft grant proposals; provide an up-to-date analysis of the needs of state-side Puerto Ricans; and provide American Indians on the Navajo Reservation and across the country access to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF).

In addition to the CICs, the Census Bureau’s overall data dissemination network includes participants in the State Data Center/Business and Industry Data Center Program, Census Depository Libraries, the Federal-State Cooperative for Population Estimates (FSCPE), and the 12 Census Regional Office Partnership and Data Services. The combined network includes nearly 2,000 entities located throughout the 48 contiguous states, Alaska, Hawaii, Washington, DC, Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. A Memorandum of Agreement is signed with the participants designating them as official repositories for census data.

**Operations.** The Census Bureau does not provide funding to CIC Program participants, but provides access to the full array of its data products, training and technical support free of charge to the CICs. In return, the CICs discuss what census data mean for local communities. The Census Information Centers produce reports, fact sheets, briefs, and other materials in different formats, on more specific subjects, and for more unique geographic areas (communities) than those produced by the Census Bureau. CICs work in partnership with the Census Bureau through its CLMSO, currently headed by Barbara Harris.

The responsibilities of the CICs include:

- Disseminating Census Bureau data and information to persons served and local communities.
- Providing training, education, and technical assistance to persons served and local communities on how to access Census Bureau data.
- Assisting data users in understanding and accessing Census Bureau data and information, and answering questions from the public and persons served about what the data mean for local communities and neighborhoods.
- Supporting Census Bureau programs by assisting with outreach, promotion and recruitment efforts for the Census Bureau’s censuses and surveys.
Who Are the CICs Today?

This 2009 CIC Survey was conducted independently for the CIC Steering Committee by the National Institute for Latino Policy, a CIC, to provide current information on the characteristics and opinions of the Census Information Centers on a variety of issues. In this section, we profile the CICs.

**Year of CIC Memberships.** The CICs responding to this survey indicated joining the program between 1988 and 2007, a 19 year span. Those that became CICs in 1988-2000 were 37 percent of the total, 26 percent in 2001-2004, and 39 percent in 2005-2007. Close to a quarter of the respondents (22 percent) did not know when their CICs were established.

**Gender Breakdown.** The gender breakdown of the CIC respondents was 67 percent male and 33 percent female.

**Racial-Ethnic Breakdowns.** The racial-ethnic breakdown of the populations served by the CICs is as follows: Latinos (by 35 percent of the CICs), Blacks (27 percent), Asians (25 percent), Native Americans (22 percent), and non-Hispanic Whites (14 percent). The racial-ethnic breakdown of the leadership of the CICs (and not the race or ethnicity of the respondent) is: Asian (22 percent), Latino (22 percent), Black (14 percent), Native American (14 percent), non-Hispanic White 12 percent) and other (14 percent).

**Organization Type.** More than two-thirds (69 percent) of the CICs are currently hosted by community-based organizations, and 31 percent are university-based. The mix of organizational types has changed significantly over time, with community-based organizations having increased to where they now outnumber university-based CICs. Community-based CICs went from being 64 percent of the members the 1988-2000 period, went down to 40 percent of those that joined in the 2001-4 period, and then up to 93 percent of those joining in 2005-2007.

It is also important to note that there are important racial-ethnic differences in the organizational types of the CICs. Except for Black-led CICs, every other group’s CICs were community-based in the majority (ranging from 64 to 100 percent). For Black-led CICs, 86 percent were university-based. In terms of populations served, the majority (53 percent) of the university-based CICs indicate that they serve the Black community. The community-based CICs, on the other hand, indicate that they serve more diverse populations (39 percent Latinos, 34 percent Native Americans, and 32 percent Asians). Only 16 percent of community-based CICs serve Black populations.

**Geographic Breakdown and Scope.** Geographically, of those reporting the CICs are located in more than 28 cities, and 16 states, Washington, DC and...
Puerto Rico. The largest concentrations of CICs are in the following urban centers: Washington, DC Metro area (24 percent), followed by Los Angeles (8 percent), Chicago (6 percent), Nashville (6 percent) and New York City (6 percent). In terms of states, DC and the territories, the CICs are concentrated in the following: District of Columbia (18 percent), California (16 percent), New York (10 percent), Tennessee (8 percent) and Texas (8 percent).

