# REPORT ON THE RETRIEVAL OF DATA FOR SMALL AREAS OF MICROCOMPUTERS (REDATAM) NATIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP

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# Introduction

As part of efforts to improve national statistical capacity in the use of the Retrieval of Data for small Areas of Microcomputer (REDATAM) software, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), conducted a week-long National Training Workshop for Trinidad and Tobago, from 7 – 11 December 2009, in Port of Spain.

Through this workshop, database experts from the various ministries and the Central Statistical Office (CSO) were introduced to the CREATE and PROCESS modules of the REDATAM software, which could be used for database creation and analysis of data. This workshop was the second in a series of workshops aimed at promoting human-resource and capacity-building at the national and regional levels in the use of the REDATAM software. It also served as a qualifier for a follow-up workshop on the use of the web-publishing application of the software to be held in 2010.

The facilitators for the workshop were drawn from ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean and the ECLAC Population Division (CELADE).

# Participation

Twenty six representatives from various line ministries and the CSO in Trinidad and Tobago attended the workshop. In addition, representatives from the national statistical offices in Aruba, Dominica and Jamaica were in attendance. Of the total participants, 14 (54%) were females and 12 (46%) were males. The full list of participants is annexed to this report.

# Highlights and outcomes of the training

## Opening session

A short opening session which featured remarks from by Mr. Neil Pierre, Director of ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, Mr. Dave Clement, Director of the CSO, and Ms. Leah-Mari Richards, Assistant Representative of UNFPA Subregional Office for the Caribbean, preceded the workshop.

The Director of CSO recognized the contribution of UNFPA and ECLAC in facilitating the conduct of this national training session and spoke to the significant contributions made by the organizations in improving national statistical capacity within the CSO. He highlighted the features of the software and underscored its usefulness in facilitating quick and widespread dissemination of census results. He appealed to participants to take full advantage of the training and suggested the convening of a follow-up course in 2010.

In his remarks, the Director of ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean endorsed the statements made by the Director of CSO. He traced the development of the software and reflected on the initiatives that had been taken in the subregion to ensure national statistical capacity-building. He emphasized the importance of data, first to promoting evidence-based policy formulation and government planning and then, ultimately, to the development process. He concluded by highlighting the features of the software and the benefits to be derived from the training.

The Assistant Representative of UNFPA expressed her organization's pleasure at facilitating the workshop and stated that the commitment to building capacity to collect, analyze and utilize data for purposes of planning and development was at the core of the UNFPA Strategic Plan. In the context of Trinidad and Tobago, she noted the value of forums such as this training workshop in achieving the goals of the Vision 2020 and the Millennium Development Goals.

**Training outcomes**

The training focused primarily on the CREATE and PROCESS modules used for database creation and data processing, respectively. Participants were introduced to the full functionality of each module and had opportunities to generate results and get hands-on practice in database creation and analysis. As a means of illustrating the usefulness of the software for creating and processing census databases, participants were allowed to work with a sample of the dataset from Population and Housing Census conducted in Trinidad and Tobago in 2000. The exercises afforded an appreciation of some of the issues related to the data processing and database creation.

Through the workshop, participants were also able to gain an understanding of the unique features of the software which allowed users to manipulate large data files to produce statistics for the smallest geographical areas defined in the data. In addition, they were also alerted to the value of the software, not as a stand alone, but as a tool which could be used alongside other existing statistical and database packages. For instance, they learned how to create a database in REDATAM using data files that had been compiled with other software such as SPSS, CSPro and xBase. They were also made aware of the limitations of the software in generating only some basic statistics, and learned how to complement the software's speed and geographical processing capabilities with other statistical software to generate more advanced statistics.

Participants' mastery of the new skills was assessed through a series of class and individual exercises. Upon completion of the training, participants were awarded with certificates of participation. Participants were encouraged to make full use of the newly acquired skills and knowledge. Towards that end, they were apprised of the mediums for communicating their experiences/challenges with the software and for seeking support. These included the Caribbean Network of REDATAM Users which was coordinated by ECLAC and the REDATAM Group on Facebook.

<div align="center">

**Summary**

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The ensuing evaluation summary provides an account of participants views of various aspects of the workshop.

**Prior training in REDATAM**

Of the 23 responses for this item, 2 of the respondents had received prior training in the software and 21 (91%) were being introduced to the software for the very first time.

