

Poverty & Equity Brief

Sub-Saharan Africa

Cameroon

April 2020

The economy of Cameroon has proved to be resilient to several shocks thanks to its relative diversity compared to other countries in Central Africa. However, poverty remains high at 37.5 percent in 2014 (using the national poverty line), declining only slightly from 39.9 percent in 2007 and 40.2 percent in 2001. The slow progress is the result of opposite poverty trends at regional level: the considerable drop in poverty in the eastern, western, central and littoral regions, has been offset by an increase in poverty in the northern regions. The growing gap is due to a clustering of investments in the two most populated urban cities and eruption of insecurity concerns in the north. With fast population growth, the number of poor individuals increased to 8.3 million people in 2014, of which 90 percent live in rural areas and 69 percent in the North regions. Nearly 45 percent of the population was living below the \$3.20 a day poverty line in 2014 and about 37 percent was multidimensionally poor.

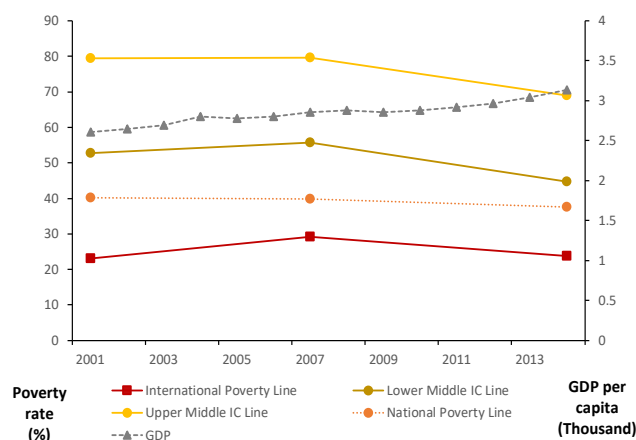
The low impact of growth on poverty reduction is due to increased inequality, with the Gini index increasing considerably between 2007 and 2014 (from 42.8 to 46.6). Growing economic disparities between rural and urban areas and between the northern regions and the rest of the country account for much of this increase. Progress on poverty and equity may be undermined if Boko Haram-related insecurity issues in the Far North and the ongoing secessionist conflict in the anglophone regions continue.

The impacts of COVID-19 on the global economy combined with the decline in international oil prices and in exports of non-oil commodities are expected to lead to a slowdown of economic activity. Measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 pandemic are expected to affect the domestic demand for services (restaurants, hotels, transportation) which are a source of livelihood for a large proportion of poor and vulnerable population. The continued pressures on security expenditure and the fiscal impact of the Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic may further affect social spending. Poverty at \$3.20 per day is not expected to increase but the depth of poverty may worsen as a result of the decline of incomes of retailers and informal sector workers who are already poor or vulnerable and will fall further below the poverty line.

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	5.4	23.8	2014
Lower Middle Income Class Poverty Line 787.2 in CFA franc (2014) or US\$3.20 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	10.1	44.7	2014
Upper Middle Income Class Poverty Line 1353.1 in CFA franc (2014) or US\$5.50 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	15.6	68.9	2014
Multidimensional Poverty Measure		36.6	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 February 2020, and Global Monitoring Database for the rest.

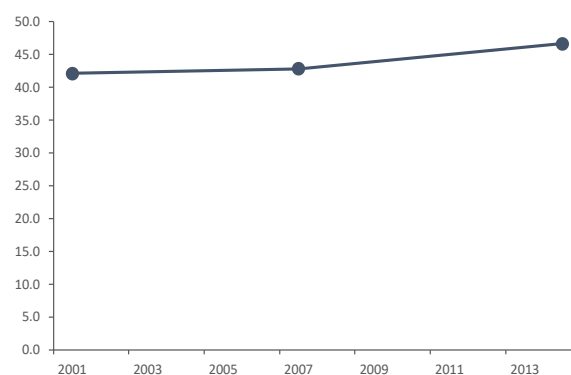
POVERTY HEADCOUNT RATE, 2001-2014



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

INEQUALITY TRENDS, 2001-2014

Gini Index



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

KEY INDICATORS

Distribution among groups: 2014	International Poverty Line(%)		Relative group (%)		Multidimensional Poverty Measures (% of people):	2014
	Non-Poor	Poor	Bottom 40	Top 60		
Urban population	98	2	10	90	Monetary poverty (Consumption)	
Rural population	61	39	61	39	Daily consumption less than US\$1.90 per person	23.8
Males	77	23	39	61	Education	
Females	76	24	41	59	At least one school-aged child is not enrolled in school	15.9
0 to 14 years old	70	30	49	51	No adult has completed primary education	24.4
15 to 64 years old	82	18	32	68	Access to basic infrastructure	
65 and older	76	24	46	54	No access to limited-standard drinking water	23.2
Without education (16+)	58	42	63	37	No access to limited-standard sanitation	38.9
Primary education (16+)	81	19	37	63	No access to electricity	1.2
Secondary education (16+)	92	8	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 with the objective of producing 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 15 years. In addition, there is a need to improve the design of the surveys to better consider issues of public policy (labor market, gender, social protection, agriculture, conflict and vulnerability, etc.). The next household survey is planned for 2020 and will be financed through a World Bank project.

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.