



Letter from the President

The year 2018 seems to have flown by. I have not managed to achieve all the things I would have liked to as President, but the IASS enters 2019 as a healthy organisation. We are able to support a number of workshops and conferences each year and for me it has been a pleasure to be able to liaise with the organisers of these. In 2018 the IASS supported events in China, France, Latvia and UK. We have already agreed to support events in Spain, Italy, Sweden and Nigeria in 2019. I am particularly pleased about the workshop in Nigeria, which will have already taken place by the time you read this newsletter. It is not part of a regular series of workshops, but is instead a training event made possible solely by the existence of the IASS funding. I hope that we will be able to encourage and support more capacity-building events of this kind in developing countries in the future. And I hope that we will be able to include a colourful report of the Nigerian workshop in the next issue of the Survey Statistician.

If you haven't made a New Year's resolution this year, you could do worse than offering your expert services to a worthy cause. Survey statisticians are in great demand from non-profit organisations of various kinds and even just a little advice can be invaluable in setting a project off in the right direction. Both the Royal Statistical Society in the UK and the American Statistical Association run schemes to put volunteering statisticians in touch with needy non-profit organisations. Make a difference in 2019 and earn yourself a whole lot of gratitude! Details of how the schemes work and how you can contribute can be found at the respective websites:

- Statisticians for Society (RSS): (http://www.rss.org.uk/RSS/Get_involved/Statisticians_for_Society.aspx)
- Statistics Without Borders (ASA): (<https://community.amstat.org/statisticswithoutborders>)

A privilege of being President is that I get to choose who should present the President's invited lecture at the World Statistics Congress. I am delighted to announce that Gero Carletto from the World Bank will present the lecture at the congress in Kuala Lumpur in August. Gero has a wealth of experience in cross-national surveys, notably as manager of the Living Standards Measurement Survey and the Integrated Surveys on Agriculture. At the Center for Development Data (C4D2) in Rome, he is leading a programme to foster methodological innovation and strengthen capacity in household surveys in low- and middle-income countries. His lecture, "A Thing of the Past? Household Surveys in the New Global Data Ecosystem" will make the point that the countries that need good surveys the most are the ones that can least afford them. Gero will focus on a number of methodological and technological innovations to improve the accuracy, timeliness and cost-effectiveness of survey instruments, with a focus on low- and middle-income countries with scarce resources and weak capacity, and will make recommendations for future methodological research to address some of the current trends and to enhance the value of household survey data in the evolving global data ecosystem. Don't miss it!

Peter Lynn, President