

2020 Census Operation Updates for the Detailed Operational Plan for: 11. Integrated Partnership and Communications Operation (IPC)

A New Design for the 21st Century

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Approvals

This Integrated Partnership and Communications Operation (IPC) Detailed Operational Plan Operation Updates has been reviewed and approved for use.

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1. Document Purpose

This document provides some updates on the Integrated Partnership and Communications operation (IPC) since the [Detailed Operational Plan](#) was published on September 22, 2016.

As the U.S. Census Bureau prepares for the 2020 Census, it faces a challenging set of environmental factors, such as declining response rates, an increasingly diverse population, and more informal and complex living arrangements. The Census Bureau is committed to conducting a cost-effective census in 2020. Since the most expensive part of the decennial census is the cost of sending field staff to visit nonresponding households in person, any steps we can take to increase self-response are important.

1.1 Operation Purpose

The Integrated Partnership and Communications operation communicates the importance of participating in the 2020 Census to the entire population of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and United States territories to:

- Engage and motivate people to self-respond, preferably through the internet.
- Raise and keep awareness high throughout the entire 2020 Census to encourage response.
- Support field recruitment efforts for a diverse, qualified census workforce.
- Effectively support dissemination of census data to stakeholders and the public.

The Census Bureau can promote self-response by taking advantage of new and improving technologies. Internet tools and increasing cellular coverage and smartphone use have opened up new communications channels and media. The Census Bureau fully intends to harness these emerging technologies and channels as part of its Integrated Partnership and Communications Program for the 2020 Census.

2. Background

2.1 2000 and 2010 Censuses

The Census 2000 Partnership and Marketing Program demonstrated that use of a paid advertising campaign, supplemented for the first time by a strong partnership program, helped reverse three decades of declining mail response rates in the decennial census. In 1970, 78 percent of housing units responded without the need for in-person follow-up (note that housing units include both occupied and vacant addresses). That number dropped to 75 percent in 1980 and to 65 percent in 1990. The strategy for the 2000 Census included the first uses of paid advertising and a comprehensive partnership program. These efforts—combined with media relations, promotions, and special events—educated people about the census, motivated them to return their questionnaires, and encouraged cooperation with enumerators. The Census Bureau’s strategy paid off. At a time when mail response rates for other governments and private sector surveys were declining, the Census 2000 mail response rate did not decline, remaining consistent with the 1990 Census at approximately 65 percent.

In the 2010 Census, the Integrated Communications Program (ICP) was developed in an effort to build on the success of the Census 2000 program. To develop a communications campaign for the 2010 Census, the Census Bureau worked with a primary contractor, the advertising agency Draft FCB, and a group of 13 subcontractors. Twenty-two states, 1,553 counties, and 278 cities and townships met or exceeded their 2000 Census participation rates. Although many predicted a decline, the mail response rate remained at 65 percent in the 2010 Census. The marketing and promotion industry recognized the 2010 Census and associated outreach campaign for its success.

3. 2020 Census Integrated Partnership and Communications Campaign

The 2020 Census Integrated Partnership and Communications Campaign will be one of the most extensive and far-reaching marketing campaigns ever conducted in this country. Unlike most integrated marketing campaigns that find their most likely prospects and concentrate their resources on them, this operation must attempt to reach every household to achieve its mission. Challenges the operation faces are that some population segments are much more difficult to motivate than others. It may be because they do not speak English, are highly mobile, do not see the benefits, are fearful of participating, or do not trust the government. The campaign must balance additional effort and resources to reach these groups effectively while still maintaining sufficient presence among the rest of the audience.

3.1 Audiences

IPC engages with different audiences depending on the specific goal. The general public is the audience for IPC’s primary goals of engaging and motivating the public to self-respond and raising and keeping awareness high to encourage response. IPC also supports field recruitment activities, which has an audience of the pool of applicants for a diverse, qualified census workforce. Finally, for IPC’s goal of effectively supporting dissemination of census data to stakeholders and the public, the audience is data users.

Figure 1 depicts these three audiences and the operation’s respective goals for them.

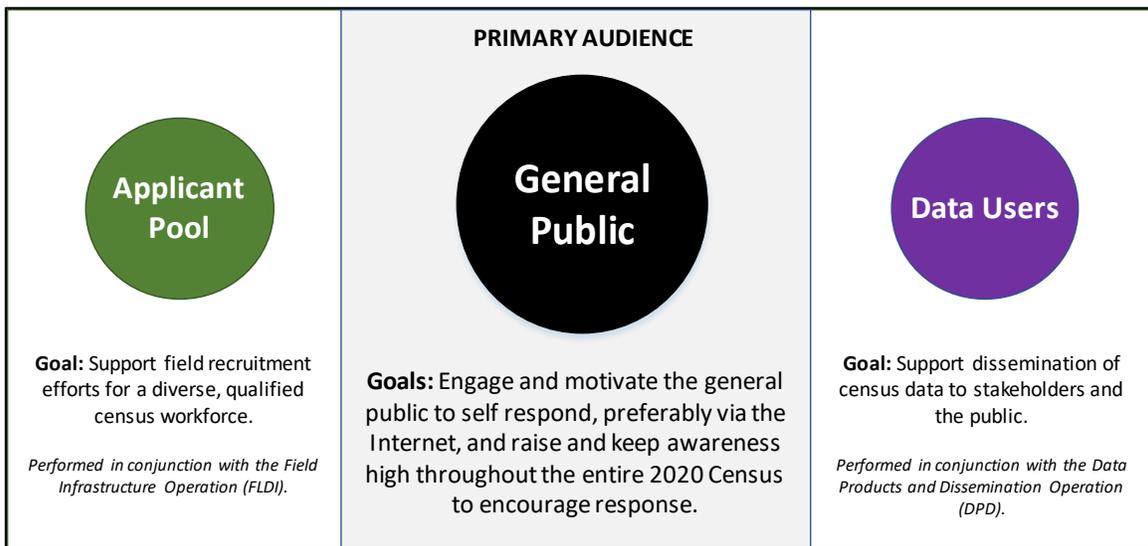


Figure 1: IPC Audiences

For the 2020 Census, the Partnership Program will expand upon and develop new tools and systems to automate and enhance the IPC operation for more efficient and effective communication. The IPC has taken great strides in learning more about new and innovating technology since the 2010 Census. Many of the innovations are directly reflective of how we communicate. Therefore, there are many opportunities for leveraging new technologies and communication mechanisms. Systems and tools used by the Census Bureau and external stakeholders include:

- **Fulfillment Center** – A system that will reside within the Government Publishing Office and will process and ship promotional materials and item orders requested via the Partnership Portal.

