



Cameroon

Cameroon: Scenarios

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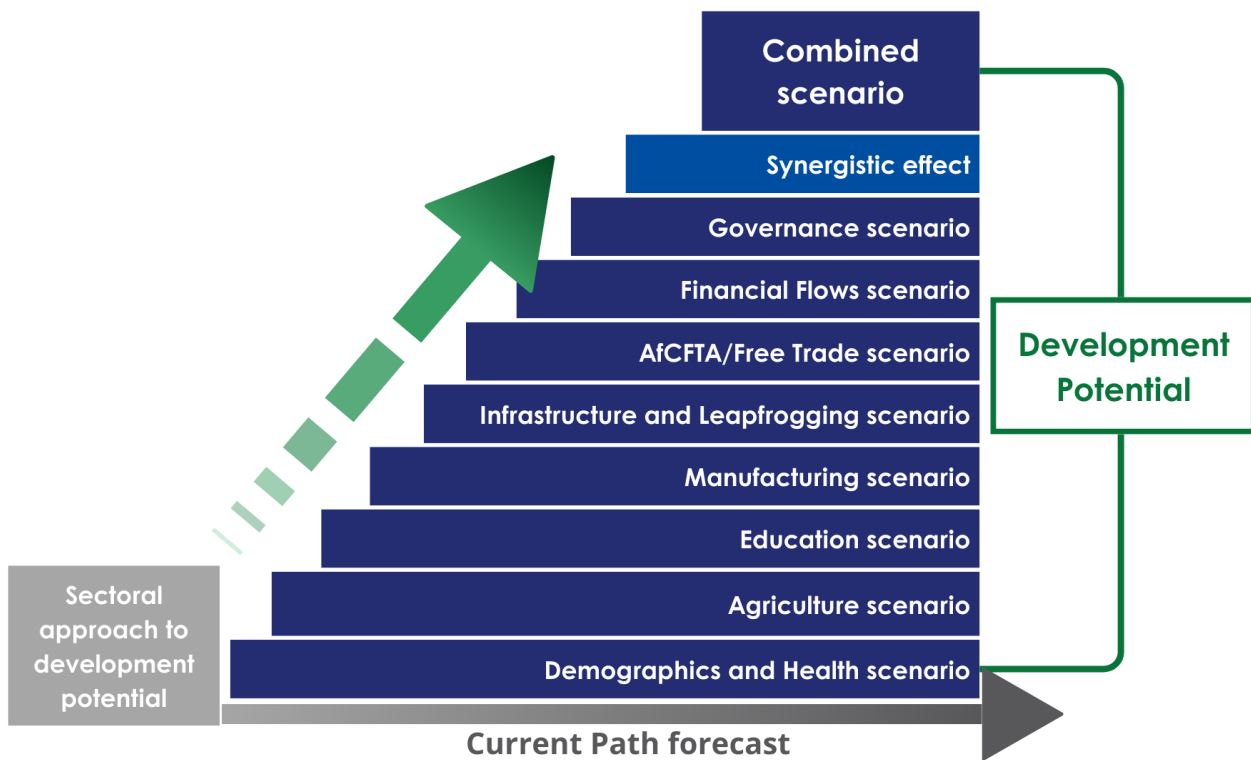
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Cameroon: Scenarios

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Briefly

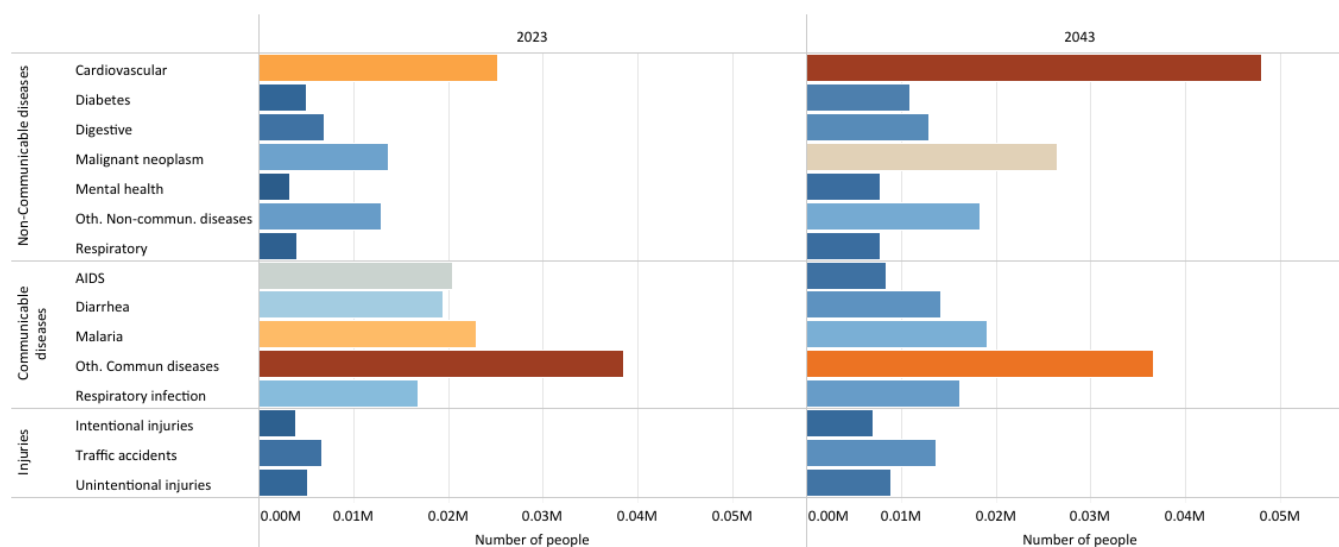
Chart 10: Relationship between Current Path and scenarios



The eight sectoral scenarios as well as their relationship to the Current Path and the Combined scenario are explained in the [Technical](#) page. Chart 10 summarises the approach.

Demographics and Health scenario

Chart 11: Mortality distribution in the Current Path, 2023-2043



Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from IHME data

Chart 11 presents the mortality distribution in the Current Path for 2023 and 2043.

The Demographics and Health scenario envisions ambitious improvements in child and maternal mortality rates, enhanced access to modern contraception, and decreased mortality from communicable diseases (e.g., AIDS, diarrhoea, malaria, respiratory infections) and non-communicable diseases (e.g., diabetes), alongside advancements in safe water access and sanitation. This scenario assumes a swift demographic transition supported by heightened investments in health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH) infrastructure.