Of the 12 Regional Census Offices, the CICs are concentrated in the following: Philadelphia (22 percent), Los Angeles (18 percent), Charlotte (12 percent) and Dallas (10 percent). The regional offices with the fewest CICs are: Detroit (2 percent) and Seattle (2 percent). The Philadelphia Census Regional Office covers the Washington, DC metro area, which is why it has such a large percentage of CICs within its area.

Asked the geographic scope of their work, the largest percentage of CICs indicated they did their work at the national (39 percent) and regional levels (29 percent). This is followed by the statewide level (10 percent), city/town level (12 percent), county level (10 percent) and neighborhood level (2 percent).
**Funding Sources.** The main funding sources of the CICs are: foundations (37 percent), their host organizations (35 percent) and government (31 percent). These are followed by: individual contributions (22 percent), special events (10 percent), and fees (6 percent). Those that run as a totally volunteer operations represent 14 percent of the total, and 6 percent don’t know what their funding sources are.

There were racial-ethnic differences in the main funding sources for the CICs along racial-ethnic lines. Asian-led and Latino-led CICs indicated that they received most of their funding from foundations (50 percent each). In contrast, Native American-led CICs mostly received government funding (71 percent), and non-Latino White-led CICs pointed to government funding and individual contributions as their main funding sources (50 percent each). Black-led CICs identified their host organization as their major funder (57 percent).

**Main Functions.** The CICs in this survey identified the dissemination of Census data as their main function (indicated by 82 percent of the respondents), in congruence with the mission of the CIC Program. This was followed by: conducting community-based research (69 percent), academic research (53 percent), geographic information systems (GIS) work (43 percent), and 2010 Census outreach (31 percent).

Along racial and ethnic lines, there were differences in the CICs’ main functions. Asian-led CICs indicated that they mostly focused on data dissemination and community-based research (91 percent each), while Latino-led CICs focused on data dissemination (91 percent). Black-led CICs indicated that they concentrated on community-based research and mapping (GIS) (83 percent), and Native American-led CICs on academic research (86 percent).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Function of CIC (%)</th>
<th>Asian/PI</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>Nat Amer</th>
<th>NL White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data Dissemination</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-based Research</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Research</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapping (GIS)</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 Census Outreach</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CICs on academic research (86 percent)

There were also differences according to the organizational type of the CICs. Those CICs that were community-based indicated that their main function was Census data dissemination (88 percent), while those that were university-based indicated that it was mapping (GIS) (73 percent).

Reflecting the origins of the CIC Program that was heavily based on strengthening the nonpartisan redistricting capacities of national community-based organizations or color, 71 percent of those CICs that became members of the CIC Program in 1988-2000 indicated that their main function was mapping (GIS). In contrast, a lower percentage, 56 percent, of those joining in 2001-2004 and only 21 percent of those joining in 2005-2008 indicated that mapping (GIS) was their main function.

**Dissemination Methods.** The main methods used by the CICs to disseminate Census data are: email (82 percent), telephone (69 percent), community presentations (61 percent) and a dedicated website (53 percent). The least used methods are: snail mail (14 percent), academic publications (29 percent), academic...
presentations (43 percent), and community publications (45 percent).

There were differences in the main data dissemination methods used by the CICs along racial-ethnic lines. Asian-led CICs primarily used email and telephones (91 percent), while 100 percent of the non-Latino White-led CICs primarily used email. Latino-led CICs mostly used email (91 percent) and community-based presentations (71 percent), Native American-led CICs a dedicated website (86 percent), and Black-led CICs telephones and academic presentations (71 percent each).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Dissemination Methods (%)</th>
<th>Asian/PI</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>Nat Amer</th>
<th>NL White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email Request</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone Requests</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Presentations</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Presentations</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were also differences according to organizational type. The community-based CICs indicated that they disseminated data primarily through email requests (88 percent), while university-based CICs did so through academic presentations (73 percent).

It appears that the CICs have not embraced disseminations strategies using newer media like Facebook, Twitter and others. This is something that the CIC Program should explore in the coming year, possibly being able to learn from the 2010 Census’ efforts using these newer media in its massive paid advertising campaign that is making use of these technologies.
Assessing the CIC Program

**Most Helpful Aspects.** The CICs were asked what aspects of the program they found most helpful. Three are seen as most helpful: training in the use of Census data and programs (76 percent), the networking with other CICs (74 percent) and the formal connection with the Census Bureau (67 percent). It was interesting that one of the main features of the CIC Program historically, providing the CICs with free Census data, ranked fairly low with 49 percent citing it as most helpful. This probably reflects that fact that access to data has become technologically much easier and less costly since the program started in 1988, making training in data access much more valuable today.

