

# Africa - WORLD African Domestic Violence Laws 2021

**WORLD Policy Analysis Center (WORLD)**

Report generated on: October 16, 2025

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## Identification

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### SURVEY ID NUMBER

afr-world-wadvl-2021-v1

### TITLE

WORLD African Domestic Violence Laws 2021

### ABBREVIATION OR ACRONYM

WADV 2021

### COUNTRY

Name	Country code
Africa	afr

### STUDY TYPE

Other

### ABSTRACT

The WORLD Policy Analysis Center (WORLD) is committed to improving the quantity and quality of globally comparative data available to policymakers, citizens, civil society, and researchers on laws and policies that work to support human rights, including economic opportunity, social and civic engagement, human health, development, well-being, and equity. This dataset is part of a series that assesses progress in laws across African countries that lay the foundation for equal opportunities in childhood and gender equality. Domestic violence has devastating consequences for women's health, economic security, and autonomy, as well as consequences for children's health and nutrition. WORLD's Protection from Domestic Violence, Africa 1990-2021 dataset was created to assess progress on laws prohibiting domestic violence through a systematic review of legislation governing domestic violence from 1990 to 2021 in 51 African countries. A public use legislative repository is available with the legislation used to code each African country. In some cases the laws made available are only the recent laws and not all the laws that relate to the coded data in the longitudinal African datasets.

### KIND OF DATA

Other

### UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Laws

## Version

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### VERSION DESCRIPTION

v1: Edited anonymised data for distribution as public access share-alike data

### VERSION DATE

2024

## Scope

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### NOTES

The data covers legislative prohibitions of domestic violence, criminalization of domestic violence, and protective orders.

## Coverage

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### GEOGRAPHIC UNIT

The data is at the level of country and includes the following countries: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya,

Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Eswatini, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

## Producers and sponsors

### PRIMARY INVESTIGATORS

Name	Affiliation
WORLD Policy Analysis Center (WORLD)	University of California, Los Angeles

### FUNDING AGENCY/SPONSOR

Name
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

## Data Collection

### DATES OF DATA COLLECTION

Start	End
1990	2021

### DATA COLLECTION MODE

Other

### SUPERVISION

Ethics approval was not required because all data is from publicly available legislative texts

### DATA COLLECTION NOTES

WORLD examined constitutional and legal provisions as they set a foundation for rights and are a first step toward improving outcomes. Across countries, having laws on paper does make a difference in practice. Laws and constitutional rights lead to change by shaping public attitudes, encouraging government follow-through with inspections and implementation, and enabling court action for enforcement. Even when local enforcement is inadequate, laws may still have an impact by shaping the terms of political debate and providing levers for civil society advocates. Laws are a mechanism by which power can be democratically redistributed, changes in institutions can be created to ensure greater fairness, and a social floor guaranteeing minimum humane conditions can be established.

### DATA SOURCES

In selecting data sources to analyze, WORLD's first priority is to identify sources containing full-text original legislation. To ensure the greatest level of accuracy and comparability across countries, the aim is always to read the original laws (primary sources) rather than secondary summaries or policy descriptions. Primary sources allow for more accurate coding across countries, particularly in complex legal areas. Working with primary sources also allows us to provide excerpts or links to actual legislation and constitutions for those interested in passing new laws or creating reform in their countries. Documents are reviewed in their original language or in a translation into one of the UN's official languages. Secondary sources are used when information is unclear or insufficient for particular countries. In choosing these secondary sources, those that are comparable across multiple countries are prioritized, such as global or regional sources. When using information sources that cover a limited number of countries, the aim is to ensure that the information they contain can be made consistent with other sources.

For the Protection from Child Marriage Database, legislation to construct the data was located primarily through official country websites, the Lexadin World Law Guide, the Foreign Law Guide, the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s NATLEX database, the Pacific Islands Legal Information Institute, the Asian Legal Information Institute, and JafBase. In some cases, hard copies and electronic copies of legislation were obtained from libraries such as the Swiss Institute for Comparative Law, the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) Law Library, the Harvard Law School Library, and the

Northwestern University Library. The data captures national-level legislation. In countries where minimum age of marriage laws are set at the state or provincial level coding is based on the lowest minimum age among all of their states or provinces. Given that the scope of the full project includes 193 UN member states, and that the role and strength of case law varies substantially across countries, an analysis of case law relevant to legal provisions for the minimum age of marriage could not be included. Including case law in future analyses will be helpful to better understand the minimum age of marriage permitted by law.