Visit the themes on [Demographics](#) and [Health/WaSH](#) for more details on the scenario structure and interventions.

Cameroon's healthcare system is organised in a hierarchical, three-tier structure encompassing central, regional and district levels, and integrates both public and private health facilities. At the central level, the Ministry of Public Health, through its central directorates and national reference hospitals, is responsible for policy direction, strategic planning and coordination of national health programs. The regional level includes regional hospitals and health delegations, which oversee the implementation of public health policies in their respective areas. The district level, which forms the operational base of the health system, comprises district hospitals, integrated health centres, and health posts that deliver frontline care to communities.

Specifically, the health service is provided through a decentralised health system including 10 regional delegations of health, 181 health districts, 2 260 public health facilities, 4 general hospitals, 3 central hospitals, 14 regional hospitals, 164 district hospitals, 155 sub-divisional medical centres and 1 920 integrated health centres. While healthcare is largely state-funded, patients frequently bear the cost of medicines and medical supplies. This situation contributes to inequities in access to care, particularly in rural areas, which leaves a health landscape with a wide variety of diseases.

There is not a single "main" disease in Cameroon, but rather a double burden of health issues: the infectious (communicable) diseases (like malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis) and the non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular disease, cancers, chronic respiratory disease and diabetes are major contributors to sickness and death.

Communicable diseases will remain the leading cause of mortality in Cameroon until around 2036, after which cardiovascular diseases will become the dominant cause. In the Current Path, deaths from other communicable diseases will decline modestly from 38 490 in 2023 to 36 570 by 2043. In contrast, cardiovascular-related deaths will almost double from 25 120 to 47 960 over the same period. Similarly, deaths from malignant neoplasms will increase from 13 700 to 26 490, while other non-communicable diseases will rise from 12 930 to 18 320.

This epidemiological transition reflects the growing burden of non-communicable diseases alongside a still significant communicable-disease load. It underscores the need to strengthen preventive healthcare, promote early screening and lifestyle interventions, and reorient the health system toward managing chronic conditions while maintaining progress in infectious disease control.

Given its geographical location in the tropical zone, Cameroon continues to suffer from malaria. In this regard, the Ministry of Public Health and the World Health Organisation have been implementing an anti-malaria policy since 1980 based on prevention, rapid diagnosis, free treatment and community mobilisation, under the coordination of the [Plan Strategique National De Lutte Contre Le Paludisme Au Cameroun](#). The policy aims to reduce malaria-related mortality and morbidity with a view to progressively eliminating the disease by 2030. The Current Path projects a decrease of malaria-related deaths from 22 980 in 2023 to 19 020 by 2043.

Cameroon has made significant progress in the fight against HIV/AIDS through free testing, widespread treatment and mother-to-child prevention (see [Plan Strategique National De Lutte Contre LE VIH, LE SIDA ET LES IST 2024-2030](#)). However, the disease remains endemic, with high prevalence among women and young people. Between 2020 and 2023, the national prevalence among adults aged 15 to 49 remained stable at around 2.6%, but the data reveal significant disparities by gender and age group. In 2022, the prevalence among women in this age group reached approximately 3.6%, compared to 1.7% among men, confirming the persistent feminisation of the epidemic. Among young people aged 15 to 24, the infection rate was estimated at 1.1% among young women and only 0.5% among young men. In 2023, the number of AIDS deaths in Cameroon reached 20 440 people. In the Current Path, the number of AIDS deaths will decline to 8 410 people by 2043.

Despite some improvements in Cameroon's health system, disparities in healthcare access between urban centres such as Yaoundé and Douala and rural and conflict-affected regions remain a major challenge. Shortages of skilled health personnel, limited infrastructure and insufficient financial protection mechanisms exacerbate health inequities. The persistence of communicable diseases, coupled with rising urban health risks, underscores the need for sustained investments in both preventive and curative care, particularly in underserved areas.

Chart 12: Infant mortality rate in Current Path and Demographics and Health scenario, 2020-2043

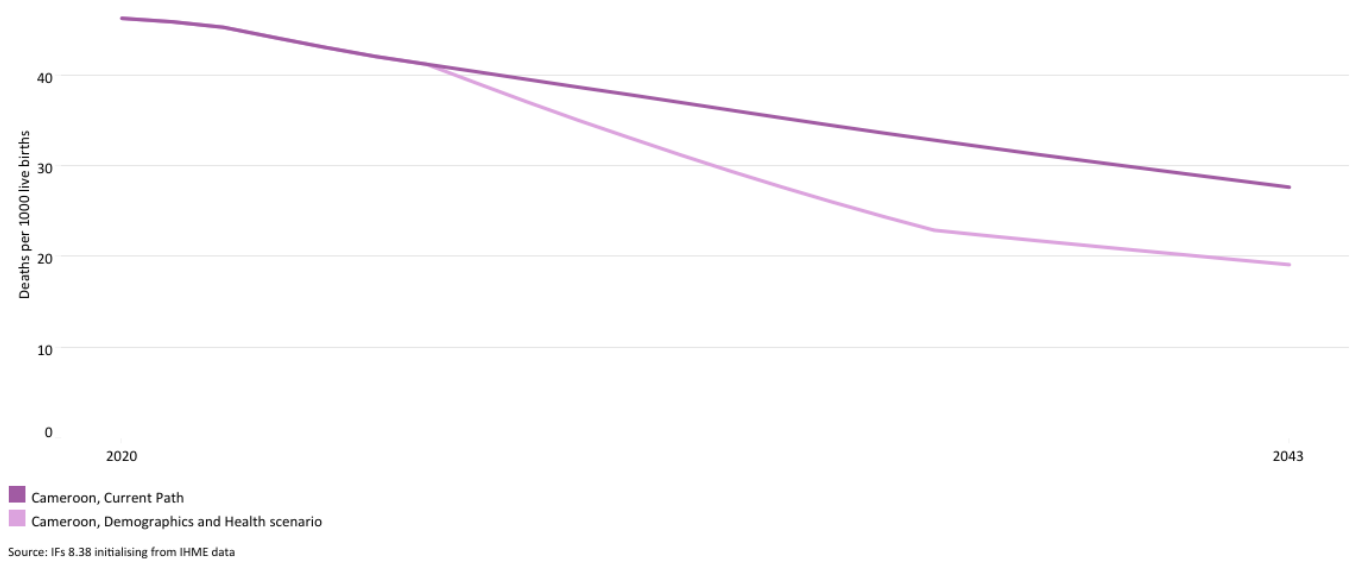


Chart 12 presents the infant mortality rate in the Current Path and in the Demographics and Health scenario, from 2020 to 2043.