- **Customer Relationship Management System** – A database used by partnership specialists in the regions, National Partnership Program staff, and data dissemination specialists that houses data on census partners collected over the past two decades.

The Partnership Program will use the systems and tools to identify and work with partners to build and promote awareness of the 2020 Census, and ultimately to motivate participation. In working with partners, one of the primary goals is to identify the trusted individuals and gatekeepers within each community who are willing to use their credibility to encourage cooperation from those who are reluctant to respond. In addition, partners support or sponsor promotional activities to raise awareness and encourage participation in the 2020 Census.

3.2 IPC Program Components

3.2.1 Stakeholder Relations

Stakeholders—those groups and individuals to which the Census Bureau is accountable—are invaluable in successfully carrying out the 2020 Census. Stakeholders are key participants in data collection activities, and they are uniquely positioned to help identify the challenges and concerns that affect communities and neighborhoods. For example, understanding language preferences and cultural intricacies within the community is key in serving communities with multicultural populations. The Census Bureau is dedicated to engaging with and responding to stakeholders who are invested in ensuring an accurate count.

To date, stakeholders have been valuable voices contributing ideas and recommendations for the strongest possible communications surrounding the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau is dedicated to continuing to engage with and respond to stakeholders who are invested in ensuring an accurate count.

The relationship between the Census Bureau and stakeholders is mutually beneficial. Stakeholders use census data to advance government, nonprofit, and business initiatives. They also promote the importance of the census among their audiences and support Census Bureau efforts across the decennial census and other surveys. As active users of census data, many stakeholders are well positioned to champion the value of an accurate count; thus, successful and efficient stakeholder relations are central to performing a complete count.

Stakeholders, as well as partners, have established trust and open communication in their communities, and they actively advocate for their constituents on important issues. As we approach the 2020 Census, the Census Bureau will, in turn, maintain an open line of

communication with stakeholders, ensuring that they have the information and resources to participate in and generate support for the 2020 Census.

3.2.2 Promotional Materials and Items

The Census Bureau has worked closely with external stakeholders to identify the campaign materials that we and our partners will need throughout the campaign. Our approach to materials development has taken the following into consideration:

- **Potential for Customization.** Materials that reflect the target population will be more appealing to the intended audiences. While materials leverage the “Shape your future: START HERE.” campaign, they are also being tailored in message, tone, and imagery for specific audiences.
- **Appeal to Hard to Count (HTC) Populations.** Although materials are being developed to reach all audiences, extra care is taken to appeal to HTC audiences. Building on campaign research, we have been working with influencers and potential partners to identify and develop materials that are most likely to be desired and used by HTC populations.
- **Cost, Storage, and Origin.** The materials and items developed must represent the most effective use of taxpayer dollars. The Census Bureau is acting as a good steward of taxpayer funds—selecting the lowest-cost options that meet quality standards and not producing multiple items that fulfill the same need. All print materials are being produced by the U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO), and any items purchased are 100 percent made in the United States. There is no funding available for stakeholders to access in-kind dollars for materials production, which is another reason we are developing materials that stakeholders can customize and deploy themselves. The Census Bureau established a GPO-run warehousing facility where materials produced will be consolidated. The Census Bureau will then further disseminate materials to field operations.

3.2.3 Statistics in Schools

The Statistics in Schools (SIS) program has been one of the most successful outreach efforts for the Census Bureau. Over the last decade, the Census Bureau has transformed its engagement with schools into a program that has expanded beyond teaching about the decennial census

and is now focused on statistical literacy in intercensal years. This is a critical subject: 2018 data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predict that statistics-related jobs, in industries such as business, health care, and engineering, will increase by more than 30 percent between 2018 and 2028.

The program offers activities for students and resources for teachers that help to highlight the census, the data it helps collect, and the ways in which those data can then be analyzed and used. Activities are designed to align with existing curriculums and supplement studies in math, geography, history, English language arts, and sociology with lessons incorporating statistical and data-oriented concepts.

For the 2020 Census, the Census Bureau has the opportunity to raise awareness and understanding of the decennial census among adults through the education of the country's students. SIS will be particularly important in reaching (HTC) audiences and individuals who do not speak English or who have limited English proficiency, as they may rely on their children to translate or interpret information from English into their native language.

New materials and lessons are being created and added to the SIS program for the 2019-2020 school year. These lessons will educate students—and through the students, the adults in their households—about the importance of completing the 2020 Census. The overall goal of the 2020 SIS program is to increase awareness of and overall public response to the 2020 Census by engaging teachers, students, and their households in public conversations about the decennial census.

To promote these activities in classrooms throughout the United States, including in Puerto Rico and the Island Areas, the Census Bureau is engaging with educational organizations and associations to highlight the free, high-quality SIS resources in use during the 2019-2020 academic year.

3.2.4 Public Relations and Crisis Management

As a complement to the partnership and advertising program components, public relations and related media activities will assist the Census Bureau in reaching diverse audiences nationwide, including HTC populations. Public relations efforts anticipate and address common questions about the census, including questions about data security and privacy, the importance of the census, and the ways in which census data will be used. Another aspect of public relations involves providing information to the public about how to respond to the census questionnaire, including how to use the new internet response option.

The Census Bureau's goals for public relations for the 2020 Census are to:

- Educate the public about the 2020 Census, its importance, and the response process.
- Assure the public of the confidentiality, safety, and security of personal information.
- Encourage self-response (by internet, phone, and mail) and an accurate response.
- Reach traditionally low-response communities.
- Advance the reputation of the Census Bureau.

By emphasizing preparedness, the crisis communications component area helps ensure that, if urgent issues or crises arise, the Census Bureau can respond with adequate, timely information and communicate with the public or the news media as needed. Our approach is open and proactive to enhance our readiness and capacity to respond to crises.

The goals of these efforts and planning are to mitigate issues that may disrupt operations; to develop strategy, messages, timing, and distribution channels to communicate effectively; to respond promptly to crises; to speak clearly with one voice; to correct and minimize dissemination of false rumors, speculation, and misinformation; and to protect the reputation of the Census Bureau, its employees and stakeholders, and the 2020 Census itself.

