Changing Children's Chances

New Findings on Child Policy Worldwide

By Jody Heymann and Kristen McNeill

UCLA World Policy Analysis Centre

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Executive Summary

Globally comparable available information on children's outcomes is improving but remains sparse in many areas. Even rarer and less systematic is information on what is being done to meet children's needs. There has been next to no readily comparable information on what laws, policies, and programs countries have in place to address each of the areas vital to children's healthy development: access to quality education, protection from child labour and early marriage, good health care, working conditions for adults that enable parents to care for their children, freedom from discrimination, and access to resources to meet basic family needs. In the absence of readily comparable information on countries, our ability to support national progress has been limited.

Drawing on original data on policies and laws around the world, this report seeks to provide a global picture of where we stand in terms of policy tools that governments can use to make a difference in children's life chances.

A basic need for children is for their family to have enough income to support their healthy development; most of this income is the result of adults' work and wages. Most countries around the world, 167 of the 189 countries on which we were able to collect information, have established a minimum wage. However, in 40 of these countries, a working adult earning the minimum wage with one dependent child would be living on $2 or less per person per day, adjusted for purchasing power parity. Working adults also need to be able to take time off from work to care for children when necessary. While the vast majority of the world guarantees paid leave for new mothers, with just 8 countries failing to do so, countries are far behind on paid leave for fathers. A minority of countries, 81 worldwide, provide paid leave that can be taken by men upon the birth or adoption of a child.

Some families need additional financial assistance to meet the needs of their children with special needs, but most countries are falling short. Just 58 countries worldwide provide a benefit or supplement specifically for families supporting children with disabilities.

When it comes to education, global progress is mixed. Primary education is tuition-free in the vast majority of countries around the world – 166 of the 174 countries for which we were able to collect data. However, looking to secondary school, a minimum requirement for most jobs that provide a decent income, there are still major gaps. Twenty-three countries report charging tuition when students begin secondary school, and it is charged before the end of secondary school in 38 countries. Once children enter school, the quality of the education that they receive is a critical concern. In 48 countries, lower secondary school teachers must have completed only a secondary education,

Children's chance to actually attend school depends on much more than its affordability. Child labour and child marriage are significant obstacles for many children,

and many countries do not have the legal framework in place to protect them. Six countries have no legislated national minimum age for full-time employment. In 5 countries, children may work full-time as young as 12 or 13, 29 countries at the age of 14, and 63 countries at 15. As well, national minimum ages for marriage all too frequently disadvantage girls – in a total of 54 countries, girls are legally permitted to marry between 1 and 3 years younger than boys; in no country can boys be married at a younger age than girls.

Children with disabilities may need additional support when it comes to schooling. While in international agreements the global community has recognized that inclusive special education is the best choice for most of these children, the reality on the ground has not kept up with the agreements. The majority of the world's countries, 155, have some provision for special education in the public education system. Of these, only 73 countries include children with and without disabilities in the same classrooms. Sixty-two countries include them within the same schools but not the same classrooms, and 20 countries do not educate children with and without disabilities within the same schools.

Regional Highlights

Sub-Saharan Africa: Marked strides have been made across sub-Saharan Africa in areas central to children's healthy development, from initiating maternity leave to ensuring access to primary education. However, there is still substantial room for policy advances to transform the lives of youth, older children, and the poorest young children. At the secondary level, educational opportunities in much of the region are deeply limited. Moreover, many national budgets have substantial room for action in the areas of health and education. As well, while policies in the formal economy are relatively strong in terms of supporting families, the many families in the informal economy remain unprotected.

Latin America and the Caribbean: This region shows areas of relative strength, as well as relative weakness. In the area of education and child labour, most nations are doing well in creating viable conditions for students to attend school and learn. Minimum wages are established at a level allowing working adults in the formal economy to exit poverty. However, in other areas, such as training requirements for teachers, labour policies enabling working parents to care for their children, and unemployment income protections, more progress is necessary to both provide adequate protections for children and families and to strengthen the foundations of economic growth.

South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific: Many Asian countries, particularly in East Asia and the Pacific, have experienced strong economic growth in recent decades. This has important and positive consequences for children and families, who have more resources at their disposal to meet and surpass basic needs. However, the region has

few protections for those children and families left in poverty compared to most of the world. Together, the economic and social policy conditions may contribute to widening gaps in the experiences of children and families.

Changing Children's Chances

Most of us spend far more of our time considering the role of parents and other caregivers in children's lives than the role of public and private sector policy. Indeed, paying attention to parents makes sense: families raise children, not governments or corporations. Yet it is equally essential to care about the policies that frame what even the most loving families are able to provide for their children. The overwhelming majority of parents and caregivers are deeply committed to the quality of their children's lives. If that were enough, we would not see the threats we currently do to children's healthy development.

When adults from a minority group face discrimination and are limited in the job opportunities they can access, they are not able to provide their children with everything that they need, and their children are likely to face this same discrimination at school or when they are receiving health care. When it comes to infant and child mortality, fewer children die as infants or toddlers in countries where births are attended by skilled personnel, where children are fully immunized, where households have access to clean piped water and sanitation facilities, and where girls are better educated.

In these areas and others, the steps taken by governments make a difference. When government investments in health care make pregnancy care and preventive paediatric care more affordable and accessible, more women receive care during childbirth and more children are immunized. When education is free, poverty puts fewer limits on all children's, and particularly girls', chance to attend school. When child labour is prohibited and the minimum wage is set high enough that working parents can support their families, children from the poorest families are more likely to go to school instead of work. When laws guarantee equal rights regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, or disability, families have more tools with which to fight the barriers erected by discrimination.

What do we know about children's chances worldwide? The global community has begun to measure certain outcomes at a world level that are vitally important but represent only the barest minimum—whether children die, whether they have been vaccinated, whether they enrol in school. The information available on children's outcomes is sparse, but even rarer and less systematic is information on what is being done to meet children's needs. There has been next to no readily comparable information on what laws, policies, and programs countries have in place to address each of the areas vital to children's healthy development: access to quality education, protection from child labour and early marriage, good health care, working conditions for adults that enable parents to care for their children, freedom from discrimination, and access to resources to meet basic family needs. In the absence of readily comparable information on countries, our ability to support national progress has been limited.

Before the World Policy Analysis Centre,[1] whose data informs this report, began, there were few global maps of what rights children have in countries around the world, no images that rapidly told the story of educational policies on access and quality, no way to readily and reliably compare child labour or child marriage laws around the world. This report seeks to provide a global picture of where we stand in terms of policy tools that governments can use to make a difference in children's life chances.

As well, this information is easily accessible to citizens, who can now find out what their country's policies and laws are doing for children and families and how they compare with other countries around the world, in their own region, or in similar economic situations. Key facts that would otherwise take thousands of hours to learn become knowable in seconds and minutes.

The ability to hold countries publicly and visibly accountable for whether they are taking steps to ensure that all children have an equal chance in practice has the potential to be transformative. Over the course of this project, we have often been asked why this information has not been made available before. There may be many reasons; one is certainly the amount of work required. The magnitude and challenges of this type of initiative may in part explain why it has not been undertaken before, but so too may the transparency and power of the results. When countries' choices are buried in thousands of pages of text, few will sort through them, and countries that have failed to support their children have little to fear in terms of public scrutiny. When single maps can capture and highlight which countries provide strong support for children's development and which are failing to do so, the likelihood that pressure will be placed on the laggards is far greater. We hope that the information presented in this report will be taken as a call to action by civil society, national and global policymakers.

Poverty: Meeting Basic Needs

Much more than a minimum level of income matters for children's chance to develop to their fullest potential. However, we cannot speak about equal life chances for all children without knowing what countries are doing when it comes to the basics.

The scale of the problem of poverty is staggering. In low- and middle-income countries, nearly half of the population lives in poverty on less than $2.00 per day[1] Millions of children lack access to essentials such as adequate nutrition, water, and shelter.[2] In the countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, approximately 10% of households are unable to meet at least one of their basic needs, including a sufficiently heated home, an adequate diet, or health care access unimpeded by financial concerns.[3] Children living in poverty are less likely to attend school and more likely to labour; when they do attend school, they are less likely to succeed because of their multiple responsibilities and financial constraints.[4] Poor children are more likely to die young than their richer counterparts.[5] From nutrition to immunizations, from infectious diseases to chronic ones, children living in poverty also have worse health outcomes throughout the life course.[6]

The policy data presented in this chapter are drawn from the database created by our research team on poverty reduction policy around the world, based on analyses of a wealth of legislative texts as well as other government and international sources.[7]

Access to decent jobs and decent wages is the most likely way for working adults and their children to exit poverty. Evidence shows that programs that increase income from parental employment can improve children's outcomes.[8] A natural mechanism for increasing the amount of income that low-income families have access to has been raising the minimum wage. The minimum wage as an income-improving policy has been hotly debated, but there is substantial evidence of its positive impact on child poverty and minimal disemployment effects.[9]

At first glance, it seems the world is doing well in establishing minimum wages.[10] Out of 189 countries on which we have information, a minimum wage is ensured in 167 countries (see Map). However, the world's progress is less convincing when one looks at the details. For those workers receiving the minimum wage, the first question is whether it is high enough to allow employed adults and their dependents to have a decent quality of life. As noted above, the figure of $2 per person per day is a commonly used global floor of poverty. Yet in 40 countries, a working adult earning the minimum wage with one dependent child would be living on $2 or less per person per day, adjusted for purchasing power parity.[11]

Financial support provided to households by the government is another often-used means of poverty reduction. The extent to which these income transfers reduce poverty levels differs according to the type of benefits and the wider social security context of

each country, but a wealth of evidence from sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, Latin America, and Europe shows that they can benefit low-income children and families by reducing the prevalence and intensity of family poverty.[12] Our investigation of the availability of cash benefits for families around the world shows that 103 countries have legislated some form of family cash allowances: income-tested, non-income-tested, or available only under particular circumstances, such as for single mothers (see Map).[13]

When we calculated the amount of family benefits that a low-income family with 2 preschool-age children would receive in the countries providing benefits on an income-tested or non-income-tested basis, we found that the amount of these benefits, and the extent to which they can contribute to poverty reduction, varies widely around the world. In 31 countries, this family would receive less than $2.00 per day, PPP-adjusted, from the income transfer. In 19 countries, the monthly transfer would total between $60.00 and $149.99, and 21 would provide at least $150.00 per month.[14]

In the context of the recent global recession, and increasing job transitions even in non-recessionary times, it is clear that working adults and their families need a source of temporary support during times of unemployment. Of the 182 countries on which we were able to collect data, 163 guarantee income protection during unemployment. Eighty-one of these offer government unemployment insurance, and 82 only offer coverage through severance pay. Many of the poorest families worldwide are working in the informal economy; because many of these individuals are considered self-employed, they are automatically excluded from severance pay provisions. Government unemployment benefits can be structured so as to include these groups as well, but as of yet, only 28 countries include the self-employed on either a compulsory or voluntary basis.

Regional Highlights

Minimum Wage

- In Latin America and the Caribbean, minimum wages in all but 2 countries are set high enough such that an adult earning the established minimum wage, with 1 dependent, earns above the $2.00 per person per day poverty line.
- Half of countries in both South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific provide a minimum wage that is too low to lift a working adult with one dependent over the $2.00 per person per day poverty line, or guarantee no minimum wage at all.
- Most countries in sub-Saharan Africa have set a minimum wage; just 6 countries have not done so. However, in 6 countries this wage is $2.00 per day or less, and in 20 countries it is between $2.00 and $4.00 per day, leaving even a family of one adult and one dependent under the $2.00 poverty line.

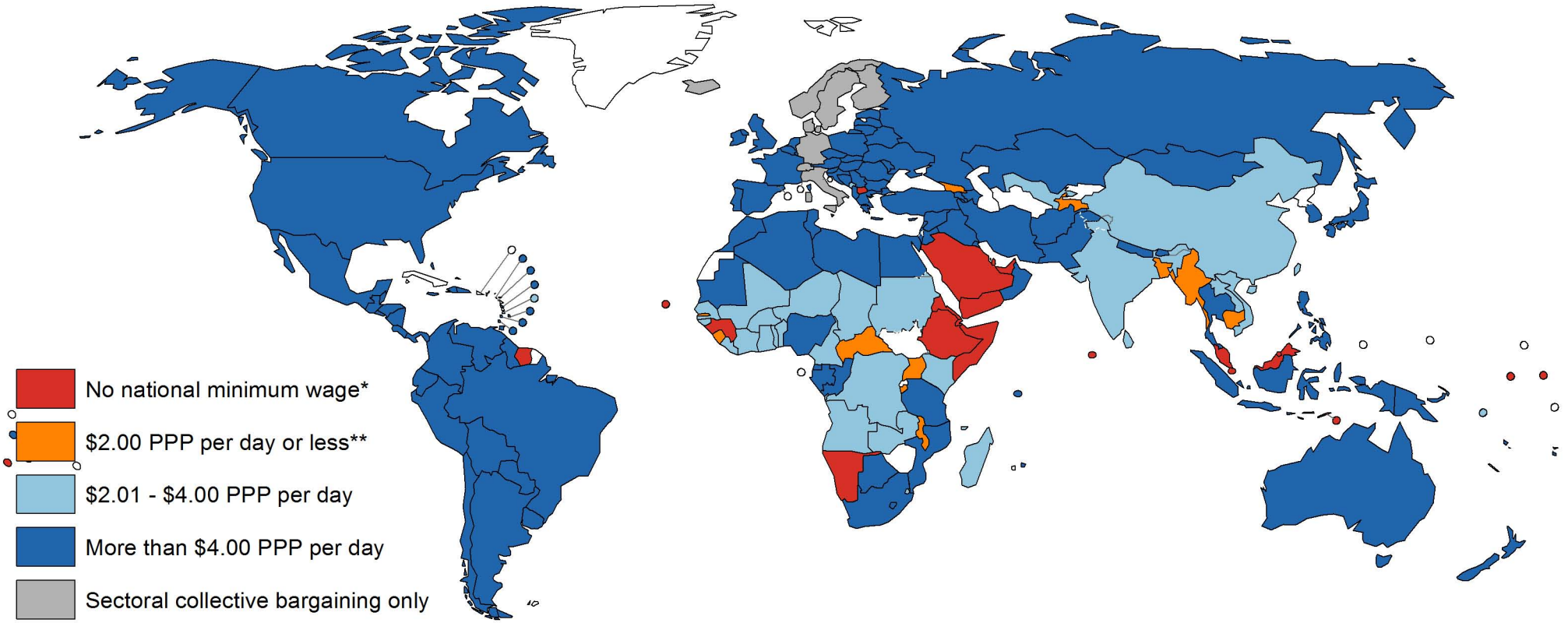
Family Benefits

- Cash benefits for families are very rare in South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific – 78% of East Asia and the Pacific and 88% of South Asia do not provide them.
- These benefits are near-universal in Europe and Central Asia, with just 2 countries failing to provide them.

Unemployment Income Protection

- Most countries in sub-Saharan Africa, 41 of 45, have recognized the need to provide income support during periods of unemployment. However, all but 4 of these countries do so through mandated severance pay, and 3 of the 4 with unemployment benefits do not include coverage for the self-employed, leaving the informal economy unprotected in all but 1 country; this is a serious gap given the prevalence of informal employment in the region.
- Virtually all countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, 30 of 31, guarantee income protection for households during unemployment. However, in 29 of these countries, there is no option for coverage for those in the informal economy.
- Income protection during unemployment is much less common in Asia than in the rest of the world; 37% of countries in East Asia and the Pacific and 25% in South Asia provide neither severance pay nor unemployment benefits. The prevalence of unemployment income protection even in low-income countries leaves no doubt about its feasibility.
- All 52 countries in Europe and Central Asia provide some form of income protection during unemployment; 22 of these countries have coverage available for the self-employed, an important step forward ahead of global norms.