The infant mortality rate is the probability of a child born in a specific year dying before reaching the age of one. It measures the child-born survival rate and reflects the social, economic and environmental conditions in which children live, including their health care. It is measured as the number of infant deaths per 1 000 live births and is an important marker of a country's overall health system quality.

Over the past three decades, Cameroon has made notable progress in maternal and child health, with infant mortality declining from 79.7 deaths per 1 000 live births in 1990 to 44.1 in 2023. This improvement reflects expanded immunisation coverage, increased skilled birth attendance and strengthened neonatal care services. In the Current Path, infant mortality will fall further to 27.6 deaths per 1 000 live births by 2043. The Demographics and Health scenario accelerates this progress, reducing infant mortality to 19.1 deaths per 1 000 live births by 2043, almost nine fewer deaths per 1 000 than in the Current Path.

In the Demographics and Health scenario, life expectancy will rise to 73.6 years, compared to 71.1 years in the Current Path. These results indicate that sustained investment in primary healthcare, maternal and child services, nutrition and preventive care would not only improve survival outcomes but also strengthen long-term human capital and support inclusive development aligned with SDG targets.

Chart 13: Demographic dividend in the Current Path and the Demographics and Health scenario, 2020-2043



Chart 13 presents the demographic dividend in the Current Path and in the Demographics and Health scenario, from 2020 to 2043.

The demographic dividend refers to the potential economic gains that arise when the share of the working-age population increases relative to dependants. It typically materialises when the ratio of working-age individuals to dependants reaches at least 1.7:1, creating fiscal space and household savings that can be channelled into investment in physical and human capital.

In 2023, Cameroon’s working-age-to-dependant ratio stood at 1.3, slightly below the lower-middle-income African average of 1.4. In the Current Path, this ratio will increase to about 1.5 by 2043, indicating a gradual demographic transition but still below the threshold associated with a full dividend.

In the Demographics and Health scenario, the ratio will rise to 1.6, which is 0.1 above the Current Path, bringing the country closer to the dividend threshold. However, demographic change alone is insufficient; realising the dividend will depend on expanding productive employment, strengthening education and skills development, and deepening structural transformation to absorb a growing labour force effectively.

Agriculture scenario

Chart 14: Crop production and demand in the Current Path, 1990-2043
Area chart show demand less production

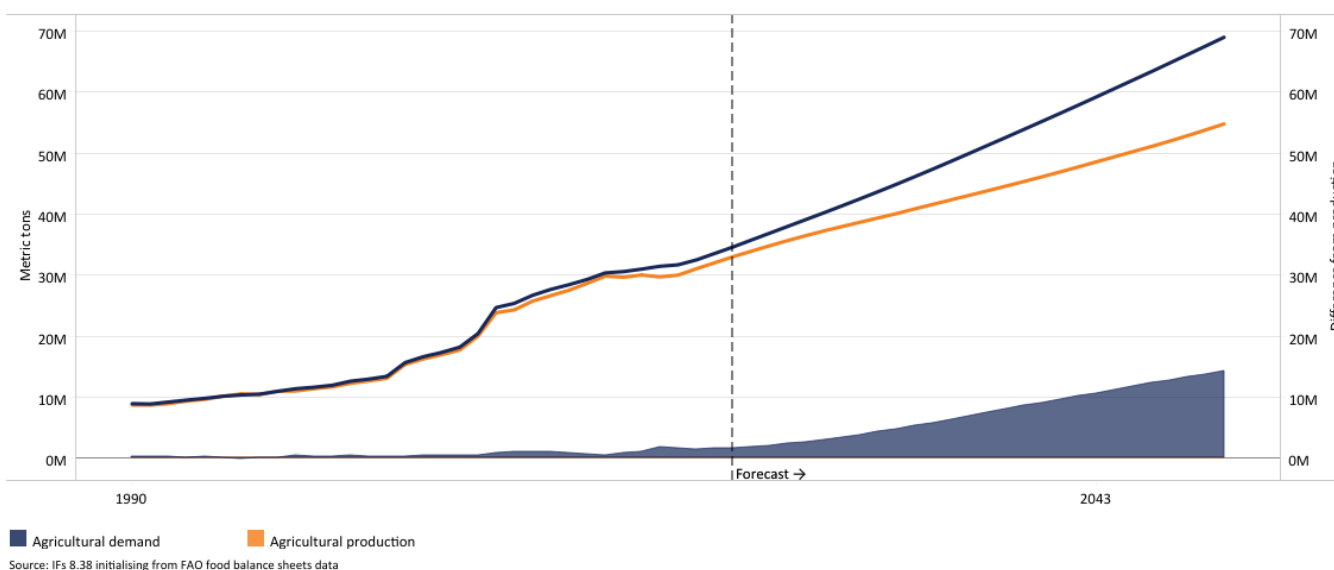


Chart 14 presents crop production and demand in the Current Path from 1990 to 2043.

The Agriculture scenario envisions an agricultural revolution that ensures food security through ambitious yet feasible increases in yields per hectare, driven by improved management, seed and fertiliser technologies, and expanded irrigation. Efforts to reduce food loss and waste are emphasised, with increased calorie consumption as an indicator of self-sufficiency and prioritising it over food exports. Additionally, enhanced forest protection demonstrates a commitment to sustainable land-use practices.

Visit the theme on [Agriculture](#) for our conceptualisation and details on the scenario structure and interventions.

Agriculture plays a key role in Cameroon's economy, as a driver of growth, a social pillar and a lever for food security. It contributes approximately 17-20% of the national GDP and generates nearly 30% of export revenues, particularly through crops such as cocoa, coffee, cotton, bananas and palm oil. These main crops account for almost 85% of total export revenues. In addition, around 70% of the working population depends directly on this sector for their income and livelihood, making it an essential pillar in the fight against poverty.

Cameroon's crop production and demand have both expanded significantly over the past three decades, but demand has consistently outpaced supply. Production increased from 8.73 million metric tons in 1990 to 48.59 million metric tons in 2023, while demand rose from 8.95 million to 59.24 million metric tons over the same period. As a result, the production deficit widened from roughly 215 000 metric tons in 1990 to approximately 1.59 million metric tons in 2023, signalling declining self-sufficiency and growing food security pressures.