3.2.5 Enterprise Communications

The Census Bureau's Center for Enterprise Dissemination Services and Consumer Innovation is building a robust platform that will ultimately house and disseminate census data. This platform is being developed to ensure that data are easily released and accessible to stakeholders, partners, and a variety of audiences, including new data users, super users, and those searching for specific data points. It will be an important feature of data dissemination efforts once the results of the 2020 Census are available.

3.2.6 Website Development and Digital Activities

The current digital environment is fundamentally different from the one that the Census Bureau navigated for decennial counts in the past. In this new, highly sophisticated digital landscape, the Census Bureau's web and digital properties are critical tools, helping to educate, engage, and motivate the population of the United States and its territories, while also

providing supporting materials and information for use in our paid and earned media and partnership efforts. In 2020, for the first time, the majority of residents will be able complete the questionnaire online.

The Census Bureau also faces challenges not as present in past decennials, like the threat of cyberattacks and misinformation campaigns on social media—making the 2020 Census website an even more critical piece of the census puzzle.

Research shows that, since 2016, mobile (including all handheld devices and tablets) has overtaken desktop as the primary source of all internet traffic (StatCounter Global Stats, 2019). Most recently, in 2018, 58 percent of web traffic was conducted using a mobile device or tablet (Enge, 2019). For the highest response rate, the Census Bureau needs to meet users where they are. That is why, for this 2020 Census, we are emphasizing a mobile-first approach and ensuring that our websites work effectively on the devices that most visitors will be using, while also providing a positive experience for desktop users.

We are designing landing pages, strategic calls to action, and other web content—all optimized for mobile devices—to help drive response and enable users to find more information, share content, and access data. Content will be tailored to users based on audience segment and how they enter the site. Regardless of their entry point, users will see consistency between web and other communications activities, such as digital advertisements, to ensure seamless, integrated engagement of audiences.

This creative integration is not limited to digital advertising. The Census Bureau is striving to ensure consistency of creative look and feel, as well as campaign messaging, across all program components of the communications campaign.

3.2.7 Social Media

Social media plays a critical role across several of the communications campaign's phases. Primary objectives include raising awareness of the census, particularly among HTC audiences; motivating people to self-respond to the 2020 Census; and fostering engagement with the Census Bureau and in the 2020 Census campaign. Social media is also being used to enhance customer service efforts, promote recruiting efforts, and assist with data dissemination.

The Census Bureau's social media plan comprises tactics that are dynamic and flexible, and that can shift to incorporate new platforms, emerging trends, data interpretation, and the changing needs of the campaign. In an evolving digital environment, continual evaluation of the social

media landscape coupled with a strategic framework for execution provide the data-driven approach needed for the campaign's success.

With the expansion of social media, many new channels have emerged. All social media platforms focus on real-time creation and sharing of content, but the audiences that each channel attracts and the ways in which people engage on them vary. While it is important that the Census Bureau create relevant, powerful messages to reach target audiences, it is equally important that we optimize our efforts to be heard by the greatest number of people.

The Census Bureau is aligning content and outreach strategies by channel and audience, and we are integrating ongoing monitoring and analysis—along with inputs from partners and stakeholders—to continually refine social media efforts.

To do so, the Census Bureau has and will continue to:

- Perform research on the social media landscape to understand how the census is being mentioned.
- Analyze the use and performance of our social media networks.
- Evaluate new social media features and tools against established procedures and protocols.
- Prioritize goals and supporting strategies for expanding social media outreach.
- Integrate social media tactics across the 2020 Census campaign (with public relations on promoting events, with paid media activities on content needs for distribution, and with crisis communications on social listening topics and trends).

3.2.8 Paid Advertising

Paid advertising plays a crucial role in the 2020 Census campaign, raising awareness of the census and driving self-response through online and traditional modes.

The growth in technology use and in the number of media channels that can reach people creates numerous opportunities. Digital platforms are rapidly expanding their audience reach and penetration. For example, Pew Research Center reported that nearly 70 percent of adults use Facebook in 2019, compared with less than 60 percent in 2012 (Perrin, 2019). These developments are important because, with the expanded availability of non-ID response in

2020, digital advertising will help people navigate to the starting point of the census questionnaire with a single click. The Census Bureau is monitoring the evolution of these trends as the 2020 enumeration approaches to ensure our strategy remains relevant in the changing digital landscape.

However, while the use of digital media is rapidly expanding, TV, radio, print, and out-of-home media are still critical channels for advertising, especially among certain HTC populations with limited internet access. The Nielsen Total Audience Report for the first quarter of 2018 showed that U.S. adults spend just under four hours a day consuming TV, including live and time-shifted TV, and more than 3.5 hours using an app or the web on a mobile device. Though radio trailed both of these media consumption trends, with adults reporting, on average, less than 90 minutes per day listening to the radio, certain geographies and audience segments reported concentrated radio listenership (Nielsen Total Audience Report, 2018).

Given the pace of change in the media environment and varying preferences for media consumption within the U.S. population, particularly among members of different ethnic groups, a one-size-fits-all approach will not be sufficient to reach all audiences. Our paid media and advertising strategy incorporates the needs of every region and audience group as well as changing technologies. Local paid media and advertising will play an important role in setting a baseline for reaching audiences across the United States while supporting and reinforcing national efforts. These efforts include partnership outreach, the Census Bureau's Statistics in Schools program, social media, public relations, and other touch points with the Census Bureau's audiences.

[Figure 2](#) shows how the various components work together with the partnership programs to engage with the general public.

