International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) Datasets Codebook

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Overview of the Datasets

International non-governmental organizations (INGOs) have had unprecedented growth over the past several decades and have become important players in international politics. Some call INGOs the 'third sector' in global politics, after states and businesses (Kallman & Clark, 2016). Today, policymakers worldwide must contemplate INGOs' influence on many issue areas, including economic and social development, environmental policy, gender equality, and human rights.

There is no ready-to-use, publicly-available data source in the literature for researchers wishing to analyze INGOs systematically. There are a variety of online data sources, but none are based on identified inclusion criteria. The INGO datasets introduced here address this research need by identifying only UN-accredited INGOs across the world. For each INGO, additional information is provided, including INGOs' start and end years of UN-consultative status, areas of expertise, countries of operation, and millennium development goals. Two datasets are constructed: one of the INGOs and the other of INGOs at the state-year level of analysis. Both datasets can be integrated with other datasets, facilitating engagement with a broad range of research questions. While the INGO-level dataset provides information for 6,595 INGOs from 1816 to 2022, the state-level dataset includes 15,024 state-year observations from 1946 to 2022. The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) iCSO database is the key definitional source-identifying INGOs for data collection. Additional information on ECOSOC-identified INGOs was also obtained from open sources, such as INGOs' own websites, INGO portals, and the U.N. digital library (the U.N. decisions and resolutions).

This codebook provides an overview of each dataset. In the first part, I describe the INGO-level dataset with summaries of the variables. The next part explains the INGO state-level dataset in the same manner. I call the dataset 'international' INGOs since all are recognized as having consultative status by the ECOSOC, though some may operate only in one or a few countries. INGOs that do not have ECOSOC consultive status are not included in the data set.

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Definition of INGOs

Although differences of opinion exist, there appears to be some scholarly agreement that INGOs are independent philanthropic organizations that aim to promote non-commercial interests. INGOs pursue some public purpose or societal interest, such as providing social services or supporting community development (WorldBank, 1998; Davies, 2019; DeMars, 2005; Teegen, Doh, and Vachani, 2004; Vakil, 1997; Yaziji & Doh, 2009). There have been myriad INGOs throughout the world. Many have been only informally organized and are fragile with short life spans. To construct a dataset on INGOs, adopting a clear, practical, and rigorous definitional standard is essential.

The INGO dataset adopts the standard of the ECOSOC, which defines an INGO as "any organization which is not established by inter-governmental agreement including organizations which accept members designated by government authorities, provided that such membership does not interfere with the free expression of views of the organizations" (ECOSOC, 1968).[2]

The ECOSOC accredits INGOs as having a consultative status for INGOs that both apply for this status and are concerned with the three main dimensions of sustainable development that concern the ECOSOC: economic, social, and environmental development.[3] In addition to doing work relevant to ECOSOC, to be accredited with consultative status, ECOSOC has several standards an INGO must meet. These are (ECOSOC, 2018, p. 30):

- It must have a transparent and democratic decision-making mechanism and a democratically adopted constitution.
- It must have an established headquarters with an executive officer.
- It must have been in existence for at least two years to apply.
- It should have the authority to speak for its members.
- It should have a representative structure.
- It must have appropriate mechanisms for accountability.
- It must provide to the Committee financial statements, including contributions and other support, and expenses, direct or indirect.

Applying this definition, I include only INGOs that were registered and recognized by the ECOSOC at any time over the temporal domain of the data. The dataset thus excludes INGOs that, for whatever reason, never applied for ECOSOC consultive status or, if they had, were considered to have yet to meet the above standards.

[2] Resolution 1296 (XLV) of 25th June 1968).

[3] This accreditation is given by the U.N. ECOSOC resolution 1996/31: "... Consultative arrangements are to be made, on the one hand, to enable the Council or one of its bodies to secure expert information or advice from organizations having special competence in the subjects for which consultative arrangements are made, and, on the other hand, to enable international, regional, sub-regional and national organizations that represent important elements of public opinion to express their views" (ibid., Part II, paragraph 20).

Consultative status creates a tacit contract that benefits both the U.N. and INGOs. On the one hand, the U.N. obtains knowledge from the field - valuable and specialized experts in areas of concern. On the other hand, an INGO that can acquire this status can use it to further its goals. For example, an INGO can make its voice heard by participating in the international meetings of the ECOSOC. Hence, they can share their agenda and activities with global audiences (ECOSOC, 2018).

