



UNITED NATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
STATISTICS DIVISION

ESA/STAT/AC.289/Bk.8  
14 May 2015

**Meeting of the Expert Group on  
International Statistical Classifications  
New York, 19-22 May 2015**

**Approaches to measuring Indigenous requirements for Official Statistics**

Statistics New Zealand



# **Approaches to measuring Indigenous requirements for Official Statistics**

**A Perspective from Statistics New Zealand**

## **Background**

Statistics New Zealand has for many years published information about the Māori population in New Zealand. This has been primarily driven by the need of the New Zealand Government to understand how the Māori population compared with the New Zealand population and other sub-populations. This has given rise to a range of what is called statistics about Māori. An example of this includes a Māori unemployment rate which is primarily derived from data collected across the population and broken down by ethnicity (in this case Māori). The underlying conceptual framework for these statistics (e.g. how unemployment is defined by the ILO) is not based on the Māori World view (Te Ao Māori).

Māori aspirations are shaped by a Māori world view for Māori development, or to put it another way, Māori measure success from a Māori world view, not the view underlying most statistics. Therefore Māori have specific information needs to support Māori-led development. These information needs are consistent with Māori aspirations for community and iwi (tribal) development. The information need reflects the current post Treaty of Waitangi settlement environment where Māori are undertaking their own development and measuring the success of this develop from a Māori world view. The benefits of Māori development are providing benefits to New Zealand as a whole. Therefore, New Zealand and Māori need statistics that reflect the Māori world view.

This issue was recognised as early as 2002 with the publication of “Towards a Māori Statistics Framework: A discussion document” which identified the dimensions that comprise a Māori World View and the areas of interest for Māori development. This postulated statistics and the infrastructure required to produce them such as classifications to measure these areas of interest from the dimensions of a Māori world view. This framework covered the needs of all users such as the Government and Māori themselves.

Since 2002 two themes have converged:

1. Statistics New Zealand has started to measure more qualitative (rather than quantitative) topics such as perceptions in the General Social Survey (GSS) and other surveys
2. Statistics New Zealand has applied the Māori Statistics Framework in developing our Te Kupenga survey

This has proved successful in measuring qualitative concepts and in developing statistics that attempt to have a Te Ao Māori perspective.

## **Current initiatives**

### He Arotahi Tatauranga

Statistics New Zealand has taken the “Towards a Māori Statistics Framework: A discussion document” concept and developed it into a tool for Māori information needs called “He Arotahi Tatauranga”. It is a resource for those working on statistics for and about Māori. It is intended to be used across the New Zealand Official Statistics System, but primarily by Māori to organise and use their information in a way that supports their development and well-being consistent with their aspirations as a people.

The tool has been socialised within Statistics New Zealand and to a limited extent among the OSS partners and some Māori groups. Currently work is being done on how to make the tool part of the Statistics New Zealand operating model. Other government agencies are being encouraged to use the tool when thinking about measurement and building information

management systems. He Arotahi Tatauranga is seen as being useful to Māori groups to help them understand what data they hold, and build information management systems to allow them to use and produce their own statistics. The tool could be used to:

- build an information management system from a Māori perspective
- think statistically about the concepts and topics relevant to Māori development from a Māori viewpoint
- identify what type of measurements would suit a user
- inform a user if an indicator already exists that could be used for such measurement.

### Te Kupenga: Maori well-being in 2013

Te Kupenga is Statistics New Zealand's first survey of Maori well-being. It comprises a range of statistics that better reflect Māori concepts and gives an overall picture of the social, cultural and economic well-being of Maori in New Zealand. The experience of running this survey, which was developed before completion of He Arotahi Tatauranga, will be used to assist in developing the next survey topics and also for modules and supplements for other household surveys.

### Tatauranga Umanga Māori

In looking at the concepts of Māori business and Māori in business, Statistics New Zealand has published Tatauranga Umanga Māori in 2014 which looked at those businesses that can be identified as Māori business from Administrative data. Work is continuing to expand the population identified and developing concepts around defining a Māori Business.

### Ngā Tumu Herenga

One piece of infrastructure that is required to produce statistics for and about Māori is classifications that relate to the Māori world. One example of this is the classification of iwi (tribe). There is an existing classification but work is underway on improving its ability to identify and measure Māori groupings that are relevant for both the Government and Māori.

### Partnering with Māori

To gain an understanding of the Māori world view partnerships have been formed with Māori. This has been critical as products that have been developed need to relate to this world view to be successful. There has been input from Māori groups and experts into He Arotahi Tatauranga, Te Kupenga, Tatauranga Umanga Māori and other statistical developments. This has been critical to their development and success, and provides feedback for further development.

### Reflections

The process of development frameworks and products to measure indigenous people must be undertaken in a partnership with these indigenous people. Statistics New Zealand would not have been able to do what has been achieved thus far without this partnership. Māori hold the mandate on determining whether the processes are on track or not. There is a strong need to continue to partner with Māori to further develop delivery of information for Māori and empowering Māori to use their own information.

It is better to try things and learn from this than to ignore the issue – He Arotahi Tatauranga is not seen as the final product but as a positive tool for further development with use.

It is important to acknowledge that there are different world views and therefore different ways of conceptualising the same topic – one way of seeing the world is not the only way of seeing the world.