



**WORLD Policy
Analysis Center**

Education, Africa, 1990 – 2021

Public Use Data Dictionary



EDUCATION, AFRICA, 1990 - 2021

PUBLIC USE DATA DICTIONARY

CONTENTS

About the Data	1
Organizational Overview	1
Building the Data Center	1
The Education, Africa, 1990 – 2019 Dataset	4
Data	6
Country Identifier Variables	6
The Education, Africa, 1990 – 2021 Dataset	7
Primary and Secondary Education, 1990 – 2019	7
Pre-Primary Education, 2000 – 2021	10

ABOUT THE DATA

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

The mission of the WORLD Policy Analysis Center (WORLD) is to strengthen equal rights and opportunities globally by providing civil society, policymakers, citizens, and other researchers with tools to advance feasible and effective policy approaches for improving the well-being of individuals, families, communities, and societies. WORLD captures quantitatively comparative data for 193 United Nations (UN) countries on adult labor and working conditions, discrimination at work, child marriage, aging, education, constitutional rights, health, disability, family, migration, child labor, environment, and income policies. WORLD works with partners to promote evidence-based decision-making across these areas.

In creating this dataset, our goal was to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of the data we present. We look forward to receiving feedback from data users if they believe that any individual countries have been placed in the wrong category. If you are aware of an error in our data, please contact us at world@ph.ucla.edu to report the error. Please provide a link to the relevant law from which the information can be verified.

BUILDING THE DATA CENTER

We examine constitutional and legal provisions as they set a foundation for citizens' 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.

When determining which laws, rights, and policies to include in the data center, we prioritize policies that meet one or more of the following criteria: 1) there is widespread global consensus on their value; 2) research evidence supports their importance to human development, health or well-being in a variety of geographic, social, and economic circumstances; or 3) input from civil society, policymakers, and other stakeholders indicates there are urgent questions about policy design that comparative data could help address.

DATA SOURCES

In selecting data sources to analyze, our first priority is to identify sources containing full-text original legislation. To ensure the greatest level of accuracy and comparability across countries, we always aim 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. We review documents 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, we prioritize those that are comparable across multiple countries, such as global or regional sources. When using information sources that cover a limited number of countries, we aim to ensure that the information they contain can be made consistent with other sources.

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, we first identify the essential policy features that we want to capture, 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 we have a viable framework, we seek feedback from civil society and researchers working in these areas to ensure the questions we are asking 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 aren't 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, we conduct systematic quality checks. We also carry out targeted checks of countries that appear as outliers globally or for their region or income level.

For each of our databases, we use the most up-to-date sources available. 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 our databases. Further, our process of coding legislation inevitably involves important matters of interpretation. For all databases, we welcome receiving feedback and copies of laws from anyone who believes the databases may not be fully up-to-date.

NATIONAL AND SUBNATIONAL LEVELS

Our goal is to understand the scope of policy provisions and whether they extend protections to all, including, for example, workers in the informal economy, racial and ethnic minorities, urban and rural residents, and those in the poorest households. Accordingly, we code for policies in place at a national level with wide coverage. When policies are legislated subnationally, that is, when states or cities provide protections without a national guarantee, we code for the minimum guaranteed level of protection covering all states so as to not overstate safeguards available only in limited localities. In the future, we hope that a team will be able to analyze information about state/provincial policies and laws in all federal systems for each area.

All indicators in the Education Database reflect national-level constitutional, legislative, or policy guarantees. In countries where guarantees are set at the state or provincial level, the database captures information for the state or province with the lowest level of protection. For example, length of compulsory education varies by state in the United States. Some states require completing twelve years of education (including all of secondary), while others (including Massachusetts and Wyoming) do not. In this analysis, the United States is coded as guaranteeing compulsory for the beginning (not the completion of) secondary education, to reflect the gaps in guarantees across states.

THE EDUCATION, AFRICA, 1990 – 2019 DATASET

The Education, Africa, 1990-2021 Database was created through a systematic review of original constitutions, education laws, children's rights laws, and education policies. For primary and secondary education, data is available on legal rights in place from 1990 to September 2019. For pre-primary education, data is available on legal rights in place from 2000 to 2021. The full-text copies of national laws used for coding were located through UNESCO's Observatory on the Right to Education, UNESCO's Planipolis, African Child Policy Forum's CHILD LAW RESOURCES, WORLD's legislative repository, and official country websites.

Secondary sources are used when information is unclear or insufficient for particular countries. In choosing these secondary sources, we prioritize those that are comparable across multiple countries, such as global or regional sources. When using information sources that cover a limited number of countries, we aim to ensure that the information they contain can be made consistent with other sources.

