



**WORLD Policy  
Analysis Center**

# **Paid Parental Leave, Africa, 1995 - 2022**

## **Public Use Data Dictionary**



# PAID PARENTAL LEAVE, AFRICA, 1995 – 2022, PUBLIC USE DATA DICTIONARY

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## 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](mailto: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.

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### 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.

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## **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.

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## **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.

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## **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.

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## **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.

## PAID PARENTAL LEAVE, AFRICA, 1995 - 2022

This Paid Parental Leave, Africa, 1995 - 2022 dataset is a subset of the WORLD Policy Analysis Center's Adult Labor Database. This dataset was created through a systematic review of original labor and social security legislation in place from 1995 to January 2022. The full-text copies of national laws used for coding, in addition to the corresponding information on their history of amendment and repeal, were located mainly through the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s NATLEX database, as well as through other trustworthy sources such as the ILO's Working Conditions Laws Database, TRAVAIL. When full-text labor and social security legislation was not available through NATLEX or TRAVAIL, researchers located this legislation through official country websites where possible.

The Social Security Programs throughout the World (SSPTW) database, based on data from the International Social Security Association, was used to complement legislative information about paid leave policies outlined in legislation. SSPTW reports were reviewed for every country in our database for which they were available. Additional sources used to clarify information or fill in missing details was drawn from the ILO's Care at Work: Investing in care leave and services for a more gender equal world of work, 2022.

The foundation for the longitudinal data from 1995 to 2015 was built in collaboration with McGill University's Maternal and Child Health Equity (MACHEquity) team. WORLD's team updated and expanded the data to 2022.

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## INFANT CAREGIVING DATA

To see Africa in the global context, WORLD's Infant Caregiving Data provides data on national legislative guarantees to paid parental leave in 193 countries. This data is current through 2022 and 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: 2020)

## PAID PARENTAL LEAVE, AFRICA, 1995 – 2022

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.

Variable Name	Variable Values	Variable Notes
Year of policy (year)	Numeric from 1995 to 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For each year, the legislation in force is coded. If a new law was passed, but it did not enter into force until a subsequent year, the new law is not captured. (e.g. A 2002 law increases the duration of paid leave from 12 to 14 weeks, but does not enter into force until January 1, 2003. For 2002, the duration would be coded as 12 weeks. For 2003, the duration would be coded as 14 weeks.)</li> </ul>
What is the duration in weeks of paid leave available to mothers of infants, including maternity and parental? (mat_leave_dur)	Numeric duration in weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paid leave available to mothers includes both paid maternity leave, which is leave reserved for mothers of infants, and paid shared parental leave -- which is leave available to either parent of an infant -- that can be taken by women.</li> <li>We report the leave available in weeks under normal conditions for the birth of a child, excluding extended leave periods under extraordinary circumstances such as childbirth complications.</li> <li>Days are converted to weeks using country-specific information on the length of a standard work week when available.</li> <li>International Labour Organization standards state that women should be guaranteed at least 14 weeks of paid maternity leave.</li> <li>The World Health Organization recommends at least six months of breastfeeding, which is facilitated by paid leave.</li> <li>When legislation guarantees paid leave in days or months instead of weeks, the duration is converted to weeks using a standard 4.3 weeks in a months and 7 calendar days in a week. Rounding is used to ensure consistent values for similar durations, such as 90 days, 3 months, or 13 weeks.</li> </ul>

Variable Name	Variable Values	Variable Notes
<p>What is the duration in weeks of paid leave available to fathers of infants, including paternity and parental?</p> <p>(pat_leave_dur)</p>	<p>Numeric duration in weeks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paid leave available to fathers includes both paid leave reserved for fathers of infants or the birth mother's spouse or partner, and paid shared parental leave -- which is leave available to either parent of an infant -- that can be taken by men.</li> <li>• We report the leave available in weeks under normal conditions for the birth of a child, excluding leave available under extraordinary circumstances.</li> <li>• Days are converted to weeks using 5 working days per week for consistency across countries. Some countries may have a longer standard work week.</li> </ul>
<p>What is the lowest wage replacement rate of paid leave for mothers of infants?</p> <p>(mat_leave_wrr_min)</p>	<p>Numeric percentage of wages.</p> <p>-8: Flat or adjusted flat rate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paid leave available to mothers includes both paid maternity leave, which is leave reserved for mothers of infants, and paid shared parental leave -- which is leave available to either parent of an infant -- that can be taken by women.</li> <li>• In some countries, wage replacement rates may vary based on a worker's employment history, duration of paid leave, or other factors.</li> <li>• A <i>flat rate</i> means all mothers receive the same amount while taking paid leave, regardless of previous salary.</li> <li>• International Labour Organization standards state that women should be guaranteed at least two-thirds of their previous earning during paid leave to ensure a suitable standard of living.</li> <li>• Research evidence suggests that a wage replacement rate of at least 80% is needed to address poverty and promote gender equality in leave-taking.</li> </ul>
<p>What is the highest wage replacement rate of paid leave for mothers of infants?</p>	<p>Numeric percentage of wages.</p> <p>-8: Flat or adjusted flat rate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paid leave available to mothers includes both paid maternity leave, which is leave reserved for mothers of infants, and paid shared parental leave -- which is leave available to either parent of an infant -- that can be taken by women.</li> </ul>