Along racial-ethnic lines, there are differences in which aspects were viewed as most helpful. Black-led CICs found the networking with other CICs as most helpful (86 percent), while non-Latino White-led CICs found the free data and training received as most helpful (83 percent each). Asian-led CICs found most helpful the formal connection to the Bureau and networking with other CICs (82 percent each), and Latino-led CICs pointed to meeting Census staff and the training received (64 percent each).

According to organizational type, the community-based CICs viewed the formal connection they have to the Census Bureau as a result of their membership in the CIC Program as the most helpful (74 percent), while the university-based CICs saw this as being less helpful to them (53 percent). Being university-based clearly requires less validation than independent community-based CICs feel they need and which the CIC Program apparently provides.

**Least Helpful Aspects.** The least helpful aspect of the CIC Program was identified as the free data provided by the Bureau (29 percent). Very few of the respondents, however, indicated that any aspect of the program was least helpful and 12 percent volunteered that all aspects of the program were helpful. Overall, the CICs see the program in a very positive light.

**Promoting More Interaction between CICs.** Asked how to make the CIC Program more interactive for the member organizations, two were mentioned most. The first was holding periodic teleconferences on subjects of interest to the CICs (53 percent), followed by establishing CIC caucuses or affinity groups along racial, ethnic, sector and other lines (41 percent). Approaches already attempted by the CIC Steering Committee received less support: a listserv (18 percent), CIC business meetings between conferences via teleconferencing (31 percent), an independent website (33 percent), and a newsletter (33 percent). Two other approaches were volunteered by single respondents: creation of joint CIC projects and having the program provide financial support to the CICs.

Asked how to promote more interactivity specifically at the CIC conferences, majorities supported having more presentations by the CICs themselves (53 percent) and holding more social events (51 percent). The least favored was holding CIC recognition events for outstanding work by individual CICs (33 percent).
2010 Census Information Needs

With the Census Bureau in the final stages of preparations for the 2010 Census, the CICs were asked what topics they preferred to hear most about the 2010 Census. About three-quarters (74 percent) indicated they preferred to learn about the role of the CICs in 2010 Census outreach and best practices, followed by those interested in learning about funding opportunities for 2010 Census outreach (61 percent). These were both topics featured in the October 2009 CIC Training Conference in Chicago.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010 Census Update Top Preferences (%)</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Role of CICs</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding Opportunities</td>
<td>61.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Contracting</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Recruitment</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census Data Products</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Community Survey</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership Program</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Programs</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At least 30 percent were interested in the following other 2010 Census update topics: minority contracting (45 percent), employment recruitment (41 percent), Census data products (41 percent), the American Community Survey (37 percent), the Partnership Program (37 percent), and language programs (31 percent).

The following 2010 Census topics elicited the least interest: the Integrated Communications Plan (18 percent), the Census in Schools Program (22 percent), Complete Count Committees (25 percent), the redistricting data program (25 percent) and the role of the regional Census offices (25 percent).

There were also differences along racial-ethnic lines. While Latino- and Native American-led CICs preferred learning about strategies for reaching hard-to-count communities and, to a lesser extent, how to get support from the Regional Census Offices, Asian and Black preferences were different. Asian-led CICs had the greatest preference for learning about Regional office support, which a much lower percentage of Black-led CICs shared. A much higher percentage of Asian-led CICs were interested in learning how to become a Complete Count Committee than the other CICs. Black- and non-Latino White-led CICs had similar preferences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010 Census Update Preferences (%)</th>
<th>CICs Led By:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hard-to-Count Outreach Strategies</td>
<td>Asian/PI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Regional Census Office Support</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting Partnerships</td>
<td>Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becoming a Complete Count Committee</td>
<td>Nat Amer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NL White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>57.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>28.6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This interest in 2010 Census outreach topics by the CICs is important to note because they clearly view their role as going beyond strictly data dissemination and analysis. This indicates that as the role of the CIC Program is reviewed, it is clear that its members wish to play a broader role than originally envisioned. This interest in outreach to hard-to-count communities by the CICs could also be extended beyond the decennial Censuses to the Census Bureau’s other survey programs, such as the ACS, the Economic Census, the CPS and others.
## CIC Training Needs

To help in identifying the data and other training needs of the CICs, they were asked what topics they would be interested in being trained at the 2009 CIC Training Conference.