The INGO-level dataset

Explanations and limitations

The INGO-level dataset provides 24 variables and 195 country-dummy variables. Two primary years variables are introduced: *Start Year* and *End Year*. The definitions and coding rules are as follows:

- Start Year is the year that the ECOSOC was granted INGO consultative status.[4] Therefore, the dataset contains all INGOs that have ever-had consultative status for at least one year since 1945. For some missing cases of consultative years (8 percent of the total), the Start Year is determined by the INGO's registration year to the ECOSOC and establishment years.[5] For cases with no registration and establishment years (3 percent of the total), the Start Year is retained as missing. Tabular comparisons of these missing years with the variables *Headquarters*, *Area of Expertise*, and *Countries of Activity* yielded no evident systematic basis for these missing data points. For transparency, the original establishment and registration years are retained in the data as the variables *Establishment Year* and *Registration Year*, respectively.
- End Year is when the ECOSOC withdraws an INGO's consultative status if it was withdrawn. Missing values indicate that an INGO has an active status in the last year of the data. According to U.N. sources, since 1999, the ECOSOC committee has monitored the liabilities of INGOs to sustain their consultative status. For example, the ECOSOC committee suspends (later withdraws) the consultative status of an INGO when they do not regularly submit their quadrennial report (ECOSOC, 2018). Since 1999 the consultative status of 1,150 INGOs has been revoked by decisions of the ECOSOC. Only these INGOs have non- for End Year. As mentioned, ECOSOC started revoking consultative statutes only in 1999. However, the data indicated that the number of revoked INGOs increased, particularly after 2010.

[4] ECOSOC has been granting consultative status since 1946.
[5] The ECOSOC does not report some consultative years before 1945, but some NGOs that were established before 1945 report their consultative years as before 1945 (43 cases). I drew on these self-reported consultative years from those NGO websites to reduce the number of missing data points for Start Year.

In an INGO's consultative status application process, ECOSOC requires INGOs to determine their geographic scope[6]. From this information, the ECOSOC identifies INGOs as working at the global, regional, national, or local-community levels (U.N., 2022; Willets, 2010). *Global NGOs* carry out operations at the global level. Examples include "Greenpeace" and "Doctors without Borders". *Regional NGOs* operate in two or more countries and are concerned primarily with regional issues (broadly defined). For example, the "Arab Society for Academic Freedoms" operates in 13 Middle Eastern countries. *National NGOs* operate only in one country. For instance, "Cultura Ecologica" deals with developing an ecological culture in Mexico. Finally, *Local NGOs* are concerned with a specific local issue. An example is "Zero Waste San Diego," which committed itself to promote a healthier environment in San Diego.

The variable *Headquarters* indicates the official address of an INGO: it does not mean the operation country of an INGO, an INGO's country, or countries of concern. In many cases, an INGO's fieldwork country(s) might differ from its Headquarters. This is the case mostly for the Global NGOs.

Although most INGOs concentrate on particular issue areas, some have broader agendas focusing on multiple areas. Some researchers may investigate INGOs according to their fields. I thus provide six binary variables indicating their main areas of expertise. These are economic and social development (*Aoe Ecosoc*), sustainable development *(Aoe Susdev*), gender issues and the advancement of women (*Aoe Genwomen*), public administration, population, and statistics *(Aoe Public)*, and conflict resolution, peace and development in Africa (*Aoe Africa).* These areas are identified by the INGOs themselves in their applications for consultative status. An INGO can have more than one area of expertise.

In 2000, the 189 member states of the U.N. adopted the U.N. Millennium Declaration to address development and make substantial progress toward eradicating poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women (U.N. 2000).[7] The declaration also proposed that all INGOs with consultive status must adopt at least one of these Millennium Developments Goals (MDGs) (Brinkerhoff, Smith, and Teegen 2007). I thus provide eight binary variables indicating INGOs' MDGs. As with areas of expertise, an INGO can have more than one MDG.

I provide 195 binary variables indicating countries associated with the INGOs. This can include the countries of concern by the INGO, or the presence of some civil society organizations in the country linked with the INGO' countries of activities from the iCSO database. The country presence or association with the INGO must not be infer as exiting throughout the lifetime of the INGO. Rather, the binary measures indicate the countries to which an NGO is concerned when it applies to ECOSOC.

[6] ECOSOC classified NGOs three categories: Special, General, and Roster. These categories are often given by evaluating the type of organization, its scope, or its contribution to ECOSOC.
[7] (U.N., A/RES/55/2).

