

Poverty & Equity Brief

Africa Western & Central

Cameroon

October 2020

Poverty remains high in Cameroon at 37.5 percent in 2014 (using the national poverty line), equivalent to 8.3 million people living in poverty. This rate represents a slight decline from 39.9 percent in 2007 and 40.2 percent in 2001 despite a relatively resilient economy to several shocks due to its relative diversity compared to other Central African countries. The proportion of the population living below the \$3.20 a day poverty line in 2014 was estimated at 47 percent and nearly 38 percent was multidimensionally poor.

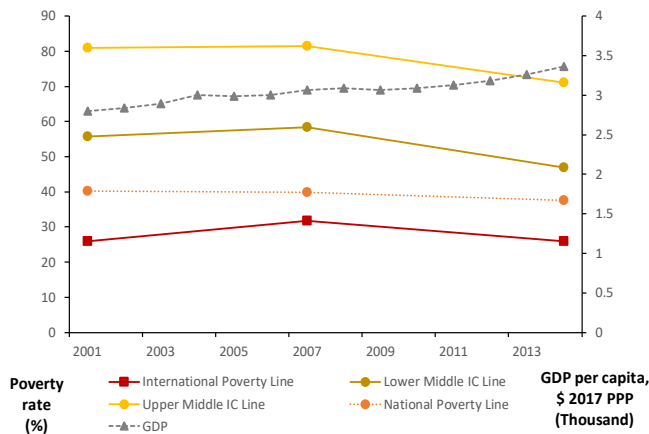
The challenge in accelerating poverty reduction is the result of fast population growth combined with opposite poverty trends between rural and urban areas and across regions due to a concentration of investments in the two largest cities (Douala and Yaoundé) and growing insecurity in the North West and South West regions. These disparities result in high income inequality with the Gini index increasing considerably by 3.8 percentage points between 2007 and 2014 (46.6 in 2014), leading to a negative Shared Prosperity Premium (growth of the bottom 40 minus average growth) of 2.43 over the two periods. The Boko Haram conflict in the Far North and the ongoing conflict in the anglophone regions as well as recent escalation of violence in the Lake Chad region are likely to not only adversely impact human capital, which is already low, but also further hinder progress on poverty reduction and equity.

Despite light containment measures of the COVID-19 outbreak, the negative impact of the pandemic resulted in a contraction of the services and agriculture sectors. As a result, real GDP growth is expected to contract by 2.5 percent in 2020. The continued pressures on security expenditure may further affect social spending, especially in delivering basic services such as health and education. This is most likely to disproportionately affect the poor who mainly depend on the provision of these services by the public sector and may lead to increased inequality in non-monetary welfare.

POVERTY	Number of Poor (million)	Rate (%)	Period
National Poverty Line	8.3	37.5	2014
International Poverty Line 467.4 in CFA franc (2014) or US\$1.90 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	5.9	26.0	2014
Lower Middle Income Class Poverty Line 787.2 in CFA franc (2014) or US\$3.20 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	10.7	47.0	2014
Upper Middle Income Class Poverty Line 1353.1 in CFA franc (2014) or US\$5.50 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	16.1	71.1	2014
Multidimensional Poverty Measure		37.7	2014
SHARED PROSPERITY			
Annualized Consumption Growth per capita of the bottom 40 percent		1.41	2007-2014
INEQUALITY			
Gini Index		46.6	2014
Shared Prosperity Premium = Growth of the bottom 40 - Average Growth		-2.43	2007-2014
GROWTH			
Annualized GDP per capita growth		1.34	2007-2014
Annualized Consumption Growth per capita from Household Survey		3.84	2007-2014
MEDIAN INCOME			
Growth of the annual median income/consumption per capita		3.51	2007-2014

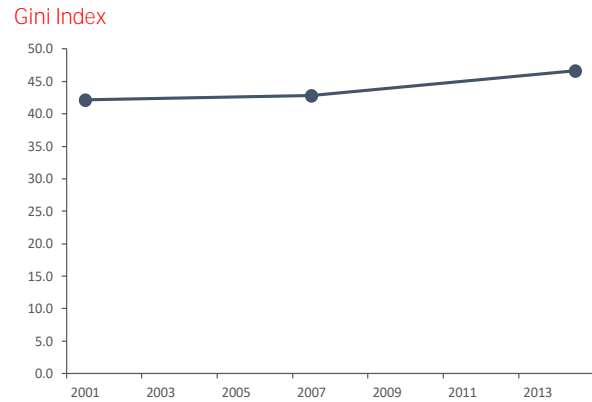
Sources: WDI for GDP, National Statistical Offices for national poverty rates, POVCALNET as of September 2020, and Global Monitoring Database for the rest.

POVERTY HEADCOUNT RATE, 2001-2014



Source: World Bank using ECAM-IV/SSAPOV/GMD

INEQUALITY TRENDS, 2001-2014



Source: World Bank using ECAM-IV/SSAPOV/GMD

KEY INDICATORS

Distribution among groups: 2014	International Poverty Line(%)		Relative group (%)		Multidimensional Poverty Measures: 2014 (% of population)
	Non-Poor	Poor	Bottom 40	Top 60	
Urban population	97	3	10	90	Monetary poverty (Consumption) Daily consumption less than US\$1.90 per person 26.0
Rural population	58	42	61	39	
Males	75	25	39	61	Education At least one school-aged child is not enrolled in school 15.9 No adult has completed primary education 24.4
Females	73	27	41	59	
0 to 14 years old	67	33	49	51	Access to basic infrastructure No access to limited-standard drinking water 23.2 No access to limited-standard sanitation 38.9 No access to electricity 1.2
15 to 64 years old	80	20	32	68	
65 and older	73	27	46	54	
Without education (16+)	55	45	63	37	
Primary education (16+)	78	22	37	63	
Secondary education (16+)	90	10	19	81	
Tertiary/post-secondary education (16+)	99	N/A*	3	97	

Source: World Bank using ECAM-IV/SSAPOV/GMD

Source: World Bank using ECAM-IV/SSAPOV/GMD

Notes: N/A missing value, N/A* value removed due to less than 30 observations

POVERTY DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The Cameroon Household Survey (ECAM) series provide a strong basis for identifying the poor through poverty profiles and for analyzing the dynamics and dimensions of poverty. The three household surveys (2001, 2007, and 2014) used for these estimates were conducted to produce sound data for poverty analysis. The sample size of these surveys is between 10,000 and 12,000 households, and the samples are designed to be representative at the regional level (10 regions and the two biggest cities: Douala and Yaounde). The design of the three surveys, the questionnaires, and the methodology of data collection are very similar, making the results easily comparable. However, these surveys are not implemented frequently, with a gap of at least six years between two surveys during the past 19 years. There is also a need to improve the surveys' design to better consider issues of public policy (labor market, gender, social protection, agriculture, conflict and vulnerability, etc.). The upcoming household and the informal sector surveys and financed through the Cameroon - Strengthening Public Sector Effectiveness and Statistical Capacity Program (P151155) will help strengthen the statistics system for evidence-based decision making.

HARMONIZATION

The numbers presented in this brief are based on the SSAPOV database. SSAPOV is a database of harmonized nationally representative household surveys managed by Sub-Saharan Team for Statistical Development. It contains more than 100 surveys covering 45 out of the 48 countries in the SSA region. The four countries not covered in the database are Eritrea, Equatorial Guinea, and Somalia. Terms of use of the data adhere to agreements with the original data producers.