

Poverty & Equity Brief

Africa Western & Central

Republic of Congo

October 2020

Despite substantial poverty reduction efforts between 2005 and 2011, the Republic of Congo has continued to perform below its potential given its status as a middle-income country (MIC). The poverty incidence at national poverty line (CFAF 274,113 per equivalent adult in 2011) declined from 50.7 percent in 2005 to 40.9 percent in 2011. This reduction was driven mainly by windfalls from oil revenue, political stability, and public investments. Affecting nearly two million Congolese, poverty is becoming increasingly concentrated in rural and urban slums. Beyond the urban-rural dichotomy, there are also significant differences in welfare among the departments, with Pointe-Noire and Brazzaville having by far the lowest rate, while the Cuvette-Ouest Lelouma and Cuvette registering the highest rates.

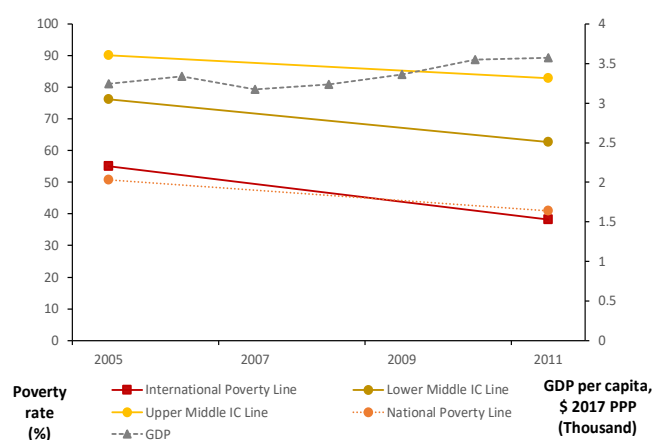
Similar to the national poverty rate, the proportion of the population below the international poverty line of \$1.90 PPP had declined by nearly 16 percentage points over the period 2005-2011, from 53.4 to 38.2 percent. After a reduction to 36.4 percent in 2015, the trend is projected to have reversed since, due to the economic downturn associated with the recent fall in the price of oil. Despite a moderate economic recovery since 2018, the poverty rate has increased to 43.1 in 2020 as a result of the economic crisis following the oil price shock and COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, in addition to the fact that the economic growth was driven by sectors which do not employ a lot of poor people while population growth remains high, the situation was worsened by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic with job losses and reduced income.

Inequality remains high because the pattern of growth and prosperity was not fairly shared in the country. The Gini index appears to have increased from 47.3 in 2005 to 48.9 in 2011. Between 2005 and 2011, the bottom 40 percent of the population enjoyed an annual consumption growth rate of 4.3 percent while the total population recorded a slightly higher consumption growth rate of 5.8 percent, which resulted in the shared prosperity premium of -1.5 percent.

POVERTY	Number of Poor (million)	Rate (%)	Period
National Poverty Line	1.8	40.9	2011
International Poverty Line 563.4 in CFA franc (2011) or US\$1.90 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	1.7	38.2	2011
Lower Middle Income Class Poverty Line 948.8 in CFA franc (2011) or US\$3.20 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	2.8	62.6	2011
Upper Middle Income Class Poverty Line 1630.8 in CFA franc (2011) or US\$5.50 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	3.6	82.9	2011
Multidimensional Poverty Measure		43.7	2011
SHARED PROSPERITY			
Annualized Consumption Growth per capita of the bottom 40 percent		4.30	2005-2011
INEQUALITY			
Gini Index		48.9	2011
Shared Prosperity Premium = Growth of the bottom 40 - Average Growth		-1.47	2005-2011
GROWTH			
Annualized GDP per capita growth		1.60	2005-2011
Annualized Consumption Growth per capita from Household Survey		5.77	2005-2011
MEDIAN INCOME			
Growth of the annual median income/consumption per capita		6.06	2005-2011

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

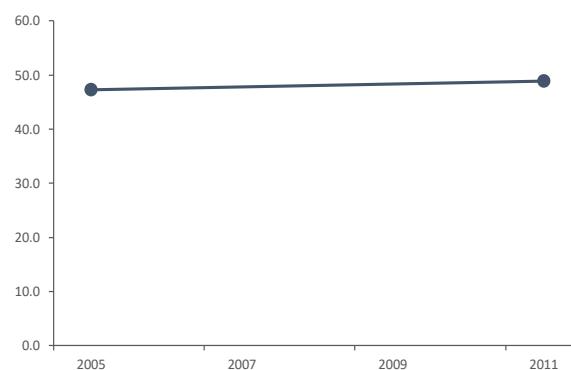
POVERTY HEADCOUNT RATE, 2005-2011



Source: World Bank using ECOM/SSAPOV/GMD

INEQUALITY TRENDS, 2005-2011

Gini Index



Source: World Bank using ECOM/SSAPOV/GMD

KEY INDICATORS

Distribution among groups: 2011	International Poverty Line(%)		Relative group (%)		Multidimensional Poverty Measures: 2011 (% of population)
	Non-Poor	Poor	Bottom 40	Top 60	
Urban population	79	21	23	77	Monetary poverty (Consumption) Daily consumption less than US\$1.90 per person 38.2
Rural population	28	72	74	26	
Males	62	38	39	61	Education At least one school-aged child is not enrolled in school 2.3 No adult has completed primary education 13.4
Females	61	39	41	59	
0 to 14 years old	54	46	48	52	Access to basic infrastructure No access to limited-standard drinking water 23.4 No access to limited-standard sanitation 47.3 No access to electricity 29.9
15 to 64 years old	67	33	34	66	
65 and older	61	39	41	59	
Without education (16+)	46	54	56	44	
Primary education (16+)	52	48	50	50	
Secondary education (16+)	73	27	28	72	
Tertiary/post-secondary education (16+)	92	8	9	91	

Source: World Bank using ECOM/SSAPOV/GMD

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

POVERTY DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Monetary and nonmonetary aspects of poverty and economic vulnerability in the Republic of Congo (ROC) were estimated using data from ECOM 2005 and 2011 surveys. The two household expenditure surveys were conducted by the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) in 2005 and 2011. They are nationally representative and are broadly comparable. While a population mapping is completed by end June 2020 and the enumeration phase is expected as soon as possible, a new household survey is planned for the beginning of 2021 after the preparatory steps including the investigation of non-standard units (NSU) are completed by end of 2020.

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.