There was a wide range of topics identified by the CICs, with the two most popular being: the American Community Survey (ACS) (53 percent) and DataFerrett for beginners (47 percent). The training focus of the 2009 CIC Training Conference was the DataFerrett Program.

The next tier of interest was in training in the following: developing a 2010 communications plan for their communities (41 percent), identifying hard-to-count communities (39 percent), American FactFinder (35 percent), geographic information systems (GIS) for beginners (33 percent), finding Census data (31 percent), redistricting data (33 percent), Local Employment Dynamics (LED) (31 percent), DataFerrett for advanced users (31 percent), and the Current Population Survey (CPS) (27 percent).

The Census Bureau developed the American FactFinder (http://factfinder.census.gov/) web site as its primary vehicle for distributing Census data. The Census Bureau has cut back on the number of volumes it is printing, and fewer printed reports will be distributed to federal depository libraries. The Bureau expects that most people will use American FactFinder (AFF) to retrieve Census data. Currently, AFF provides data for the lowest level of geography (blocks), and data for the biggest variety of geographic entities, everything from zip code tabulation areas to state legislative districts to Census tracts. It also allows users to retrieve reference and thematic maps.

DataFerrett (http://ferret.bls.census.gov) is an electronic data review and extraction tool designed to facilitate review and extraction of socioeconomic data from massive BLS and Census Bureau databases. It was developed jointly by the U.S. Bureau of the Census and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The following topics were volunteered by only one or two respondents: using PUMS and bringing back Advance Query. It appears, at this point, that the Census Bureau currently has no plans to restore Advanced Query program. The Census Bureau’s Advanced Query provided customized cross tabulations of selected Census 2000 variables and universes. PUMS, or Public Use Microdata Samples, are computer-accessible files containing records for a sample of housing units, with information on the characteristics of each housing unit and the people in it.

Asked about their interest in topics related to their preparations for 2010 Census outreach, the top preference was for strategies for reaching hard-to-count populations (73 percent). This was followed by types of support the CICs could receive from the regional Census offices (55 percent), and how CICs can promote partnership agreements in their communities (41 percent).

The least interest was expressed for following: becoming a Be Counted Center (14 percent), becoming a Questionnaire Assistance Center (24 percent), recruiting 2010 Census enumerators (27 percent) and becoming a Complete Count Committee (29 percent). There appears to be less of an interest by the CICs in these more direct services aspects of 2010 Census outreach, given their other responsibilities and the burden that this would place on relatively small staffs.

Almost all (96 percent) of the CICs indicated they would be involved in 2010 Census outreach activities. As indicated in the previous section, the CICs are interested in learning of ways that the Census Regional Offices could support their outreach efforts for 2010. When asked how they would characterize their relations with their local Census regional office’s Partnership Program, the majority (55 percent) saw it as...
good to excellent, 37 percent saw it as poor to fair, with 8 percent stating that they haven’t met with the regional partnership staff yet. Given that the CICs are an official part of the Census Bureau, it should, however, be of concern that only 16 percent found the relationship to be excellent.

Major complaints made by CICs about the Regional Census Offices is that these offices in general do no communicate with their local CICs on their activities nor do they seem to have ways to involve the CICs in supporting their work for the 2010 Census. There are also a number of CICs who have developing good working relationships with their local Regional Census Office, but these seem to be in the minority.

The Role of Race and Ethnicity. Significant differences appeared along racial and ethnic lines in the CICs’ training preferences. In terms of preferred training topics, Black-led CICs were most interested in the American Community Survey (ACS) (71 percent), while Native American-led CICs focused on DataFerrett for beginners (71 percent), and non-Latino White-led CICs on Population Estimates (67 percent). On the other hand, Latino-led CICs focused on developing communications strategies for 2010 Census outreach (55 percent), while Asian-led CICs were most interested in the ACS and the Current Population Survey (CPS) (64 percent).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIC Training Preferences (%)</th>
<th>CIs Led By:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asian/PI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Community Survey</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Population Survey-SIPP</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Estimates/Projections</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DataFerrett (beginners)</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of 2010 Census outreach topics, while Asian-led CICs were most interested in learning about Regional Census Office support (82 percent), most Latino-led CICs were interested in information of hard-to-count population outreach strategies (91 percent).
Conclusions

