

# Data first resource unit

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Data First continued to grow its collection of digital resources and specialised published material during this period. It has increasingly become an important resource for students and staff, within the social sciences, at the University of Cape Town.

## DATA ARCHIVE

The data archive now consists of 114 datasets, mostly from surveys conducted in South Africa and Southern Africa. Access to International datasets continues through our membership to the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan. This membership is generously sponsored by the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at the University of Michigan.

All data is made available to researchers in Stata format, but can be converted to most other formats if requested by researchers. Support for the program Stata is offered by the staff at Data First. A Stata tutorial developed by the Population Studies Centre at the ISR and the UCT School of Economics is available online. In addition a training program in Household Survey Analysis is offered annually at UCT. The online tutorial has been very successful in allowing researchers unfamiliar with Stata to learn it in a short period of time. Data First interns are on duty in the Resource Centre to answer questions about datasets and deal with Stata queries. This availability of a growing archive of datasets as well as the support offered by Data First in their use, has led to a rapid increase this year in the number of staff and students using the Resource Centre for their research.

## LIBRARY

The Resource Centre library now consists of 2699 monographs. A large number of monographs relating to the design, implementation and analysis of household surveys have been added this year. Access to these key texts on survey design and analysis combined with access to the data archive through the Resource Centre workstations now means that researchers have everything they need to conduct survey related research.

Data First started a project this year to compile bibliographies of publications that use datasets in our archive. This provides a useful means for researchers who are unfamiliar with specific datasets to access research done by other researchers using the same datasets. Nineteen bibliographies have been compiled to date. Keeping the bibliographies up to date is an ongoing process.

## TRAINING

Data First employed and trained three interns in 2003. They were Charlton Ziervogel, Eyob Ghebretsadik and David Fuamba Ngindu. The interns are required to learn

## RESOURCE CENTRE

Due to the rapid increase in the number of students and staff using the datasets and other digital resources in the Resource Centre an additional six high end workstations were added to the Resource Centre this year. There are now eighteen workstations in the Resource Centre from which clients access the survey data and digital resources.



## WEBSITE

All questionnaires, codebooks and bibliographies related to surveys in our archive are available on the Data First website (<http://www.uct.ac.za/depts/cssr/dfu.html>). Data First also maintains the websites for all the other CSSR research Units.

Data First started a project towards the end of 2003 to make data collected from surveys conducted by Units in the CSSR available for analysis and download via our website. This we hope will broaden access for undergraduate students at UCT as well as for researchers throughout the world, by making it possible to download data as well as do analysis online without being dependent on a statistical package (all the user will need is a web browser and access to the internet). We expect the first of these datasets to be prepared and available from mid 2004.

Stata as well as know the contents of all the datasets housed in our archive. An intern is also always available in the Resource Center to help clients with queries. This has been a very rewarding process for Data First and we are pleased that the knowledge gained by these interns has helped and encouraged them to go on to more advanced academic studies.

Lynn Woolfrey and Matthew Welch spent a month at the University of Michigan visiting and learning from the staff at Units within the ISR about how best to manage large datasets, documentation projects and data archives. It was this visit which inspired us to launch our own project to make data available on the web.

Matthew Welch continues to be involved with the summer training program run in cooperation with the Population Studies Centre at the ISR and the School of Economics at UCT. This workshop took place at UCT in January each year. He also conducted a number of lectures on the use of Stata for a third year Sociology course run by Professor Jeremy Seekings.

## CONCLUSION

Data First is very pleased with the rapid growth of our archive and the increased use of the facilities in our Resource Centre. We expect to continue to grow our data archive and through increased training broaden access to our data.

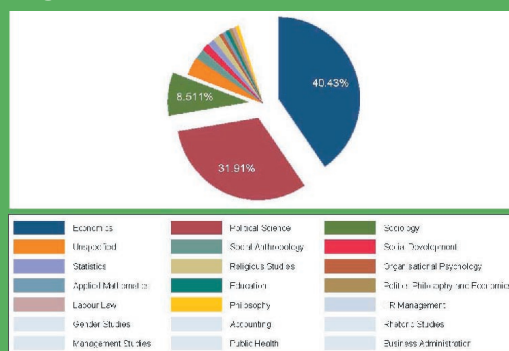


Data First's Staff Members  
 from left to right: Matthew Welch, Lynn Woolfrey, David Ngindu, Chantal Le Fleur, Charlton Ziervogel and Alison Siljeur

## MEMBERSHIP

Access to the Resource Centre is limited to staff members and post-graduate students. Student membership for 2003 is 141. The graph below gives a breakdown of student member's fields of study.

### Registered Clients 2003: Field of Study



Students from Economics, Political Studies and Sociology make up the majority of our student members. Our membership last year was mostly restricted to Economics students. It is encouraging to see that students from Sociology and Political studies are beginning to gain the interest and skills to do research using survey data. Fifty percent of the student members are registered for Honours degrees, forty percent for Masters Degrees and ten percent for Phds.

Staff membership stands at 49 for this year. The graph shows a breakdown of staff membership by department for 2003.

Staff membership is mainly from research staff within the Units of the CSSR as well as Economics, Sociology and Political Science.

### Staff Clients 2003: Department

