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Results of the 5th Cameroon Household Survey (CHS5)

Press release of   30th April   2024

Summary: The main findings of CHS5 point to a resilient economy, but one faced with persistent poverty and increased vulnerability of households to the various shocks to which they are exposed. With an average annual economic growth rate of 2.6% over the period 2020 to 2023, not far from the demographic growth rate of 2.5% per year, the poverty rate stood at 38.6% in 2021. Compared with the 30.8% target set for the NDS30 by 2030, this represents a gap of nearly 8 points to be reduced. Fast-tracking and strengthening the implementation of the NDS30 and the sectoral strategies that underpin it is the way forward. Particular attention should be paid to policies aimed at mitigating the impact of unavoidable shocks.

As part of its communication with users, the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) publishes today the main results of CHS5 conducted in 2021 and 2022. These results highlight the multi-dimensionality of the poverty phenomenon, as well as the increased vulnerability of households to the various socio-economic, security and climatic shocks to which they are exposed, by their area of residence, their living environment, their status and their socio-professional profile.

The methodological approach adopted for this CHS5 was twofold. The first is the one used for the previous CHSs from 2001 to 2021. The second, successfully tested in 2022, is new and promoted by the World Bank. It provides a welfare indicator that best reflects household consumption patterns over the year, since it is based on actual household consumption and takes account of the seasonal nature of consumption.

Under the new approach that becomes the reference situation for upcoming CHSs, in 2022, nearly two out of five people, i.e. 37.7%, lived below the national poverty line, estimated at 813 CFA francs per person per day. With this threshold, around ten million people lived below the poverty line in 2022, out of a total population estimated at around 27 million. This situation can be accounted for by a series of factors, including insufficient economic growth, distortions relating to wealth redistribution, as well as multiple endogenous and exogenous shocks and fluctuations in the world prices of the main export and import products.

Spatially, poverty is more widespread in rural areas, with an incidence of 56.3%, meanwhile urban areas have a much lower incidence, estimated at 21.6%. The Far-North, North-West, North, Adamawa and East regions are the most affected by this phenomenon, with poverty levels higher than the national average.

Consumer inequalities remain high, with the richest 20% of households consuming ten (10) times more than the poorest 20%.

Under the former approach, analysis of trends from 2014 to 2021 shows an increase in the poverty rate, from 37.5% to 38.6% over this period, thus deviating from the 30.8% target set out in the NDS30. This

trend is more significant in urban areas, where the poverty rate has increased more significantly, from 8.9% in 2014 to 16.5% in 2021.

However, there has been an improvement in access to improved and non-shared sanitation facilities, with a population access rate of 47.7% in 2022, as against 40.4% in 2014. Encouraging progress has been made in terms of access to an improved source of drinking water. Four out of five persons now have access to such a source, whether during the dry season (81.9%) or the rainy season (80.6%), compared with 76.7% in 2014. However, further efforts are needed to guarantee a supply of water fit for consumption for the entire population.

In the area of financial inclusion, a significant progress has been made, with 45.7% of persons aged 15 years or more holding an account in a financial institution, using mobile money or having a prepaid card in 2022. The use of the mobile money service has particularly increased, from 29.9% in 2017 to 42.7% in 2022 for the entire population aged 15 years or more.

Although the proportion of the population with access to electricity increased slightly to 60.2% from 58.4% in 2014, significant disparities persist between the urban area with an access rate of 87.6% and the rural area with 28.4%. In addition, the use of clean energy for cooking remains low, with only 23.4% of the population using clean energy in 2022. With regard to hygiene and sanitation, the sound management of household waste remains a major challenge, with only 39.4% of the population disposing of their waste properly.

Regarding the above-mentioned results, suggestions are made for strengthening the implementation of the NDS30, while mitigating the impact of shocks that could aggravate the incidence of poverty or vulnerability, by reducing the risk of their occurrence or assisting those affected. This involves fast-tracking up economic infrastructure projects and programmes to build people's resilience capacity, in a bid to support their resilience efforts, particularly those of vulnerable households.

Through the Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development, the NIS expresses its gratitude to the Government and the World Bank for their technical and financial support in conducting this important statistical operation.

*For further information, please contact the NIS at the addresses below:

🌐 **: www.ins-cameroun.cm**

@: infos@ins-cameroun.cm

: Institut National de la Statistique du Cameroun

: Institut National de la Statistique du Cameroun

: @ins_cameroun