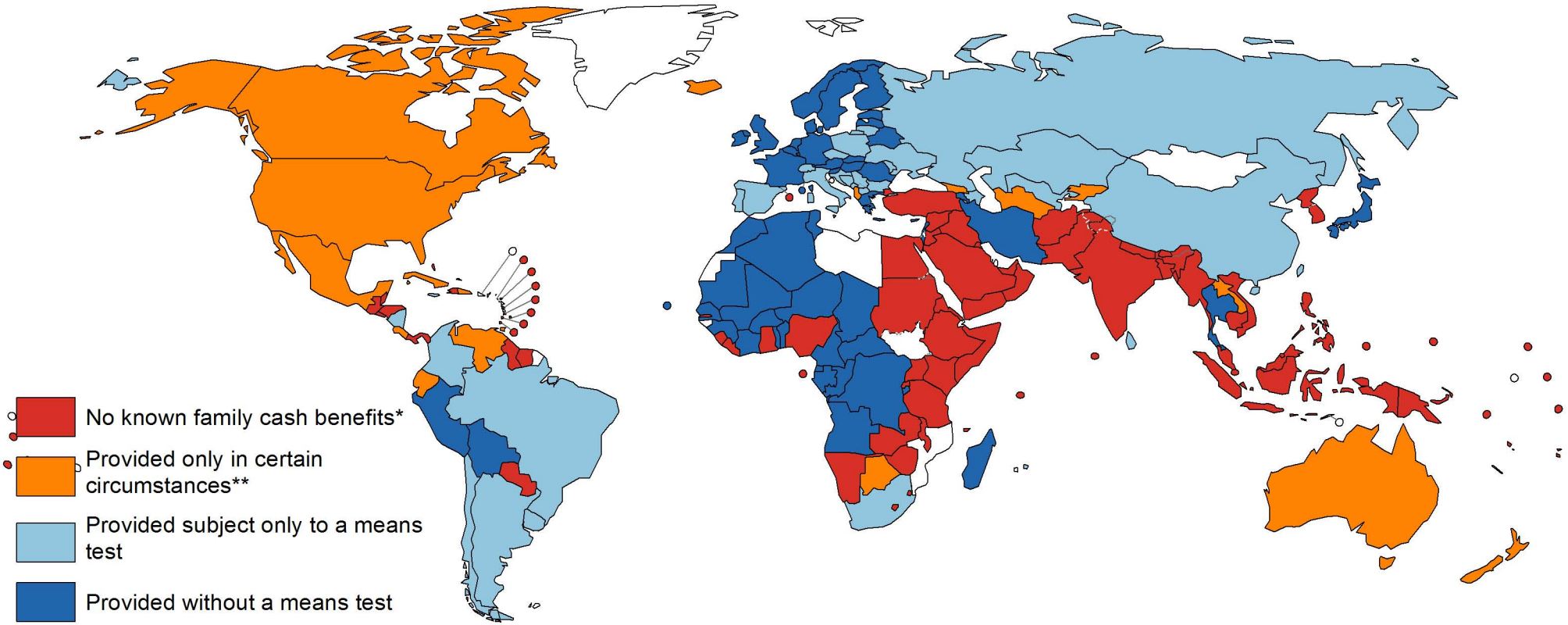
At what level are minimum wages set?



**No national minimum wage* includes cases where there is no minimum wage legislation as well as where legislation provides a framework for establishing a minimum wage, but the country has not yet implemented one.
***Buying power of minimum wage, adjusted for purchasing power parity.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Poverty Database

Do families receive income support?



**No known family cash benefits* also includes cases where a framework for benefits has been legislatively established, but the benefits themselves have not been established

***Only in certain circumstances* includes cases where benefits are available only to specific subpopulations, such as single parents or orphans, or as benefits to fund specific aspects of life, such as housing allowances, birth grants, and school allowances.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Poverty Database

	Low-Income Countries	*Middle-Income Countries*	*High-Income Countries*
Type of Minimum Wage Protection			
No minimum wage set by law or collective bargaining	4 (12%)	12 (11%)	6 (12%)
Minimum wage set by collective bargaining only	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	11 (22%)
Minimum wage set by law	30 (88%)	93 (88%)	32 (65%)
Buying Power of Minimum Wage, PPP-Adjusted			
No national minimum wage established	4 (13%)	12 (12%)	6 (13%)
Minimum wage set by collective bargaining at the sectoral level	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	8 (17%)
Minimum wage is $2 per day or less	10 (32%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)
Minimum wage is $2.01 - $4 per day	12 (39%)	17 (17%)	0 (0%)
Minimum wage is $4.01 - $10 per day	5 (16%)	36 (36%)	2 (4%)
Minimum wage is $10.01 - $20 per day	0 (0%)	29 (29%)	7 (15%)
Minimum wage is $20.01 - $30 per day	0 (0%)	4 (4%)	8 (17%)
Minimum wage is more than $30 per day	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	15 (33%)
Type of Government-Provided Family Benefits Available by Law			
No known family benefits	20 (63%)	48 (47%)	11 (23%)
Family benefits only in certain circumstances	1 (3%)	11 (11%)	6 (13%)
Means-tested family benefits available	0 (0%)	23 (23%)	8 (17%)
Family benefits available - not means tested	11 (34%)	20 (20%)	23 (48%)
Amount of Government-Provided Family Benefits Available to Low-Income Families with Two Preschool-Age Children (Age 4), PPP-Adjusted			
No known family benefits available	21 (68%)	59 (63%)	17 (39%)
Less than $10 per month for eligible families	5 (16%)	3 (3%)	0 (0%)
$10 - $19.99 per month for eligible families	5 (16%)	5 (5%)	0 (0%)
$20 - $59.99 per month for eligible families	0 (0%)	12 (13%)	1 (2%)
$60 - $149.99 per month for eligible families	0 (0%)	9 (10%)	10 (23%)
$150 or more per month for eligible families	0 (0%)	5 (5%)	16 (36%)
Unemployment Protections Guaranteed by Law			
No guaranteed unemployment protections	5 (16%)	12 (12%)	2 (4%)
Employers must compensate workers at the time of dismissal (severance pay)	25 (81%)	50 (49%)	7 (14%)
Government provides financial assistance during unemployment, self-employed excluded	1 (3%)	27 (26%)	25 (51%)
Government provides financial assistance during unemployment, self-employed coverage available	0 (0%)	13 (13%)	15 (31%)

Source : World Policy Analysis Centre, Poverty Database.

Definitions : Means-tested benefits are available only to families with incomes below a certain threshold.
Not means-tested benefits are available to families without considering their income.
Only in certain circumstances includes cases where benefits are available only to specific subpopulations, such as single parents or orphans, or as benefits to fund specific aspects of life, such as housing allowances, birth grants, and school allowances.

Notes : Severance pay may also be required when government unemployment benefits are available.
Self-employed excluded also includes cases where it is unknown whether self-employed coverage is available.
Self-employed coverage available includes both mandatory and voluntary coverage.

Education: Beyond the Basics

Tens of millions of children around the world face barriers to attending school and succeeding in school, at the primary level and beyond. At the primary level, 61 million primary school-age children are out of school.[1] While secondary school enrolment in high-income countries is virtually universal, in other regions the story is quite different – for each 100 children who could be attending secondary school, just 40 are enrolled in sub-Saharan Africa, 59 in South and West Asia, 69 in the Arab States, and 90 or fewer in Central and Eastern Europe, East Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.[2] Girls and boys from poor families experience among the greatest barriers – in the vast majority of countries with a large out-of-school population, the poorest children are 4 times more likely to be out of school than the richest children.[3] Given these realities, making schooling free is critical to ensure that all children can attend. Many countries have shown that eliminating tuition fees means that more children, especially girls, can afford to enrol.[4] In Malawi, for example, primary school tuition fees were eliminated in 1994; while only half of children were enrolled in 1991, 99% were enrolled by 1999.[5]

With this in mind, the World Policy Analysis Centre analysed qualitative reports and national policies to determine the educational conditions experienced by children around the world.[6]

In terms of affordability, the world has made great strides at the primary school level, showing that when the world makes a commitment to a particular issue as it has to universal primary education, huge change is possible – since 1990, the number of children not attending primary school has dropped from 108 million to 61 million.[7] Primary education is tuition-free in the vast majority of countries around the world – 166 of the 174 countries for which we were able to collect data.[8] However, looking to secondary school,[9] a minimum requirement for most jobs that provide a decent income, there are still major gaps. Twenty-three countries report charging tuition when students begin secondary school,[10] and it is charged before the end of secondary school in 38 countries (see Map).[11]

Once children enter school, the quality of the education that they receive is a critical concern. Poor-quality education can have severe consequences – for example, in at least 12 sub-Saharan African countries, young adults have a 40% probability of illiteracy *after* having completed 6 years of schooling.[12] A key component of educational quality and achievement is the quality and training of the teachers instructing students, a reality supported by research evidence as well as intuition.[13]

Yet, at the secondary level, requirements are inadequate in many countries. In 48 countries, lower secondary school teachers must have completed only a secondary education (see Map). While many countries also require some teacher training, the

duration and nature of this training is variable and the level of information on it is inadequate. At the upper-secondary level, 30 countries do not require teachers to have achieved more than a secondary education and some teacher training. This leaves large numbers of students around the world being taught by instructors who have completed little more education than their students.[14]

Can countries afford to do better? Especially given that in most cases, children living in the poorest countries have the poorest educational opportunities, this is an important question to answer. Combining our data with UNESCO's data on educational expenditures, we can see that some low-performing countries could be investing more in education. For example, 13 of the 38 countries that begin charging tuition before the end of secondary education spend less than 4% of their GDP on education – these countries include 6 low-income countries, 6 middle-income countries, and 1 high-income country. These countries lag behind global spending norms at every income level – the majority of low-income, middle-income countries, and high-income countries spend 4% or more of their GDP on education. Even low-income countries like Malawi and Burundi have managed to spend almost 6% of their GDP on education. Lesotho, a lower-middle-income country, has devoted 13% of its GDP to educational expenditures.[15]

Although many poor performers could afford to spend more, there is still likely to be a need for a global financial commitment along the lines of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to ensure that all children have access to high-quality education, because of the magnitude of low-income countries' needs and the limited size of their current GDP. International assistance should not be required indefinitely, as the nation's GDP will gradually rise as a result of the return on investment in education,[16] enabling the country to fully fund its own enhanced educational system.

Regional Highlights

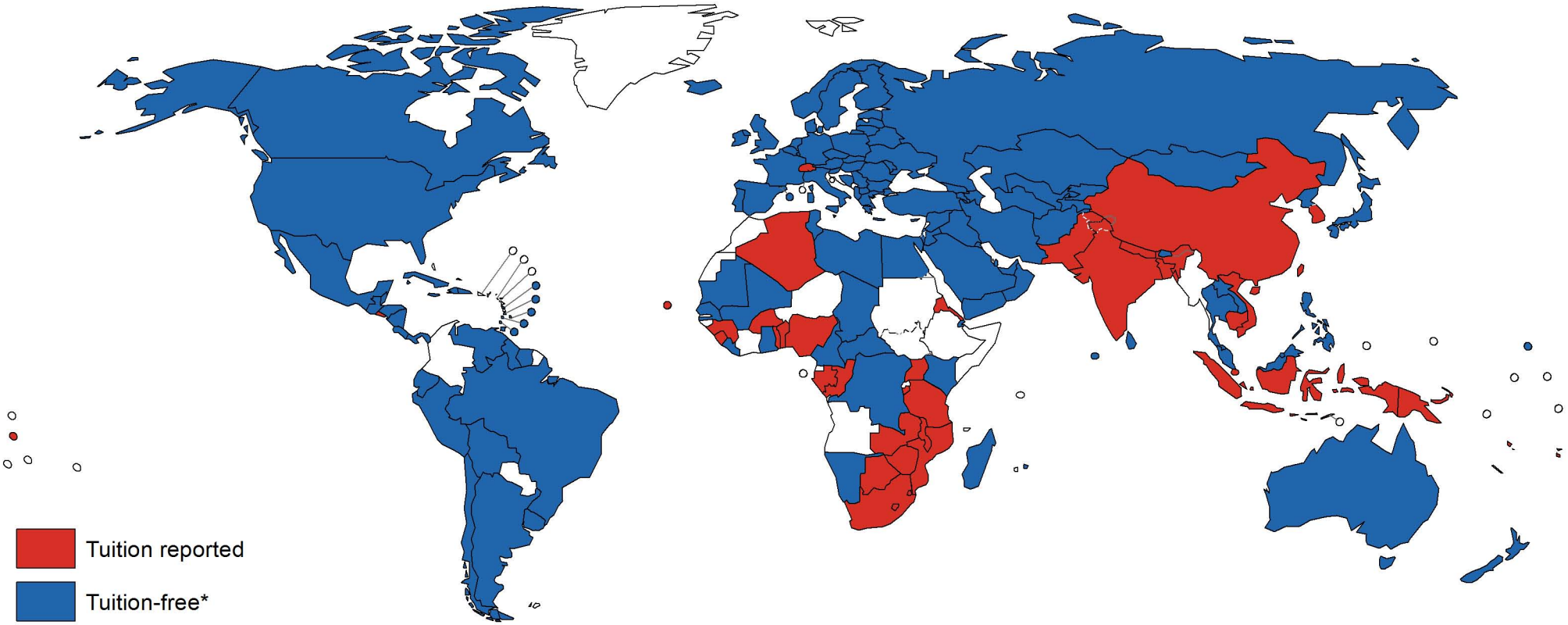
Tuition-Free Schooling

- Rare on a global scale, there are still 3 countries in the Pacific that charge tuition for primary schooling.
- Half of countries in East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia do not make education tuition-free through the completion of secondary education.
- A greater proportion of countries in sub-Saharan Africa than in other regions – 61% – begin charging tuition before the end of secondary school. However, 13 countries in the region have removed this barrier until the completion of secondary school, showing that this policy is feasible.
- In Latin America, schooling is free through the completion of secondary school in 27 out of 28 countries in the region.

Educational Requirements for Teachers

- Sub-Saharan Africa has among the lowest educational requirements for teachers – half of countries require lower secondary school teachers to have completed no higher than a secondary education. (Although most of these countries also require teacher training, information is needed regarding the extent and nature of this training.) However, the other half of countries in the region require at least a bachelor's degree.
- 5 of 7 countries in South Asia require no higher than a secondary education to teach lower secondary school.
- In Europe and Central Asia, even at the primary level, most countries require teachers to have completed at least a Bachelor's level of education.

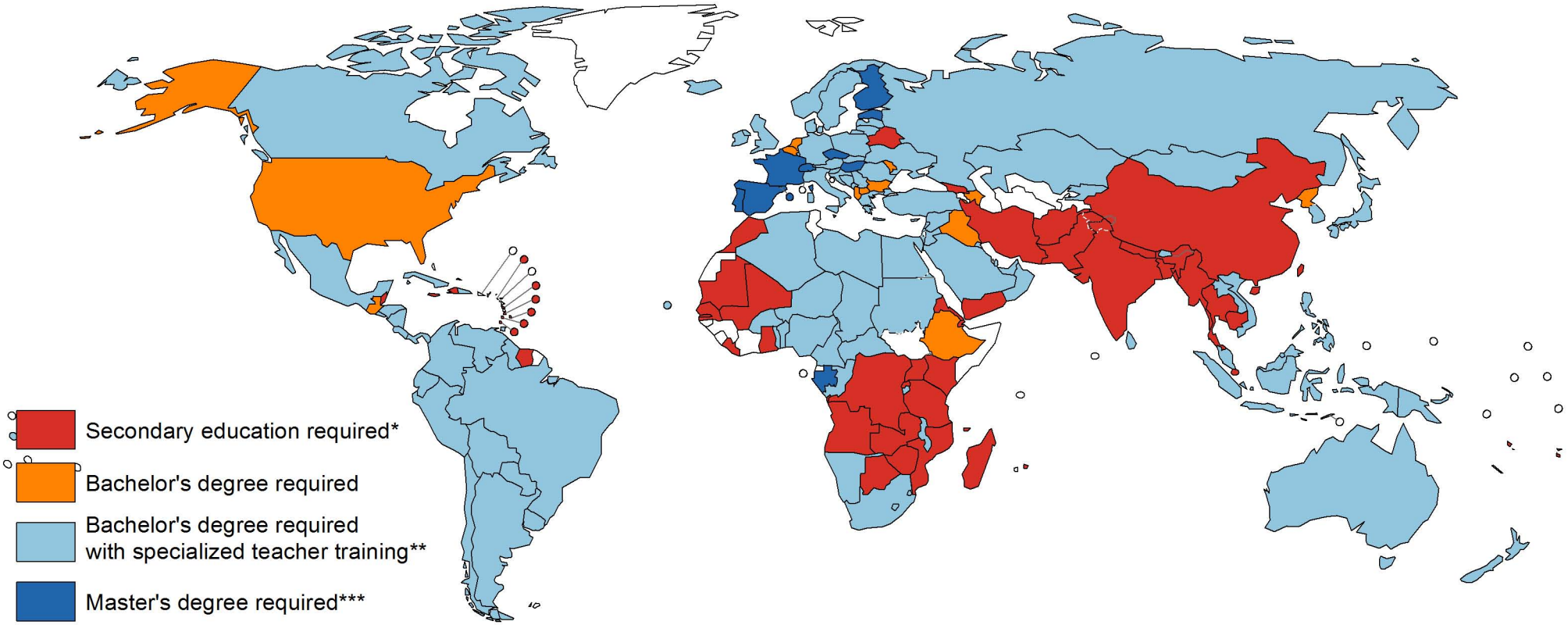
Is completing secondary education tuition-free?



**Tuition-free* includes cases where no tuition is charged, but there may be other fees. Adequate information for systematic assessment of other fees is not available.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Education Database

How much education must lower secondary-school teachers complete?



