

Poverty & Equity Brief

Africa Eastern & Southern

Democratic Republic of Congo

April 2021

Over the **2005–12** period, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) experienced an average annual per capita GDP growth rate of 2.6 percent which resulted in a decline of the proportion of population below the national poverty line from 69.3 percent in 2005 to 64 percent in 2012. However, poverty incidence remains high and, due to high population growth, the number of poor people increased by 7 million. In addition, the decline in poverty at the national level masks marked regional disparities in poverty trends, with improvement in the northeastern provinces of Orientale and North Kivu and worsening in both Kasai and Maniema provinces.

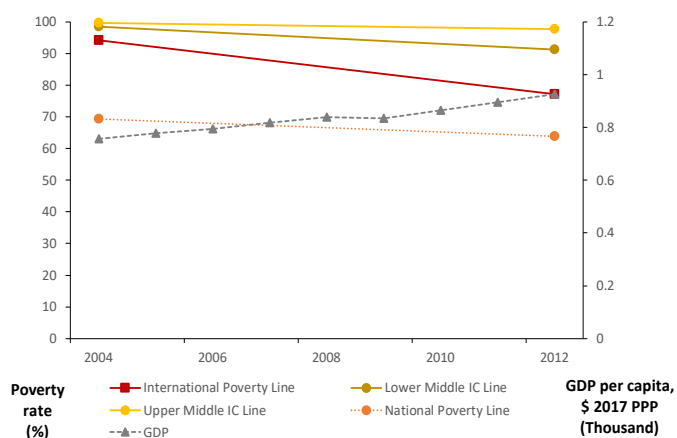
The poverty rate measured by the international poverty line of \$1.90 a day has declined even more than the official measure – from 94.1 percent in 2005 to 77.2 percent in **2012–but** remains pervasive. After a decrease by 4.6 percentage points in 2015, the poverty rate remained almost stable around 72 percent until the end of 2020. Meanwhile, DRC continues to have the second highest number of poor in Sub-Saharan Africa, and one in six persons living in extreme poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa lives in DRC. After the negative effect of the epidemic of Ebola Virus Disease in both Kivu and Ituri provinces, the country is also facing the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to COVID-19 High Frequency Phone surveys in Kinshasa, over 10 percent of households have seen members lose their jobs while 20 percent have reduced their food consumption due to rising prices.

The bottom 40 percent of the population enjoyed a consumption growth rate of nearly 10 percent, while the richest 60 percent recorded a slightly higher growth rate. These resulted in a shared prosperity premium of -0.05 percent. Because of this very small difference, inequality measured by the Gini index remained basically unchanged.

POVERTY	Number of Poor (million)	Rate (%)	Period
National Poverty Line	44.1	63.9	2012
International Poverty Line 1131.4 in Congo franc (2012) or US\$1.90 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	53.3	77.2	2012
Lower Middle Income Class Poverty Line 1905.5 in Congo franc (2012) or US\$3.20 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	63.1	91.4	2012
Upper Middle Income Class Poverty Line 3275.1 in Congo franc (2012) or US\$5.50 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	67.5	97.9	2012
Multidimensional Poverty Measure		82.8	2012
SHARED PROSPERITY			
Annualized Consumption Growth per capita of the bottom 40 percent		9.78	2004-2012
INEQUALITY			
Gini Index		42.1	2012
Shared Prosperity Premium = Growth of the bottom 40 - Average Growth		-0.05	2004-2012
GROWTH			
Annualized GDP per capita growth		2.55	2004-2012
Annualized Consumption Growth per capita from Household Survey		9.83	2004-2012
MEDIAN INCOME			
Growth of the annual median income/consumption per capita		10.03	2004-2012

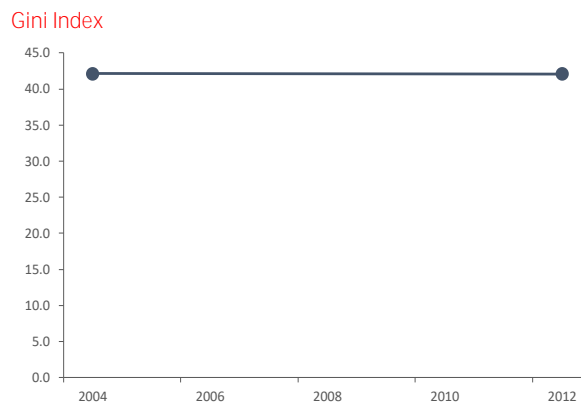
Sources: WDI for GDP, National Statistical Offices for national poverty rates, POVCALNET as of February 2021, and Global Monitoring Database for the rest.

POVERTY HEADCOUNT RATE, 2004-2012



Source: World Bank using E123/SSAPOV/GMD

INEQUALITY TRENDS, 2004-2012



Source: World Bank using E123/SSAPOV/GMD

KEY INDICATORS

Distribution among groups: 2012	International Poverty Line(%)		Relative group (%)		Multidimensional Poverty Measures: 2012 (% of population)
	Non-Poor	Poor	Bottom 40	Top 60	
Urban population	43	57	18	82	Monetary poverty (Consumption) Daily consumption less than US\$1.90 per person 77.2
Rural population	10	90	54	46	
Males	23	77	40	60	Education At least one school-aged child is not enrolled in school 8.0 No adult has completed primary education 22.5
Females	23	77	40	60	
0 to 14 years old	17	83	46	54	Access to basic infrastructure No access to limited-standard drinking water 47.9 No access to limited-standard sanitation 80.0 No access to electricity 83.0
15 to 64 years old	27	73	36	64	
65 and older	34	66	25	75	
Without education (16+)	17	83	45	55	
Primary education (16+)	18	82	43	57	
Secondary education (16+)	32	68	29	71	
Tertiary/post-secondary education (16+)	76	24	6	94	

Source: World Bank using E123/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

While the 2005 and 2012 surveys are similar in structure, comparability of consumption aggregates is unclear due to lack of documentation on the methodology adopted in generating previous consumption aggregates, especially for the 2004/5 survey. Therefore, the consumption aggregates for the 2004/5 survey were recomputed using the same methodology as in 2012. A new household survey for Kinshasa only was completed in November 2018. Since the statistics project closed by end December 2020, there is no clarity on the expected date of a new national household survey. Even the population census planned to be resumed by the Government is uncertain given possible changes at the political level.

Tracking poverty over time requires not only comparable consumption data, but also a consistent consumer price index (ideally for food and non-food items) to update the poverty lines. However, there is no consistent CPI series in DRC between 2004/5 and 2012 both in terms of geographic coverage and in computation methodology. In the absence of a reliable consumer price index, unit prices from the consumption modules were used to compute price indices for both surveys.

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 three 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.