Table 1. INGO Dataset Variable List

Variable name	Description	Measurement
Ncode	The numeric four-digit code that identifies each INGO in the dataset.	Integer
INGO Name	The string variable contains the full name of the INGO.	String
Start Year	The year was granted consultative status by the UN-ECOSOC.	Date (Year)
End Year	The year consultative status was revoked by the U.N.	Date (Year)
Headquarters	The country where the INGO's Headquarters or secretariat is located.	String
Global NGO	The geographic scope of the INGO is global.	Binary
Regional NGO	The geographic scope of the INGO is regional.	Binary
National NGO	The geographic scope of the INGO is within a single country.	Binary
Local NGO	The INGO's geographic scope is local (that is, focused on a particular location within a country).	Binary
Aoe Ecosoc	Area of expertise is economic and social development.	Binary
Aoe Susdev	Area of expertise is sustainable development.	Binary
Aoe Genwomen	Area of expertise is gender issues and the advancement of women.	Binary
Aoe Public	Area of expertise is public administration, population, and statistic.	Binary
Aoe Africa	Area of expertise is conflict resolution, peace and development, and NEPAD[8].	Binary
Mdg Disease	Main Development Goal is to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.	Binary
Mdg Education	Main Development Goal is to achieve universal primary education.	Binary
Mdg Gender	Main Development Goal is to promote gender equality and empower women.	Binary
Mdg Poverty	Main Development Goal is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.	Binary
Mdg Child	Main Development Goal is to reduce child mortality.	Binary
Mdg Development	Main Development Goal is a global partnership for development.	Binary
Mdg Maternal	Main Development Goal is to improve maternal health.	Binary
Mdg Environment	Main Development Goal is to ensure environmental sustainability.	Binary
Establishment Year	The establishment year of the INGO.	Date (Year)
Registration Year	The year applied for consultative status.	Date (Year)
Countries of Activity	Countries of activity of 195 countries (alphabetically ordered)	Binary
Version	Version Mar2023.	

The INGO state-level dataset

Explanations and limitations

A range of studies suggests that Western, democratic, or higher-income countries might be more likely than others to originate INGOs. To render the dataset useful for studies at the state level, I derived five count INGO variables by their geographic scope from the INGO-level dataset. The data are converted to the state-level annualized time series by considering an INGO's start and end years. Since the U.N. started to grant consultative status as of 1946, the dataset covers the INGO

[8] The New Partnership for Africa's Development.

observations between 1946 and 2022. I determined the *Country Name* (Cname) as the country in which INGO's headquarter is located. In many cases the exact countries of activity are not clear in the data. Some INGOs are located in the country of concern, while others (mostly Global NGOs) are located in Western countries. For this reason, I used the Headquarters of the INGOs, the most reliable country data available.

INGOs without Start Year are necessarily omitted from this coding. Overall, the dataset contains 3,874 Global, 2,582 Regional, 3,459 National, and 2,178 Local INGOs between 1946 and 2022. At the state level, the *All INGO* variable captures all types of INGOs and is calculated as the sum of them for each state-year.

I aggregate five expertise areas of INGOs. It refers to the total number of INGOs that a country has in a given year by area of expertise. In the same fashion, I created eight discrete variables by Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of INGOs. They allow for the investigations of states' INGOs with specific MDGs for any pattern of relationships.

Table 2. INGO State-year Dataset Variable List

Variable name	Description	Measurement
Ccode	The numeric country code as used in the Correlates of War Dataset.	Integer
Cname	Country name.	String
Year	Calendar years between 1946 – 2022 are set as time series.	Integer
All INGO	The number of all INGO types headquartered in that country.	Discrete
Global NGO	The number of global NGOs headquartered in that country.	Discrete
Regional NGO	The number of regional NGOs headquartered in that country.	Discrete
National NGO	The number of national NGOs headquartered in that country.	Discrete
Local NGO	The number of local NGOs headquartered in that country (certain location within the country).	Discrete
Aoe Ecosoc	The number of INGOs whose area of expertise is economic and social development.	Discrete
Aoe Susdev	The number of INGOs whose area of expertise is sustainable development.	Discrete
Aoe Genwomen	The number of INGOs whose area of expertise is gender issues and advancement of women.	Discrete
Aoe Public	The number of INGOs whose area of expertise is public administration, population, and statistic.	Discrete
Aoe Africa	The number of INGOs whose area of expertise is conflict resolution, peace and development, and NEPAD.	Discrete
Mdg Disease	The number of INGOs whose MDG is to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.	Discrete
Mdg Education	The number of INGOs whose MDG is to achieve universal primary education.	Discrete
Mdg Gender	The number of INGOs whose MDG is to promote gender equality and empower women.	Discrete

Mdg Poverty	The number of INGOs whose MDG is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.	Discrete
Mdg Child	The number of INGOs whose MDG is to reduce child mortality.	Discrete
Mdg Development	The number of INGOs whose MDG is a global partnership for development.	Discrete
Mdg Maternal	The number of INGOs whose MDG is to improve maternal health.	Discrete
Mdg Environment	The number of INGOs whose MDG is to ensure environmental sustainability.	Discrete
Version	Version Mar2023.	

Errors or anomalies

Some anomalies may have escaped my attention. Please contact me for any questions or if any potential errors may appear in the data or its construction.

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