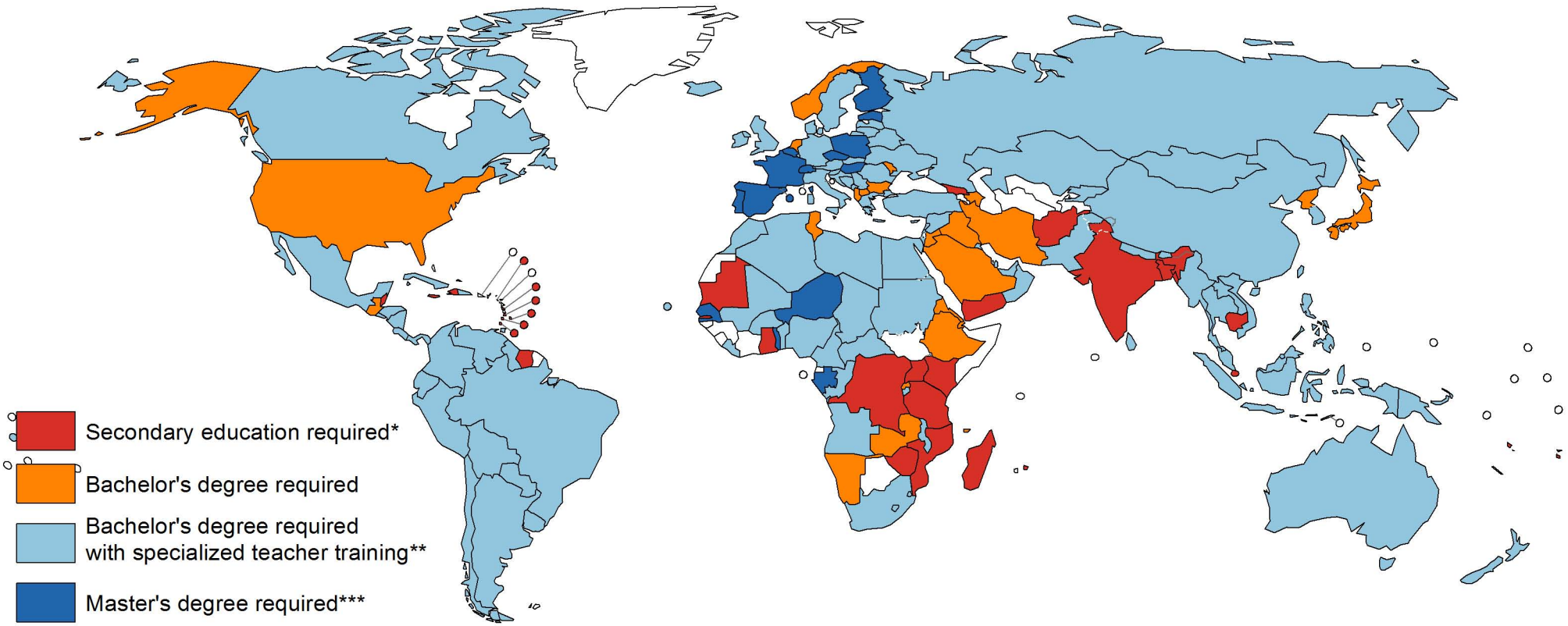
**Secondary education required* includes countries that require a teacher to have completed no more than a secondary level of education, whether or not they require specialized teacher training.

***Specialized teacher training* includes a bachelor of education or a general bachelor's with additional teacher training.

****Master's degree required* includes countries that require a teacher to have completed a Master's degree, whether or not they require specialized teacher training.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Education Database

How much education must upper secondary-school teachers complete?



**Secondary education required* includes countries that require a teacher to have completed no more than a secondary level of education, whether or not they require specialized teacher training.

***Specialized teacher training* includes a bachelor of education or a general bachelor's with additional teacher training.

****Master's degree required* includes countries that require a teacher to have completed a Master's degree, whether or not they require specialized teacher training.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Education Database

Tuition-Free Education	*Low-Income Countries*	*Middle-Income Countries*	*High-Income Countries*
Financial Barriers to Accessing Primary Education			
Tuition fees are charged in primary education	3 (9%)	5 (5%)	0 (0%)
Primary education is tuition-free	30 (91%)	91 (95%)	45 (100%)
Financial Barriers to Accessing the Beginning of Secondary Education			
Tuition fees are charged in the first year of secondary education	11 (38%)	10 (11%)	2 (4%)
At least the first year of secondary education is tuition-free	18 (62%)	81 (89%)	43 (96%)
Financial Barriers to the Completion of Secondary Education			
Tuition fees are charged in at least the last year of secondary education	16 (59%)	19 (22%)	3 (7%)
The completion of secondary education is tuition-free	11 (41%)	68 (78%)	41 (93%)
Financial Barriers to Accessing Higher Education			
Tuition fees are charged in higher education	13 (45%)	33 (45%)	21 (49%)
Higher education is tuition-free	16 (55%)	41 (55%)	22 (51%)
Compulsory Education	***Low-Income***	***Middle-Income***	***High-Income***
Compulsory Education at the Primary Level			
Primary education is not compulsory	5 (15%)	8 (8%)	2 (4%)
Primary education is compulsory	29 (85%)	87 (92%)	43 (96%)
Compulsory Education at the Beginning of Secondary Education			
Education is not compulsory for at least the first year of secondary education	19 (56%)	28 (29%)	2 (4%)
Education is compulsory for at least the first year of secondary education	15 (44%)	68 (71%)	43 (96%)
Compulsory Education through the Completion of Secondary Education			
Education is not compulsory through the completion of secondary education	32 (94%)	80 (84%)	34 (77%)
Education is compulsory through the completion of secondary education	2 (6%)	15 (16%)	10 (23%)
Teacher-Training Requirements	***Low-Income***	***Middle-Income***	***High-Income***
Minimum Level of Training Required to Teach at the Primary Level			
Completion of secondary education required	2 (6%)	4 (4%)	1 (2%)
Completion of secondary education and specialized teacher training required	26 (84%)	45 (49%)	2 (4%)
Completion of a bachelor's degree required	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	4 (9%)
Completion of a bachelor of education or a bachelor's degree and specialized teacher training required	3 (10%)	42 (46%)	34 (76%)
Completion of a master's degree required	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (9%)
Minimum Level of Training Required to Teach at the Lower Secondary Level			
Completion of secondary education required	1 (3%)	2 (2%)	1 (2%)
Completion of secondary education and specialized teacher training required	17 (57%)	26 (29%)	1 (2%)
Completion of a bachelor's degree required	2 (7%)	7 (8%)	3 (7%)

Completion of a bachelor of education or a bachelor's degree and specialized teacher training required	10 (33%)	53 (60%)	31 (69%)
Completion of a master's degree required	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	6 (13%)
Completion of a master's degree and specialized teacher training required	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (7%)
Minimum Level of Training Required to Teach at the Upper Secondary Level			
Completion of secondary education required	1 (3%)	1 (1%)	1 (2%)
Completion of secondary education and specialized teacher training required	10 (33%)	16 (18%)	1 (2%)
Completion of a bachelor's degree required	5 (17%)	13 (15%)	5 (11%)
Completion of a bachelor of education or a bachelor's degree and specialized teacher training required	12 (40%)	57 (64%)	27 (60%)
Completion of a master's degree required	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	6 (13%)
Completion of a master's degree and specialized teacher training required	2 (7%)	1 (1%)	5 (11%)

Source : World Policy Analysis Centre, Education Database.

Definition : Tuition-free includes cases where no tuition is charged, but there may be other fees. Adequate information for systematic assessment of other fees is not available.

Child Labour: Protecting Childhood

According to the International Labour Organization, there are 215 million child labourers in the world aged 5 to 17.[1] Many of these children have dropped out of school; many others struggle to combine work and education. As well as damaging children's health,[2] labour can impede their education – child labourers around the world tend to complete less education than children who do not work.[3] In Vietnam, for example, research on children who combined work and school showed that the highest grade attained by children who worked was three grades lower than for children who did not work, even after family and regional characteristics were controlled for.[4]

Through a detailed examination of labour legislation and other supplementary sources as required, we examined how well children are protected from labouring young.[5]

It is beyond question that children should be prevented from doing hazardous work – performing dangerous tasks, for extreme hours, or in unhealthy conditions. However, our comprehensive analysis of legislation worldwide reveals that far too many countries are failing to do so. While protection from hazardous work should be universal, 46 countries do not prohibit children and youth from performing it under the age of 18; 16 countries allow children aged 15, or even younger, to do this work. Many countries that prohibit hazardous work also include exceptions in their legislation that allow children younger than the official minimum age to do this work, such as if the work is vocational or educational, or for particular types of work.[6] When these exceptions are included, the number of countries permitting hazardous work before age 18 climbs to 83 (see Map).[7]

While nearly all work can harm children's chances at an education, data from over 60 countries show that when children work long hours, their school attendance decreases,[8] making it especially important to regulate long hours of work. In Ghana, each additional hour of paid work is associated with a decrease of over a year of completed schooling,[9] and in Tanzania, it is estimated that if a girl's working hours were reduced by an hour per day, she would be 8 percentage points more likely to be able to read a newspaper.[10] Nonetheless, in 6 countries (Australia, India, Micronesia, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Tonga), there is no legislated national minimum age for full-time employment; some of these countries have state-level minimum ages, but not all states have established these laws, leaving some of the nation's children unprotected. In 5 countries (Bhutan, Dominica, Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Sudan), children are permitted to work 35 or more hours per week at age 12 or 13.[11] As well, many countries do not set the minimum age for full-time work high enough to allow for the completion of secondary school. Twenty-nine countries set the minimum age at 14, 63 countries at 15, and 59 countries at 16 or 17. A total of 18 countries permit full-time

work for children only once they turn 18 (see Map). Again, in some countries these ages are even lower in reality, because of loopholes built into the laws.[12]

Finally, children need to be protected from working too many hours on school days, and from working at night. While there is good reason to believe that youth can work a modest number of hours per week without seriously impinging on their education, youth who work long hours during the school week are unable to take full advantage of their education. Our results show that the majority of countries do not protect secondary school-age children and youth from having to work for 6 hours or more on school days (see Map).[13] Fifteen-year-olds are unprotected from long working hours on school days in 118 countries; a total of 171 countries permit 6 hours of work or more on school days before a child turns 18. In terms of night work, children are no longer guaranteed 12 hours off from work at night once they turn 14 in 18 countries;[14] the same is true for 16-year-olds in 58 countries.[15]

Regional Highlights

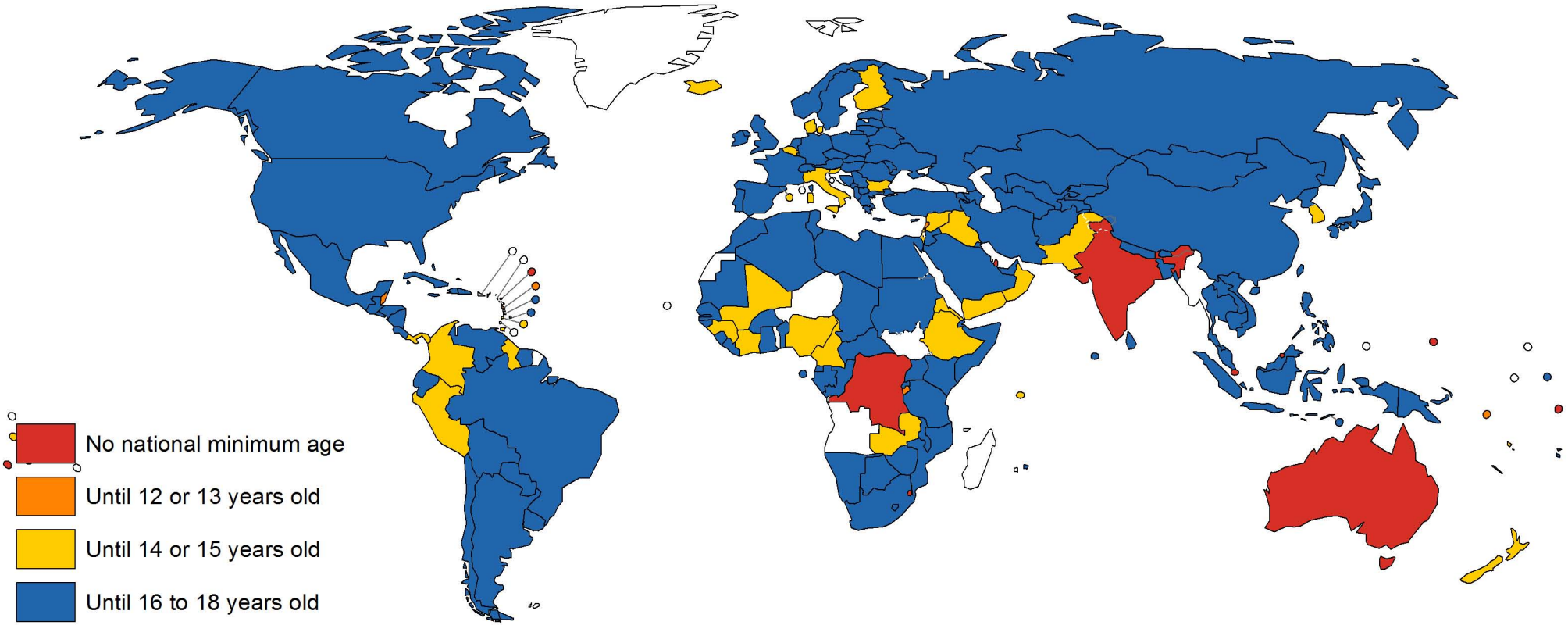
Hazardous Work

- 3 countries in East Asia and the Pacific have no national minimum age for hazardous work; an additional 10 countries in this region permit hazardous work before a child turns 18.

Full-Time Work

- 5 countries in East Asia and the Pacific and 3 in South Asia permit children as young as 13 to work full-time.
- All countries in sub-Saharan Africa have legislated a minimum age for full-time work, an important base level of protection for children. However, the majority of countries (76%) have set this age at less than 16; 2 countries have set this age at 12 or 13. At the same time, 11 countries protect children from full time until age 16, 17, or 18.

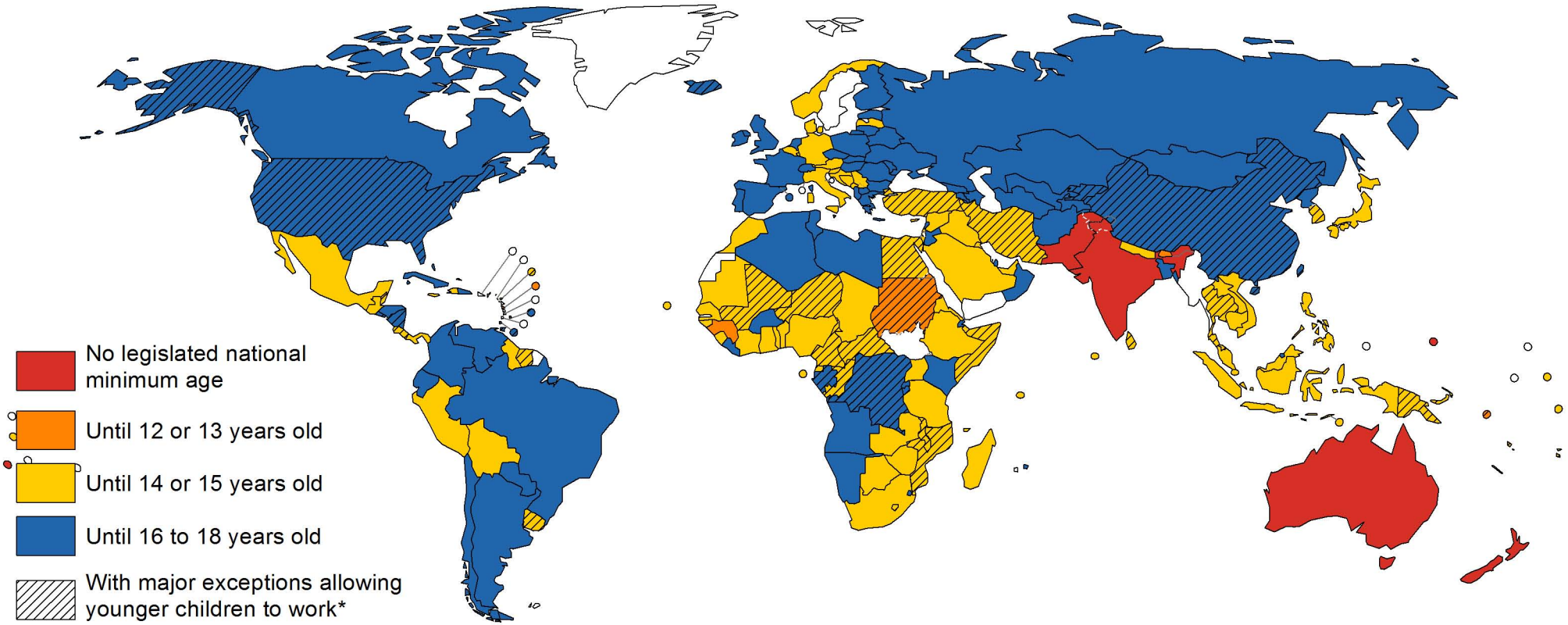
If exceptions are taken into account, how long are children protected from hazardous work?



Exceptions are cases where legislation allows children to do hazardous work at younger ages under specific circumstances. For hazardous work, we include any exceptions to the minimum age for hazardous work except force majeure (extraordinary circumstances such as war).

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Child Labour Database

How long are children protected from full-time work?