When legislation was not available from these sources, analysts reviewed the most recent reports submitted by countries to the monitoring committees of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as well as the reports detailing the committees' concluding observations. The foundation for the longitudinal data from 1995 to 2013 was built in collaboration with McGill University's Maternal and Child Health Equity (MACHEquity) team. WORLD's team updated and expanded the data to May 31, 2023.

#### CODING FRAMEWORKS

In this work, coding refers to the process of translating legislative, policy, or constitutional text into a set of features which can be quantitatively analyzed to provide readily understandable summaries of policy approaches across countries and transformed into data visualizations, such as maps or charts. For example, a researcher reviews many pieces of labor and social security legislation and uses them to answer questions such as: Does a country guarantee paid parental leave? Is it available to all parents, only mothers, or only fathers? How long is paid leave? What is the wage replacement rate? How long do workers need to have been employed to access paid leave?

To answer these questions consistently across countries, the WORLD team first identify the essential policy features to be captured, including intrinsic characteristics, such as coverage; important elements identified in policy research; and minimum standards recognized in global agreements, where they exist. Researchers then read legislative text from 20 to 30 countries to develop an understanding of the approaches countries take in each of these areas. A coding framework consisting of questions and close-ended responses is developed to capture the essential policy features systematically across countries based on the range of approaches identified. Research team members then test whether this coding framework accurately captures approaches on an additional ten to twenty nations.

Once a viable framework is created, feedback is sought from civil society and researchers working in these areas to ensure the questions asked will provide the critical answers needed to inform policy debates. Their feedback can lead to more scoping and test coding to determine which questions are feasible to answer with available legislation, recognizing that some important areas are not always covered by national laws and policies. For example, access to sanitation facilities and safe transportation matters deeply to girls' ability to complete their education but is rarely addressed in a meaningful way in national-level education laws and policies. In other cases, new areas of research might involve going beyond the initial legislation we planned to code, expanding the scale of the project.

Capturing the richness and variety of approaches taken by different countries is our priority throughout the coding process. At times, research teams would have already analyzed 60 to 80 countries before coming across a single country whose approach to a particular problem was different enough in important ways that it could not be adequately captured within the coding scheme. In these cases, the coding scheme was revised to add the elements necessary to capture new features of legislation and policymaking that had presented themselves. All previously coded nations were reviewed to determine whether the revised coding system would alter how they were analyzed. In other words, the new coding system, better adapted to the full variety of approaches nations around the world take, was applied to all countries in the end.

The data sources available contained systematic information on legislation and policies but not on implementation. To ensure consistent approaches across countries, reports that contained comprehensive information on policies but only limited incidental information on implementation were coded only for policies. Obtaining systematic sources of information on implementation should be a pressing priority for global organizations.

#### CODING PROCESS

Core to ensuring transparency and consistency is developing a codebook that details the rules and examples for coding each question. Researchers rely on this codebook to make decisions on coding policy features. The codebook is designed to be as straightforward as possible, but some questions require judgment calls. To minimize human error, we use a double-coding system where two researchers independently code legal text for each country and then meet to compare their results. When two researchers cannot reach consensus based on the existing codebook, they bring these questions to the full coding team and senior analysts. This team meets regularly to discuss any questions or concerns that arise through the coding process. We record detailed minutes of these meetings and update the codebook to reflect any determinations that impact the coding rules.

#### ACCURACY, ANALYSIS, AND UPDATING

Upon completion of coding, the WORLD team conducts systematic quality checks. They also carry out targeted checks of countries that appear as outliers globally or for their region or income level.

World uses the most up-to-date sources available for each of their datasets. While this approach is designed to achieve accuracy, it is important to note that when publicly available sources have not been fully updated, the most recent amendments may not be captured in the data. Further, the process of coding legislation inevitably involves important matters of interpretation. For all datasets, the WORLD team welcome receiving feedback and copies of laws from anyone who believes the datab may not be fully up-to-date.