Figure 1
**Participants' prior training in Redatam**
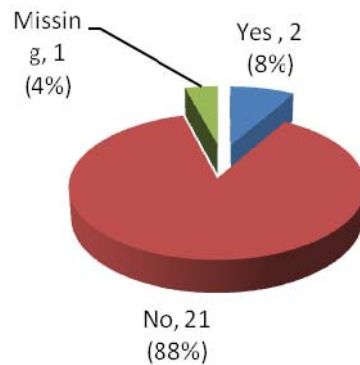


## Content, delivery and organization

Participants were asked to rate elements of the content, delivery and organization of the workshop along a 5-point scale from "very good" to "poor". Generally, participants provided very positive ratings for the individual elements related to workshop content and organization.

Participants provided very positive ratings for the pace and structure of the sessions, with 21% selecting "very good", and 71% indicating "good". In terms of the quality of the reference materials and handouts, 92% rated this aspect of the workshop as "very good" or "good"; the remaining 8% indicated that it was "adequate". Participants provided similar ratings for their views on the effectiveness of the activities and the pitch of the content, with more than 70% of them rating those aspects as either "very good" or "good".

## Facilitators

Participants were asked to rate several statements about the facilitators and their delivery of the workshop against a 5-point scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". With the exception of one participant who did not respond and another who disagreed with the statement "facilitators encouraged questions and participation", all other participants "strongly agreed" or "agreed" to the three statements made in this section. Thus, 96% to 100% of the participants gave positive ratings to the statements about the trainers' knowledge and preparation; the manner in which they engaged participation and the coverage of the training material.

## Facilities

Feedback on the facilities for the training was generally positive. The location of the training appeared most appealing, with 79% of the participants agreeing to the convenience of the location. Participants' responses to the item on the ambience of the training space (its comfort and conduciveness to learning) varied significantly with 17% maintaining a "neutral" stance or disagreeing with that statement. The full disaggregation of the responses to those two items is given in figure 2.

Figure 2
**Participants' views of the training venue**
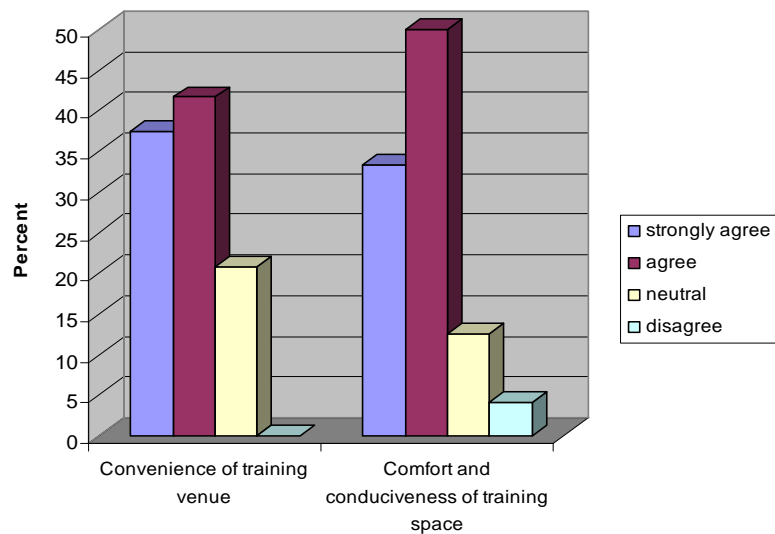


## Impact

Participants were asked to rate the impact of the training in terms of some key factors such as the relevance of the training to their needs; the usefulness of the software; and the introduction to new approaches and techniques. Participants were required to rate those factors along a continuum from "highly useful" to "highly inadequate".

In terms of the relevance of the training, the majority (83%) of respondents felt that training was "highly useful" or "useful". With the exception of one other participant who deemed it "inadequate", all remaining participants indicated that it was "adequate". Participants registered similar views for the value of the training in introducing new approaches and techniques.

With regard to the usefulness of the software to their jobs, all participants rated this positively with 83% stating that it was "highly useful" or "useful" and 17% rating it as "adequate".

## Expectations of the training

Of the 23 participants who responded to this item, 20 (83%) indicated that the training had met their expectations; 3 (13%) stated that it had not and 1 (4%) did not provide a response. Participants were prompted for further comments to support their position and in response they indicated the following:

- "However I needed to see how it can be used in a network environment"
- "It taught me about things that I wasn't familiar with, even though I have worked in the general area for quite a while"
- "Short period a lot covered"
- "Will assist with preliminary assessment, analysis and presentation of census and other data"
- "More training was needed personally for me in the use of syntax"

In addition to assessing elements of expectations and impact, the assessment also sought participants' views on the applicability of their newly acquired skills and the likelihood of putting what was learned into practice. Participants' response to this item is captured in figure 4.

