

Poverty & Equity Brief

Sub-Saharan Africa

Republic of Congo

April 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, the highest rates.

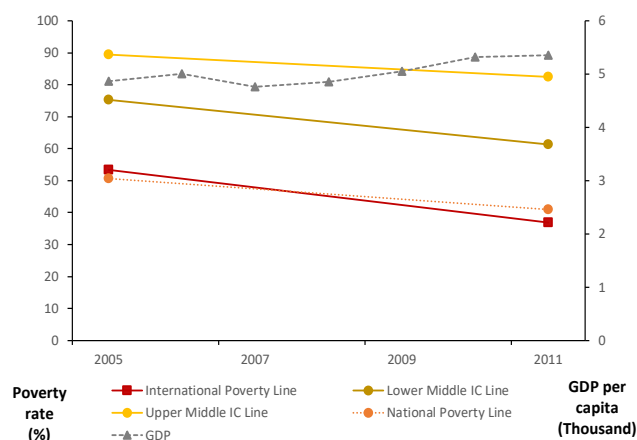
Similar to the national poverty rate, the proportion of the population below the international extreme poverty line of \$1.90 PPP had declined by nearly 16 percentage points over the period 2005-2011, from 53.4 to 37 percent. After a reduction to 35.6 percent in 2015, the trend is projected to have reversed since, due to the economic downturn associated with the recent fall in the price of oil. Despite a moderate economic recovery since 2018, poverty rates remained over 38 percent towards the end of 2010s due to the fact that the economic growth was driven by sectors which do not employ a lot of poor people and population growth remained high. The decline in economic growth following the current COVID-19 pandemic will induce an increase in poverty in the short and medium term.

Inequality remains high because the pattern of growth and prosperity was not fairly shared in the country. When measured by the Gini index, inequality appears to have increased from 47.3 in 2005 to 49 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	1.6	37.0	2011
Lower Middle Income Class Poverty Line 948.8 in CFA franc (2011) or US\$3.20 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	2.7	61.3	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	82.4	2011
Multidimensional Poverty Measure		42.7	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 February 2020, and Global Monitoring Database for the rest.

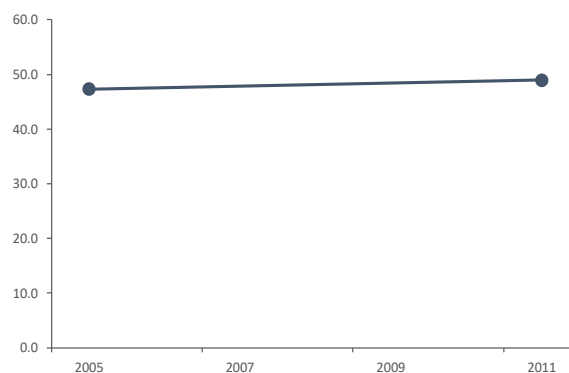
POVERTY HEADCOUNT RATE, 2005-2011



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 (% of people):	2011
	Non-Poor	Poor	Bottom 40	Top 60		
Urban population	80	20	23	77	Monetary poverty (Consumption)	
Rural population	29	71	74	26	Daily consumption less than US\$1.90 per person	37.0
Males	64	36	39	61	Education	
Females	63	37	41	59	At least one school-aged child is not enrolled in school	2.3
0 to 14 years old	55	45	48	52	No adult has completed primary education	13.4
15 to 64 years old	69	31	34	66	Access to basic infrastructure	
65 and older	62	38	41	59	No access to limited-standard drinking water	23.4
Without education (16+)	48	52	56	44	No access to limited-standard sanitation	47.3
Primary education (16+)	53	47	50	50	No access to electricity	29.9
Secondary education (16+)	75	25	28	72		
Tertiary/post-secondary education (16+)	93	7	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 census is about to start with the effective start of the cartographic phase in early March, a new survey is planned for 2020 after the completion of the cartography.

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.