## DATA COLLECTORS

Name	Abbreviation
WORLD Policy Analysis Center	WORLD

## Access policy

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## CONTACTS

Name	Affiliation	Email	URL
DataFirst Support	University of Cape Town	support@data1st.org	www.support.data1st.org

## ACCESS CONDITIONS

Public access data for use under a Creative Commons CC-BY-SA (Attribution plus Share-Alike) License

## CITATION REQUIREMENTS

WORLD Policy Analysis Center (WORLD). WORLD African Domestic Violence Laws 2021 [dataset]. Version 1. Los Angeles: WORLD Policy Analysis Center [producer], 2024. Cape Town: DataFirst [distributor], 2024. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25828/055a-7c84>

## ACCESS AUTHORITY

Name	Affiliation	Email	URL
DataFirst	University of Cape Town	support@data1st.org	support.data1st.org

## Metadata production

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## PRODUCERS

Name	Abbreviation	Role
WORLD Policy Analysis Center	WORLD	Metadata producer
DataFirst		Metadata producer

## DATE OF METADATA PRODUCTION

2025-09-26

## DDI DOCUMENT VERSION

Version 2

**Data Description**

<b>Data file</b>	<b>Cases</b>	<b>Variables</b>
<b>pdv-1990-2021-v1</b>	1611	13



**Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1**

Cases: 1611

Variables: 13

**Variables**

ID	Name	Label	Question
V32	country	country	
V33	count1		
V34	count2		
V35	count3		
V36	count4		
V37	year		
V38	dv_law	Law prohibiting DV	
V39	dv_order	Protective orders available for DV	
V40	dv_crime	DV criminalized	
V41	iso3	ISO 3	
V42	region	World Bank Region	
V43	wb_econ	World Bank Income-level	
V44	iso2	ISO 2	

Total: 13



**COUNTRY: country****Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1****Overview**

Valid: 1611 Invalid: 0

Type: Discrete Width: 32 Range: - Format: character

**Questions and instructions**

## CATEGORIES

Value	Category	Cases	
Algeria		32	2%
Angola		32	2%
Benin		32	2%
Botswana		32	2%
Burkina Faso		32	2%
Burundi		32	2%
Cameroon		32	2%
Cape Verde		32	2%
Central African Republic		32	2%
Chad		32	2%
Comoros		32	2%
Cote d'Ivoire		32	2%
Democratic Republic of the Congo		32	2%
Djibouti		32	2%
Egypt		32	2%
Eritrea		32	2%
Eswatini		32	2%
Ethiopia		32	2%
Gabon		32	2%
Ghana		32	2%
Guinea		32	2%
Guinea-Bissau		32	2%
Kenya		32	2%
Lesotho		32	2%
Liberia		32	2%
Madagascar		32	2%
Malawi		32	2%
Mali		32	2%
Mauritania		32	2%
Mauritius		32	2%

Morocco		32	2%
Mozambique		32	2%
Namibia		32	2%
Niger		32	2%
Nigeria		32	2%
Republic of the Congo		32	2%
Rwanda		32	2%
Sao Tome and Principe		32	2%
Senegal		32	2%
Seychelles		32	2%
Sierra Leone		32	2%
South Africa		32	2%
South Sudan		11	0.7%
Sudan		32	2%
Tanzania		32	2%
The Gambia		32	2%
Togo		32	2%
Tunisia		32	2%
Uganda		32	2%
Zambia		32	2%
Zimbabwe		32	2%

**COUNT1:****Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1****Overview**

Valid: 0 Invalid: 0

Type: Discrete Width: 1 Range: - Format: character

**COUNT2:****Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1****Overview**

Valid: 0 Invalid: 0

Type: Discrete Width: 1 Range: - Format: character

**COUNT3:****Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1**

**Overview**

Valid: 0 Invalid: 0  
 Type: Discrete Width: 1 Range: - Format: character

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**COUNT4:**

**Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1**

**Overview**

Valid: 0 Invalid: 0  
 Type: Discrete Width: 1 Range: - Format: character

---

**YEAR:**

**Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1**

**Overview**

Valid: 1611 Invalid: 0 Minimum: 1990 Maximum: 2021 Mean: 2005.572 Standard deviation: 9.249  
 Type: Continuous Decimal: 0 Width: 4 Range: 1990 - 2021 Format: Numeric

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**DV\_LAW: Law prohibiting DV**

**Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1**

**Overview**

Valid: 1604 Invalid: 7 Minimum: 0 Maximum: 1  
 Type: Discrete Decimal: 0 Width: 2 Range: -9 - 1 Format: Numeric

**Questions and instructions**

## CATEGORIES

Value	Category	Cases	
-9	Insufficient data	0	0%
0	No	1121	69.9%
1	Yes	483	30.1%
Sysmiss		7	

---

**DV\_ORDER: Protective orders available for DV**

**Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1**

**Overview**

Valid: 1590 Invalid: 21 Minimum: 0 Maximum: 1  
 Type: Discrete Decimal: 0 Width: 2 Range: -9 - 1 Format: Numeric