With the 2010 Census only months away, the preparation of the CIC Program to play a critical role in the dissemination of the decennial data and this year’s American Community Survey (ACS) statistics to poor and working class populations and communities of color needs to assume some priority for the Census Bureau and the CICs. With these vulnerable populations being hit hardest by the economic crisis facing the country and their continued lag in Internet and computer access, the need for the CIC Program to develop a strong intermediary sector and services for timely and efficient Census data dissemination is a challenge that will require some creativity and additional resources. By making the results of the 2010 Census and various Census surveys like the ACS fully available and understandable to communities of color, especially at the local level, this will also make the value of participating in such programs more apparent.

In recognition of this challenge, the CICs have seen their role change from primarily being one of data dissemination to a broader one that includes community outreach and promotes participation in the 2010 Census and other related activities. When the program began over a decade ago, the Census Bureau providing CICs with free data was a major resource for these communities. However, advances in data management and dissemination technology have made this aspect of the program less important and its training component more so. These are trends that this survey has documented.

This survey has also provided a profile of the CICs with more information than has been so far available, with the hope that it can prove useful for program promotion and planning. There has been some discussion about the need to expand the CIC Program member organizations from the current 57 to at least 100. As this survey indicates, there are 27 states and 4 US territories that do not have a CIC. It could be a priority to at least expand the program to have all states and territories represented with one CIC each, which would bring the total to 90.

The Census Bureau should also consider reorganizing the ways in which it provides training to the CICs. Besides the one or two national training conferences it currently holds annually, the Bureau should be considering more frequent and intensive teleconference and webinar training sessions. The survey also found an interest in organizing part of the CIC Program around caucuses or affinity groups of specific communities and functional areas, such as racial-ethnic populations as the Bureau’s Race and Ethnic Advisory Committees (REAC) Program does. As this survey found, there appear to be significant differences in the interests, organization and resources of the CICs along racial and ethnic lines.

The Bureau should also consider ways to increase its support of the CIC Program by providing resources to be determined to initiate and enable collaborative projects between the CICs, and between the CICs and the Bureau. The Bureau could assign specialized staff, provide funds for meetings and travel, publications development and other activities.

In such program development, the differences between community- and university-based CICs need to be recognized in terms of their different needs and resources, as well as between national and more local CICs. Attention to these internal differences between the CICs has not been adequately taken into account in the CIC Program’s past programming.

The Bureau needs to also work with the CICs in attracting private funding for joint CIC projects. Although some have advocated that the Census Bureau itself provide some operational funding for individual CICs, up until this point this has not been the case. The CICs themselves have recently begun to work with the CIC
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Program to explore ways to attract private funding for CIC activities by leveraging their relationship with the Bureau.

The CICs are considering developing working groups that would develop collaborative CIC projects in areas such as:

1. **Determining the Census and other data needs of communities of color.** The CICs could jointly conduct a series of activities, from a national survey to local focus groups, to assess the needs of local communities of color for Census data and relevant dissemination strategies. Besides helping the CICs themselves, this information could also be utilized by the Census Bureau itself to enhance its data dissemination and analysis tools, such as the American FactFinder, DataFerrett, and others.

2. **Nonpartisan redistricting data and mapping.** A large group of CICs already have the capacity to conduct scientifically-based mapping and data analysis for nonpartisan redistricting. Local communities of color for the most part lack the expertise and resources for combining voting and registration statistics with demographic data, and for displaying this information on computerized maps for the purpose of redistricting. Done on a purely nonpartisan basis, the CICs could provide these resources in ways that increase the participation of these local communities in this civic process. A possible model for this is the new web-based, interactive hard-to-count mapping site developed by the City University of New York (CUNY) Mapping Service at the Center for Urban Research, CUNY Graduate Center (www.CensusHardToCountMaps.org).

3. **Designing common national and local data websites.** The 57 CICs have websites that in different ways provide access to Census data, but no common design exists. The CICs could be able to work together to develop a common design for use through the country in different languages and common and more sophisticated data tools. The CICs, for example, are currently working with the DataFerret team from the Census Bureau to develop common table shells that would present Census data in a dynamic manner. Besides providing the CICs with a new data dissemination strategy, this process could provide insights for Census Bureau staff on ways to improve the DataFerrett Program.