Due to the well-documented evidence in some countries that tuition-free education rights, laws, or policies experienced a delay in or lack of implementation, secondary sources were also used to verify dates of implementation. In some cases, tuition-free education laws or policies were not immediately implemented; in these cases, the year of actual implementation is coded. In other cases, the constitution or legislation states that children have the right to tuition-free education, but reliable sources suggest these rights were never implemented; in these cases, tuition-free education is not coded. Reliable secondary sources used to corroborate tuition-free coding include UNESCO's International Bureau of Education country reports, UN Treaty Body reports, and academic journal articles.

All variables are captured by school level. When countries do not split their education systems according to primary, lower secondary and upper secondary, we assigned these categories based on the available information on levels of schooling to increase comparability across countries. Stages of schooling were established as follows:

- When countries have 8 or more years of primary school and split it into stages, the upper level of primary is treated as lower secondary for comparability.
- For the minority of countries that do not split secondary into levels, we apply the general secondary policies to both levels of secondary education (lower and upper secondary)

EDUCATION DATABASE

To see Africa in the global context, WORLD's Education Database has data on tuition-free and compulsory education, prohibitions of discrimination in education based on gender and disability, guarantees of inclusive education, and prohibition of sexual harassment in schools for 193 countries. This data can be accessed here: <https://www.worldpolicycenter.org/maps-data/data-download/world-areas>

DATA

COUNTRY IDENTIFIER VARIABLES

Variable Name	Variable Values	Variable Description
country		Name of country
iso2		2-digit ISO country code
iso3		3-digit ISO country code
region		Country geographical region (World Bank classification)
World Bank Country Income Group (wb_econ)	1: Low-income 2: Middle-income 4: High-income	Country income group classification (World Bank, 2022)

THE EDUCATION, AFRICA, 1990 – 2021 DATASET

While exhaustive methods were used to collect data, comparable information was not always available for all countries for every indicator, particularly when legislation pre-dates the widespread usage of the internet. In these cases, the relevant variable will be blank in the datasets.

Primary and Secondary Education, 1990 – 2019

Variable Name	Variable Values	Variable Notes
<p>For each <i>level</i> primary (prim), lower secondary (lowsec), and upper secondary (upsec):</p> <p>Is <i>level</i> education tuition-free?</p> <p>(<i>level_free</i>)</p>	<p>0: No 1: Yes 2: Broad targeted program 3: Yes, for part</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guaranteeing tuition-free education can eliminate a financial barrier to schooling that disproportionately impact girls, poor children, children with disabilities, and other marginalized groups. <i>Tuition</i> refers to fees charged for access to public education. It does not include fees that may be levied on other specific educational materials, such as textbooks or uniforms. In countries with tuition-free guarantees to public education, tuition may be charged in private schools operating in parallel. <i>No</i> means that there is no explicit guarantee to tuition-free education in the country's constitution, legislation, or non-legislative policy commitments or a commitment exists, but reliable secondary sources indicate education was not free for that year. <i>No</i> also includes countries that have made commitments to progressively realize free education by gradually implementing it over time. The following countries had constitutional rights, laws, or policies in place that were not coded for due to secondary source information on lack of implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benin – 1990 constitution Burkina Faso – 2000 education policy Gambia – 1996 constitution Liberia – 2001 education law Madagascar – 1992 constitution Nigeria – 1977 education policy

Variable Name	Variable Values	Variable Notes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Togo – 1975 education law (coded as missing due to lack of secondary sources) • <i>Broad targeted program</i> means that education is not guaranteed to be tuition-free for all children, but there is a large-scale program or policy in place that extends tuition-free education to many students. • <i>Yes for part</i> means that some grades of education are tuition-free at the specified level, but the latter grades in the level are not guaranteed to be tuition-free.
<p>For each <i>level</i> primary (prim), lower secondary (lowsec), and upper secondary (upsec):</p> <p>Is <i>level</i> education compulsory?</p> <p>(<i>level_comp</i>)</p>	<p>0: No 1: Yes 3: Yes, for part</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guarantees to compulsory education can make clear that government has an obligation to provide education, and support families in prioritizing education for all of their children • <i>Compulsory</i> education can be specified by an age range, a number of years, or a level of education during which children are required to go to school. We have looked at each of these factors, as well as national information on the length of primary education and the standard age of beginning school, in order to create comparable information on the age until which education is compulsory. Note that in some cases, source text uses authoritative language to assert parents'/guardians' responsibility to ensure children of a certain age are enrolled or attending school; these cases were categorized as a guarantee to compulsory education. • <i>No</i> means that there is no explicit guarantee to compulsory education in the country's constitution, legislation. <i>No</i> also includes countries that have made commitments to progressively realize compulsory education by gradually implementing it over time. • <i>Yes for part</i> means that some grades of education are compulsory at the specified level, but the latter grades in the level are not guaranteed to be compulsory.
For each <i>level</i> primary (prim), lower secondary	Numeric age of child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start age refers to the expected starting age of education. In practice, children may enter school earlier or later.