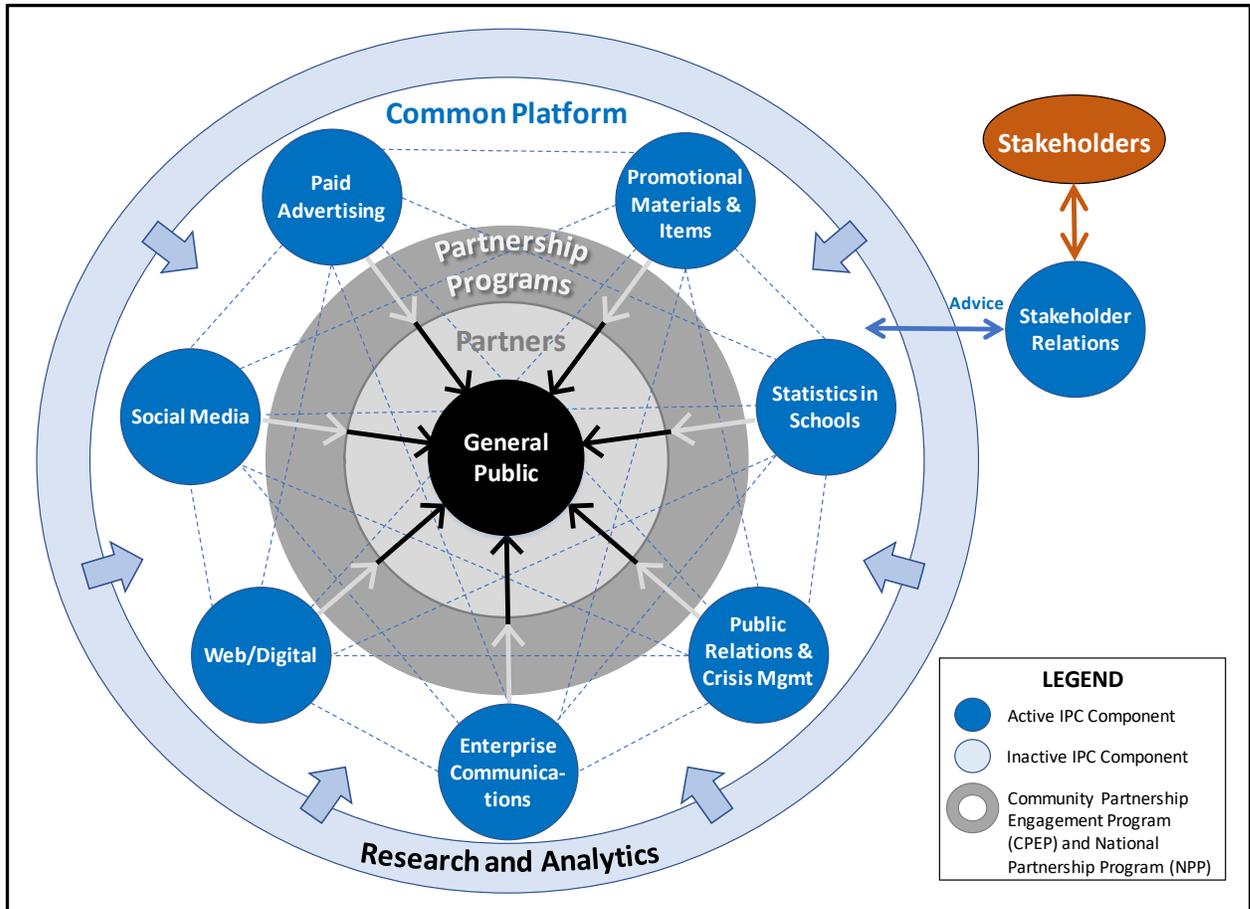


Figure 2: IPC Components and Programs for Engaging with the General Public

As illustrated, seven of the eight components are used to engage with the general public directly or through the partnership programs and partners. These seven components rely on a common platform of infrastructure (e.g., the 2020 Census website) and messaging, which is informed by rigorous research and analytics as well as advice from stakeholders (the eighth component, Stakeholder Relations, is shown on the right side of the figure).

The next two figures show how the components and partnership programs interact with the other two audiences. Figure 3 shows that only four of the components are active during the recruitment advertising phase where IPC is supporting the Field Infrastructure operation (FLDI) in communicating to potential applicants (i.e., the applicant pool). These four components are Paid Advertising, Social Media, Web/Digital, and Enterprise Communications. The partnership programs and partners actively participate in this phase. The platform used during recruiting (referred to as the Recruiting Platform) is different from the common platform used for the IPC activities associated with the public as shown above

in Figure 2. This is because partnership and communications activities targeted at the applicant pool use different infrastructure and messaging from those targeted at the general public.