4. **Assessment of the 2010 alternative questionnaire testing of the race and Hispanic questions for the 2020 Census.** The CICs rely on the ability to disaggregate Census data by race and Hispanic categories. With the testing of these questions during the 2010 Census, the CICs would like to work with the Census Bureau in the assessment of the alternative wording of these questions from the perspective of the communities of color themselves. The CICs could organize meetings with community leaders, academics of color and other interested parties and Census staff and other stakeholders, as well as conduct or sponsor additional research on these issues.

The possibilities for other collaborative projects for the CICs to develop are endless, but hopefully these provide a good idea of what they could be and their potential impacts.

The CIC Program, in other words, has the potential of being a powerful intermediary between the Census Bureau and hard-to-reach communities in the areas of data dissemination and analysis. At the same time, the Census Bureau and the CIC Program can develop mirroring services that can promote greater collaboration between communities of color, the larger research community and the Census Bureau itself.

The Census Bureau’s current methods and mechanisms of data dissemination to communities of color and the poor and working people have had limited success in reaching these populations. By developing the capacities of the CICs individually and collectively, the Census Bureau has the opportunity to promote efforts for full access to the data it generates as it is currently doing in promoting full participation in the 2010 Census. As the CIC Program begins its second decade of operation, this is a goal that will serve to make the work of the Census Bureau more relevant to all Americans.
Methodology and Acknowledgements

This study was based on a web survey administered by the National Institute for Latino Policy (NiLP) CIC using the Zoomerang program. The survey was conducted between August 19 and September 12, 2009. Of the 57 CICs in the program, 49 responded to the survey for a response rate of 86 percent.

The survey questions were developed in consultation with the members of the CIC Steering Committee and Census Bureau staff. This survey is not an official activity of the US Bureau of the Census and the opinions expressed in this report are not necessarily shared by the Bureau or the CIC Program. This report was prepared independently by the National Institute for Latino Policy for the CIC Steering Committee.

The questions reported on in this report that were asked of the respondents were:

1. Which are the topics for which you would like to receive training at the October CIC Training Conference? (check as many as apply)
2. Which types of training sessions would you prefer? (Check as many as apply)
3. In terms of updates on the 2010 Census, which are the topics you would like to hear most about (check off as many as apply)
4. Which are the MOST HELPFUL aspects of your participation in the CIC Program? (Check as many as apply)
5. Which are the LEAST HELPFUL aspects of your participation in the CIC Program? (Check as many as apply)
6. Which topics are you most interested in as they relate to your CIC’s participation in the 2010 Census outreach and other activities? (Check as many as apply)
7. What is the name of your Census Information Center (CIC)?
8. What is the name of the organization/institution sponsoring your CIC?
9. In which city and state/territory is your CIC located?
10. Which is the geographic scope of your CIC’s work?
11. In what year was your CIC established as part of the Census Bureau’s CIC Program?
12. Which population group does your CIC primarily serve? (Check as many as apply)
13. What currently is the main function(s) of your CIC? (Check all that apply)
14. What is the main method(s) you use to disseminate Census data to your constituency(ies)? (Check all that apply)
15. The work of your CIC is primarily supported by funding from which of the following sources? (Check all that apply)
16. How do you think the CIC Program can promote greater interaction between the CICs beyond the conferences?
17. At the CIC training and other conferences, how can we promote greater interaction among the CICs? (Check all that apply)
18. How would you characterize your CIC’s relationship to your local Regional Census Office's Partnership Program as they plan for the 2010 Census?
19. Note: Race of CIC Leadership was determined by a review of each CIC’s CEO and Board of Directors (it is not based on the race/ethnicity of the individual respondent).
20. Note: Whether the CIC is community- or university-based was determined by a review of each CICs self-description.

We would like to acknowledge the contributions of Joseph Pereira, Ph.D., Hector Soto, Esq., and Ying Li, Ph.D. for their thoughtful comments on the first draft of this report. Any improvements are the result of their suggestions; the flaws remain the sole responsibility of the author.

Please note that the views expressed in this report beyond the survey results are solely the opinions of the author and not those of the CIC Program and its member organizations, the United States Census Bureau, or the United States Government.
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