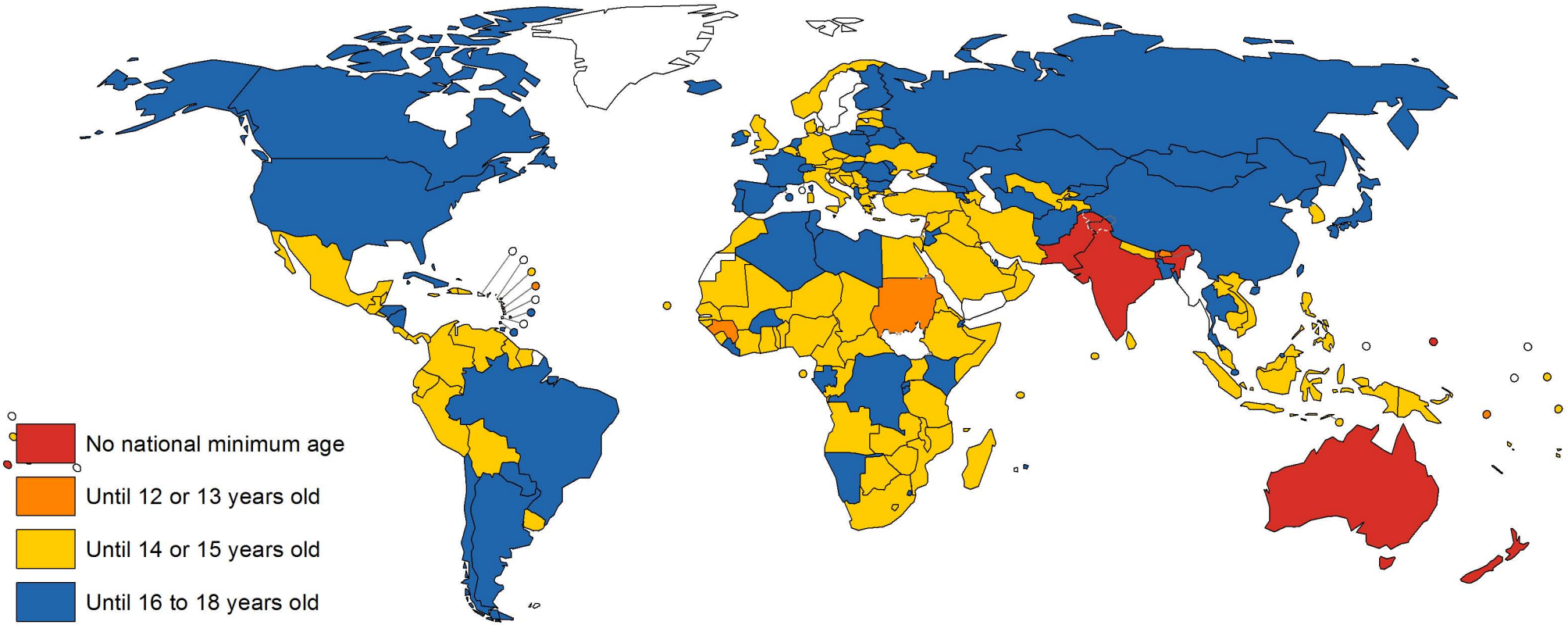


Full-time work is defined as 35 hours of work per week. If a country allows children to work at a younger age subject only to parental permission, the younger age is shown to increase comparability across countries.

**Major exceptions* include younger ages set for specific types of work, such as agricultural, temporary, or seasonal work; exceptions to allow children to work with family members; and exceptions that require only minister or government approval or when the work is termed indispensable for the child or their family.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Child Labour Database

How long are children protected from working 6 or more hours on a school day?



If legislation specifies that children can do only light work which by definition should not interfere with schooling, it is assumed that they are protected from working 6 or more hours on a school day.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Child Labour Database

	Low-Income Countries	*Middle-Income Countries*	*High-Income Countries*
Age Until Which Children are Protected from Hazardous Work when Exceptions to Minimum-Age Protections are Considered			
No legislated national minimum age for hazardous work	0 (0%)	7 (7%)	4 (9%)
Protected from hazardous work only until age 12 or 13	1 (3%)	4 (4%)	0 (0%)
Protected from hazardous work until age 14	4 (13%)	6 (6%)	3 (6%)
Protected from hazardous work until age 15	0 (0%)	11 (11%)	9 (19%)
Protected from hazardous work until age 16	6 (20%)	13 (13%)	11 (23%)
Protected from hazardous work until age 17	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	2 (4%)
Protected from hazardous work until age 18	19 (63%)	56 (57%)	18 (38%)
Age Until Which Children are Protected from Working 6 or More Hours on a School Day			
No legislated national minimum age for work and no protection	0 (0%)	4 (4%)	2 (4%)
Protected only until age 12 or 13	1 (3%)	5 (5%)	0 (0%)
Protected until age 14	10 (30%)	20 (20%)	2 (4%)
Protected until age 15	13 (39%)	39 (39%)	22 (47%)
Protected until age 16	7 (21%)	28 (28%)	15 (32%)
Protected until age 17	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	2 (4%)
Protected until age 18	2 (6%)	3 (3%)	4 (9%)
Age Until Which Children are Guaranteed 12 Hours Off from Work at Night			
No legislated national minimum age for work and no guarantee	0 (0%)	3 (3%)	2 (4%)
Guaranteed only until age 12 or 13	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)
Guaranteed until age 14	3 (9%)	14 (14%)	1 (2%)
Guaranteed until age 15	7 (21%)	20 (20%)	6 (13%)
Guaranteed until age 16	3 (9%)	14 (14%)	5 (11%)
Guaranteed until age 17	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	1 (2%)
Guaranteed until age 18	20 (61%)	46 (46%)	32 (68%)
Minimum Age Protection for Full-Time Work			
No legislated national minimum age for full-time work	0 (0%)	4 (4%)	2 (4%)
Minimum age for full-time work is 12 or 13	1 (3%)	4 (4%)	0 (0%)
Minimum age for full-time work is 14	11 (33%)	16 (16%)	2 (4%)
Minimum age for full-time work is 15	11 (33%)	34 (34%)	18 (38%)
Minimum age for full-time work is 16	8 (24%)	31 (31%)	16 (34%)
Minimum age for full-time work is 17	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	2 (4%)
Minimum age for full-time work is 18	2 (6%)	9 (9%)	7 (15%)

Source : World Policy Analysis Centre, Child Labour Database.

Definitions : Hazardous work is work that countries themselves or the International Labour Organization define as hazardous.

Full-time work is defined as 35 hours of work per week.

Exceptions are cases where the legislation allows children to do hazardous work at younger ages under specific circumstances.

Child Marriage

Early marriage is still far too common in many regions of the world – 46% of women in South Asia, 38% in sub-Saharan Africa, and 21% in Latin America and the Caribbean are married before the age of 18.[1] In countries around the world, girls and boys from low-income families are more likely to be married as children than those from richer families.[2]

Gender inequity is an inextricable part of any discussion of child marriage. Girls are much more likely than boys to be married as children. The ratio of married girls to married boys aged between 15 and 19 is very high in countries where early marriage is common, such as Mali, where the ratio is 72:1, and is also significant in countries where early marriage is less prevalent, such as the United States (8:1) and El Salvador (6:1).[3]

When children marry, their education suffers; many girls must drop out of school once they marry.[4] In addition, early marriages commonly result in early childbirth, which can have serious effects on both mothers and babies.[5] Both infant mortality and maternal mortality are significantly higher for very young mothers.[6] Worldwide, mothers aged 15 to 19 are twice as likely to die in childbirth as women giving birth in their 20s, and girls under age 15 are five times more likely to die in childbirth.[7]

When girls marry young, they tend to marry men who are significantly older than they are and have substantially more education; these age and education gaps are much smaller among men and women who marry as adults.[8] These disparities affect power dynamics within the relationship. Women who marry as children are less likely to have control over their health decisions and freedom of movement, as well as household expenditures, than women who marry as adults.[9] This puts them at higher risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, limits their access to the information and health care they need, and restricts their independence.[10] Additionally, wives who married as children are at higher risk of sexual and physical abuse within their marriage.[11]

Are countries legislating against child marriage? Do their laws address the disproportionate impact on girls? Using reports submitted to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women monitoring committees, we built a database analysing the minimum age at which a girl or boy can be married with no restrictions, or subject only to parental permission.[12]

In 7 countries, there is no nationally set minimum legal age of marriage, including the United States, where in some states there is no minimum age below which marriage cannot occur, provided that parental consent is given. An additional five countries set the minimum age for girls to be married at age 13 or younger. Another 30 countries allow girls to be married at age 14 or 15. Boys are guaranteed a chance to grow up free

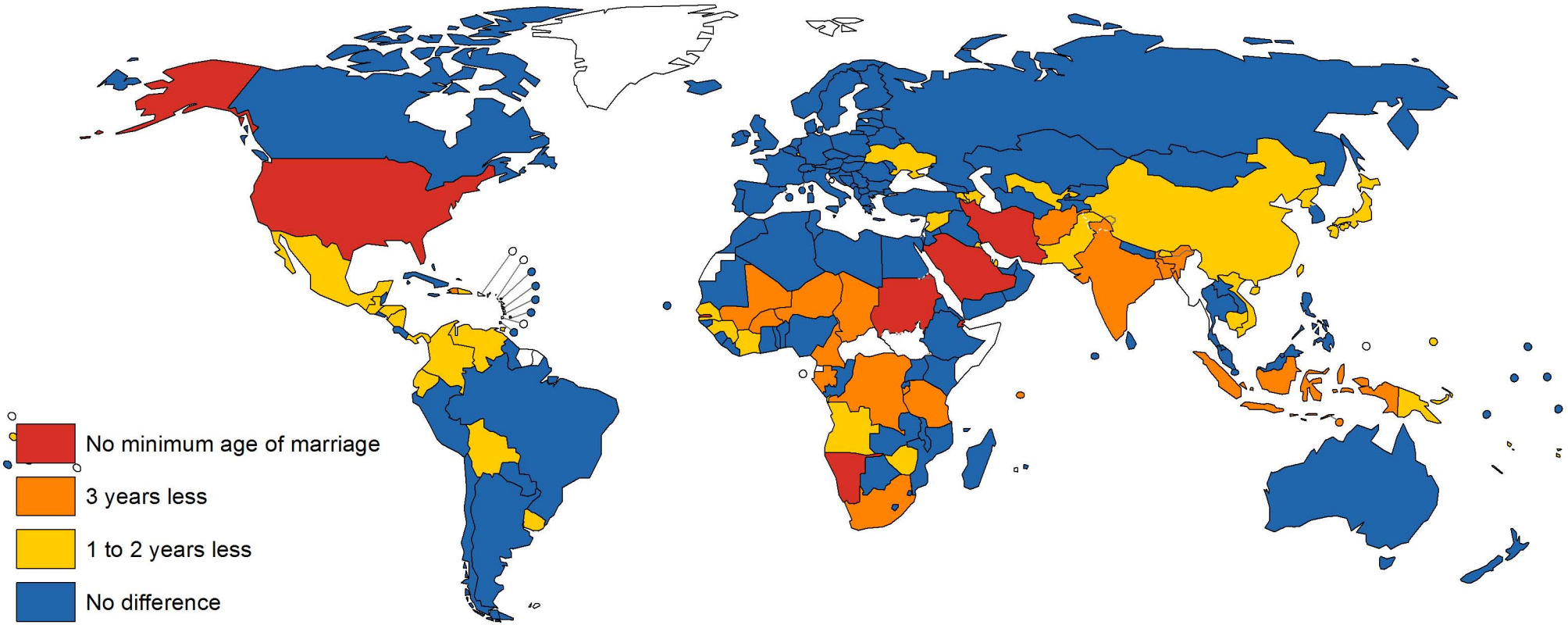
from marriage for somewhat longer. No country sets the minimum age of marriage for boys at an age younger than 14, though 6 countries have not set a minimum age for boys. Only half as many countries allow boys to marry at age 14 or 15 (15 countries) as allow girls to do so.[13]

Examining the disparity in the ages at which girls and boys are protected from early marriage is illuminating – in many cases, legal frameworks reinforce rather than combat gender inequalities (see Map). In a total of 54 countries, girls are legally permitted to marry between 1 and 3 years younger than boys. In no country can boys be married at a younger age than girls.[14]

Regional Highlights

- In 13 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, girls are permitted to marry at a minimum age younger than that of boys, reinforcing the gender inequities inherent in early marriage.
- Of those countries in sub-Saharan Africa that have set a minimum age for marriage, 40%, or 16 countries, permit girls to marry at a younger age than boys.
- 12 countries in East Asia and the Pacific and 4 in South Asia permit girls to marry at a younger age than boys.
- While the vast majority of Europe and Central Asia sets the same minimum marriage age for boys and girls, 5 countries permit girls to marry 1-2 years younger than boys.

How long are girls protected from marriage compared to boys?



If a country allows children to marry at a younger age subject only to parental permission, the younger age is used. There are no cases where the minimum age for boys to marry is younger than the minimum age for girls.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Child Marriage Database

	Low-Income Countries	*Middle-Income Countries*	*High-Income Countries*
Minimum Legal Age of Marriage for Girls			
No minimum age of marriage	1 (3%)	4 (4%)	2 (4%)
Girls are protected only until age 13 or younger	0 (0%)	4 (4%)	1 (2%)
Girls are protected until age 14	0 (0%)	6 (6%)	1 (2%)
Girls are protected until age 15	7 (21%)	12 (12%)	4 (8%)
Girls are protected until age 16	6 (18%)	27 (26%)	11 (23%)
Girls are protected until age 17	4 (12%)	8 (8%)	1 (2%)
Girls are protected until age 18 or older	15 (45%)	41 (40%)	28 (58%)
Minimum Legal Age of Marriage for Boys			
No minimum age of marriage	1 (3%)	4 (4%)	1 (2%)
Boys are protected until age 14	0 (0%)	4 (4%)	2 (4%)
Boys are protected until age 15	1 (3%)	5 (5%)	3 (6%)
Boys are protected until age 16	4 (13%)	25 (25%)	8 (17%)
Boys are protected until age 17	1 (3%)	3 (3%)	2 (4%)
Boys are protected until age 18 or older	25 (78%)	60 (59%)	31 (66%)
Difference in Legal Age of Marriage between Girls and Boys			
The law does not establish a minimum age of marriage	1 (3%)	4 (4%)	2 (4%)
Minimum legal age for girls is 3 or more years lower than for boys	9 (28%)	8 (8%)	0 (0%)
Minimum legal age for girls is 2 years lower than for boys	2 (6%)	20 (20%)	5 (10%)
Minimum legal age for girls is 1 year lower than for boys	2 (6%)	8 (8%)	0 (0%)
Minimum legal age to marry is the same for girls and boys	18 (56%)	61 (60%)	41 (85%)

Source : World Policy Analysis Centre, Child Marriage Database.

Definition : Minimum legal age is the age at which a child is permitted to marry subject to no conditions or subject only to parental consent.

Note : There are no cases where the minimum age for boys to marry is younger than the minimum age for girls.

Parents and Children

Transformations in the world of work have made paid labour an ever more crucial determinant of parents' ability to provide care for their children. As more families have moved from rural to urban areas, as more adults work away from their homes or farms, and as more women have entered the paid labour force, increasing numbers of children are living in households where all adults work for pay outside the home – a conservative estimate of 340 million children under the age of 6 and 590 million children between the ages of 6 and 14.[1]

Working conditions originally formulated with the assumption that employees were not caring for children or other family members need to be redesigned so that adults can succeed at work while fulfilling their caregiving responsibilities. The World Policy Analysis Centre's database on adult labour policy pulled together comprehensive and comparable information on flexibility and leave from work available to mothers and fathers, drawing on primary sources of legislation as well as supplemental secondary sources.[2]

Paid leave for new parents is a critical component of ensuring that work and caregiving can coexist. Evidence confirms that paid leave for new parents significantly improves infant and child health.[3] Our global study of paid leave for new mothers showed that an increase in this leave by 10 paid full-time-equivalent weeks was associated with 9 to 10% lower neonatal mortality, infant mortality, and under-5 mortality rates.[4] Our data show that in most of the world, providing paid leave for new mothers is the norm across regions and income groups (see Map).[5] Just 8 countries do not provide this leave. The only high-income country not providing this paid leave is the United States.