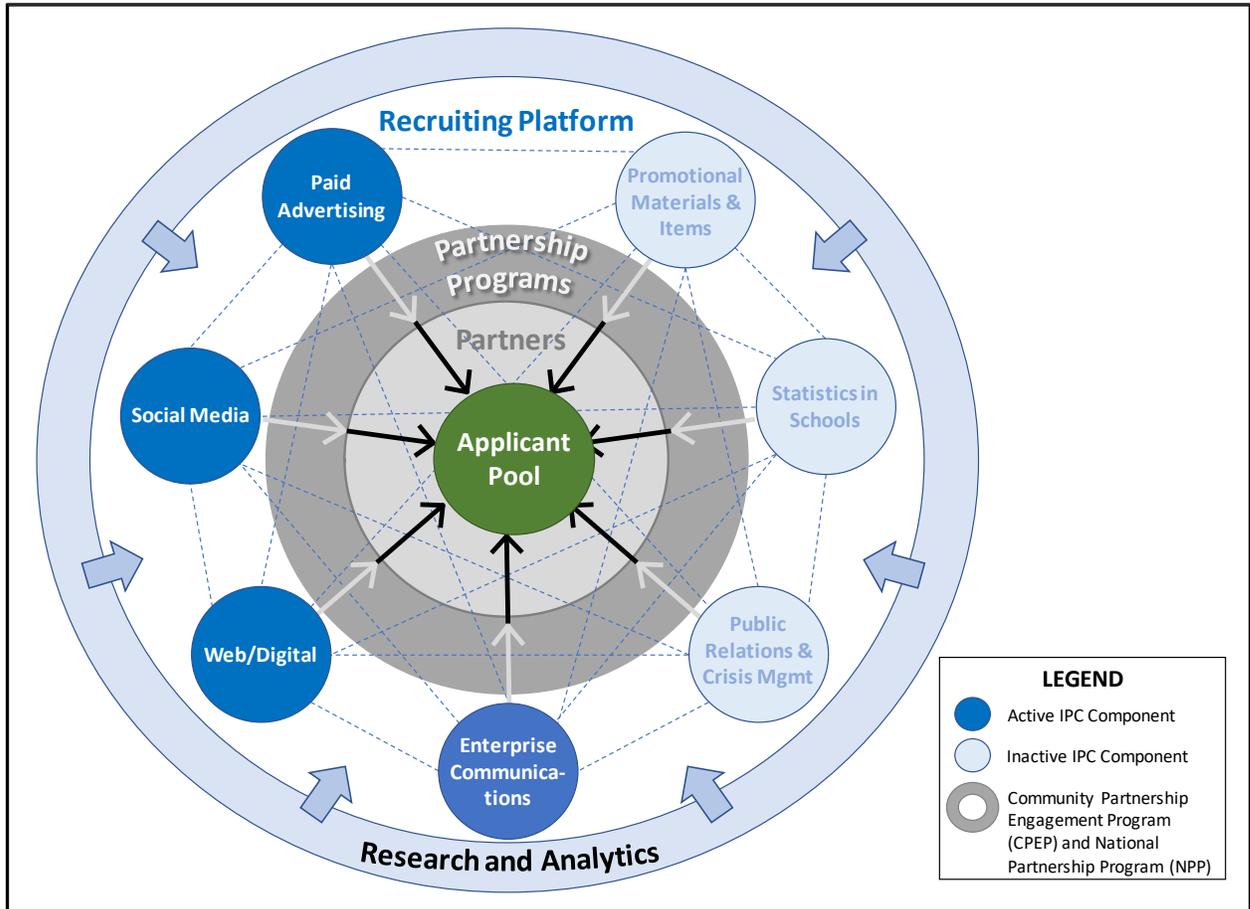


Figure 3: IPC Components and Programs for Engaging with the Applicant Pool

Figure 4 below shows the components actively used to target the data users. These include the four components used to support recruiting as well as the public relations portion of the Public Relations and Crisis Management component. Paid advertising will only be used if funds are available. The partnership programs and partners play an active role in supporting communications around data dissemination. The platform used for this audience is the same as for the general public; however, the messaging will be different, focusing on the dissemination of the data products.

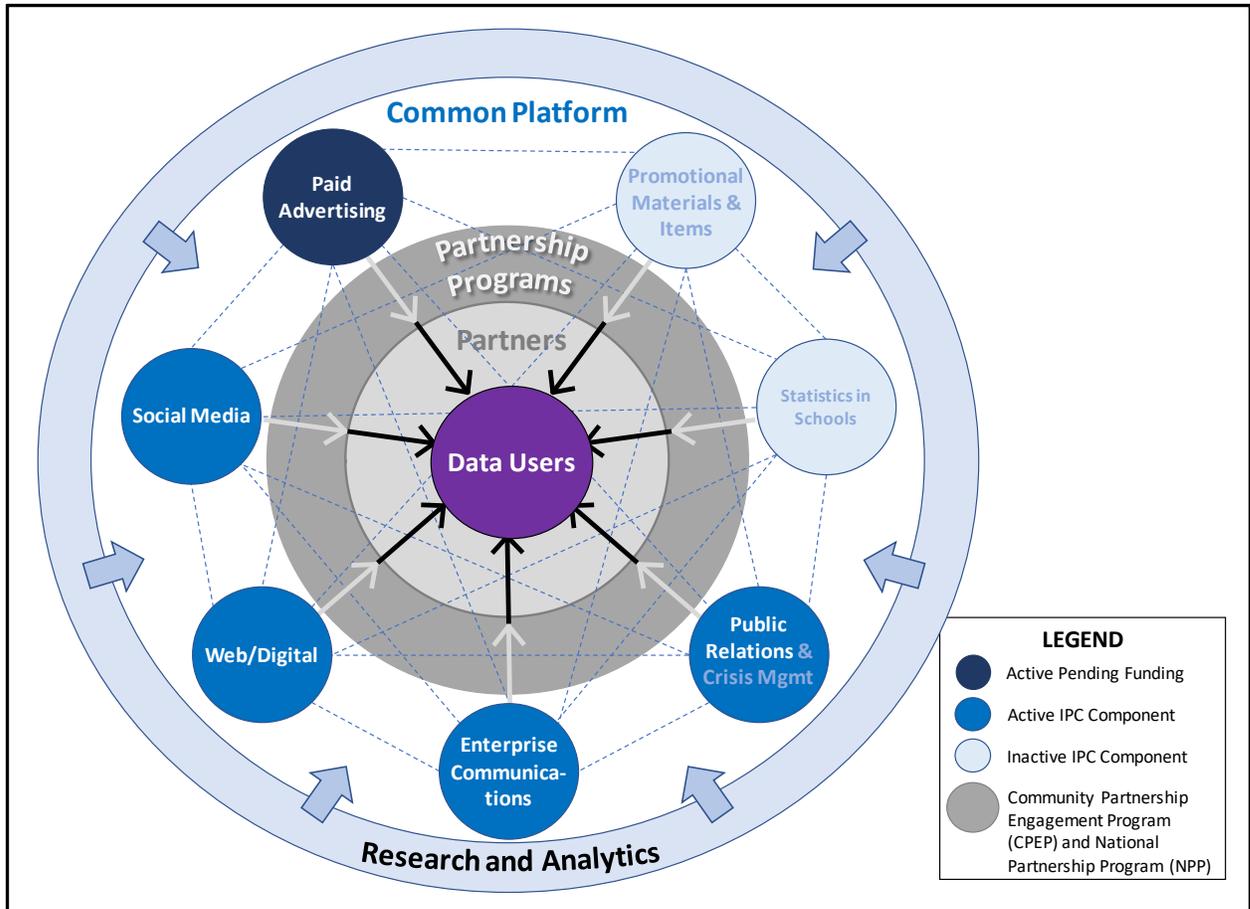


Figure 4: IPC Components and Programs for Engaging with the Data Users

IPC also provides communications support to other operations that involve or require interactions with the public, including:

- Working with local partners to assist in finding training sites for in-person training.
- Providing messaging for crisis management situations that require changing the standard messages provided when someone calls a Census Questionnaire Assistance center.
- Informing the local community about upcoming census field operations that will be conducted in their areas.

3.3 Key Concepts

As discussed above, a key concept of the 2020 Census Integrated Partnership and Communications operation is the integration of the components. This includes use of a common platform and messaging and a daily monitoring and analysis activity that examines the effectiveness of all components using various metrics from both within the IPC operation as well as from other operations. Figure 5 shows how this works. The IPC operation motivates the public to respond through its integrated partnership and communications campaign. An ongoing campaign optimization effort monitors and analyzes various internal and external metrics, particularly response rates by geographic area and demographic group to assess the effectiveness of the campaign. Based on the analysis, IPC makes adjustments to the components with the goal of increasing campaign effectiveness.