**Figure 4**
**Participants' views of the training venue**
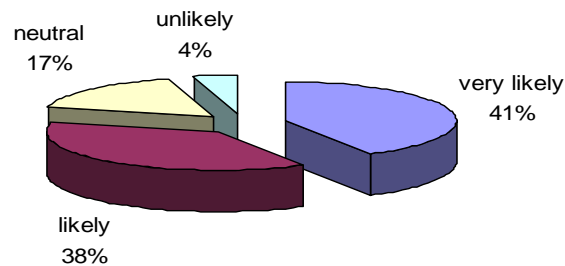


**Responses and comments on open-ended items**

**Strengths of the training**

Participants were asked to comment on the strengths of the training, as follows:

(a) The use of the multi-media and a sound system
(b) The competence and helpfulness of the facilitators
(c) The interactive setting and personal attention
(d) The use of several examples and hands-on exercises
(e) The technical support
(f) Recapping as means of reinforcing main points

**Areas of improvement**

Participants also provided some feedback on areas of improvement which would inform future workshops. A number of comments were registered and a summary of those main points are as follows:

(a) The course was too short and should be at least two weeks to give more in-depth training
(b) Screens should have been larger
(c) Instructors should be very fluent in the language in which they are instructing, in order to be able to explain effectively
(d) The pace of teaching should have been slower and clearer
(e) Facilitators should ensure that all persons were at the same level, as persons who were slower were left behind
(f) More time should be allotted for create module and mapping
(g) Tips on more effective file management should have been provided, as persons had difficulties locating folders
(h) Additional quizzes can be given to test participants' understanding

(i)  Practicals should be done while the facilitator is doing his tutorial

**Additional comments**

In the final segment of the evaluation, participants were provided with an opportunity to share any additional points which they deemed useful for future workshops.  Some participants took that opportunity to provide additional tips on areas of improvement and those were articulated in comments such as:

- "Host can ensure with trainers: (i) all software is installed on PCs before we start training; (ii) all software material used save on PC and in organized folders; (iii) training material as far as possible should be given in soft copies to facilitate distribution"
- "software information can be forwarded to participants before actual workshop"
- "Facilitators need to reduce their lecturing speed"

A few participants took the opportunity to commend the organizers and highlight some of the strengths of the training:

- "The training was helpful and the facilitators were competent"
- "Very good job. Thanks to ECLAC, UNFPA and CSO (T and T)"
- "A lot of material was covered but it was not stressful. I enjoyed it."

Some participants also registered some recommendations for follow-up training:

- "It would be nice to have follow-up assistance in building the command set. The syntax was especially challenging. It would be especially nice to get a manual of troubleshooting techniques"
- "The availability of follow-up and networking is a plus"

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## Annex II
## Training Evaluation Form

**National Training Workshop on REDATAM**
*Central Statistical Office, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago*
*7 – 11 December, 2009*

**WORKSHOP EVALUATION**

In an effort to assess the effectiveness and impact of this workshop, please complete the following evaluation form. Your responses will be invaluable in providing feedback on the overall workshop, identifying areas of weakness and helps improve the organization of future workshops.

| 5. Impact | Highly Useful | Useful | Adequate | Inadequate | Highly Inadequate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Relevance of the training to your needs | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
| Introduction of new approaches and techniques | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
| Usefulness of the software to your job | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**1.** Have you received training in REDATAM prior to this workshop?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

| 2. Content Delivery & Organization | Very Good | Good | Adequate | Below Average | Poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pace and structure of the sessions | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
| Quality of reference materials and handouts | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
| Effectiveness of Activities | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
| Content was pitched at the right level | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

| 3. Facilitators | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The trainers were knowledgeable and well prepared | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
| The trainers were engaging and encouraged questions and participation | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
| The trainers covered the material clearly | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

| 4. Facilities | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The location of the training was convenient | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
| The training space was comfortable and conducive to learning | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

6.     Did the training meet your expectations?     Yes [ ]     No [ ]

    Please comment if you feel necessary:

_____

_____

_____

7.     What is the likelihood of using what you learned in this training?

| Very Likely | Likely | Neutral | Unlikely | Highly Unlikely |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

8.  Strengths of the training:

_____

_____

_____

_____

9.  Areas of improvement:

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. Any other comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

**THANK YOU!!!**

## Annex III

### Responses to quantitative items

Table 1
**Prior experience/ training in REDATAM**

|  |  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Yes | 2 | 8.3 | 8.7 | 8.7 |
|  | No | 21 | 87.5 | 91.3 | 100.0 |
|  | Total | 23 | 95.8 | 100.0 |  |
| Missing | System | 1 | 4.2 |  |  |
| **Total** |  | **24** | **100.0** |  |  |