In the Current Path, the deficit will widen further to 10.64 million metric tons by 2043. This gap reflects structural constraints, including low irrigation coverage, limited mechanisation, significant post-harvest losses, weak value-chain coordination and exposure to climate variability. Crop yields will remain modest at 4.7 metric tons per hectare in 2023, below the lower-middle-income African average of 5.2 metric tons per hectare. They will increase to 6.7 metric tons per hectare by 2043.

Addressing these structural bottlenecks through irrigation expansion, improved inputs, mechanisation, climate-smart agriculture and stronger farmer organisations will be critical to narrowing the production gap, reducing import dependence and strengthening rural incomes.

The country is pursuing targeted interventions through initiatives such as the [Agricultural Infrastructure and Value Chain Development Project \(PDCVA\)](#), supported by the African Development Bank and the [Agricultural Value Chain Development Project \(AVC_DP\)](#), co-financed by IFAD and the Government of Cameroon. In addition, Cameroon has adopted the *Stratégie de développement du secteur rural (SDSR) / Plan national d'investissement agricole (PNIA) 2020-2030*, as well as the *Programme de Renforcement de la Production Agricole au Cameroun (PARPAC)*. These programs and initiatives aim to transform traditional agriculture into a more modern, competitive and sustainable form of agriculture, playing a major role in pushing future yields and production.

Chart 15: Import dependence in the Current Path and Agriculture scenario, 2020-2043

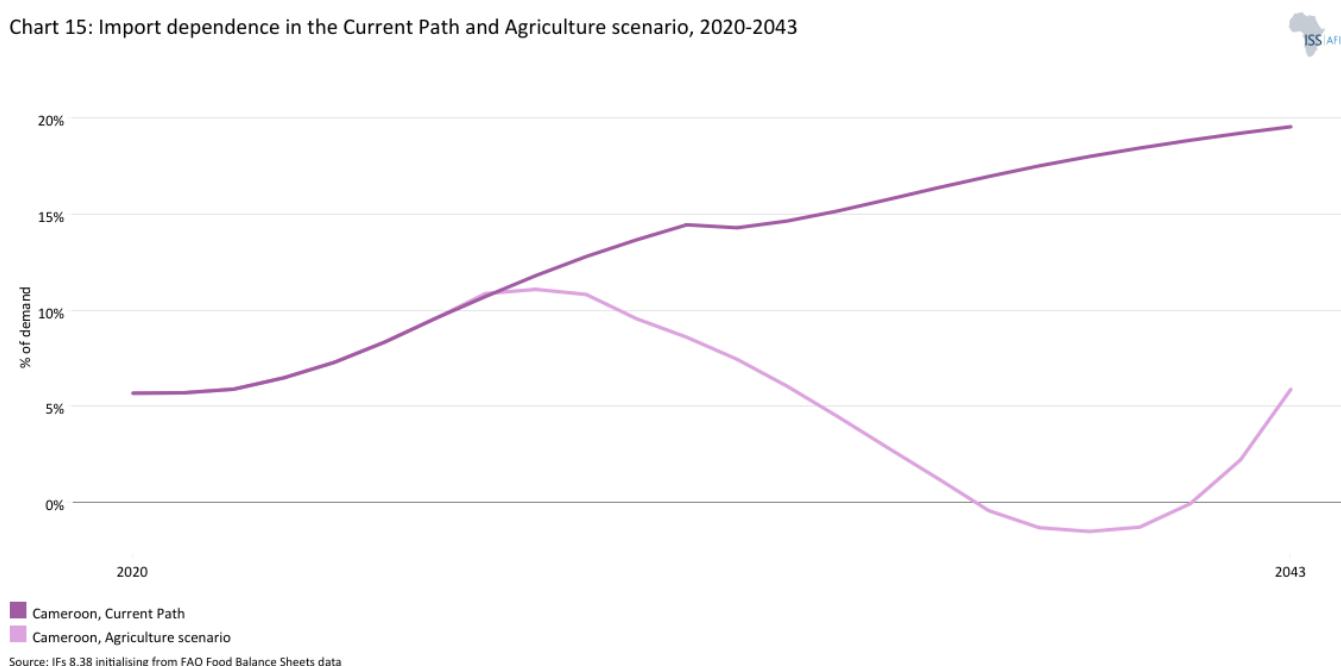


Chart 15 presents the import dependence in the Current Path and the Agriculture scenario, from 2020 to 2043.

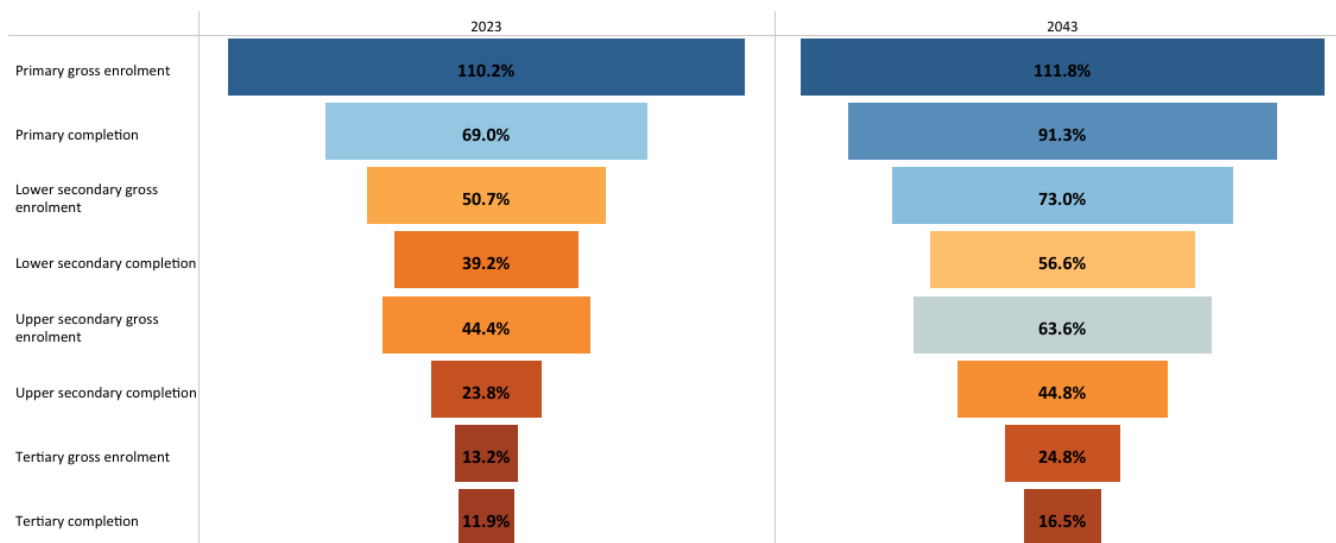
In 2023, Cameroon’s crop import dependency stood at 6.1% of total demand, lower than the lower-middle-income African average of 10.2%. However, under the Current Path, this dependency will rise sharply to 18.4% by 2043, increasing exposure to external price volatility and geopolitical disruptions.