Although the world has made great progress in ensuring paid maternity leave, a policy priority that has long been on the global agenda, far less progress has been made in paid paternity leave. This has consequences for children and families: when fathers can take leave, they are more involved with their infants, and child-care responsibilities are more equally shared.[6] As well, gender equity in the home and in the workplace cannot be achieved when men and women do not have equal opportunities to provide care for their families. Combining leave available only to fathers and that available to either parent, only a minority of countries, 81, provide paid leave that can be taken by new fathers; 40 of these countries provide less than 3 weeks (see Map). Despite that fathers are more likely to take leave when it is specifically allocated paternity leave,[7] when just father-specific paid paternity leave is considered, the number of countries providing leave drops to 67.[8]

Parental care is important for children's outcomes beyond infancy, and makes a marked difference to children's health. When parents are involved in their care, children are more likely to recover more rapidly from injuries and illnesses, have chronic

conditions under better control, and follow medical advice regarding prevention and treatment. Without guaranteed access to paid leave, working parents risk income and job loss when they must take time off to care for a sick child.[9] This has effects for children: in the United States, parents with access to paid leave were more than five times as likely to attend to their sick children themselves as parents who lacked access to paid leave.[10]

Our findings show that only 54 countries worldwide provide parents with paid leave specifically to meet their children's health needs.[11] In countries that provide unpaid leave, parents are protected from job loss when they are caring for a sick child, but they still suffer wage loss; 16 countries guarantee only unpaid leave for children's health needs. Some countries have legislated leave that can be taken for family needs in general, leave that can be taken at the employee's discretion, or leave that can be taken for emergencies. When family, discretionary, and emergency leave are included, 76 countries provide paid leave and 21 unpaid leave that can be taken for a child's health needs (see Map).[12]

Regional Highlights

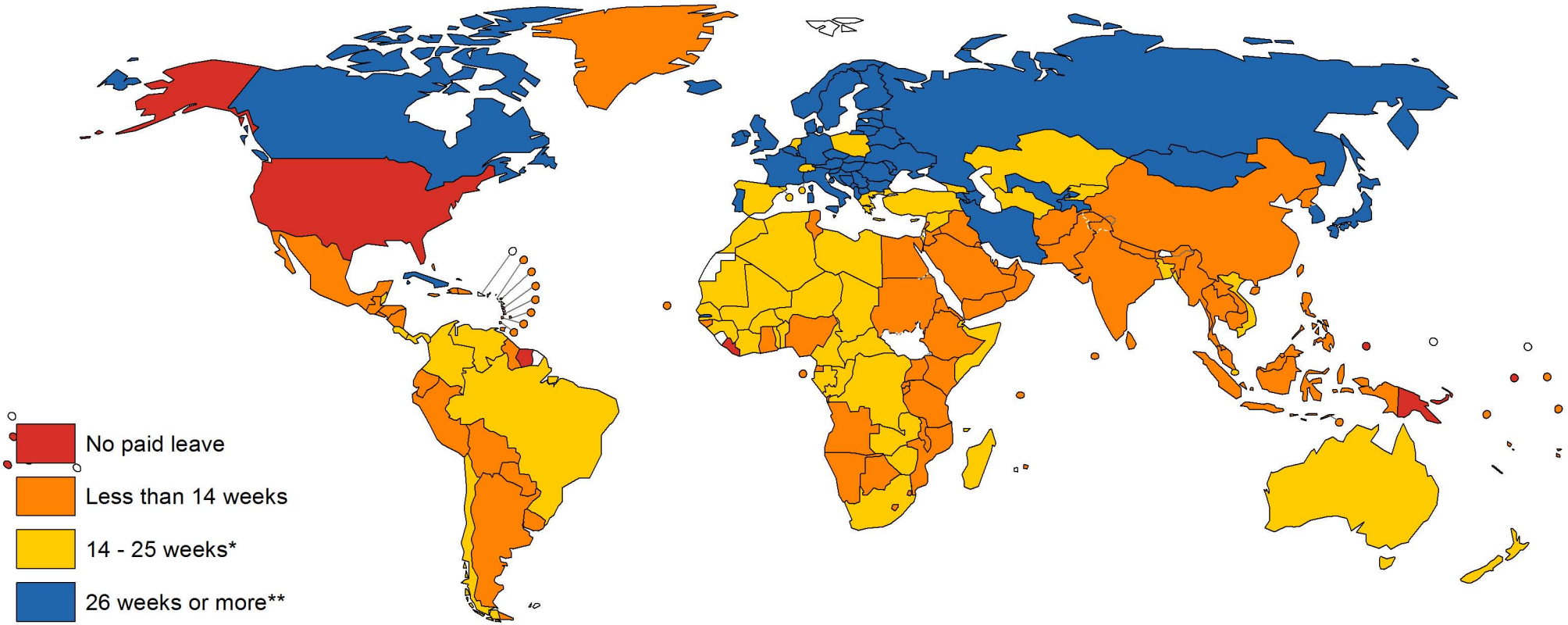
Leave for new parents

- 5 countries in East Asia and the Pacific do not provide any paid maternity leave, and only 1 country in South Asia meets the basic 14-week minimum maternity leave duration established by the ILO.
- Most of Europe and Central Asia, 38 of 53 countries, provide 26 weeks or more of paid leave for new mothers.

Leave to Care for Children

- Besides Europe and Central Asia (where 85% of countries provide leave for children's health needs), sub-Saharan Africa has the greatest number of countries guaranteeing leave specifically to care for children's health needs (12 countries).
- Some countries provide leave for family needs instead of or as well as that available for a child's health needs. Here again, sub-Saharan Africa is ahead of the curve: 14 sub-Saharan African countries guarantee working adults leave to address family needs; outside the region, only 5 countries provide this leave.
- Very few countries in South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific provide leave that can be taken for a child's needs – 7 provide leave specifically for children's health needs, 3 provide leave for emergencies, just 2 provide leave for family needs, and 1 provides leave that can be taken at an employee's discretion.
- Just 3 countries in Latin America provide leave specifically to address children's health needs, and 1 for emergencies.

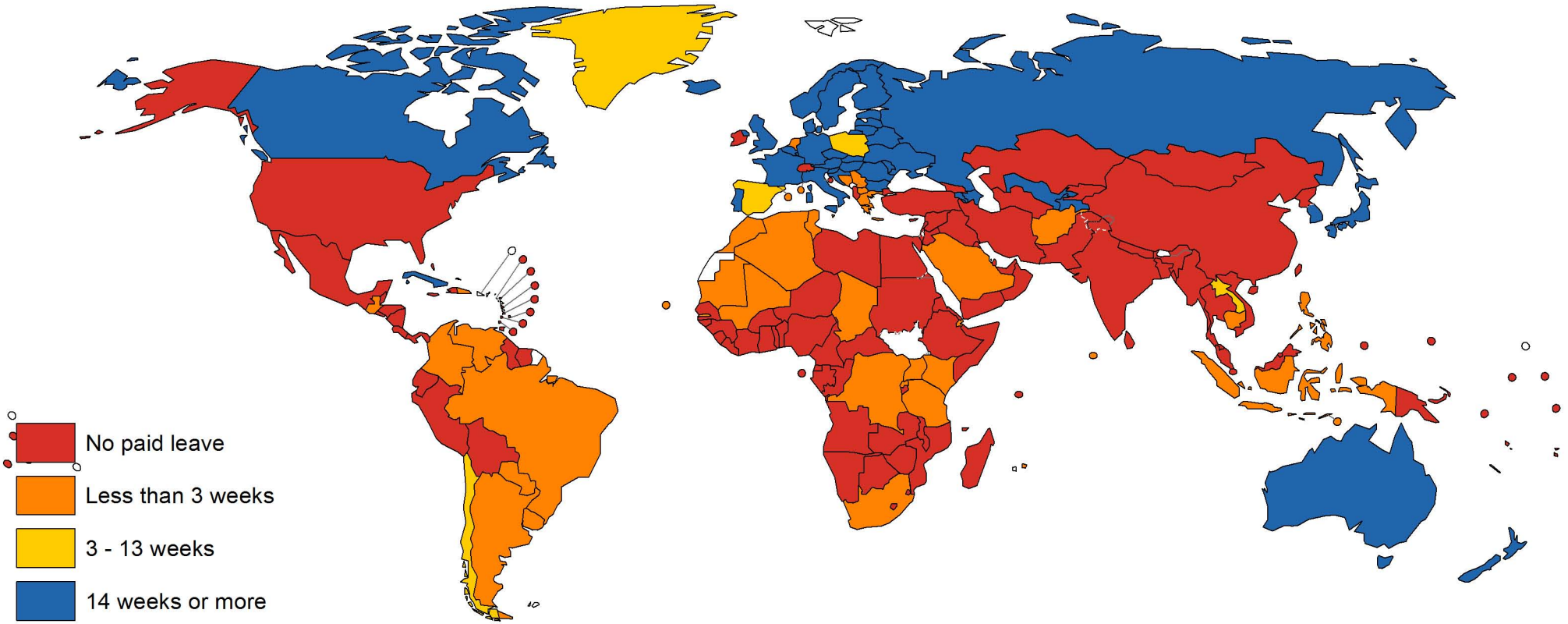
Is paid leave available for mothers of infants?



*International Labour Organization standards state that women should be guaranteed at least 14 weeks of paid maternity leave.
**The World Health Organization recommends at least 6 months of breastfeeding, which is facilitated by paid leave.

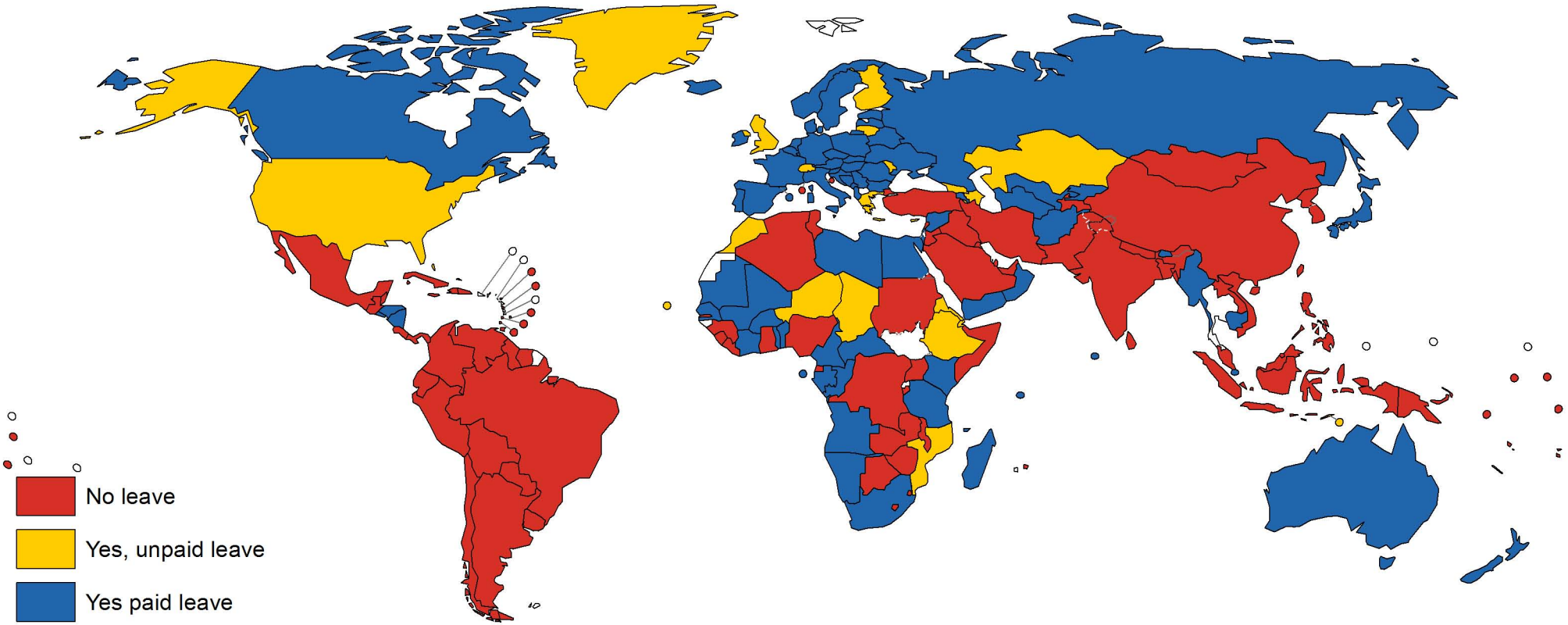
Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Adult Labour Database

Is paid leave available for fathers of infants?



Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Adult Labour Database

Can working parents take leave to meet children's health needs?



Leave to meet children's health needs includes leave specifically for children's health needs, as well as discretionary, family needs, and emergency leave which may be used for health needs. It also includes cases where leave is available only for serious illnesses, hospitalization, or urgent health needs.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Adult Labour Database

	Low-Income Countries	*Middle-Income Countries*	*High-Income Countries*
Duration of Paid Leave for Mothers			
No guaranteed paid maternal leave	1 (3%)	6 (6%)	1 (2%)
Fewer than 14 weeks of paid maternal leave	16 (47%)	54 (52%)	12 (24%)
14 - 25 weeks of paid maternal leave	15 (44%)	25 (24%)	13 (26%)
26 - 51 weeks of paid maternal leave	1 (3%)	2 (2%)	11 (22%)
52 weeks or more of paid maternal leave	1 (3%)	17 (16%)	13 (26%)
Duration of Paid Leave for Fathers			
No guaranteed paid paternal leave	24 (69%)	67 (64%)	17 (34%)
Fewer than 3 weeks of paid paternal leave	10 (29%)	23 (22%)	7 (14%)
3 - 13 weeks of paid paternal leave	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	2 (4%)
14 weeks or more of paid paternal leave	1 (3%)	12 (12%)	24 (48%)
Leave Specifically for Children's Health Needs			
No guaranteed leave for parents specifically to take care of their children's health needs	27 (77%)	74 (73%)	16 (32%)
Unpaid leave is guaranteed for parents to take care of their children's health needs	3 (9%)	6 (6%)	7 (14%)
Paid leave is guaranteed for parents to take care of their children's health needs	5 (14%)	22 (22%)	27 (54%)
Leave Specifically for Children's Educational Needs			
No guaranteed leave for parents specifically to take care of their children's educational needs	35 (100%)	100 (100%)	46 (94%)
Unpaid leave is guaranteed for parents to take care of their children's educational needs	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)
Paid leave is guaranteed for parents to take care of their children's educational needs	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)
Leave for Family Needs			
No guaranteed leave for employees specifically to take care of family needs	24 (73%)	92 (93%)	47 (94%)
Unpaid leave is guaranteed for employees to take care of family needs	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)
Paid leave is guaranteed for employees to take care of family needs	8 (24%)	7 (7%)	1 (2%)
Discretionary Leave			
No guaranteed leave for employees for discretionary reasons	33 (97%)	89 (92%)	49 (98%)
Unpaid leave is guaranteed for employees for discretionary reasons	0 (0%)	6 (6%)	1 (2%)
Paid leave is guaranteed for employees for discretionary reasons	1 (3%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)
Leave for Emergencies			
No guaranteed leave for employees specifically for emergencies	30 (91%)	90 (91%)	45 (92%)
Unpaid leave is guaranteed for employees for emergencies	2 (6%)	4 (4%)	1 (2%)

Paid leave is guaranteed for employees for emergencies	1 (3%)	5 (5%)	3 (6%)

Source : World Policy Analysis Centre, Adult Labour Database.

Definitions : Paid leave for mothers includes both paid maternity leave and paid parental leave that can be taken by women.
Paid leave for fathers includes both paid paternity leave and paid parental leave that men can take.
Leave specifically for children's health needs includes both leave available for any health needs and leave available only for serious illnesses, hospitalization, or urgent health needs.
Family needs leave is leave that employees can take to address family or household issues, which could include health or educational needs.
Discretionary leave is leave that employees can take for personal reasons not covered by other types of leave.

Health: The Centrality of Social Conditions

If all children are to have the chance to reach their full potential, the first step must be making sure that they survive, and that avoidable poor health and disability do not limit their options. Each year, 4 million children do not live even 1 month;[1] if all children under the age of 5 are considered, the number of deaths more than doubles.[2] Even when they do not lead to loss of life, preventable and readily treatable conditions take a large toll on children's daily lives and can have long-term effects.[3]

Today as throughout history, social and environmental conditions are fundamental determinants of children's health, in spite of advances in the quality and effectiveness of health care services. A long history of powerful evidence leaves no doubt that factors such as educational attainment, child labor, poverty, and inequality play a critical role in shaping health outcomes. The problem is not recognizing that social determinants matter – the problem is knowing what to do about it. To date, the lack of information on what countries have done and can do to address these social determinants has been a major impediment to progress. The World Health Organization's Commission on the Social Determinants of Health recognized this important gap, and focused one of its three overarching recommendations on the need to improve policy responses. In its final 2008 report, the Commission urged nations to "invest in generating and sharing new evidence […] on the effectiveness of measures to reduce health inequities through acting on social determinants."[4]

The new data presented in this report on national policies and laws in place globally in the areas of education, poverty, adult labour, child labour, early marriage, and equal rights begin to fill this information gap, and each of these areas has a profound impact on children's health and welfare. For example, children who labour are more likely to be injured, and tend to experience poorer health outcomes throughout the life course.[5] Girls who marry and give birth at a young age are much more likely to die during childbirth.[6] Studies show that discrimination has harmful health impacts.[7] Living in poverty puts children at greater risk of illness, premature death, and harmful environmental exposures.

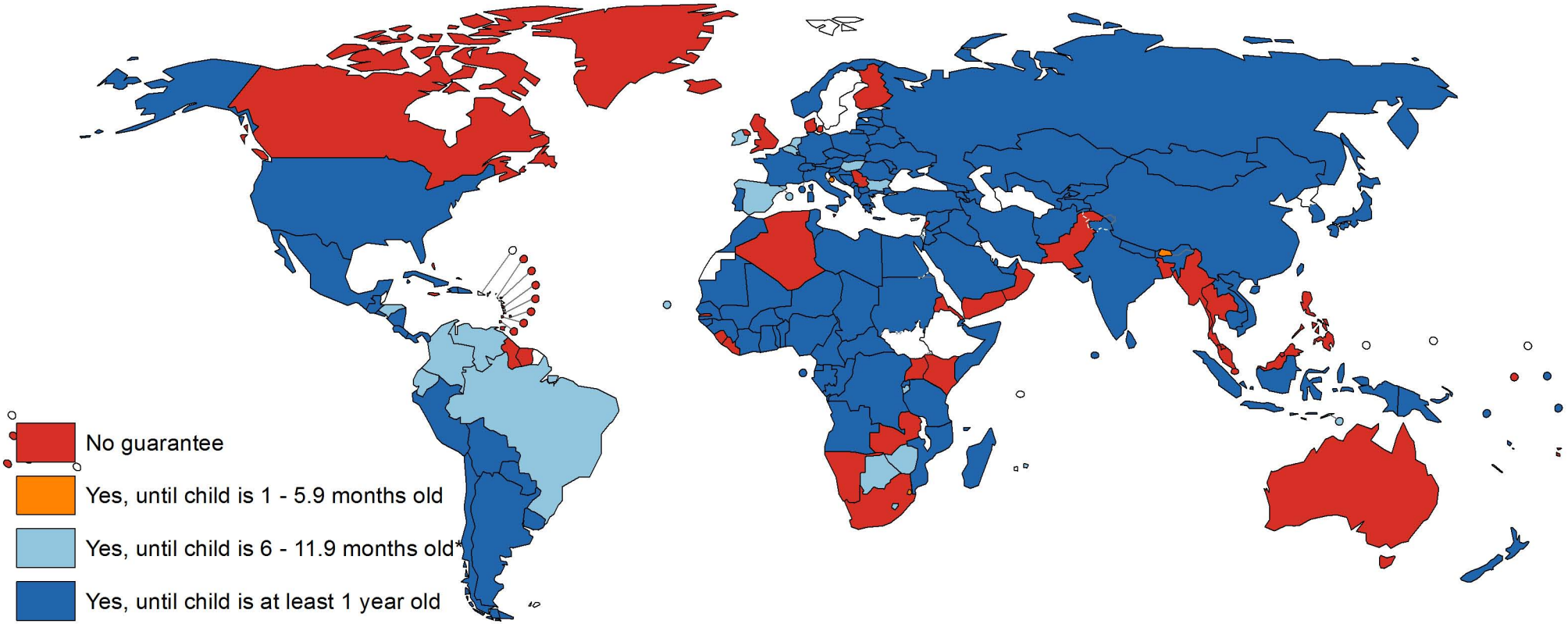
Looking at breastfeeding as a detailed example is illustrative. A wealth of evidence demonstrates its positive effects on young children's health and development – in most contexts it can reduce infant and child mortality three- to five-fold.[8] Given that so many mothers of infants work in the paid labor force, their ability to breastfeed is markedly affected by social conditions and the policies that shape their rights and experiences at work. The majority of countries guarantee paid maternal leave for less than the 6 months of exclusive breastfeeding recommended by the World Health Organization; many women are still breastfeeding when they return to work, and in the absence of supportive policies, work can be a significant barrier to breastfeeding. Guaranteeing breastfeeding mothers the right to take short breaks from work to breastfeed or pump milk is a straightforward way to give all children the chance to benefit from this low-cost life-saving option. The data

many women are still breastfeeding when they return to work, and in the absence of supportive policies, work can be a significant barrier to breastfeeding. Guaranteeing breastfeeding mothers the right to take short breaks from work to breastfeed or pump milk is a straightforward way to give all children the chance to benefit from this low-cost life-saving option. The data collected by the World Policy Analysis Centre's analysis of labour policies worldwide show that 136 countries make this guarantee.

While the social conditions and policies discussed in this report are major determinants of children's health outcomes, the availability and delivery of preventive and curative health services are equally essential. Data from the World Health Organization show that the health systems of many countries are in dire straits. For example, in 65 countries worldwide, there are not enough health professionals to achieve delivery of basic health services according to WHO minimum standards. Worldwide, in 9 countries, at least 70% of births are not attended by skilled health personnel; in an additional 20 countries, between 50 and 69% of births are not attended by skilled personnel, leaving many mothers and babies at risk of preventable morbidity and death. Immunization is central to child survival and health; examining immunization coverage for a basic vaccine like the combined diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis vaccine (DTP3) reveals significant gaps in coverage. DTP3 coverage among 1-year-olds is less than 85% in 47 countries worldwide, not high enough to achieve herd immunity.[9]

Many of the countries with the worst access to health services are low-income countries; could these countries be investing more in health, or are they already doing the best they can with the resources they have? In fact, when we drew on data on expenditures from the World Health Organization and combined it with data on health care access, we found that some of the countries that perform especially poorly could be doing more to make services available to their populations. Fifty-two of the 64 countries that do not meet the WHO minimum number of health professionals for delivery of basic health services spend 4% or less of their GDP on health, and 22 of these countries spend 2% or less (13 low-income and 9 middle-income countries). In 24 of the 29 countries where 50% or fewer of births are attended by skilled health personnel, 4% or less of GDP is spent on health (17 low-income and 7 middle-income countries); the same is true of 37 of the 47 countries with a DTP3 immunization rate of less than 85% (17 low-income, 19 middle-income, and 1 high-income).[10] By contrast, 1 low-income country, 18 middle-income countries, and 25 high-income countries devote at least 6% of their GDP to health. Although disparities in national incomes clearly play a role in the dollar amount that countries can spend on their health services, countries could be devoting more of their resources to this key area.

Are mothers of infants guaranteed breastfeeding breaks at work?



*The World Health Organization recommends at least 6 months of breastfeeding.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Adult Labour Database

	Low-Income Countries	*Middle-Income Countries*	*High-Income Countries*
Availability of Breastfeeding Breaks at Work			
No guaranteed breastfeeding breaks at work	8 (25%)	24 (24%)	13 (27%)
New mothers are guaranteed breastfeeding breaks until the child is 1 - 5.9 months old	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	1 (2%)
New mothers are guaranteed breastfeeding breaks until the child is 6 - 11.9 months old	2 (6%)	11 (11%)	8 (17%)
New mothers are guaranteed breastfeeding breaks until the child is 1 year old or more	22 (69%)	64 (63%)	26 (54%)
Amount of Government Spending on Health Care as % of GDP			
Less than 2% of GDP is spent by the government on health care	15 (45%)	16 (15%)	3 (6%)
2.1% - 4% of GDP is spent by the government on health care	15 (45%)	52 (49%)	11 (22%)
4.1% - 6% of GDP is spent by the government on health care	2 (6%)	21 (20%)	10 (20%)
More than 6% of GDP is spent by the government on health care	1 (3%)	18 (17%)	25 (51%)

Sources : World Policy Analysis Centre, Adult Labour Database; Global Health Observatory Data

Note : The World Health Organization recommends at least 6 months of breastfeeding, which is facilitated by breastfeeding breaks at work.

Equity and Discrimination

Equal rights lay the foundation for equal life chances. Discrimination can affect every aspect of a child's education, including school attendance, academic achievement, and motivation.[1] A wealth of studies have found that discrimination on various grounds increases the frequency of illness and poor physical and mental health, as well as limiting access to treatment.[2] Furthermore, when children see that their parents and other adults like them are limited by discrimination, children anticipate encountering the same treatment, which affects their aspirations for themselves. Role models have long been recognized as having an impact on the goals and achievement of children and youth, and their impact increases when children perceive them as more similar to themselves.[3] In India, for example, strong evidence shows that when adolescent girls see women in positions of political leadership, their career aspirations and educational attainment increase significantly.[4]

Can constitutional rights make a difference? Evidence shows that they can. Constitutional guarantees can be used to demand greater equity in the delivery of and access to basic services, as a Canadian family did to ensure access to inclusive education for their disabled daughter.[5] Constitutions have been used to challenge legislation limiting equal rights, as occurred in Afghanistan when proposed legislation would have deeply restricted women's and girls' rights.[6] Although constitutions do not eliminate interpersonal discrimination, they play an important role in setting norms. As the fundamental building blocks of a nation's government and laws, constitutions shape the rules that governments and societies must follow. For example, in South Africa, despite the fact that 80% of citizens believed that sexual relations between same-sex adults were "wrong,"[7] gay and lesbian families in South Africa have been able to fight for and secure substantial rights because the constitution prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.[8]

To what extent are equal rights guaranteed in countries around the world? Our World Policy Analysis Centre research team reviewed and analysed constitutional texts and amendments from 191 countries to create the first detailed comparison of constitutions on equal rights.[9]

Examining overall guarantees of equal rights, we found that equal rights protections[10] for girls and boys are quite comprehensive: the constitutions of all but 10 countries discuss equity for all or equity across gender (see Map). When it comes to ethnicity and religion, these protections are discussed in all but 7 constitutions (see Maps).[11]

Turning specifically to educational rights, perhaps the most crucial element of rights in childhood, protections are much less comprehensive around the world.[12] Few countries have explicitly prohibited discrimination in education in their constitutions. Just 16 countries prohibit discrimination in education specifically on the basis of gender, 17

countries specifically for religious groups, and 18 for ethnic groups. Even when we include prohibitions of discrimination that apply to all citizens, there are no protections against discrimination in education for girls in the constitutions of 143 countries, for children across religions in 142 countries, and for children across ethnic groups in 139 countries.[13]

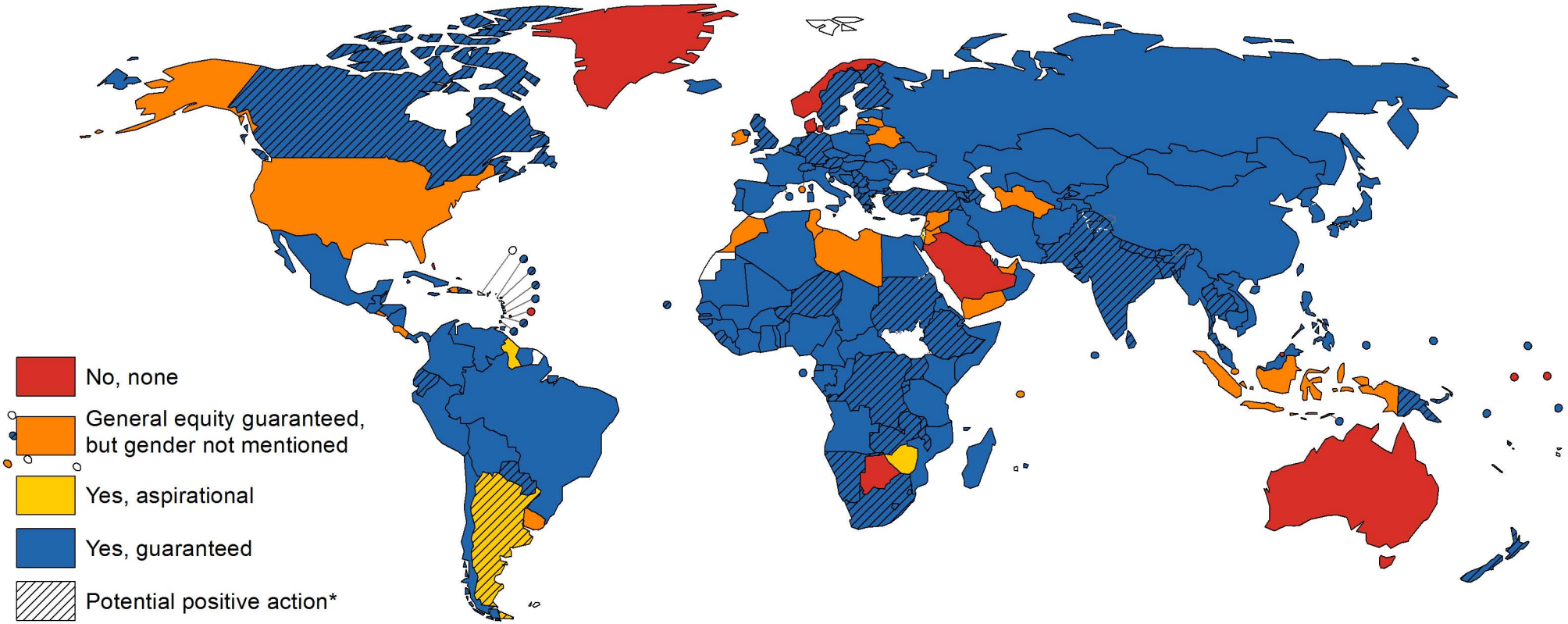
While these findings are illuminating, to have an adequate picture of the state of equal rights, it is critical to analyse laws as well as constitutions. While constitutions have some important advantages over regular legislation—their difficult amendment process makes the rights they enshrine more permanent—this same reality also means that it is difficult to add these rights where they are lacking. Constitutions developed more recently are more likely to have included many equal rights and discrimination protections than constitutions written centuries ago – for example, South Africa's progressive 1996 constitution explicitly guarantees equal rights for a wide range of social groups, including gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and disability status, among others. This raises the importance of looking also at equal rights protections in regular legislation. It is clear that legislation fills a number of gaps. There are currently no globally comparative data sources available on countries that guarantee equal rights across diverse groups in their legislation, as opposed to their constitutions. This knowledge gap must be filled in order to be able to fully analyse the most effective policies and to focus on change for the nations with the greatest inequities.

Regional Highlights

Gender Equity

While gender equity is generally recognized in constitutions, protections are weaker when we examine specific areas of rights. In the case of education, for example, just 9% of constitutions protect gender equity explicitly. Recently-written constitutions are more likely to contain gender-specific protections in the area of education, as well as in work, political participation, and marriage. However, no country in the Middle East or North Africa makes these guarantees.

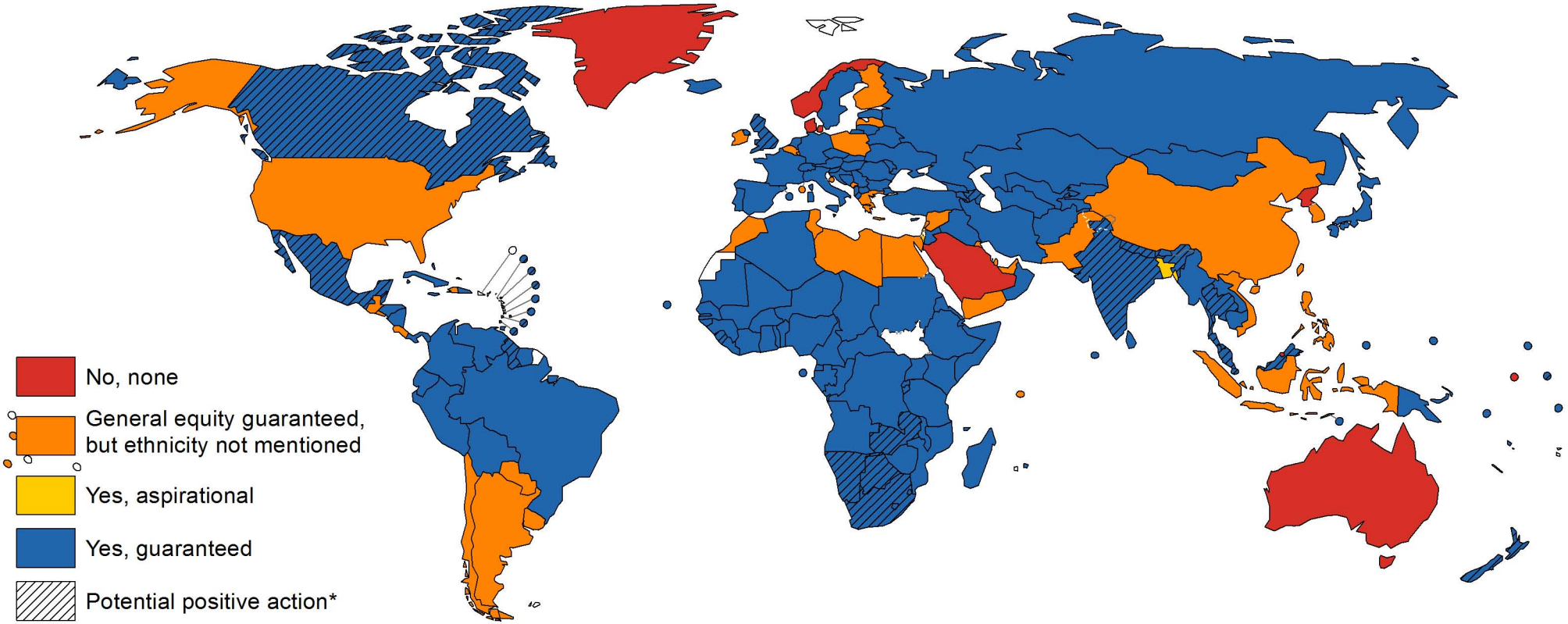
Do constitutions take at least one approach to gender equity?



Approaches to equity include prohibitions of discrimination, guarantees of equal rights, guarantees of equality before the law, and guarantees of equality.
**Potential positive action* indicates that constitutions also include measures to promote equity for women.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Constitutions Database

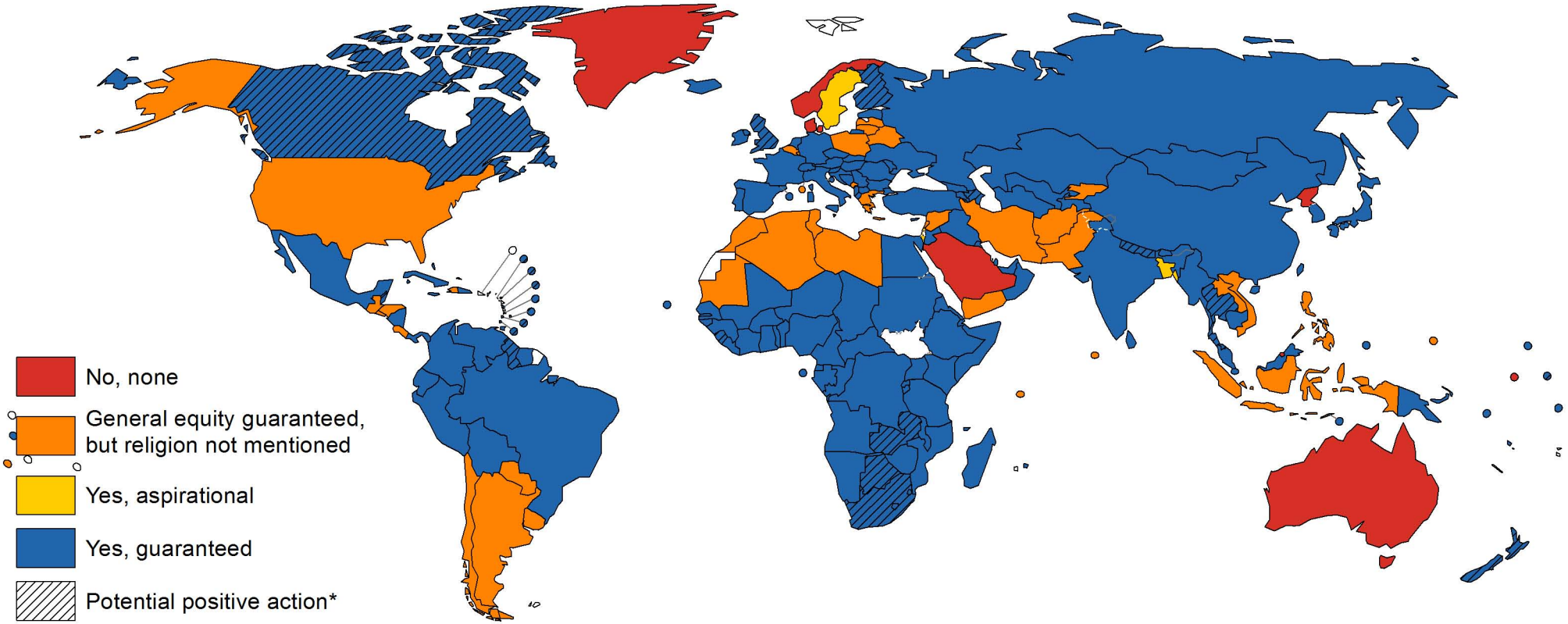
Do constitutions take at least one approach to equity across ethnicity?



Approaches to equity include prohibitions of discrimination, guarantees of equal rights, guarantees of equality before the law, and guarantees of equality.
**Potential positive action* indicates that constitutions also include measures to promote equity on the basis of ethnicity.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Constitutions Database

Do constitutions take at least one approach to equity across religion?



Approaches to equity include prohibitions of discrimination, guarantees of equal rights, guarantees of equality before the law, and guarantees of equality.
**Potential positive action* indicates that constitutions also include measures to promote equity on the basis of religion.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Constitutions Database

	Equal Rights	*Equality Before the Law*	*Equality*	*Prohibition of Discrimination*
Approaches to Equity Based on Gender				
Constitution does not include any relevant protection	85 (45%)	42 (22%)	149 (78%)	46 (24%)
Constitution guarantees equal treatment to all citizens generally, but does not mention gender specifically	27 (14%)	97 (51%)	11 (6%)	16 (8%)
Constitution aspires to equal treatment based on gender	6 (3%)	0 (0%)	13 (7%)	5 (3%)
Constitution guarantees equal treatment based on gender, but allows for exceptions	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)
Constitution guarantees equal treatment based on gender	73 (38%)	52 (27%)	18 (9%)	123 (64%)
Positive action may be taken to compensate for past discrimination or current inequalities on the basis of gender	6 (3%)	43 (23%)	1 (1%)	4 (2%)
Approaches to Equity Based on Ethnicity				
Constitution does not include any relevant protection	113 (59%)	43 (23%)	165 (86%)	47 (25%)
Constitution guarantees equal treatment to all citizens generally, but does not mention ethnicity specifically	34 (18%)	104 (54%)	13 (7%)	18 (9%)
Constitution aspires to equal treatment based on ethnicity	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	9 (5%)	0 (0%)
Constitution guarantees equal treatment based on ethnicity, but allows for exceptions	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)
Constitution guarantees equal treatment based on ethnicity	43 (23%)	44 (23%)	4 (2%)	125 (65%)
Positive action may be taken to compensate for past discrimination or current inequalities on the basis of ethnicity	0 (0%)	29 (15%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)
Approaches to Equity Based on Religion				
Constitution does not include any relevant protection	114 (60%)	44 (23%)	171 (90%)	42 (22%)
Constitution guarantees equal treatment to all citizens generally, but does not mention religion specifically	33 (17%)	103 (54%)	14 (7%)	22 (12%)
Constitution aspires to equal treatment based on religion	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	4 (2%)	1 (1%)
Constitution guarantees equal treatment based on religion, but allows for exceptions	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)
Constitution guarantees equal treatment based on religion	43 (23%)	44 (23%)	2 (1%)	125 (65%)
Positive action may be taken to compensate for past discrimination or current inequalities on the basis of religion	0 (0%)	25 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Source : World Policy Analysis Centre, Constitutions Database.

Definitions : Equal rights is a guarantee of being able to enjoy rights enshrined in the constitution (e.g. "Men and women enjoy equal rights").
Prohibition of discrimination is a general protection against discrimination (e.g. "No one may be discriminated against on the basis of ethnicity").
Equality before the law is a guarantee of equal protection before the law (e.g. "All persons are equal before the law regardless of their religion").
Equality is a guarantee of a general right to equality or equal opportunities (e.g. "The State guarantees equality between men and women").
Guaranteed with exceptions includes cases where individuals can be treated disparately on the basis of gender, ethnicity, or religion for specified reasons, for example, where equality is guaranteed, except when the law "takes due account of physiological differences between persons of different sex or gender."

Note : Countries with an aspirational or guaranteed right could also have potential positive action.

	Low-Income Countries	*Middle-Income Countries*	*High-Income Countries*
Protection Against Discrimination in Education Based on Gender			
Constitution does not include any relevant provisions specific to discrimination in education	25 (71%)	78 (74%)	40 (80%)
Constitution protects citizens against discrimination in education, but does not mention gender specifically	4 (11%)	22 (21%)	6 (12%)
Constitution aspires to protect citizens from discrimination in education on the basis of gender	3 (9%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)
Constitution guarantees citizens protection from discrimination in education on the basis of gender, but allows for exceptions	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Constitution guarantees citizens protection from discrimination in education on the basis of gender	3 (9%)	5 (5%)	4 (8%)
Positive action may be taken to compensate for past discrimination or current inequalities on the basis of gender	5 (14%)	1 (1%)	1 (2%)
Protection Against Discrimination in Education Based on Ethnicity			
Constitution does not include any relevant provisions specific to discrimination in education	27 (77%)	73 (69%)	39 (78%)
Constitution protects citizens against discrimination in education, but does not mention ethnicity specifically	4 (11%)	23 (22%)	7 (14%)
Constitution aspires to protect citizens from discrimination in education on the basis of ethnicity	1 (3%)	3 (3%)	0 (0%)
Constitution guarantees citizens protection from discrimination in education on the basis of ethnicity, but allows for exceptions	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Constitution guarantees citizens protection from discrimination in education on the basis of ethnicity	2 (6%)	7 (7%)	4 (8%)
Positive action may be taken to compensate for past discrimination or current inequalities on the basis of ethnicity	2 (6%)	4 (4%)	2 (4%)
Protection Against Discrimination in Education Based on Religion			
Constitution does not include any relevant provisions specific to discrimination in education	27 (77%)	76 (72%)	39 (78%)
Constitution protects citizens against discrimination in education, but does not mention religion specifically	4 (11%)	21 (20%)	7 (14%)
Constitution aspires to protect citizens from discrimination in education on the basis of religion	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Constitution guarantees citizens protection from discrimination in education on the basis of religion, but allows for exceptions	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Constitution guarantees citizens protection from discrimination in education on the basis of religion	3 (9%)	9 (8%)	4 (8%)
Positive action may be taken to compensate for past discrimination or current inequalities on the basis of religion	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)

Source : World Policy Analysis Centre, Constitutions Database.

Note : Countries with an aspirational or guaranteed right could also have potential positive action.

Children with Special Needs

It is impossible to ensure that all children and youth have an equal chance at a full life without addressing the barriers faced by children with special needs. By any estimate, disabled girls and boys make up one of the world's largest minority communities. These children are among the last in most countries—and on the world stage—to have their rights recognized. It was treated as inevitable that children with disabilities had fewer opportunities and worse outcomes. Over the past decade, it has been increasingly recognized that the limitations faced by children with disabilities are often primarily the result of the social context in which they find themselves.

Education is crucial for children with disabilities to reach their full potential and set the stage for a fulfilling adulthood. Around the world, children with disabilities are less likely to be enrolled in school than their nondisabled counterparts. In Bolivia and Indonesia, children with disabilities are more than 50 percentage points less likely to be in school than nondisabled children; in Cambodia, Colombia, Jamaica, Mongolia, South Africa, and Zambia, this disparity is between 24 and 45 percentage points.[1] Even where the enrolment rates of disabled children are relatively high, disparities are still significant. For instance, in Bulgaria, 81% of children with disabilities aged 7 to 15 are enrolled in school, as are 71% in Jamaica and 76% in South Africa; however, enrolment rates among children without disabilities are 96%, 99%, and 96%, respectively.[2]

What is the best approach to ensuring that children with disabilities can develop to their full potential at school? Extensive evidence on the impact of inclusive versus separate education on the academic achievement of students with disabilities shows that the majority of students perform equally well or better in inclusive settings.[3] Moreover, when the ultimate goal is for individuals with disabilities to be able to participate fully in all spheres of life, segregating children eliminates the opportunity for children to learn from and about one another.[4] The international community has come to the same conclusion – in 1994, the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education affirmed that "regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system."[5]

Through the systematic examination of national reports to UNESCO, we examined the extent to which countries around the world are including children with special needs in the public school system (see Map).[6] The majority of the world's countries, 155, have some provision for special education in the public education system. Of these, 73 countries include children with and without disabilities in the same classrooms; 62 countries include them within the same schools. However, 28 countries do not educate children with and without disabilities within the same schools.[7]

The disadvantages experienced by children with disabilities are compounded by the fact that their families tend to have more limited resources than the families of children without special needs. Their average income and earnings are often lower because of the restrictions that caring for a disabled child can place on employment; these challenges are compounded by the greater expenses required for their care.[8] In Bangladesh, for example, a child with severe disabilities is 3 times as expensive to support as a child with average needs.[9]

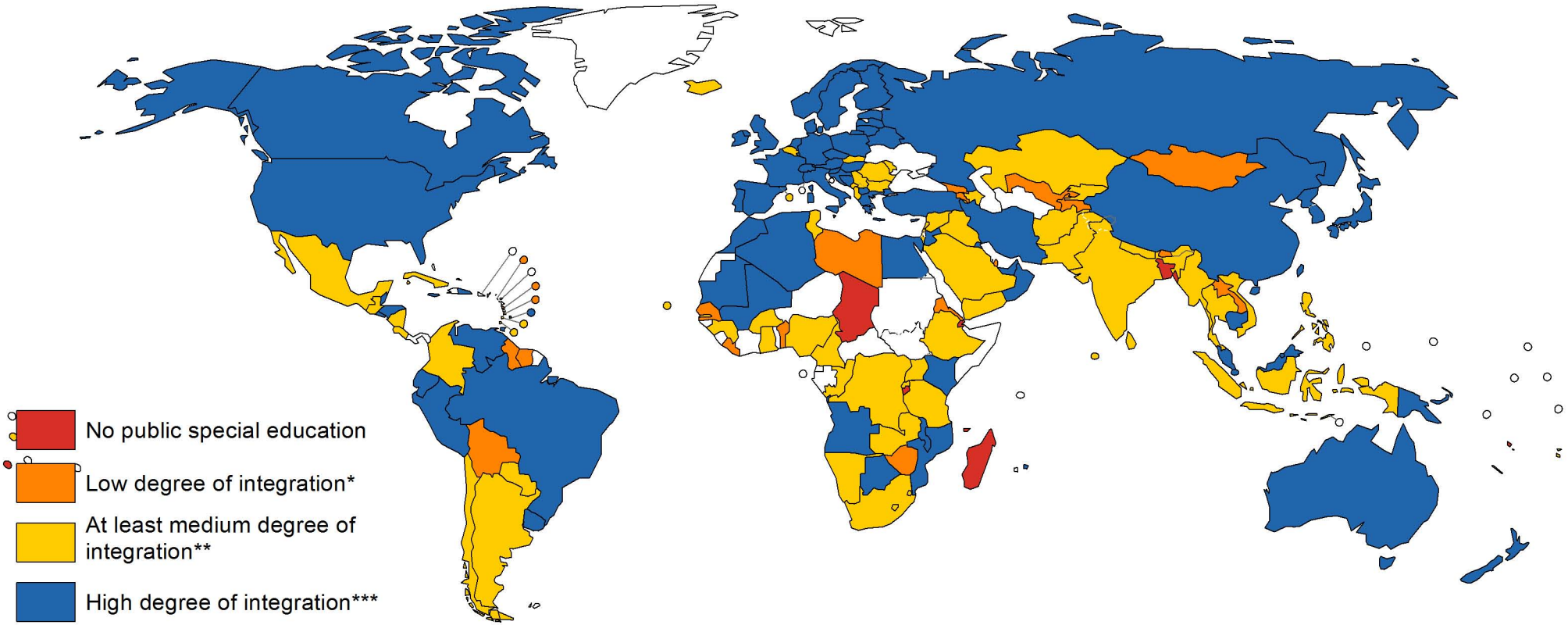
One of the ways to bridge the gap in resources faced by these families is through direct financial assistance. The World Policy Analysis Centre research team analysed extensive detailed information available through the Social Security Programs throughout the World database and other sources to develop a quantitatively comparable database of poverty reduction policy around the world.

We examined financial assistance designed for families with a disabled child through cash benefits, benefit supplements for families with disabled children available through general family benefit schemes, and resources available through programs targeting adults with disabilities that cover children as well.[10] Even if all these types of benefit provision are included, just 58 countries provide a benefit or supplement specifically for families supporting children with disabilities (see Map).[11]

Regional Highlights

- Fully-integrated inclusive special education is rarer in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa than other regions – no country in South Asia and just 23% of countries in sub-Saharan Africa provide inclusive education to children with disabilities within the same classrooms.
- Most countries in East Asia and the Pacific – 18 of 22 – provide special education for children with disabilities in the same classrooms or same schools as their nondisabled peers.
- Outside of Europe, benefits specifically for children with disabilities are very rare. They are provided by fewer than 10% of countries in every other region besides Latin America and the Caribbean, where 22% of countries provide them. However, the existence of outliers in every region that do make these benefits available suggests that more action is feasible.

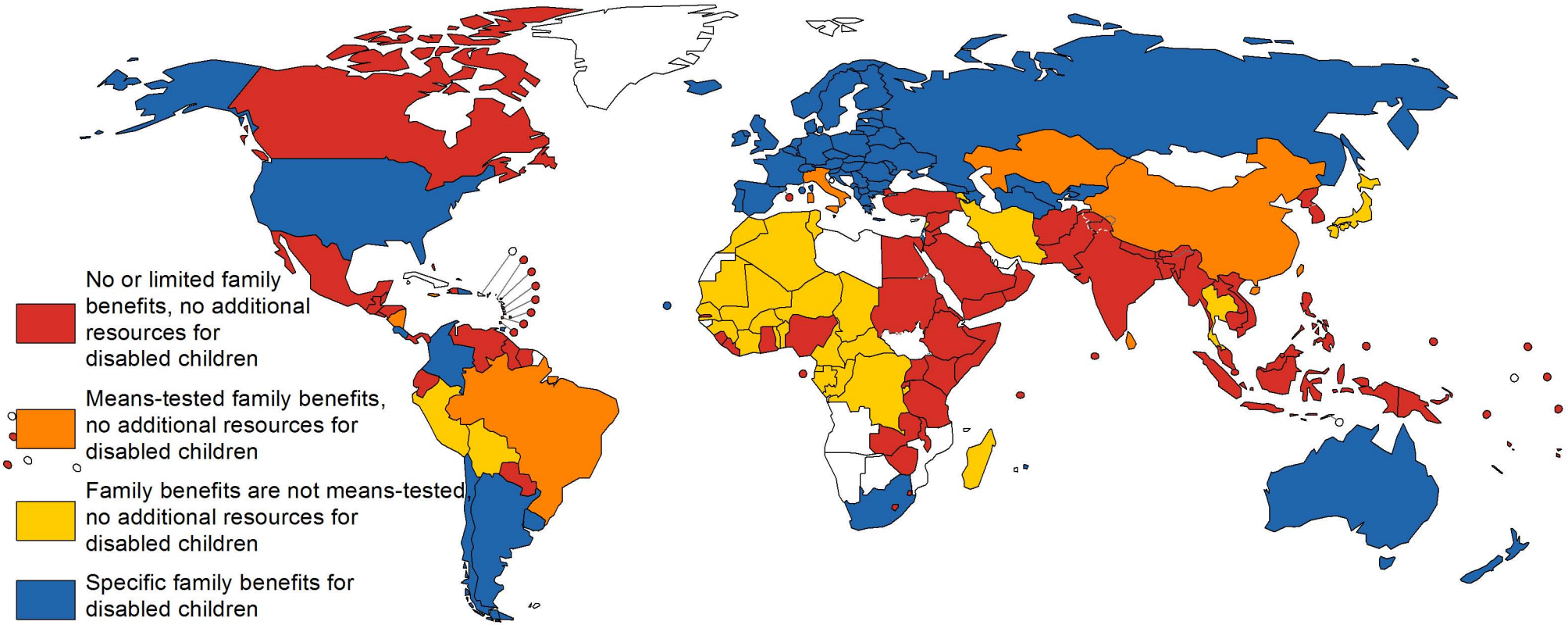
Is inclusive special education available for children with disabilities?



**Low degree of integration* indicates that children are sent to separate schools within the public school system.
***At least medium degree of integration* indicates that children may attend the same schools but not necessarily the same classrooms as other students.
****High degree of integration* indicates that children with disabilities are able to be taught within the same classroom as other students.

Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Education Database

Are benefits available to families with disabled children?



Source: World Policy Analysis Centre, Poverty Database

	Low-Income Countries	*Middle-Income Countries*	*High-Income Countries*
Availability of Inclusive Special Education for Children with Disabilities in Public Schools			
No special education for children with disabilities provided within the public school system	5 (18%)	3 (3%)	0 (0%)
Children with disabilities attend separate schools within the public system	5 (18%)	14 (16%)	1 (2%)
Children with disabilities may attend the same schools as their peers but are not necessarily taught within the same classrooms	12 (43%)	44 (49%)	6 (13%)
Children with disabilities are able to be taught within the same classrooms as their peers	6 (21%)	29 (32%)	38 (84%)
Government-Provided Family Benefits for Families of Children with Disabilities			
No known family benefits or benefits only in certain circumstances unrelated to disability	19 (61%)	50 (52%)	10 (22%)
Means-tested family benefits, but no additional support for families of children with disabilities	0 (0%)	6 (6%)	1 (2%)
Family benefits are not means-tested, but no additional support for families of children with disabilities	11 (35%)	15 (16%)	2 (4%)
Specific family benefits for children with disabilities	1 (3%)	25 (26%)	32 (71%)

Sources : World Policy Analysis Centre, Education Database and Poverty Database.

Definitions : Means-tested benefits are available only to families with incomes below a certain threshold. *Not-means-tested* benefits are available to families without considering their income.

Recommendations for Action

These findings have substantial implications for action. For national leaders, they show a way forward in terms of what needs to be done and what can feasibly be done. For the global community, these findings show how to zero in on critical gaps and make progress on global goals, particularly leading up to the new round of development goals in 2015. For civil society, acquiring information on what their country is doing and failing to do for its children empowers individuals and organizations to push for accountability on key issues.

For all of these groups, a key question is: what are the priority areas for action?

1) Quality Secondary Education that is Affordable and Accessible to All

This report's findings make it clear that while substantial progress has been made at the primary level, moving forward, it is critical to address education at the secondary level. The need for at least a secondary education is becoming increasingly important for individuals the world over to earn their way out of poverty. The progress that has been made in terms of the availability and affordability of primary education has been substantial since it became a focus in the Millennium Development Goals. Post-2015, secondary education needs a parallel level of attention.

- ***Making schooling affordable:*** The poorest children can often not afford to attend school when tuition fees are charged. In the face of tuition barriers, girls are also less likely to be sent to school than boys. Countries that charge tuition at the secondary level should take action to remove these barriers to attendance.
- ***A chance to go to school:*** Child labour seriously impedes children's chance to attend school, and to succeed in school. Laws must protect youth from long hours of work that conflict with attending school and doing homework as well as from work at night in order for children and youth to have a chance at educational success. Laws establishing a minimum age for marriage should be set high enough to allow for the completion of secondary school. It is particularly pressing to address the lower age of marriage set for girls than boys in many countries, which contributes to gender disparities in education.
- ***Enough trained teachers****:* If children are attending school in very large classes or with poorly trained teachers, they are not fully benefiting from their education. Too many countries require secondary school teachers to have completed barely more education than their students; this is not enough to ensure that teachers are well-prepared. However, higher standards need to be accompanied by

adequate salaries and training opportunities to ensure that enough teachers are available.

2) **Work that Enables Families with Children to Exit Poverty while Providing Care**

Our findings show that there are still major gaps in the ability of parents to earn an adequate income while supporting the needs of their children. Global opinion surveys demonstrate the high priority the public places not only on jobs, but on decent work, in countries around the world. A fundamental part of decent work is ensuring that working adults can adequately care for children and other family members. While the economy has been and remains high on the agenda of world leaders, far less attention has been paid to the impact of adult working conditions on children and families.

- ***Enough income to exit poverty****:* It is not enough that wages be high enough to lift an individual out of poverty; they also must permit employees to lift their families out of poverty, and not rely on child labour for subsistence.
- ***Working conditions that allow for child care:*** Workplace policies need to support the ability of working adults to balance work and family, and also allow children to receive the care they need to develop to their full potential. Leave for new parents and leave to care for children's health or educational needs are crucial guarantees for working adults. Ensuring paid leave is available to fathers as well as mothers is essential to gender equity.

3) **Equal Chances Across Recognized and Under-Recognized Divides**

While equal rights and non-discrimination are the focus of many international conventions, often too little has been done to ensure that signatories recognize and implement the same legal rights in their countries. This is particularly true as it applies to children and youth.

- ***Creating a framework of equal rights and non-discrimination****:* Legal frameworks should protect all citizens from discrimination, and ensure the enjoyment of equal rights. Particularly in the area of education, this framework is commonly lacking. Fewer than 30 countries worldwide explicitly prohibit discrimination in education for children across gender, ethnicity, or religion in their constitutions. Even if one assumes that prohibitions of discrimination in education that do not specifically mention these groups are sufficient, there are no unequivocal guarantees of nondiscrimination in education for girls in the constitutions of 143 countries, for children across ethnic groups in 139 countries, and for children across religions in 142 countries.

- ***Addressing the needs of children and youth with disabilities****:* Even within the area of equity, children and adults with disabilities are all too frequently left on the sidelines. Policies like the provision of inclusive special education for children, financial aid to their families to help address the additional expenses required to ensure an equal chance at healthy development, and guarantees of equal access to information, transportation, and health and other services form a foundation.

Methodology: World Policy Analysis Centre

The World Policy Analysis Centre aims to significantly improve the level and quality of comparative data on public policies available to people in countries around the world, to global and national policymakers, to civil society and private-sector leaders, and to researchers. The World Policy Analysis Centre to date includes, among other components, education, discrimination, equity, health, disability, family, parental labour, child labour, child marriage, and income policies as well as social, economic, civil, and political rights. Each of the databases spans a wide range of topics important to children and adults. This report summarizes all the key original findings currently available that are relevant to the healthy development of children and youth.

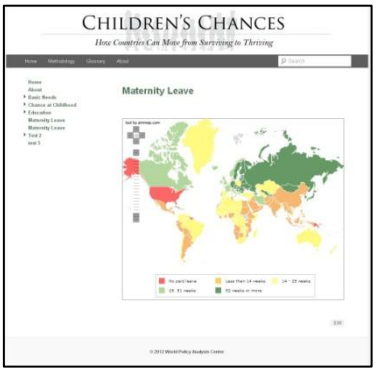
In selecting data sources to analyse, wherever possible we used sources of primary data, such as legislation. When legislation was not available, either because it had not been collected by the UN and other global institutions or because we were examining areas that are often not legislated, such as education policy, we gave priority to country reports on their own policies submitted to international organizations. Although we used primary data and global sources whenever possible, we also used secondary sources, such as regional information centres, when information was unclear or lacking on particular countries, or when a substantial number of countries were missing even from the most comprehensive sources.

To capture this information as reliably as possible, analysis was carried out primarily by team members fluent in the relevant language of the original documents or in the language into which it had been translated by a UN source. All data were analysed independently twice, and the results of each were compared to minimize human error.

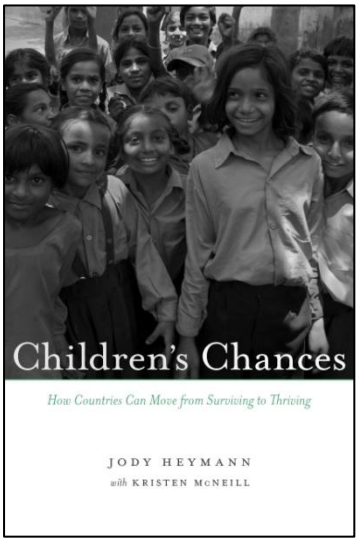
Conceptually, frameworks had to be developed that allowed the comparison of laws and policies across all the world's countries, even when there was a great deal of variation in the approach taken by individual nations. Key definitions used to make data comparable across nations are detailed in this report's endnotes.

Even with all the efforts to provide information that is as accurate as possible, errors in version 1.0 are nearly inevitable. Delays may occur in the sending of legislation to international repositories or in these repositories making the most recent data available, national reports may contain errors, and errors can be introduced in coding. We look forward to receiving feedback if any individual countries have been placed in the wrong category, and we look forward to updating our databases when we receive new primary sources of legislation or policy indicating that changes should be made.

For More Information:



http://www.childrenschances.org/



Children's Chances: How Countries Can Move from Surviving to Thriving

(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

Or contact the World Policy Analysis Centre directly:

contact@childrenschances.org

Abbreviations

DTP3	diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine
GDP	gross domestic product
ILO	International Labour Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PPP	purchasing power parity
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

Acknowledgements

This report and the website that accompanies it (www.childrenschances.org) would not have been possible without the generous support of the Canadian Foundation for Innovation, the Canadian Institute for Health Research Programmatic Grants in Health and Health Equity, the Canada Research Chairs Program, and UCLA.

We are indebted to many colleagues at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health and the McGill Institute for Health and Social Policy for their work developing the databases behind this report, developing of the public use tools, and providing thoughtful advice on the contents, including Amy Raub, Tina Assi, Nicolás De Guzmán Chorny, Isabel Latz, Parama Sigurdsen, Megan Arthur, Adèle Cassola, Ilona Vincent, Efe Atabay, Denise Maines, Adam Mahon, Kip Brown, José Mendoza Rodriguez, Erin Bresnahan, and many others over the years.

About the Authors

Dr. Jody Heymann is Dean of the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, Distinguished Professor of Epidemiology, and Founding Director of the World Policy Analysis Centre.

Kristen McNeill is the Coordinator of the Children's Chances Initiative and a member of the Maternal and Child Health Equity Project research team at the Institute for Health and Social Policy, McGill University.

Notes

Changing Children's Chances

[1] The World Policy Analysis Centre is an initiative which aims to significantly improve the level and quality of comparative data on public policies available to people in countries around the world, to global and national policymakers, to civil society and private sector leaders, and to researchers. The World Policy Analysis Centre to date includes, among other components, education, discrimination, equity, health, disability, family, parental labour, child labour, child marriage, and income policies as well as social, economic, civil, and political rights; this report presents only a fraction of these data. Further information is available at *http://www.childrenschances.org.*This report often presents data disaggregated into low-, middle-, and high-income countries; for these categories, we use the World Bank's November 2011 classification of income groups, the most recent available. For the regional classifications used in the text, we use the World Bank's classifications. The purchasing power parity conversions used are from the United Nations Statistics Division's Millennium Development Goals Database, updated as of 29 August 2011, available at http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?q=PPP+datamart[MDG]&d=MDG&f=seriesRowID%3a699 (accessed 21 March 2012).

Poverty: Meeting Basic Needs

[1] S. Chen and M. Ravaillon, "The Developing World Is Poorer Than We Thought, but No Less Successful in the Fight against Poverty," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 125, no. 4 (2010): 1577–1625.
[2] UNICEF, "Achieving the MDGs with Equity," *Progress for Children* 9 (September 2010).
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[9] When countries do not split their education systems according to primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary, we defined them similarly to increase comparability across countries. When primary is split between lower and upper stages, or lasts for more than 8 years, and levels of secondary are not separated, we consider lower primary as primary education and upper primary as equivalent to lower secondary education. When countries do not split primary or secondary into levels, we apply the general secondary data to both levels of secondary.

[10] "Beginning secondary education" refers to the policy in place during the first year of what our database considers lower secondary education. "Finishing secondary education" refers to the policy in place in the final year of upper secondary education.

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[5] In order to build the Child Labour Database, original labour and other relevant legislation from each country was analyzed. The data reflect a systematic review of available legislation as of March 2012 (data were not collected on the newest UN nation, South Sudan, which became a member in July 2011).

[6] If a country explicitly defined hazardous work in its legislation, its own definition was used. For countries that do not define hazardous work, we use the International Labour Organization's categorization of hazardous work. In some cases, there is no minimum age for hazardous work, but there is a minimum age for general employment; in these cases, the minimum age for general employment is applied to the minimum age for hazardous work on the assumption that if children are not permitted to work, they will not be permitted to do hazardous work. Some countries include exceptions to the minimum age for hazardous work that would allow children to do this work at a younger age under specified conditions. When it is stated that exceptions are taken into account, this includes exceptions for specific types of work, often agricultural; for educational, vocational, personal development, apprenticeship, or volunteer work; when minister or government approval is granted; when working with family members; when a medical certificate is provided; or when there is unlikely to be any harm to health, safety, or morals.

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[11] Information on the minimum age for full-time work shows the minimum age at which a child is permitted to do full-time work, subject only to parental permission. We use 35 or more hours of work per week as a measure of full-time employment. The hashing on the map showing the minimum age for full-time work indicates that there are exceptions that we consider major loopholes allowing children to work at an age younger than the official minimum age. These exceptions fall into the categories of work with family members; specific types of work, such as agricultural, temporary, or seasonal; when the work is termed essential to the child or family; or upon minister or government approval or request.
[12] World Policy Analysis Centre, Child Labour Database
[13] A nation's stated maximum number of hours permitted on a school day is used whenever available to measure this variable directly. When countries do not specify hours allowed on a school day, we use the maximum number of hours permitted per day (not specific to a school day) because it is assumed that these regulations will also apply to school days. When countries state that work is prohibited during school hours but do not specify particular hour limitations, a 6-hour school day is assumed and is combined with data on hours of rest guaranteed at night; the resulting number of hours is used to represent the hours of work permitted on school days.
[14] This variable captures the number of uninterrupted hours off work at night that children are guaranteed at particular ages. If a country specifies only that work by children and youth is limited to a given number of hours per day, it is not coded as prohibiting night work because the working hours could occur at night if there are no restrictions on night work.
[15] World Policy Analysis Centre, Child Labour Database

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[10] Constitutions can take different approaches to equity. Most commonly, nations prohibit discrimination using language such as "No person shall be discriminated against on the basis of his or her religion." Some make positive guarantees of equal rights, for example, "Women and men enjoy equal rights." They can also guarantee overall equality between groups, such as "The State guarantees equality between men and women." In other cases, constitutions guarantee equality before the law, for example, "Everyone is equal before the law regardless of his or her race or ethnicity."
[11] World Policy Analysis Centre, Constitutions Database
[12] We consider a right to education as guaranteed or aspirational for a particular level (primary, secondary, and tertiary) if the constitution explicitly protects that level of education, as well as if it protects the right to free and/or compulsory education at that level. If the constitution protects the right to education "at all levels," we consider this to be a specific guarantee for primary, secondary, and tertiary education. When the constitution does not attach the rights to education, free education, or compulsory education to a specific level or "all levels" of education, it is assumed that they necessarily apply at the primary level as the most basic level of education. These rights are considered specific guarantees at the secondary level only when they are specified to extend for at least 11 years or until age 16.
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Meeting Special Needs

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