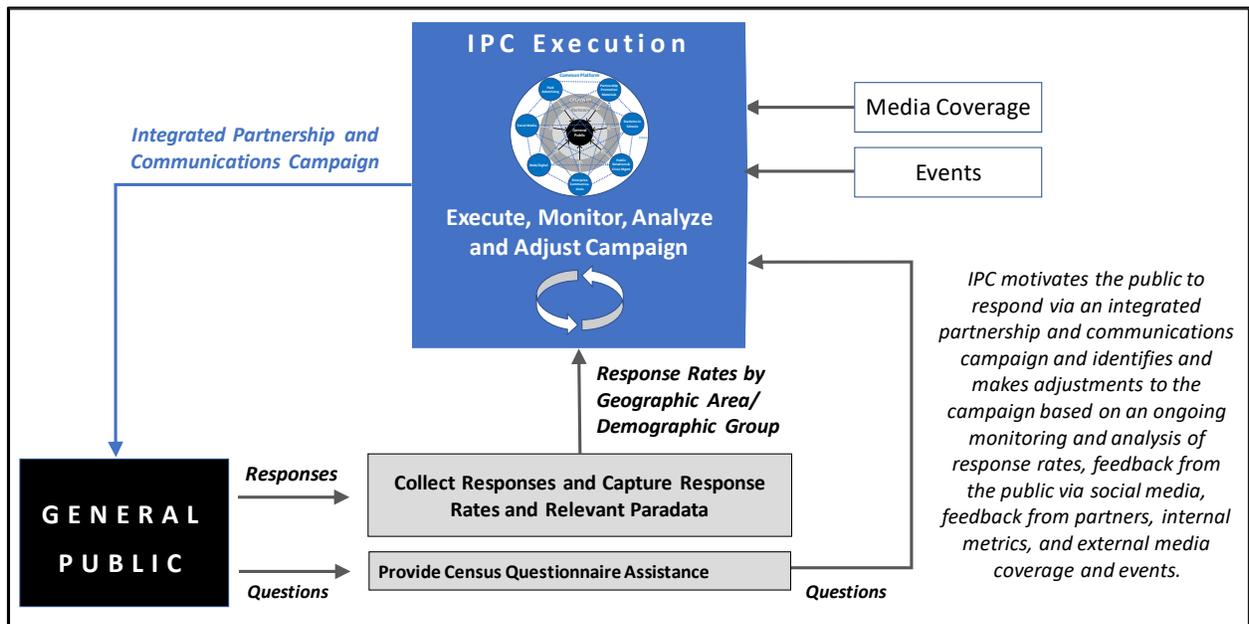


Figure 5: IPC Campaign Optimization Strategy

Another key concept behind the 2020 Census IPC campaign is reliance on a wide network of partners at both the local and national levels.

3.4 IPC Phases

As shown in [Error! Reference source not found.](#), IPC activities span four general phases: Research and Planning, Component Development, Execution, and Evaluation and Close-out.

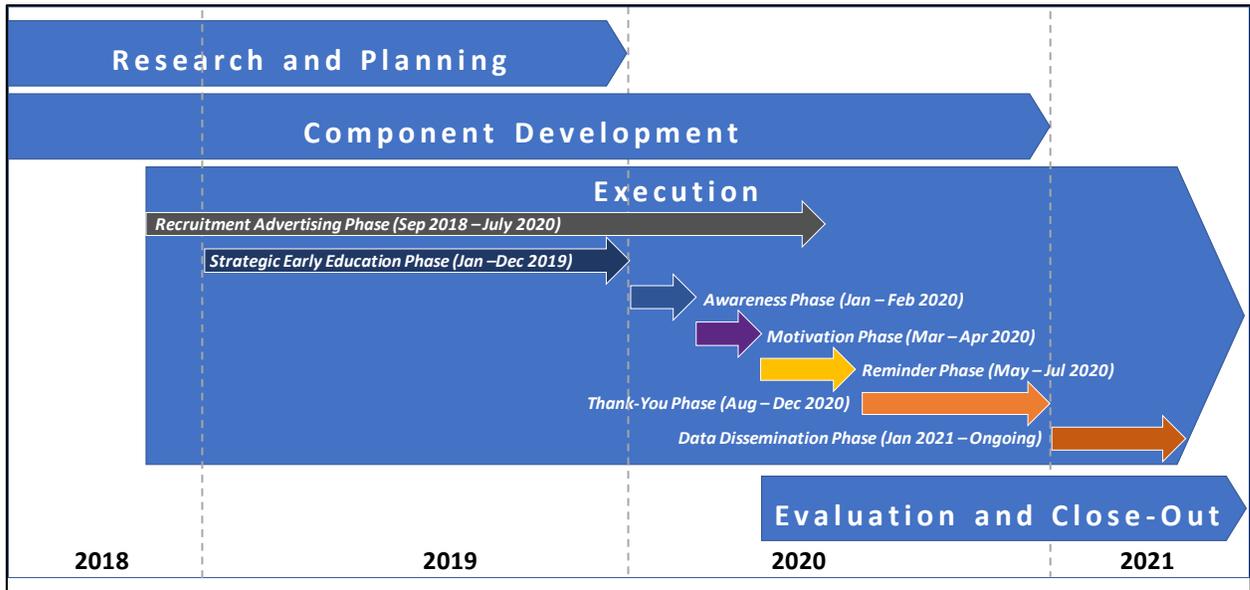


Figure 6: IPC Phases

3.4.1 Research and Planning

Research and planning are the first steps. The results of quantitative and qualitative research and predictive modeling activities provide the key foundational inputs for campaign planning, which maps the entire IPC process.

The Census Bureau has built on previous research and communications efforts in developing the 2020 Census campaign approach. In executing its research initiatives, the Census Bureau has followed the guiding principles described below.

Leading up to the 2020 Census, campaign materials are being pretested and refined in multiple rounds. Throughout 2020 Census campaign planning and execution, we have conducted robust quantitative and qualitative creative testing to investigate how messaging and materials resonate with audiences of varying attitudes, languages, races, and ethnicities. This research has helped us modify communications for maximum impact.

