

Africa - African Harmonised Early-Grade Assessment Data

African Foundational Learning Data Hub

Report generated on: July 31, 2026

Visit our data catalog at: <https://www.datafirst.uct.ac.za/dataportal/index.php>

Identification

SURVEY ID NUMBER

ahead-v1

TITLE

African Harmonised Early-Grade Assessment Data

ABBREVIATION OR ACRONYM

AHEAD

COUNTRY

Country code	Name
AFR	Africa

ABSTRACT

The AHEAD dataset pools and harmonizes microdata from Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) surveys conducted in African countries. Each constituent survey was originally captured with its own variable names, numeric codes, and value labels. The harmonization assigns a single canonical variable name, code, label scheme to comparable items across surveys to produce one analysis-ready pooled data file suitable for cross-country and cross-time comparative research on early-grade literacy and numeracy across diverse educational contexts.

Survey-level documentation, including assessment sub-tasks, sampling design commands, and source-linking instructions, is available in the AHEAD Study Catalogue: [<https://datafirst-aflearn.github.io/ahead/>]

KIND OF DATA

Harmonized survey microdata

UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Individual pupil (learner)

Version

VERSION DESCRIPTION

v1.1: Edited, anonymised data for public distribution

VERSION DATE

2026-07-31

VERSION NOTES

Changes from Version 1 to Version 1.1:

1. Two new projects were appended. They are Nal'ibali Story Powered Schools (SPS) in 2017, 2018, and 2019 from South Africa; and Literacy Achievement and Retention Activity (LARA) in 2017 and 2019 from Uganda.
2. Three projects are excluded because the original source microdata for these records are not available. Users of Version 1 release that included these projects should treat the current file as authoritative and expect those country-years to be absent. These are Early Grade Reading Improvement Activity (MERIT) in 2016, 2017 and 2018 from Malawi; Tunoze Gusoma in 2022 from Rwanda; and a national assessment in 2021 from Zambia.

No variables from the Version 1 were dropped.

Scope

KEYWORDS

Keyword
Education

Early grade reading
Early grade mathematics
Literacy
Numeracy
Learning assessment
EGRA
EGMA
Early foundational learning

Coverage

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

National coverage

UNIVERSE

Early-grade primary school pupils assessed in the respective EGRA/EGMA samples. Exact target grades and eligibility rules differ by survey

Producers and sponsors

PRIMARY INVESTIGATORS

Name	Affiliation
African Foundational Learning Data Hub	DataFirst

FUNDING AGENCY/SPONSOR

Name	Role
Gates Foundation	Financial support

Sampling

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Constituent surveys used different sample designs. Harmonized survey design variables are present in the pooled file where supplied by the original survey. There is no single pooled sampling frame. Weighted and sampling error estimation analysis requires a separate survey design specification for each source.

Data Collection

DATA COLLECTION MODE

Face-to-face paper and pen interview [face-to-face]

DATA COLLECTORS

Name	Affiliation	Abbreviation
United States Agency for International Development	US Government	USAID

Questionnaires

QUESTIONNAIRES

Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Mathematics Assessment (EGMA) instruments. Original instruments, languages of assessment, and field protocols differ by constituent survey.

Data Processing

DATA EDITING

Full description of the cleaning operations can be found in the User Guide in the Downloads tab.

Data Appraisal

DATA APPRAISAL

Known limitations, residual unresolved codes, and cross-survey variable availability are documented in Appendix C (Variable Availability Matrix) of User Guide.

Access policy

ACCESS CONDITIONS

Creative Commons CC-BY 4.0 attribution license

CITATION REQUIREMENTS

African Foundational Learning Data Hub. African Harmonised Early-Grade Assessment Data [dataset]. Version 1.1. Cape Town: AFLEARN [producers], 2026. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25828/2287-mw84>

LOCATION OF DATA COLLECTION

DataFirst data repository

Metadata production

PRODUCERS

Name	Abbreviation	Affiliation
DataFirst	DF	University of Cape Town

DATE OF METADATA PRODUCTION

2026-07-31

DDI DOCUMENT VERSION

2

Data Description

Data file	Cases	Variables
ahead-v1_1	0	2110