Variable Name	Variable Values	Variable Notes
(mat_leave_wrr_max)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In some countries, wage replacement rates may vary based on a worker's employment history, duration of paid leave, or other factors.</li> <li>• A <i>flat rate</i> means all mothers receive the same amount while taking paid leave, regardless of previous salary.</li> <li>• International Labour Organization standards state that women should be guaranteed at least two-thirds of their previous earning during paid leave to ensure a suitable standard of living.</li> <li>• Research evidence suggests that a wage replacement rate of at least 80% is needed to address poverty and promote gender equality in leave-taking.</li> </ul>
<p>What is the lowest wage replacement rate of paid leave for fathers of infants?</p> <p>(pat_leave_wrr_min)</p>	<p>Numeric percentage of wages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paid leave available to fathers includes both paid leave reserved for fathers of infants or the birth mother's spouse or partner, and paid shared parental leave -- which is leave available to either parent of an infant -- that can be taken by men.</li> <li>• In some countries, wage replacement rates may vary based on a worker's employment history, duration of paid leave, or other factors.</li> <li>• Research evidence suggests that a wage replacement rate of at least 80% is needed to address poverty and promote gender equality in leave-taking.</li> </ul>
<p>What is the highest wage replacement rate of paid leave for fathers of infants?</p> <p>(pat_leave_wrr_max)</p>	<p>Numeric percentage of wages.</p> <p>-8: Flat or adjusted flat rate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paid leave available to fathers includes both paid leave reserved for fathers of infants or the birth mother's spouse or partner, and paid shared parental leave -- which is leave available to either parent of an infant -- that can be taken by men.</li> <li>• In some countries, wage replacement rates may vary based on a worker's employment history, duration of paid leave, or other factors.</li> <li>• Research evidence suggests that a wage replacement rate of at least 80% is needed to address poverty and promote gender equality in leave-taking.</li> </ul>

Variable Name	Variable Values	Variable Notes
<p>What is the full-time-equivalent (FTE) duration of paid leave for mothers of infants in weeks?</p> <p>(mat_leave_fte)</p>	<p>Numeric.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The full-time-equivalent (FTE) duration of paid leave is calculated by multiplying the duration of leave by the wage replacement rate. This enables researchers studying the impact of paid leave to control for duration and affordability simultaneously. For example, ten weeks of paid leave paid at 50% of wages would be coded as 5 weeks.</li> <li>• For comparability, this variable examines the wage replacement rate for workers who have been with their employer for at least one year. In some countries, recently hired workers may not be eligible for paid leave, or may receive a lower wage replacement while on leave. One country does not provide maternity leave to workers with one year of tenure: Zambia requires two years and has therefore been coded as 0 for this variable.</li> <li>• FTE weeks are not calculated for countries that have flat rate payments. These appear as missing in the dataset.</li> <li>• Country-specific notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Niger is calculated using the lowest wage replacement rate which applies to workers with 1 year of tenure.</li> <li>○ South Africa is calculated using the highest wage replacement rate which applies to low wage earners. Note that benefits accumulate based on contributions to the employment insurance fund.</li> <li>○ Rwanda for 2009 – 2015 is calculated based on full pay for the first 6 weeks of leave and 20% of wages for the last 6 weeks of leave.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>What is the full-time-equivalent (FTE) duration of paid leave for fathers of infants in weeks?</p> <p>(pat_leave_fte)</p>	<p>Numeric.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The full-time-equivalent (FTE) duration of paid leave is calculated by multiplying the duration of leave by the wage replacement rate. This enables researchers studying the impact of paid leave to control for duration and affordability simultaneously. For example, ten weeks of paid leave paid at 50% of wages would be coded as 5 weeks.</li> <li>• For comparability, this variable examines the wage replacement rate for workers who have been with their employer for at least one year.</li> </ul>

Variable Name	Variable Values	Variable Notes
		In some countries, recently hired workers may not be eligible for paid leave, or may receive a lower wage replacement while on leave.