

NNIP Partners Support a Complete Census Count in 2020

A summary of Partner engagement and activities

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THE ROLE OF PARTNERS

NNIP Partners are playing a crucial role in providing support for a complete count in 2020. In a recent survey, **100 percent of Partners said they planned to participate in 2020 Census efforts, while only half said they had been involved in 2010.**

Partners are experts in working with **neighborhood-level data that can help contextualize and focus local outreach efforts.** As trusted data providers, Partners serve as conveners, bringing together diverse organizations in conversation around the census.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Data and Technology Groups Can Improve the 2020 Census Count](#)
NNIP brief on how to get involved locally

[Mobilizing Data-Driven Local Outreach for the 2020 Census](#)
NNIP website with resources and project examples

[The Vulnerable, Vital 2020 Census](#)
Urban Institute analysis of undercounts

Every 10 years, the US Census Bureau aims to count **every US resident once, only once, and in the right place.** Less than a year from its start, Census 2020 faces several challenges that could result in an inaccurate count. The US Commerce Department's proposal of a citizenship question, the new internet-response option, and a general distrust of the government all pose threats to a complete count. The Urban Institute has estimated that **the count could leave out 900,000 to 4 million people,** an outcome that would affect how many political representatives and how much federal funding undercounted communities receive. Overcoming these barriers and supporting a complete census count in 2020 will require a coordinated and comprehensive effort by community partners.

As the coordinator of the **National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP)**, the Urban Institute is learning about 2020 Census mobilization in communities across the country. NNIP is a network of independent organizations in 31 cities that share a mission to ensure that all communities have access to data and the skills necessary for using information to advance equity in neighborhoods. We conducted a survey of NNIP Partner organizations to understand their plans for supporting a complete count in 2020. *All 31 of the responding Partners said they intend to participate in census activities.* Here are three major takeaways from our survey about how Partners are involved:

1. PARTNERS ARE CONTRIBUTING TO LOCAL CENSUS COALITIONS

We found that NNIP Partner organizations are natural collaborators in this effort; they understand what is at risk in 2020, are embedded in communities as trusted data providers, and can amplify the importance of the census. Most Partners are supporting their **Complete Count Committee (CCC)**, formal coalitions of community voices established to encourage census responses. Over 85 percent of those reporting said their local governments or community coalitions had established a CCC. These committees provide an infrastructure that Partners can plug into, and about 60 percent of Partners responding said they planned to engage with them. Almost half of Partners responding to the question on CCC involvement said they were already committee members. Some Partners

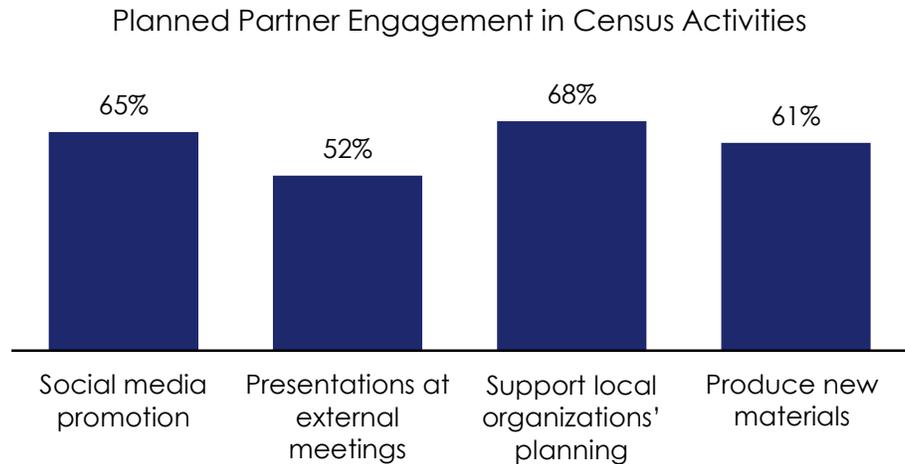
planned to provide information to their CCC about challenges, such as the undercount or barriers to responding; others planned to conduct data analysis to inform the CCC's outreach.

2. PARTNERS ARE LEVERAGING KNOWLEDGE OF COMMUNITY ISSUES, LOCAL DATA, AND RELATIONSHIPS

Partners are participating in local census efforts in various ways that fit their capacity and mission. To encourage civic participation in the 2020 Census, most Partners are serving as trusted messengers in their communities, providing accurate and up-to-date information and underscoring the importance of the census for community representation and resources. Data Driven

Detroit has [published blog posts](#) about the importance

of a complete count. One of our Boston Partners, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, is providing technical assistance to municipalities in its region that have large numbers of hard-to-count tracts. The Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance is using [local data on births](#) to identify areas for targeted outreach and [new national data on computer access](#) to find places where people completing the census online might have difficulties. Community Information Now in San Antonio presented [to organizations focused on young children](#) about why the census matters and how it affects their county's families. Additional examples and resources can be found on the [NNIP website](#).



Source: NNIP survey of Partners' 2020 Census activities, n = 31.

3. PARTNERS ARE FOCUSING ON MARGINALIZED GROUPS, INCLUDING FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Some groups are more likely to be missed by the census than others. Communities of color, immigrants, young children, and renters have [long been undercounted](#). The census count is used to apportion federal funding and draw legislative districts, so an inaccurate count would mean that these populations receive less than their fair share of resources and representation. Partners were asked about local activities focused on ensuring a complete count of historically undercounted populations, and of those that responded, 95 percent said they were aware of activities focused on immigrants. Efforts focused on the Latinx community were the second most common. However, only 62 percent were aware of activities specifically focused on families with young children. This lower share implies the need for more local efforts to educate families, child advocates, and service providers about the census and ensure that all young children are counted.

To be successful in getting out the count, communities need to connect with people in groups that have traditionally been undercounted on the importance of the census to them and how to complete the form. Although a citizenship question was ultimately not added, its proposal exacerbated community concerns about privacy. In our survey, Partners highlighted "fear of repercussions" and "distrust in government" as the two concerns they had heard expressed most frequently.