## Questions and instructions

### CATEGORIES

Value	Category	Cases	
-9	Insufficient data	0	0%
0	No	1280	80.5%
1	Yes	310	19.5%
Sysmiss		21	

### DV\_CRIME: DV criminalized

Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1

#### Overview

Valid: 1592 Invalid: 19 Minimum: 0 Maximum: 1  
 Type: Discrete Decimal: 0 Width: 2 Range: -9 - 1 Format: Numeric

## Questions and instructions

### CATEGORIES

Value	Category	Cases	
-9	Insufficient data	0	0%
0	No	1199	75.3%
1	Yes	393	24.7%
Sysmiss		19	

### ISO3: ISO 3

Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1

#### Overview

Valid: 1611 Invalid: 0  
 Type: Discrete Width: 3 Range: - Format: character

## Questions and instructions

### CATEGORIES

Value	Category	Cases	
AGO		32	2%
BDI		32	2%
BEN		32	2%
BFA		32	2%

BWA		32	2%
CAF		32	2%
CIV		32	2%
CMR		32	2%
COD		32	2%
COG		32	2%
COM		32	2%
CPV		32	2%
DJI		32	2%
DZA		32	2%
EGY		32	2%
ERI		32	2%
ETH		32	2%
GAB		32	2%
GHA		32	2%
GIN		32	2%
GMB		32	2%
GNB		32	2%
KEN		32	2%
LBR		32	2%
LSO		32	2%
MAR		32	2%
MDG		32	2%
MLI		32	2%
MOZ		32	2%
MRT		32	2%
MUS		32	2%
MWI		32	2%
NAM		32	2%
NER		32	2%
NGA		32	2%
RWA		32	2%
SDN		32	2%
SEN		32	2%
SLE		32	2%
SSD		11	0.7%
STP		32	2%
SWZ		32	2%
SYC		32	2%

TCD		32	2%
TGO		32	2%
TUN		32	2%
TZA		32	2%
UGA		32	2%
ZAF		32	2%
ZMB		32	2%
ZWE		32	2%

## REGION: World Bank Region

Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1

### Overview

Valid: 1611 Invalid: 0  
 Type: Discrete Width: 26 Range: - Format: character

### Questions and instructions

#### CATEGORIES

Value	Category	Cases	
Middle East & North Africa		160	9.9%
Sub-Saharan Africa		1451	90.1%

## WB\_ECON: World Bank Income-level

Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1

### Overview

Valid: 1611 Invalid: 0 Minimum: 1 Maximum: 4  
 Type: Discrete Decimal: 0 Width: 1 Range: 1 - 4 Format: Numeric

### Questions and instructions

#### CATEGORIES

Value	Category	Cases	
1	Low-income	651	40.4%
2	Middle-income	928	57.6%
4	High-income	32	2%

**ISO2: ISO 2****Data file: pdv-1990-2021-v1****Overview**

Valid: 1611 Invalid: 0

Type: Discrete Width: 2 Range: - Format: character

**Questions and instructions**

## CATEGORIES

Value	Category	Cases	
AO		32	2%
BF		32	2%
BI		32	2%
BJ		32	2%
BW		32	2%
CD		32	2%
CF		32	2%
CG		32	2%
CI		32	2%
CM		32	2%
CV		32	2%
DJ		32	2%
DZ		32	2%
EG		32	2%
ER		32	2%
ET		32	2%
GA		32	2%
GH		32	2%
GM		32	2%
GN		32	2%
GW		32	2%
KE		32	2%
KM		32	2%
LR		32	2%
LS		32	2%
MA		32	2%
MG		32	2%
ML		32	2%
MR		32	2%
MU		32	2%

MW		32	2%
MZ		32	2%
NA		32	2%
NE		32	2%
NG		32	2%
RW		32	2%
SC		32	2%
SD		32	2%
SL		32	2%
SN		32	2%
SS		11	0.7%
ST		32	2%
SZ		32	2%
TD		32	2%
TG		32	2%
TN		32	2%
TZ		32	2%
UG		32	2%
ZA		32	2%
ZM		32	2%
ZW		32	2%

## Download related resources

### Other materials

#### Protection from Domestic Violence, Africa, 1990 - 2021 public use data dictionary

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Title	Protection from Domestic Violence, Africa, 1990 - 2021 public use data dictionary
Date	2024-01-01
Country	Africa
Language	English
Contributor(s)	This is the data dictionary for the data file
Filename	pdv-1990-2021-dict.pdf

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