Research is designed to provide actionable results. The Census Bureau’s approach to campaign research and creative testing is to produce tangible findings that we can act on throughout the communications campaign. Because different research methods are used to answer different research questions, our approach includes several initiatives that collectively contribute to an understanding of an increasingly diverse population while ensuring budget and time efficiency.

Our strategy, creative development, and campaign execution have involved multicultural agencies and specialized communications partners working with Census Bureau communications experts from the early days of campaign formation. Cross-team input was integrated into the overarching plan, and this collaboration has allowed multicultural communications experts to develop meaningful creative executions for testing during research with diverse audiences.

Messages are being tailored to specific audiences, especially HTC groups, such as renters, rural audiences, and young and mobile individuals. Research and audience segmentation for the 2020 Census campaign aimed to understand groups that had low response rates in previous data collections. We have used research insights to identify ways to mitigate barriers that prevent HTC groups from responding. Using findings from research conducted specifically for 2020 as well as previous research and data collection efforts, the Census Bureau identified audiences and themes to focus on in the 2020 campaign to effectively drive self-response.

3.4.2 Component Development

Component development involves a variety of activities necessary to ensure that each of the IPC components are ready for execution. These activities encompass the following:

- Develop promotional materials and items component.
- Develop Statistics in Schools component.
- Develop public relations and crisis management component.
- Develop enterprise communications component.
- Develop web/digital component.
- Develop social media component.
- Develop paid advertising component.
- Develop stakeholder relations component.

The develop promotional materials and items component is subdivided into the following operational subactivities:

- Identify promotional materials and items needed.
- Create and review promotional materials and items.

The develop Statistics in Schools (SIS) component is subdivided into the following operational subactivities:

- Conduct detailed SIS planning.
- Prepare SIS training materials.
- Develop SIS website content.
- Conduct SIS partnership and school outreach.
- Develop requirements/content for SIS promotional materials and items.
- Develop and deliver classroom materials.

The develop public relations (PR) and crisis management component is subdivided into the following operational subactivities:

- Develop public relations strategy and milestones.
- Develop public relations website content.
- Determine needs and requirements/content for PR and crisis management promotional materials and items.
- Create PR-specific promotional materials and items.
- Create and disseminate background materials.

The develop enterprise communications component involves developing avenues to communicate with Census Employees and is managed by the Public Information Office's Internal Communications Team. Such communications include:

- Broadcast emails.
- Internal intranet announcements.

- Employee newsletter.

The develop web/digital component is subdivided into the following operational subactivities:

- Create design for 2020 Census website.
- Review and test 2020 Census website design.
- Develop 2020 Census website.
- Test 2020 Census website.
- Prepare to launch 2020 Census website.
- Launch 2020 Census website.

The develop social media component is subdivided into the following operational subactivities:

- Create social media strategy.
- Develop and conduct social media training.
- Develop social media customer service approach.
- Stand up social media platforms.
- Prepare and post social media content.

The develop paid advertising component is subdivided into the following operational subactivities:

- Create paid advertising content.
- Develop media plan.
- Purchase ads from national providers.
- Purchase local/hyperlocal ads.

The develop stakeholder relations component operational subactivity includes identifying Census Bureau enterprise programs and offices that manage stakeholder's that have an interest in decennial census operation to establish a core Stakeholder Relations subteam. The subteam

will develop a structured stakeholder engagement plan outlining stakeholder dates of interest, decennial operations dates, and planned communications releases from to ensure release consistent release across all stakeholder groups.

Note the Stakeholder Relations Component differs from other IPC components in that Census Bureau stakeholder management occurs throughout the decade by enterprise programs and not stand-alone decennial operations. To that end, the stakeholder relations component serves as a conduit for the distribution of information and an internal reporting mechanism of stakeholder feedback and requests.

3.4.3 Execution

The execution phase is divided into six communication phases that correspond to the timing of the data collection operations:

- **Strategic Early Education Phase (March 2019 – January 2020)** – The goal of this first phase is to build public awareness and understanding of the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau will form relationships with and will conduct outreach to members of the media, particularly multicultural media outlets. This is particularly important to inform long-form feature stories and long-lead publications.
- **Awareness Phase (January 2020 – February 2020)** – Throughout this phase, the objective for public relations activities is to broaden the population’s understanding of how to respond to the census and how they benefit from participating. To accomplish this, we will create “aha!” moments for reporters—and by extension, their audiences—in the form of “I had no idea that my participation in the census made this possible.” During this phase, we will illustrate the numerous ways in which census data directly affects decisions on matters of national and local importance: education, employment, veterans’ services, public health care, rural development, the environment, transportation, and housing. We will also work with partnership specialists who further enhance our relationships with influential stakeholders involved in these matters.
- **Motivation Phase (March – May 2020)** – Once the self-response option is available, public relations efforts will focus on encouraging participation in the 2020 Census and driving self-response. Recognizing that no two markets are alike, the Census Bureau will mobilize the Field Division to work in local markets to tailor strategies to suit the nuances and culture of the area.

- **Reminder Phase (May – July 2020)** – During this phase, public relations efforts will be instrumental in supporting the final push to participate in the 2020 Census. Given the goal of this campaign phase—to encourage census response, especially among HTC populations and in areas of low response—outreach will be hypertargeted at the local level. Campaign optimization efforts, which include monitoring response rates, will be coordinated with public relations outreach to facilitate communications encouraging response among people living in tracts with low response rates. This phase will urge target audiences to participate by reminding them that the census is winding down and that census participation is a key opportunity to help shape their communities. The Census Bureau will work with media specialists to provide customized content and localized pitch angles to be served on local television and radio and on appropriate multicultural media outlets. One final media-generating event is planned for this phase to highlight the start of the Nonresponse Followup operation and to remind the population of the importance of responding to the census.
- **Thank You Phase (August 2020 – December 2020)** – Public relations will help sustain public engagement with the Census Bureau after the decennial enumeration is complete. Messages will focus on thanking the public for their participation in the 2020 Census, using preliminary insights from the enumeration (such as response rates) to build engagement for the subsequent data dissemination phase.
- **Data Dissemination Phase (January 2021 – ongoing)** – After the 2020 Census counts have been delivered to the president (by December 2020), insights derived from the census data will provide useful news hooks to further emphasize the importance of data collection efforts. Ongoing story development using these data will generate further support for the Census Bureau, creating a backdrop against which ongoing and intercensal data collections will take place. The aim of public relations communications issued during this phase is to keep recognition of the Census Bureau high, encouraging sustained engagement with census data and further data collections.