In the Agriculture scenario, import dependency will decline to 4.7% of demand by 2043. Crop production will increase to 54.59 million metric tons, about 6 million metric tons above the Current Path, driven by higher yields of 7.7 metric tons per hectare. At the same time, crop demand will be 1.13 million metric tons lower than the Current Path forecast. Consequently, the production deficit will narrow to 3.12 million metric tons, compared to 10.64 million metric tons in the baseline.

These outcomes demonstrate that sustained investment in productivity-enhancing reforms, such as irrigation expansion, improved seed and fertiliser use, mechanisation and climate-resilient farming, can significantly strengthen food security, reduce import vulnerability and enhance agricultural competitiveness.

Education scenario

Chart 16: Progress through education funnel in the Current Path, 2023-2043



Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from Barro-Lee data

Chart 16 depicts the progress through the educational system in the Current Path, for 2023 and 2043.

The Education scenario represents reasonable but ambitious improvements in intake, transition, and graduation rates from primary to tertiary levels and better quality of education at primary and secondary levels. It also models substantive progress towards gender parity at all levels, additional vocational training at the secondary school level, and increases in the share of science and engineering graduates.

Visit the theme on [Education](#) for our conceptualisation and details on the scenario structure and interventions.

Investing in education is pivotal for tackling poverty, addressing gender and social inequalities and fostering economic transformation. The [African Union](#), in its economic blueprint Agenda 2063, is betting on young people to drive its vision through modern skills that can be acquired only through education.

The Cameroonian education system is characterised by its linguistic duality (Francophone and Anglophone), inherited from colonialism, and is structured into three main levels: primary education, secondary education and higher education; managed by the Ministry of Primary Education (MINEDUB), the Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC) and the Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP), respectively.

Primary education comprises pre-school (2 to 3 years old) and primary school (6 years old), which leads to the Certificate of Primary Education (CEP) or the First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC). Secondary education, lasting 5 to 7 years, leads to the BEPC or GCE Ordinary Level, then to the Baccalaureate or GCE Advanced Level, depending on the subsystem. It is divided into general, technical and vocational courses. Higher education is organised according to the LMD (Bachelor's–Master's–Doctorate) system and comprises eleven (11) public universities and many private institutes.

Since 2020, the Cameroonian government, through the [Education Sector Strategy 2023–2030](#), has launched numerous projects to improve the quality of education, strengthen technical and vocational training, and promote inclusive and

bilingual education tailored to national development needs. In 2023, Cameroon's gross primary enrolment rate stood at 110.2%, up from 98.9% in 1990 and slightly above the average of 101.0% for LMICs in Africa. The net primary enrolment rate was 69.1%, reflecting persistent challenges in age-appropriate enrolment and grade repetition. On the Current Path, gross primary enrolment is expected to stand at 111.8% by 2043, with the net rate rising moderately to 83.2%. However, primary completion rates remain a concern: in 2023, roughly 68% of children completed primary school, still well below the regional LMIC average of 85.2%.

Among those who complete primary education, some are expected to move directly into lower-secondary schooling, others may enter after a period out of school, and some may never make the transition. This pattern of progression influences the potential for advancement through lower-secondary, upper-secondary and eventually tertiary education levels.

In 2023, gross enrolment for lower- and upper-secondary levels in the country stood at 50.7% and 44.4%, respectively. By 2043, gross enrolment at the lower-secondary level will rise to 73%, while that at the upper-secondary level will rise only to 63.6%, indicating substantial dropout between levels. In 2023, completion rates dropped from 23.8% in the lower-secondary level to just 39.2% in the upper-secondary level. In the Current Path, lower- and upper-primary completion rates will modestly rise. By 2043, 44.8% of students are expected to complete their lower-secondary education compared to 56.7% in the upper-secondary level.

Tertiary education faces even greater challenges. In 2023, gross enrolment at the tertiary level was just 13.2%, projected to rise to 24.7% by 2043 in the Current Path. Worryingly, only 11.8% of the relevant age group in Cameroon graduated from a tertiary institution with at least a first degree in 2023. This will steadily rise to 16.5% by 2043.

Enrolment in vocational training and science and engineering education, which are essential for the future of work, is fairly low. Vocational training is a key element in meeting labour market needs, improving workers' skills and promoting the employability of young people. In 2023, 23.6% of upper-secondary students were enrolled in vocational training programs in Cameroon, and this figure is expected to remain steady until 2043. This is far below the average rate of 13.4% for lower-middle-income countries in Africa. At the tertiary level, by 2023, 18.1% of Cameroon's tertiary graduates will be enrolled in science and engineering programs, which is lower than the 15.2% rate for lower-middle-income countries in Africa. In the Current Path, Cameroon's progression rate will reach 18.1% in 2043.

For a long time, Cameroon's education policy has consistently **promoted** general education, considering theoretical subjects (law, literature, economics) more prestigious than technical courses, thereby discouraging young people from pursuing manual or industrial skills. Furthermore, **underfunding of the sector** is another major obstacle: technical training requires substantial investment (machinery, workshops, laboratory equipment), which is often not aligned with budgets allocated to public higher education. However, the **National Development Strategy 2020–2030 (SND30)**, combined with the **Education Sector Strategy 2023–2030**, is expected to address these problems by 2030 by strengthening the professionalisation of universities and public-private partnerships and, above all, by promoting more inclusive education in Cameroon.