Variable Name	Variable Values	Variable Notes
<p>(lowsec), and upper secondary (upsec):</p> <p>What is the start age of <i>level</i> education?</p> <p>(<i>level_start_age</i>)</p>	<p>For upper secondary only: 999: Country does not distinguish between lower and upper secondary, see coding for lower secondary</p>	
<p>For each <i>level</i> primary (prim), lower secondary (lowsec), and upper secondary (upsec):</p> <p>What is the end age of <i>level</i> education?</p> <p>(<i>level_end_age</i>)</p>	<p>Numeric age of child</p> <p>For lower secondary only: 999: Country does not distinguish between lower and upper secondary, see coding for upper secondary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End age refers to the expected age of completing each level of education. In practice, this age may be higher due to later starts or grade repetition.
<p>For each <i>level</i> primary (prim), lower secondary (lowsec), and upper secondary (upsec):</p> <p>What is the duration of <i>level</i> education?</p> <p>(<i>level_total_yrs</i>)</p>	<p>Numeric years of schooling</p> <p>For upper secondary only: 999: Country does not distinguish between lower and upper secondary, see coding for lower secondary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duration refers to the number of years of education or grades in each level.

Pre-Primary Education, 2000 – 2021

Variable Name	Variable Values	Variable Notes
<p>Is pre-primary education tuition-free?</p> <p>(pprim_free)</p>	<p>0: No 1: Yes 2: Broad targeted program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pre-primary education</i> is equivalent to UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) level 0 which targets children one to two years before the start of primary education. • Guaranteeing tuition-free education can eliminate a financial barrier to schooling that disproportionately impact girls, poor children, children with disabilities, and other marginalized groups. • <i>Tuition</i> refers to fees charged for access to public education. It does not include fees that may be levied on other specific educational materials, such as textbooks or uniforms. In countries with tuition-free guarantees to public education, tuition may be charged in private schools operating in parallel. • <i>No</i> means that there is no explicit guarantee to tuition-free education in the country's constitution, legislation, or non-legislative policy commitments or a commitment exists, but reliable secondary sources indicate education was not free for that year. <i>No</i> also includes countries that have made commitments to progressively realize free education by gradually implementing it over time. • <i>Broad targeted program</i> means that education is not guaranteed to be tuition-free for all children, but there is a large-scale program or policy in place that extends tuition-free education to many students.
<p>Is pre-primary education compulsory?</p> <p>(pprim_comp)</p>	<p>0: No 1: Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pre-primary education</i> is equivalent to UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) level 0 which targets children one to two years before the start of primary education. • Guarantees to compulsory education can make clear that government has an obligation to provide education, and support families in prioritizing education for all of their children • <i>Compulsory</i> education can be specified by an age range, a number of years, or a level of education during which children are required to go to school. We have looked at each of these factors, as well as

Variable Name	Variable Values	Variable Notes
		<p>national information on the length of primary education and the standard age of beginning school, in order to create comparable information on the age until which education is compulsory. Note that in some cases, source text uses authoritative language to assert parents'/guardians' responsibility to ensure children of a certain age are enrolled or attending school; these cases were categorized as a guarantee to compulsory education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No</i> means that there is no explicit guarantee to compulsory education in the country's constitution, legislation. <i>No</i> also includes countries that have made commitments to progressively realize compulsory education by gradually implementing it over time.
<p>What is the start age of pre-primary education? (pprim_start_age)</p>	<p>Numeric age of child -6: see coding manual notes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pre-primary education</i> is equivalent to UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) level 0 which targets children one to two years before the start of primary education. • Start age refers to the expected starting age of education. In practice, children may enter school earlier or later. • Details on -6 coding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In Senegal prior to 2004, pre-primary generally starts at age 3 and lasts for 3 years. If children complete pre-primary, they can start primary school at age 6 instead of age 7. ○ In Sierra Leone 2021, compulsory pre-primary begins at age 5 and lasts for one year. There is also a broad targeted tuition-free pre-primary that starts at age 3 and lasts for 3 years.
<p>What is the duration of pre-primary education? (pprim_total_yrs)</p>	<p>Numeric years of schooling -6: see coding manual notes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pre-primary education</i> is equivalent to UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) level 0 which targets children one to two years before the start of primary education. • Duration refers to the number of years of education or grades in pre-primary education.

Variable Name	Variable Values	Variable Notes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details on -6 coding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In Senegal prior to 2004, pre-primary generally starts at age 3 and lasts for 3 years. If children complete pre-primary, they can start primary school at age 6 instead of age 7. ○ In Sierra Leone 2021, compulsory pre-primary begins at age 5 and lasts for one year. There is also a broad targeted tuition-free pre-primary that starts at age 3 and lasts for 3 years.