3.4.4 Evaluation and Close-Out

After the completion of the IPC operation, lessons learned debriefings will be conducted, field staff employment will begin to wind down, assessment reports will be written, the Integrated Communications Contract will be closed out, and a formal evaluation of that contract will be completed. All materials and items left over will be inventoried, and where appropriate, held for use in the intercensal years before the 2030 Census.

3.5 Partnership Program

The Census Bureau relies on the support of partners throughout the country to achieve a complete and accurate count. Partnership outreach is a critical function in our audience-focused approach to encouraging self-response and participation by the public in 2020.

Strong partnerships are critical for reaching HTC audiences that represent a variety of cultures and ethnicities. The Census Bureau engages these audiences by enlisting national and community-based organizations and other partners that have worked hand in hand with these communities and have gained their trust over the years. Partners play a key role in reaching and persuading respondents that the census is relevant to their lives, their communities, and their causes—and that the Census Bureau is committed to ensuring data privacy and security.

Based on the insights of our existing partners and on our experience from previous censuses—seeing what did and did not work well—we developed a flexible outreach and engagement approach that gives all potential partners a chance to contribute. This audience-focused approach ensures that our efforts fit the needs of our partners.

- **National Partnership Program.** NPP is executing partnership engagements with major national corporations, nonprofits, associations, and government entities across the country and providing materials for them to use in reaching their audiences.
- **Community Partnership Engagement Program.** CPEP staff work out of field offices and locations throughout the United States. This network of more than 1,500 partnership specialists knows their audiences well and is poised to engage with local and regional partners. All partnership staff use materials in various languages, but CPEP staff distribute tailored pieces to engage community members on small and very direct levels.
- **Census Open Innovation Labs (COIL).** The Census Bureau's COIL office focuses on engaging high-impact potential partners and encouraging them to use their own creativity and ideas to promote census completion. COIL has been hosting and will continue to host events and workshops in which leading organizations in digital media, education, and activism brainstorm ways to improve the count. These organizations leave the events with their own action items for fostering participation and further promoting partnership among members of their networks.

These three programs are making requests and suggestions to partners about how to encourage a complete and accurate count within their respective communities. Partnership programs are assisting partners in tailoring their participation based on available time and resources. In direct conversations with partners, the Census Bureau is discussing promotional techniques ranging from low effort to large scale. Further, the breadth of the three-pronged approach ensures that partners' requests for access to census data, trainings, and subject matter experts are fulfilled while also facilitating opportunities for partners to share what they are doing in their community.

Additional information about the National Partnership Program (NPP) and the Community Partnership Engagement Program (CPEP) can be found in the following programs plans:

- 2020 Census Detailed Operational Plan for Integrated Partnership and Communications Operation (IPC): <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/2020-census/planning-management/planning-docs/IPC-detailed-op-plan.html>
- 2020 Census Partnership Plan: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/2020-census/planning-management/2020-partners.html>
- 2020 Census Integrated Communication Plan: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/2020-census/planning-management/planning-docs/integrated_com_plan.html

3.6 Foundational Research to Guide Creative Development

The Barriers, Attitudes, and Motivators Study (CBAMS) was the foundation for building an Integrated Partnership and Communications campaign for the 2020 Census. It was comprised of a survey and a series of focus groups designed to better understand the nation's attitudes toward the 2020 Census, potential barriers that may inhibit participation, and possible motivators of responding. Major findings from the results of the CBAMS can be found in the reports listed in the next section.

3.6.1 Survey Findings

The 2020 CBAMS Survey was designed to understand attitudes and behaviors that relate to census participation across demographic characteristics. The survey was designed to provide

inputs aimed at informing and enhancing the quality of audience-specific messaging for the 2020 Census communications campaign.

The 2020 CBAMS Survey was administered by mail and internet between February and April of 2018 to a sample of households across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Adults ages 18 and older were eligible to take the survey, which was offered in both English and Spanish. Each household received a prepaid incentive and up to five mailings inviting them to participate in the survey. Approximately 17,500 people responded to the survey, and the results were then weighted to be representative of all householders in the United States ages 18 and older.

The 2020 CBAMS Survey responses were used to compare barriers, attitudes, knowledge levels, and motivators related to participation in the 2020 Census. Across demographic characteristics, with a focus on differences across race, gender, education, and country of birth. Survey results helped us understand the attitudes and knowledge gaps that the 2020 Census campaign need to address for each audience segment.

The full report and its findings are available at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/2020-census/planning-management/final-analysis/2020-report-cbams-study-survey.html>.

3.6.2 Focus Groups Findings

The qualitative component of the 2020 CBAMS research enabled us to hear directly from people who did not speak English or Spanish; had low literacy levels in those languages; or were otherwise unlikely, unwilling, or unable to respond to the quantitative survey. Focus groups provided deeper and more specific insights than could be obtained through the survey, especially for HTC populations. The Census Bureau drew from its team of multicultural and research experts to plan the design and fielding of the focus groups, which were conducted with individuals from minority demographic groups and other audiences at risk of low self-response. Particular emphasis of the focus groups was on areas that may be underrepresented in the survey, such as households in rural areas; young, single, mobile individuals; and no- or low-internet proficiency.

The number and makeup of focus groups were based on available funding, recommendations from our multicultural partners, and modeling activities, which helped determine priority audiences. To achieve the most useful results, we selected participants who varied in age, language, race, ethnicity, sex, and technology and media usage.

There were 42 total focus groups that took place in 14 locations between March and April of 2018. Focus groups were held in locations across the country, spanning rural and urban areas and regions from east to west. This range in location, especially, helped to ensure adequate representation of the country's diverse population and of the campaign's target audience groups. Among those sampled were HTC racial and ethnic minorities including American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN), Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI), and Middle Eastern or North African (MENA). Historically, these groups all have among the lowest propensities to respond to the decennial census, and the focus groups helps ensure that the Census Bureau had sufficient and actionable research to guide outreach to these groups as we moved forward with the 2020 Census communications campaign.

A full report on the execution of 2020 CBAMS and its findings is available at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/2020-census/planning-management/final-analysis/2020-report-cbams-focus-group.html>