Gender gaps are also visible. In 2023, 90.3 females were enrolled in primary school for every 100 males in Cameroon, compared to the 97.0 females per 100 males average for lower-middle-income countries in Africa. At the secondary level, 86.5 females were enrolled for every 100 males in Cameroon, compared with the average of 96.1 females per 100 males across African lower-middle-income countries. At the tertiary level, there were 82.7 female students for every 100 male students, compared to Cameroon's peers in the continent's income group, with an average of 90.4 female students for every 100 male students.

Using average test scores as a proxy for educational quality, Cameroon's performance varies compared to that of its

income peers in Africa. In 2023, the average test score for primary education stood at 33.4 out of 100, compared to 28.4 out of 100 for the African lower-middle-income countries. At the secondary level, the average test score was 38.5 out of 100, above the 37.4 average for African lower-middle-income countries. On the Current Path, Cameroon will see gradual gains in enrolment and completion rates across all levels by 2043, but without targeted interventions in quality, gender equity and post-secondary skills development, the country risks falling short of the human capital targets outlined in Vision 2035 and the Education Sector Strategy 2020–2030.

Chart 17: Mean years of education in the Current Path and Education scenario, 2020-2043
15 to 24 year age group

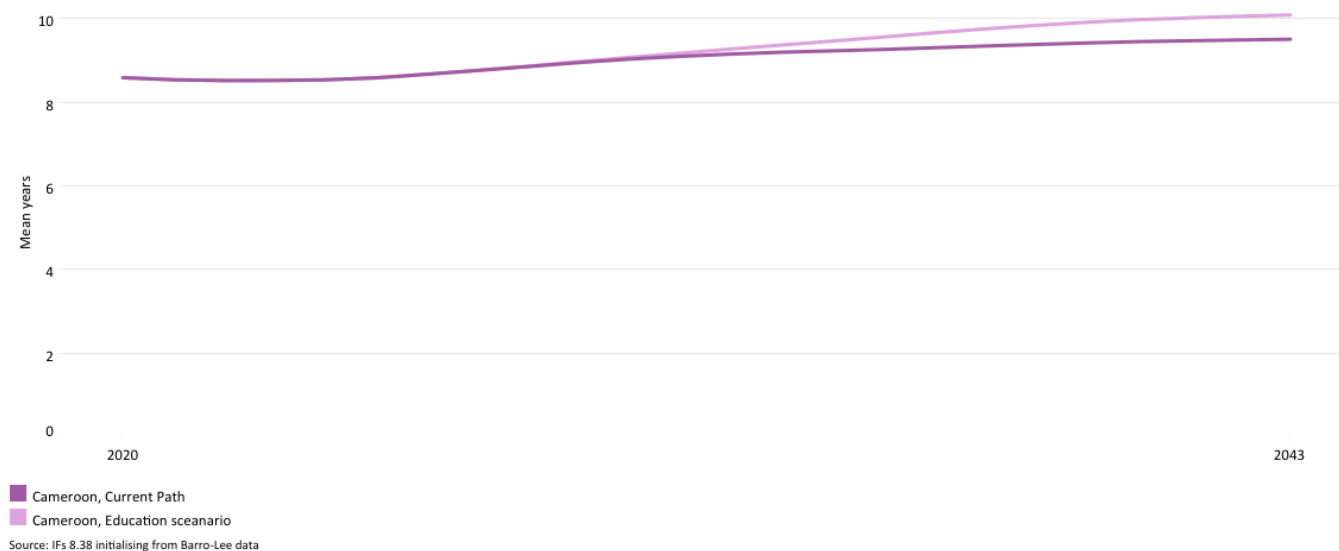


Chart 17 presents the mean years of education in the Current Path and in the Education scenario, from 2020 to 2043, for the 15 to 24-age group.

The average years of education in the adult population aged 15 to 24 is a good first indicator of how the stock of knowledge in society is changing.

The average years of schooling for the 15–24 age cohort provides an important proxy for the evolving stock of human capital. In 2023, young Cameroonians in this group had completed an average of 8.5 years of schooling, above the lower-middle-income African average of 7.8 years. Under the Current Path, this will increase to 9.5 years by 2043. In the Education scenario, average attainment will rise further to 10.1 years, 0.6 years above the Current Path in 2043.

Learning outcomes also improve, with average primary test scores reaching 39.4% (compared to 36.6% in the Current Path) and secondary scores rising to 44.7% (versus 41.8%). These gains suggest that improving both access and quality of education can significantly strengthen human capital, enhance labour productivity and support long-term economic competitiveness.

Manufacturing scenario

Chart 18: Value-add by sector as % of GDP in the Current Path, 2020-2043

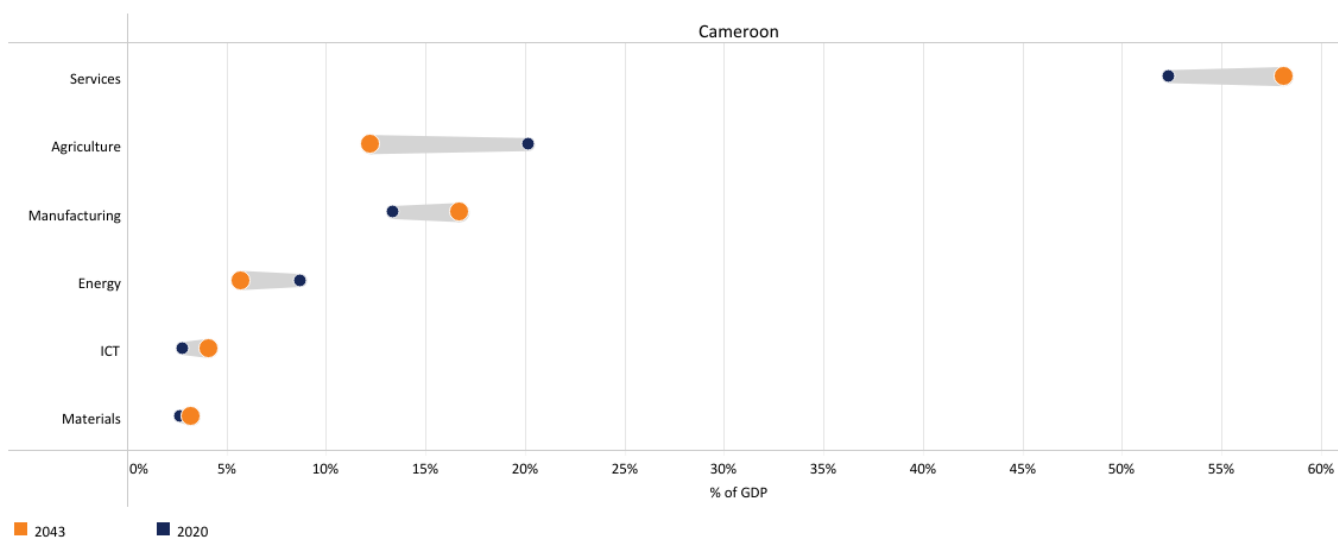


Chart 18 presents value added by sector as a share of GDP under the Current Path for 2023 and 2043.

In the Manufacturing scenario, reasonable but ambitious growth in manufacturing is envisaged through increased investment in the sector, research and development (R&D) and improved government regulation of businesses. This aims to enhance total labour

Visit the Manufacturing theme for our conceptualisation and details on the scenario structure and interventions.

The manufacturing sector is vital for Cameroon's economic transformation, fostering sustained growth, employment generation and overall prosperity. It maintains strong backward and forward linkages with agriculture and mining, creating a multiplier effect across the economy. The sector accounted for around **13.9%** of GDP in 2024, representing an estimated added value of **US\$7.14 billion**. The Current Path suggests an increase to 16.7% by 2043, equivalent to US\$18.87 billion.

Cameroon's manufacturing sector **relies** mainly on agri-food processing, wood, textiles and lightweight chemicals, benefiting from access to significant local natural resources. However, its growth remains hampered by capital constraints, high production costs, infrastructure bottlenecks (energy, transport, logistics), skills shortage, lack of innovation capacity and weak regional competitiveness. In addition, dependence on equipment imports and low productivity limit local processing and job creation.

To address these, Cameroon has initiated reforms such as the National Industrial Development Strategy (NIDS) and the establishment of investment facilitation agencies aimed at improving the business climate and supporting agro-industrial clusters. Public-private partnerships and regional integration efforts, notably through the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), seek to enhance competitiveness and market access. Additionally, Cameroon's commitment to renewable energy targets aims to reduce energy costs and support green industrialisation.

As in many African economies, Cameroon's services sector is the largest contributor to GDP, though it is largely composed

of low-value-added activities. In 2023, services accounted for 50.9% of GDP (approximately US\$22.1 billion). In the Current Path, this share will increase to 58.1% (about US\$65.7 billion) by 2043, reflecting continued structural shifts toward services-led growth.

Agriculture contributed US\$8.75 billion in 2023, representing 20.2% of GDP. Although the sector is projected to expand to US\$13.79 billion by 2043, its share of GDP will decline to 12.2%, indicating relative contraction despite absolute growth. A similar pattern applies to the energy sector. In contrast, the materials and ICT sectors are projected to grow both in absolute size and relative contribution.

This evolving sectoral structure highlights the importance of upgrading service quality, strengthening agro-industrial linkages and promoting higher-value activities within ICT and materials to ensure that structural transformation translates into productivity gains and employment creation.

Chart 19: Value-add by the manufacturing sector in the Current Path and Manufacturing scenario, 2020-2043

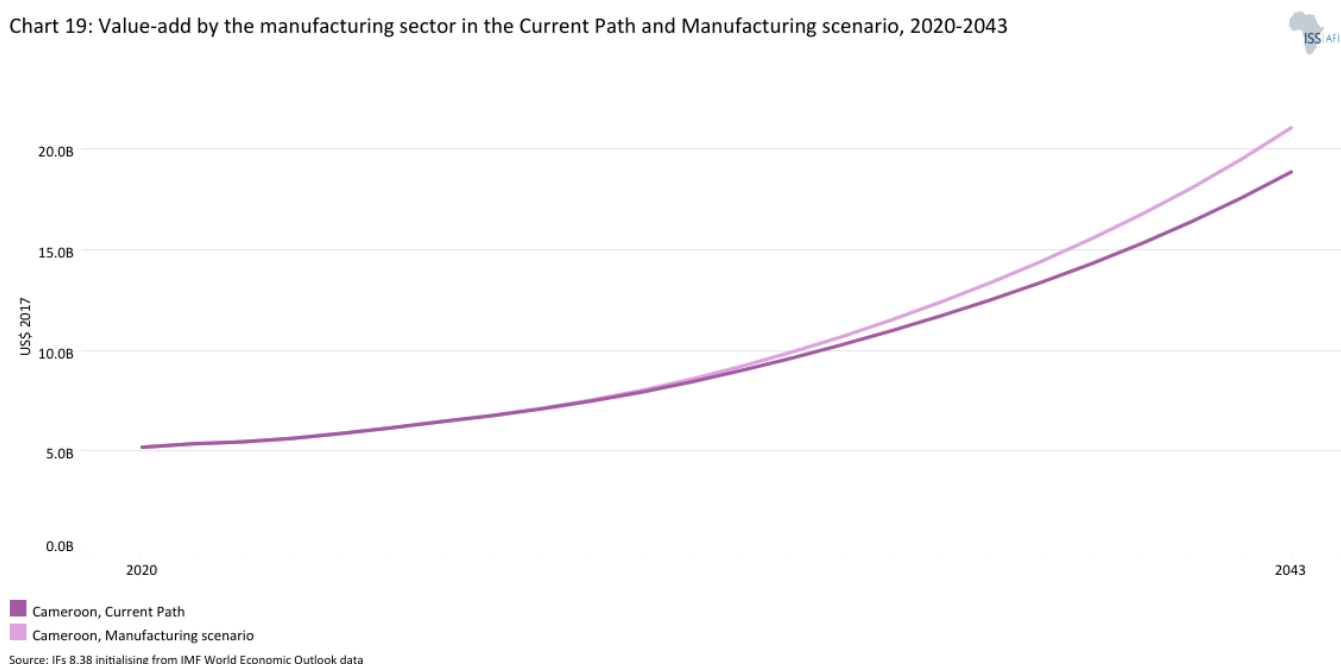


Chart 19 presents the contribution of the manufacturing sector to GDP in the Current Path and in the Manufacturing scenario, from 2020 to 2043. The data is in US\$ and % of GDP.

The Manufacturing scenario will raise manufacturing’s share of GDP by 1.05 percentage points above the Current Path in 2043, signalling accelerated industrialisation. The ICT and energy sectors will also record modest gains of 0.02 and 0.01 percentage points, respectively. By contrast, the relative shares of services, energy and agriculture will decline by 0.31, 0.23 and 0.54 percentage points compared to their Current Path forecast, reflecting a structural rebalancing toward higher industrial activity.