Table 2
**Pace and structure of sessions**

|  |  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | very good | 5 | 20.8 | 21.7 | 21.7 |
|  | good | 17 | 70.8 | 73.9 | 95.7 |
|  | adequate | 1 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 100.0 |
|  | Total | 23 | 95.8 | 100.0 |  |
| Missing | System | 1 | 4.2 |  |  |
| **Total** |  | **24** | **100.0** |  |  |

Table 3
**Quality of reference materials and handouts**

|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| very good | 9 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 37.5 |
| good | 13 | 54.2 | 54.2 | 91.7 |
| adequate | 2 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0** | **100.0** |  |

Table 4
**Effectiveness of the activities**

|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| very good | 8 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 33.3 |
| good | 15 | 62.5 | 62.5 | 95.8 |
| adequate | 1 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0** | **100.0** | |

Table 5
**Content pitched at the right level**

|  |  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | very good | 4 | 16.7 | 17.4 | 17.4 |
|  | good | 12 | 50.0 | 52.2 | 69.6 |
|  | adequate | 7 | 29.2 | 30.4 | 100.0 |
|  | Total | 23 | 95.8 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 1 | 4.2 | | |
| **Total** |  | **24** | **100.0** | | |

Table 6
**Trainers' knowledge and preparation**

|  |  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | strongly agree | 12 | 50.0 | 52.2 | 52.2 |
|  | agree | 11 | 45.8 | 47.8 | 100.0 |
|  | Total | 23 | 95.8 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 1 | 4.2 | | |
| **Total** |  | **24** | **100.0** | | |

Table 7
**Facilitators encouraged questions and participation**

|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| strongly agree | 10 | 41.7 | 41.7 | 41.7 |
| agree | 13 | 54.2 | 54.2 | 95.8 |
| disagree | 1 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0** | **100.0** | |

Table 8
**Trainers' coverage of material**

|  | *Frequency* | *Percent* | *Valid Percent* | *Cumulative Percent* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| strongly agree | 6 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 25.0 |
| agree | 18 | 75.0 | 75.0 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0** | **100.0** | |

Table 9
**Location of training**

|  | *Frequency* | *Percent* | *Valid Percent* | *Cumulative Percent* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| strongly agree | 9 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 37.5 |
| agree | 10 | 41.7 | 41.7 | 79.2 |
| neutral | 5 | 20.8 | 20.8 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0** | **100.0** | |

Table 10
**Training space was comfortable and conducive to learning**

|  | *Frequency* | *Percent* | *Valid Percent* | *Cumulative Percent* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| strongly agree | 8 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 33.3 |
| agree | 12 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 83.3 |
| neutral | 3 | 12.5 | 12.5 | 95.8 |
| disagree | 1 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0** | **100.0** | |

Table 11
**Relevance of training to your needs**

|  | *Frequency* | *Percent* | *Valid Percent* | *Cumulative Percent* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| highly useful | 9 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 37.5 |
| useful | 11 | 45.8 | 45.8 | 83.3 |
| adequate | 3 | 12.5 | 12.5 | 95.8 |
| inadequate | 1 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0** | **100.0** | |

Table 12
**Introduction of new approaches and techniques**

|  | *Frequency* | *Percent* | *Valid Percent* | *Cumulative Percent* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| highly useful | 11 | 45.8 | 45.8 | 45.8 |
| useful | 9 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 83.3 |
| adequate | 3 | 12.5 | 12.5 | 95.8 |
| inadequate | 1 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0** | **100.0** | |

Table 13
**Usefulness of the software to your job**

|  | *Frequency* | *Percent* | *Valid Percent* | *Cumulative Percent* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| highly useful | 11 | 45.8 | 45.8 | 45.8 |
| useful | 9 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 83.3 |
| adequate | 4 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | **24** | **100.0** | **100.0** | |

Table 14
**Did the training meet your expectations**

|  |  | *Frequency* | *Percent* | *Valid Percent* | *Cumulative Percent* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | yes | 20 | 83.3 | 87.0 | 87.0 |
|  | no | 3 | 12.5 | 13.0 | 100.0 |
|  | Total | 23 | 95.8 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 1 | 4.2 | | |
| **Total** |  | **24** | **100.0** | | |

Table 15
**Likelihood of using what was learnt in the training**

|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| very likely | 10 | 41.7 | 41.7 | 41.7 |
| likely | 9 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 79.2 |
| neutral | 4 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 95.8 |
| unlikely | 1 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |