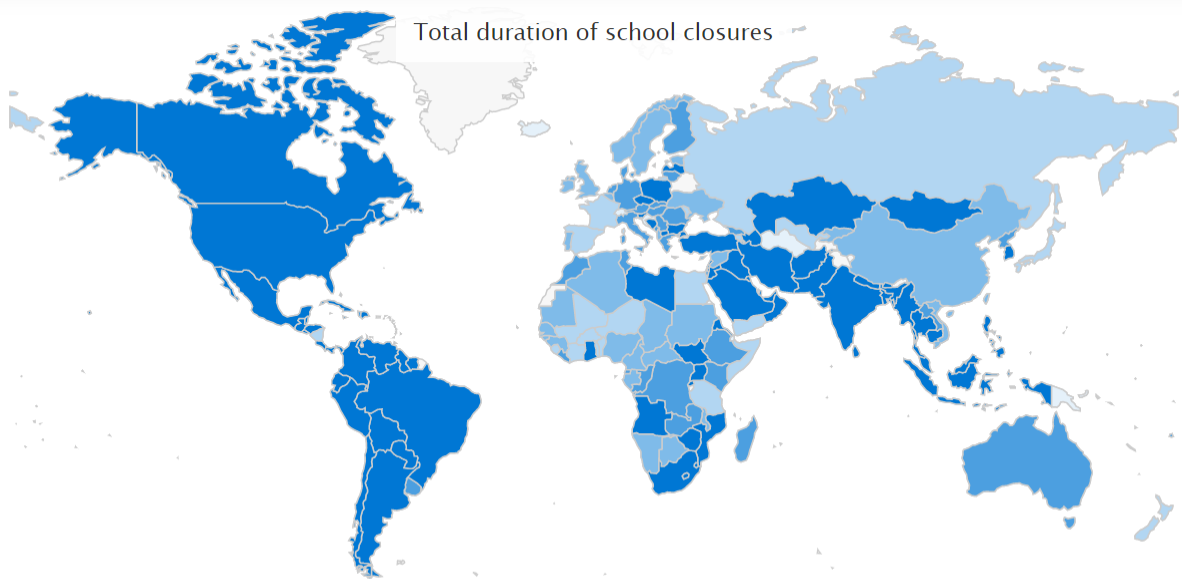# COVID-19, Gender, and Caregiving: Understanding Progress and Gaps Across 193 Countries in Laws that Support Balancing Work and Care Responsibilities

Amy Raub

Director of Research
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worldpolicycenter.org

Total duration of school closures

- 0 weeks
- 1–10 weeks
- 11–20 weeks
- 21–30 weeks
- 31–40 weeks
- 41+ weeks
- No data

+
−

Highcharts.com © UN

▲
TOP

Gender and Care Gaps Prior to the Pandemic

- ➢ ILO 2019: **606 million women** out of labor force due to care needs, compared to only 41 million men

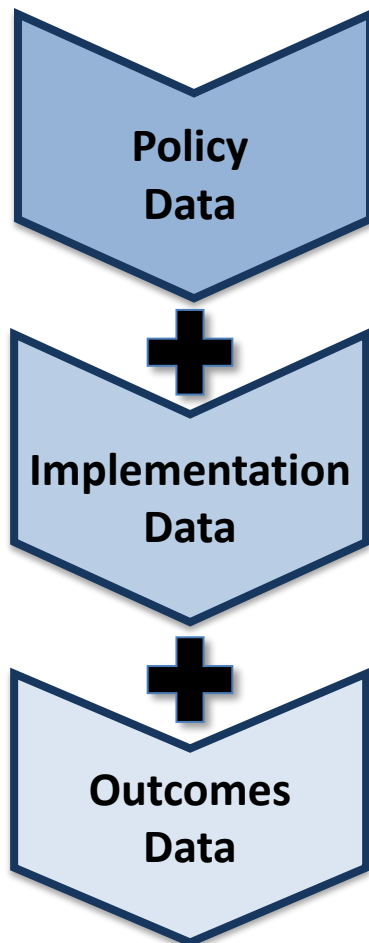- ➢ WEF 2020 (pre-COVID): 257 years to close the gender pay gap

Equality within Our Lifetimes:
How Laws and Policies Can Close—or Widen—Gender Gaps in Economies Worldwide

➤ A systematic analysis of all 193 UN countries:
  ➤ How countries can accelerate gender equality at work
  ➤ At a national scale

➤ This initiative answers important questions:
  ➤ Where are the gaps?
  ➤ Has there been progress?
  ➤ Which countries lead and lag?

EQUALITY
WITHIN OUR
LIFETIMES

*How Laws and Policies
Can Close—or Widen—
Gender Gaps in
Economies
Worldwide*

Jody Heymann
Aleta Sprague
Amy Raub
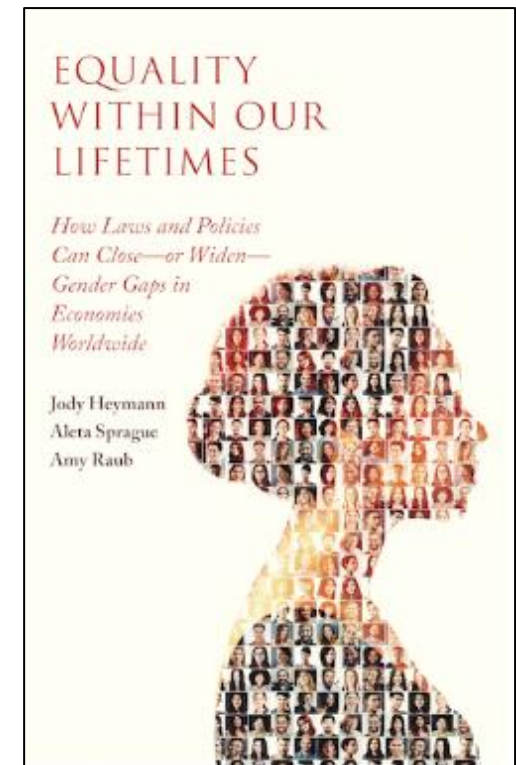
Sum Greater Than its Parts: What Data do we Need to Accelerate Change?

**Policy
Data**

+

**Implementation
Data**

+

**Outcomes
Data**

=

All three data types contribute to:

❖ Increasing **evidence-based governance, investment,** and **strategy** decisions

❖ Identifying **global leaders and laggards**

❖ **Monitoring and accountability** of the SDGs, global, and regional commitments

❖ Advancing rigorous work to **determine which approaches will work to achieve goals at scale**

Overview of WORLD Data Areas

WORLD has data on more than 2,500 policies in 193 countries in policy areas that affect **human health**, **development**, **well-being**, and **equity,** including:

- ✓ Gender
- ✓ Nutrition
- ✓ Reproductive Health
- ✓ Public and Population Health

- ✓ Income
- ✓ Social Protection
- ✓ Childhood
- ✓ Marriage
- ✓ Education

- ✓ Families
- ✓ Environment
- ✓ Equal Rights and Discrimination
- ✓ Adult Labor and Working Conditions
- ✓ Child Labor
- ✓ Aging
- ✓ Disability
- ✓ Migration

Coding Process and Frameworks

➢ **Team from diverse backgrounds around the world:**

   ➢ Multilingual: English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, and other languages

   ➢ Multidisciplinary: Economics, political science, international development, public health, education, laws, and demography

➢ **Review source materials** for each individual country in a systematic, consistent, and comparative way

➢ **Quality checks:**

   ➢ Double coding; reconciling

   ➢ Database cleaning

   ➢ Verification of outliers
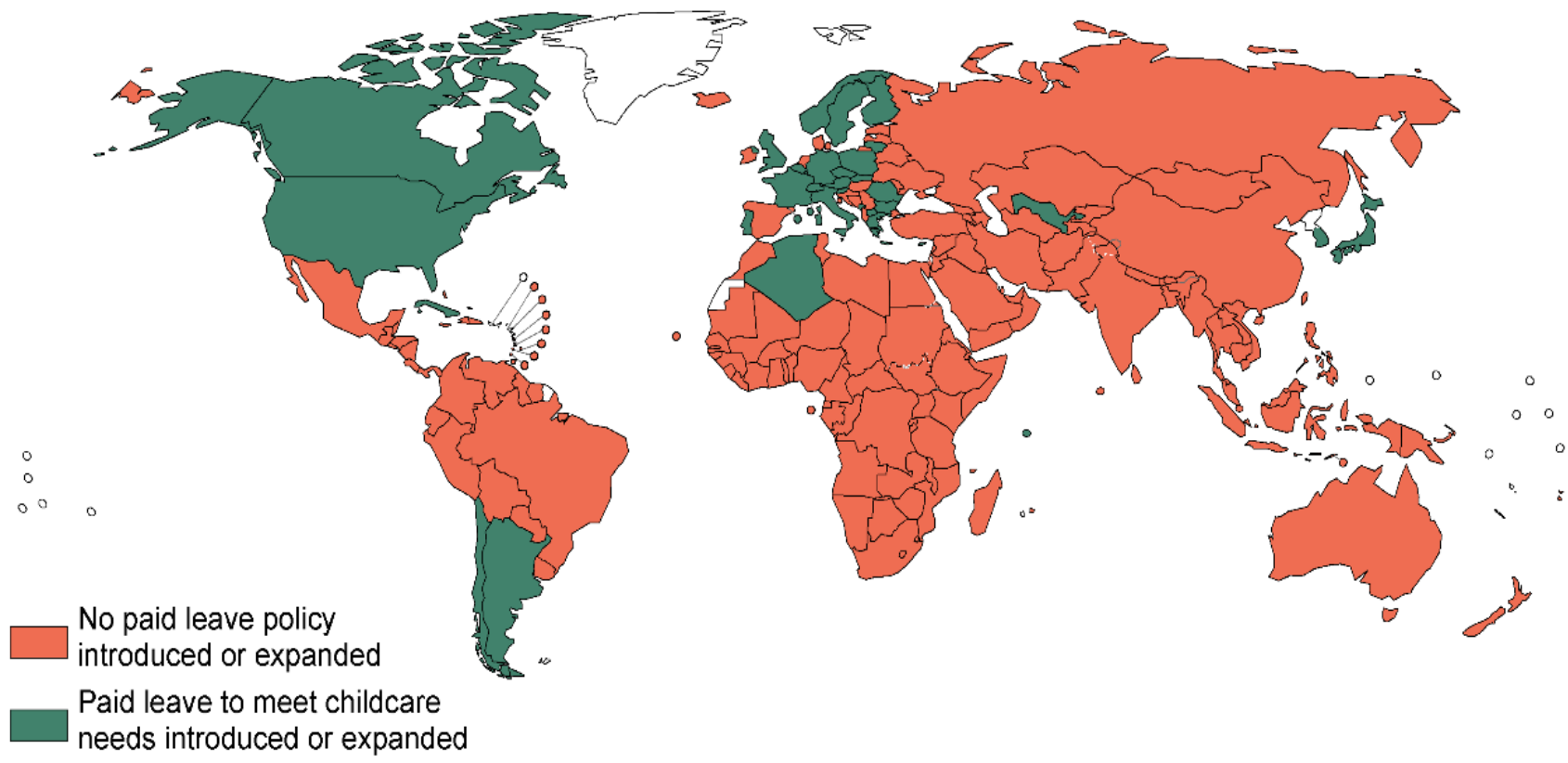
   ➢ Periodic updates

   ➢ Feedback from countries/regions

Mapping Legal Gaps that Undermine Gender Equality in Work and Care

Paid leave policies introduced or expanded to meet increased childcare needs during the pandemic

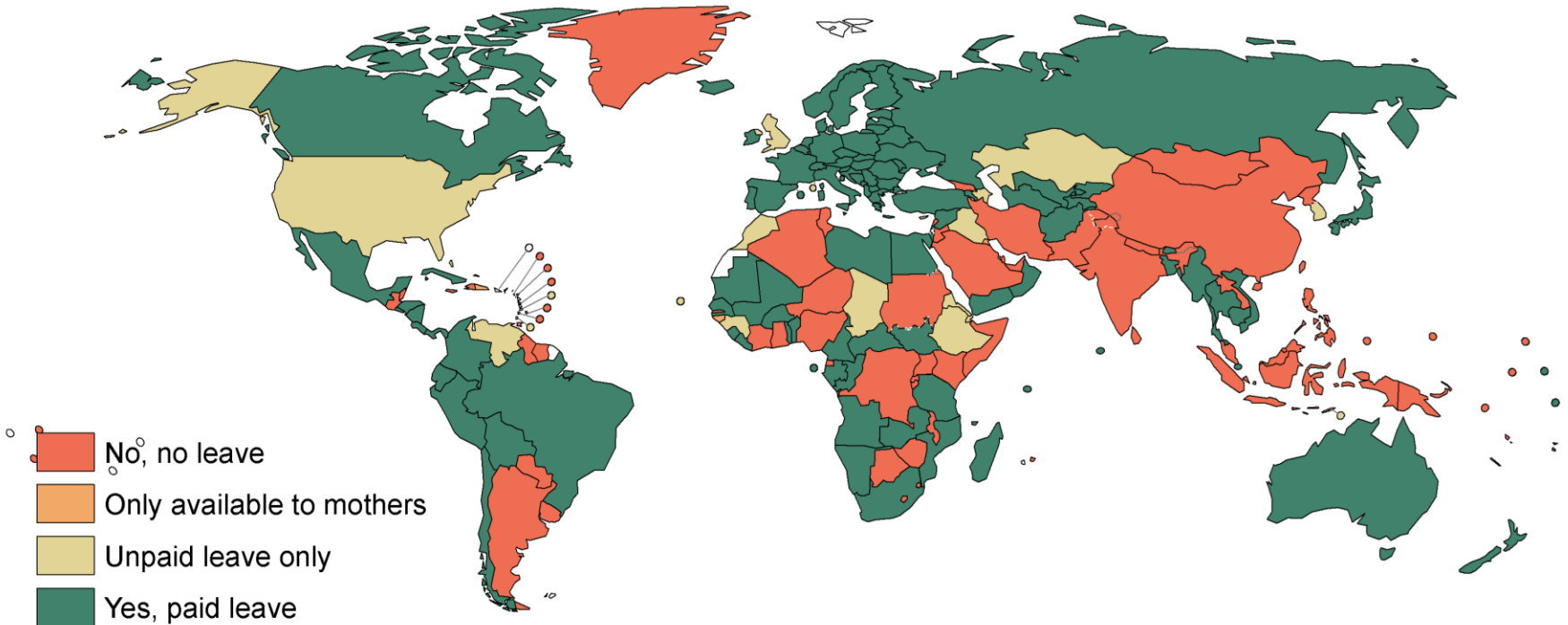WORLD Policy Analysis Center

Legend:
- No paid leave policy introduced or expanded
- Paid leave to meet childcare needs introduced or expanded

Are working parents guaranteed any leave for children's everyday health needs?

Legend:
- No, no leave
- Only available to mothers
- Unpaid leave only
- Yes, paid leave
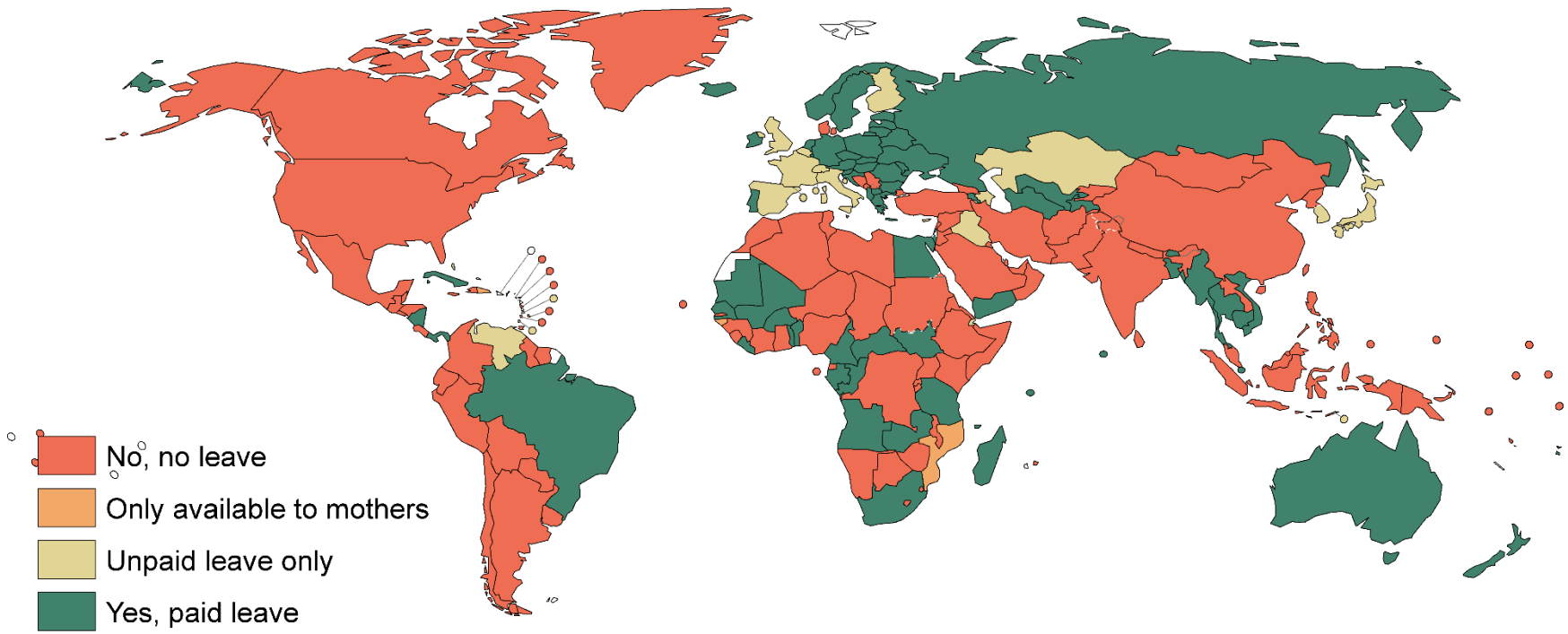
Source: WORLD Policy Analysis Center, Adult Labor Database, 2022

Are working parents guaranteed any leave for children's serious health needs?

Legend:
- No, no leave
- Only available to mothers
- Unpaid leave only
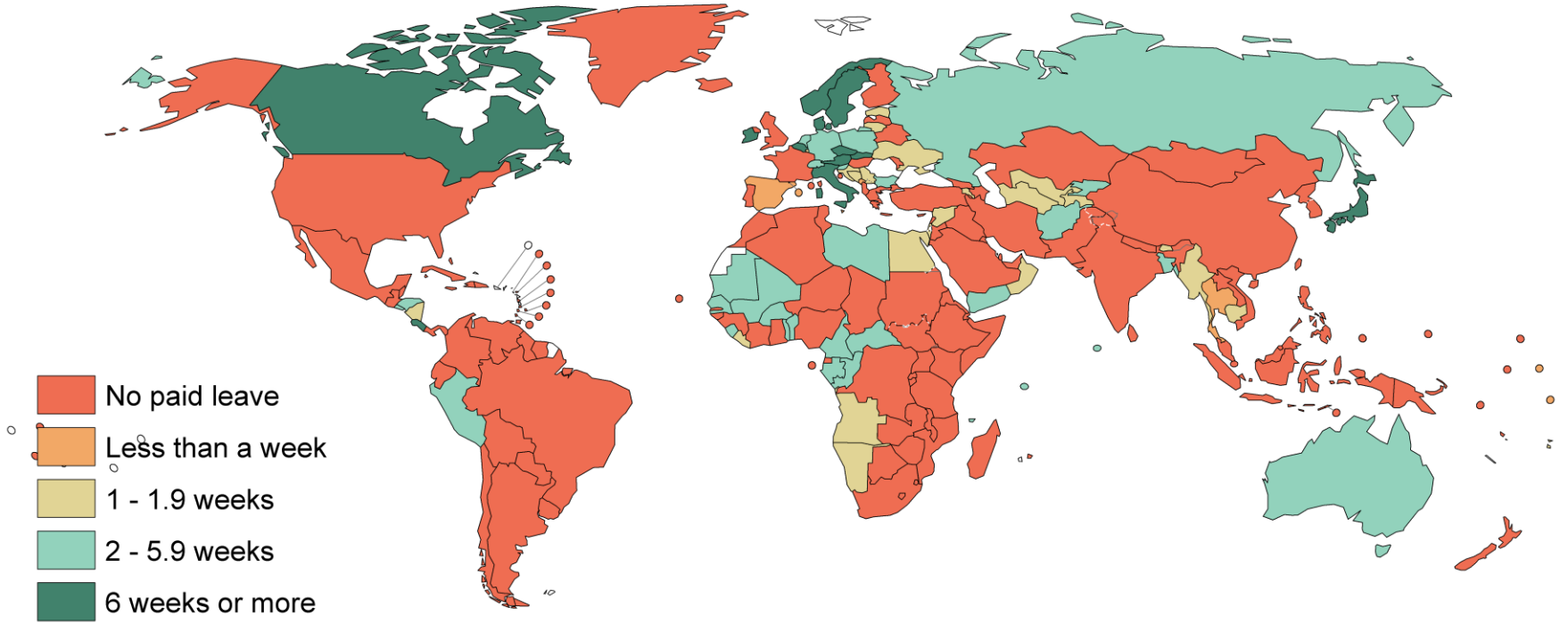- Yes, paid leave

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Is at least 6 weeks of paid leave available to meet a child's serious health needs?

Duration of leave for adult child is based on leave available for adult children still living in the same household as their parent.
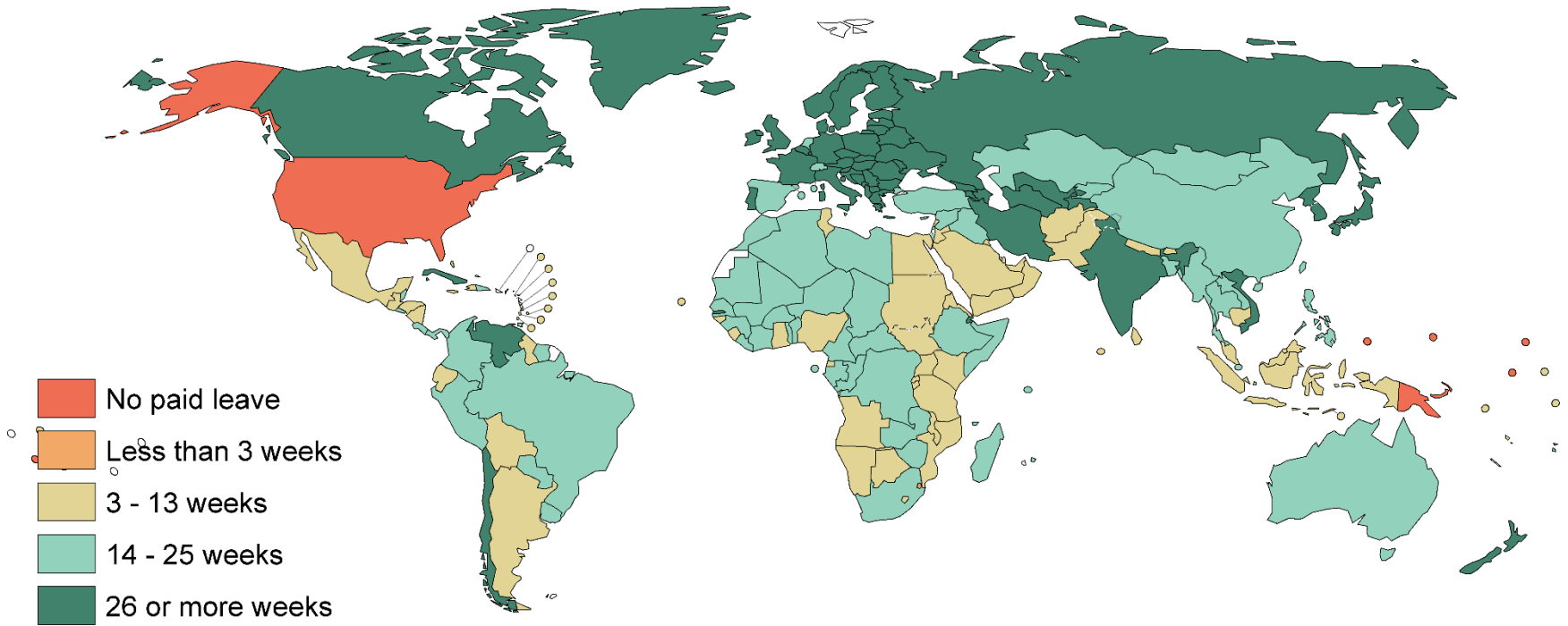
How much paid leave is available to workers to meet a parent's serious health needs?

Legend:
- No paid leave
- Less than a week
- 1 - 1.9 weeks
- 2 - 5.9 weeks
- 6 weeks or more

WORLD Policy
Analysis Center

Is paid leave available for mothers of infants?

Legend:
- No paid leave
- Less than 3 weeks
- 3 - 13 weeks
- 14 - 25 weeks
- 26 or more weeks

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# Do countries reserve paid leave for fathers of infants which supports gender equality in caregiving?

Legend:
- No access to any paid leave for fathers
- No paid leave reserved for fathers
- Limited leave reserved for dads
- Yes, longer leave reserved for fathers or incentives to take longer leave

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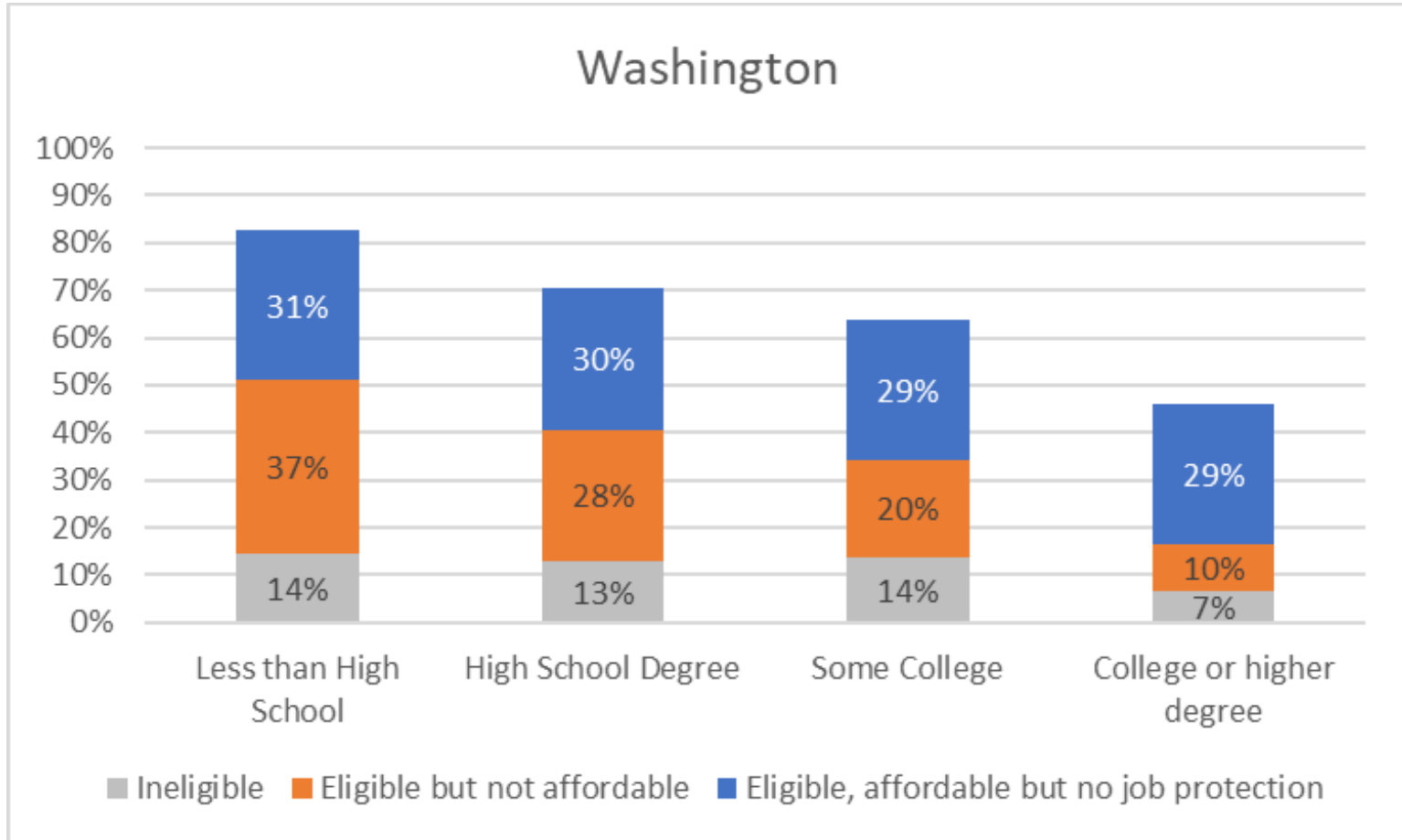Are more countries guaranteeing paid leave to mothers and fathers of infants?
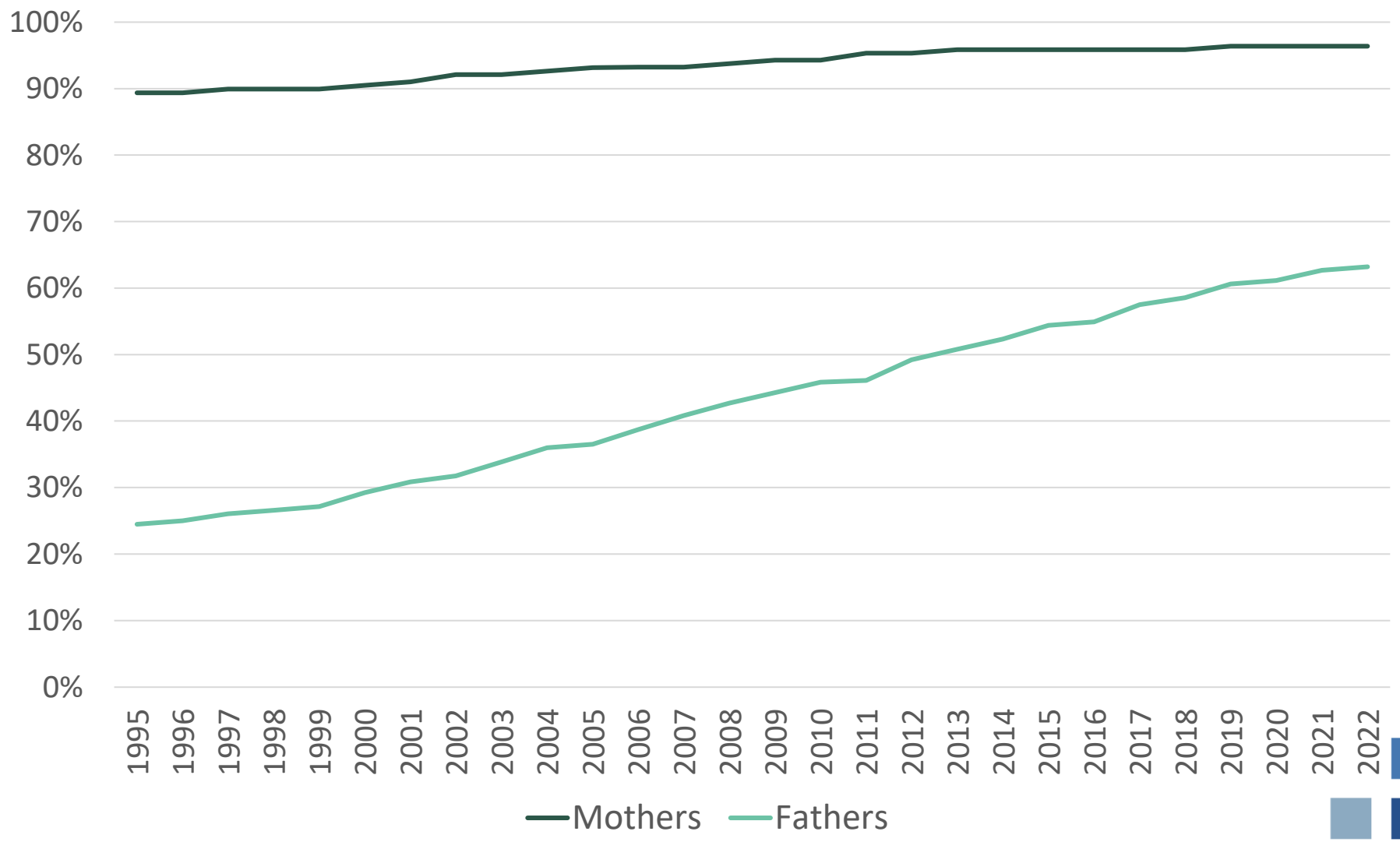
Using Policy Data with Household Survey Data to Quantify Structural Inequalities

Disparities across Education in Access to 6 weeks of Paid Family Leave for Serious Illness with Job Protection

Conducting rigorous quasi-experimental models to assess policy impacts

➢ **Harmonized Surveys for low- and middle-income countries**

   ✓Individual-level outcomes on large global populations

   ✓Surveys allow for studies in change over time

➢ **Rich datasets allow for rigorous analyses with controls at the individual, household, and country level, such as**:

   ✓Country level: GDP, spending on health and education, fixed effects

   ✓Household level: wealth, urban or rural, parents' education

   ✓Individual level: gender, age

Paid Maternity Leave: Peer-Reviewed Evidence for Infant Survival

➢ Examining the effects of **paid maternity leave** duration on **infant death**

  ✓ 282,751 births in 20 LMICs (years 2000-2007)

➢ **Findings**

  ✓ Extending the duration of paid maternity leave decreased the probability of infant death.

  ✓ **Each additional month** of paid maternity leave led to **7.9 fewer infant deaths** per 1,000 live births, reflecting a 14% reduction relative to the mean.
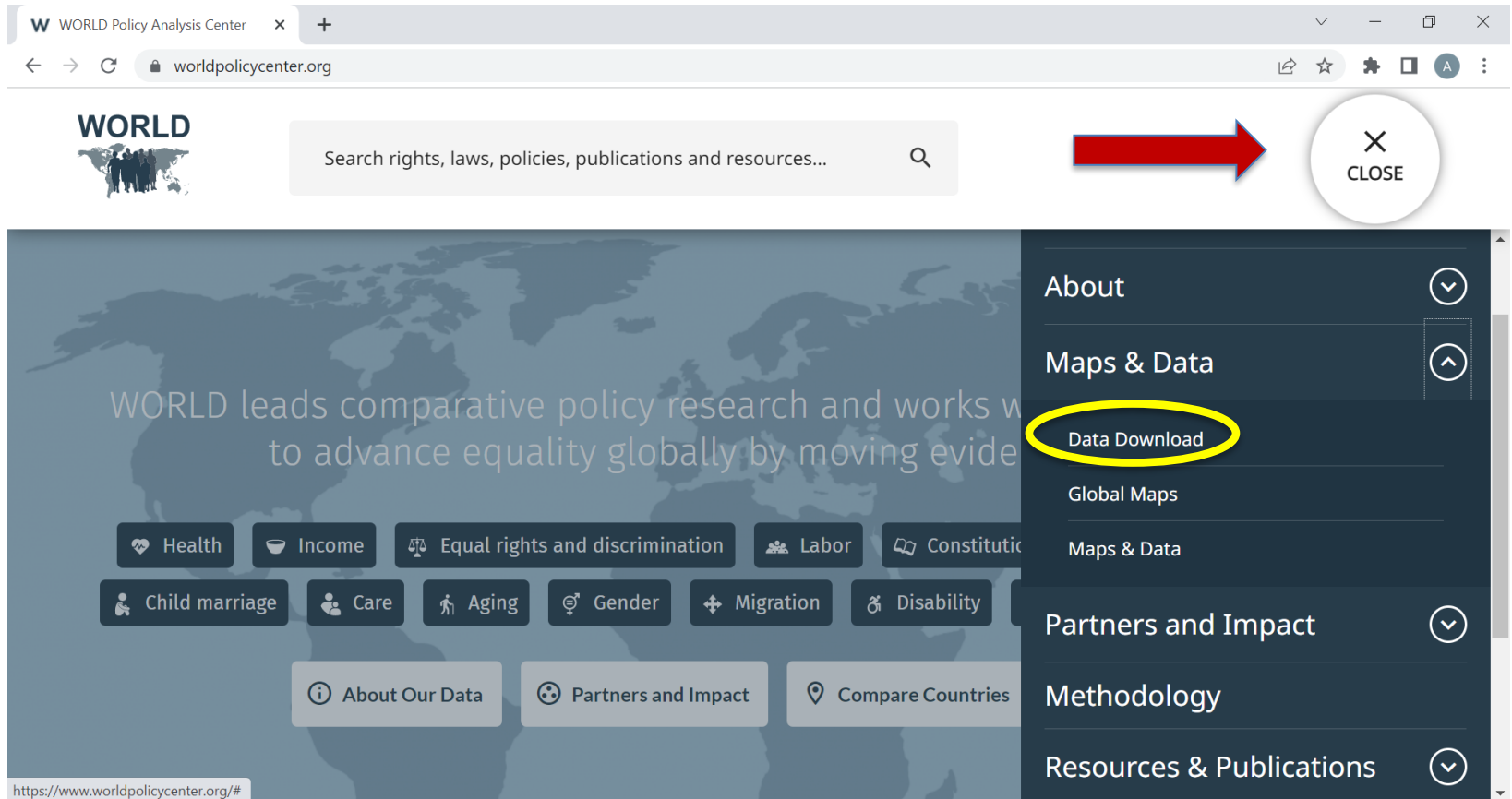
Photo: Filckr/Steve Evans

Source: Nandi A, Hajizadeh M, Harper S, Koski A, Strumpf EC, and Heymann SJ. Increased Duration of Paid Maternity Leave Lowers Infant Mortality in Low- and Middle-income Countries: A Quasi-experimental Study. *PLoS Medicine*. Published online before print March 2016.

Data Publicly Available and Downloadable

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*We welcome exploring ways
we can work together!*

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