In absolute terms, however, all sectors will expand due to positive spillover effects from industrial growth. The services sector will record the largest absolute gain of US\$2.95 billion above the Current Path, followed by manufacturing (US\$2.21 billion), ICT (US\$0.25 billion), materials (US\$0.2 billion), agriculture (US\$0.06 billion) and energy (US\$0.05 billion). These results underscore the catalytic role of manufacturing in driving cross-sector productivity gains and reinforcing broader economic expansion.

AfCFTA scenario

Chart 20: Export and imports as % of GDP in the Current Path, 2000-2043

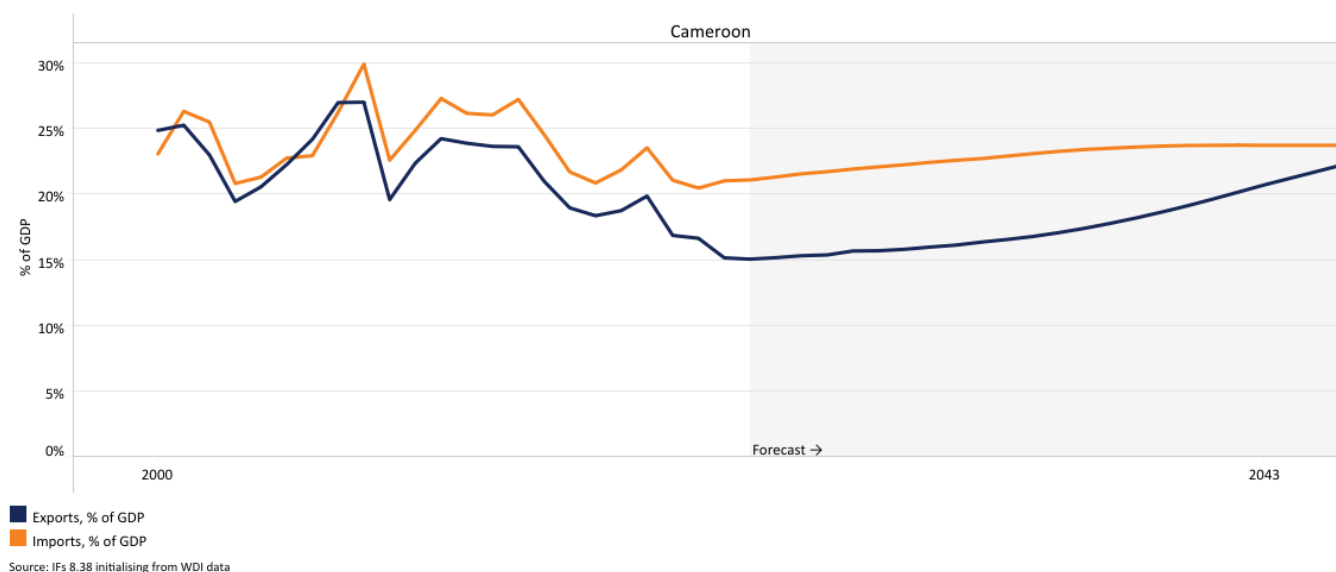


Chart 20 depicts exports and imports as a percentage of GDP, from 2000 to 2043, in the Current Path.

The AfCFTA scenario represents the impact of fully implementing the African Continental Free Trade Agreement by 2034. The scenario increases exports in manufacturing, agriculture, services, ICT, materials and energy exports. It also includes improved multifactor productivity growth from trade and reduced tariffs for all sectors.

Visit the AfCFTA theme for our conceptualisation and details on the scenario structure and interventions.

Cameroon is a member of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), which promotes the free movement of goods, capital and people within the subregion. Cameroon has been a member of the WTO since 13 December 1995. It was previously a member of the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) since 3 May 1963. It has also signed the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in 2019, giving it access to a market of over a billion consumers and gradually reducing intra-African tariff barriers. In addition, Cameroon has an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU) that was ratified in 2014 and entered into force in August 2014. This agreement allows Cameroon to access the European market without customs duties or quotas on all its products. In return, Cameroon must gradually eliminate customs duties on 80% of its imports from the EU, a process that should be completed in 2029.

Cameroon's major exports include crude oil, cocoa beans, timber and coffee. Other significant exports are petroleum, gas, bananas and aluminium. These products, which are a mix of agricultural and mineral resources, form the backbone of the country's export economy. However, they expose the country to global shocks.

In 2024, Cameroon's top exports included crude petroleum (valued at US\$2.7 billion), cocoa beans (US\$1.28 billion), petroleum gas (US\$727 million), sawn wood (US\$424 million) and cocoa butter (US\$329 million). The primary destinations for these exports were the Netherlands (US\$1.4 billion), China (US\$1.07 billion), Malaysia (US\$747 million), France (US\$532 million) and Germany (US\$497 million).

During the same year, Cameroon's major imports consisted of rice (US\$487 million), refined petroleum (US\$424 million), raw sugar (US\$271 million), wheat (US\$256 million) and packaged medicaments (US\$217 million). The leading countries of origin for these imports were China (US\$3.64 billion), France (US\$584 million), India (US\$533 million), Belgium (US\$414 million) and Brazil (US\$278 million).

Cameroon's major African export destinations are limited, with the CEMAC countries, especially Chad, being the most significant partners.

The historical trend of Cameroon's trade has been unpredictable, influenced by fluctuations in global commodity prices. Since the early 2000s, the trade structure has been heavily dominated by imports. Specifically, imports rose from US\$4.1 billion in 2000 to US\$9.13 billion in 2023, while exports increased from US\$4.42 billion to only US\$6.25 billion during the same period. According to the Current Path, exports are expected to continue lagging behind imports over the next two decades, growing to US\$23.4 billion by 2043 compared to a forecast of US\$26.8 billion for imports.

Trade openness in Cameroon has decreased from 47.9% in 2000 to 36.1% in 2023. However, the Current Path suggests a potential recovery to 44.4% by 2043. It is concerning that this trade openness is primarily skewed towards imports, indicating significant capital flight. Moreover, a large portion of Cameroon's imports consists of manufactured goods, which has led to the displacement of domestic products and industries.

Chart 21: Trade balance in the Current Path and AfCFTA scenario, 2020-2043

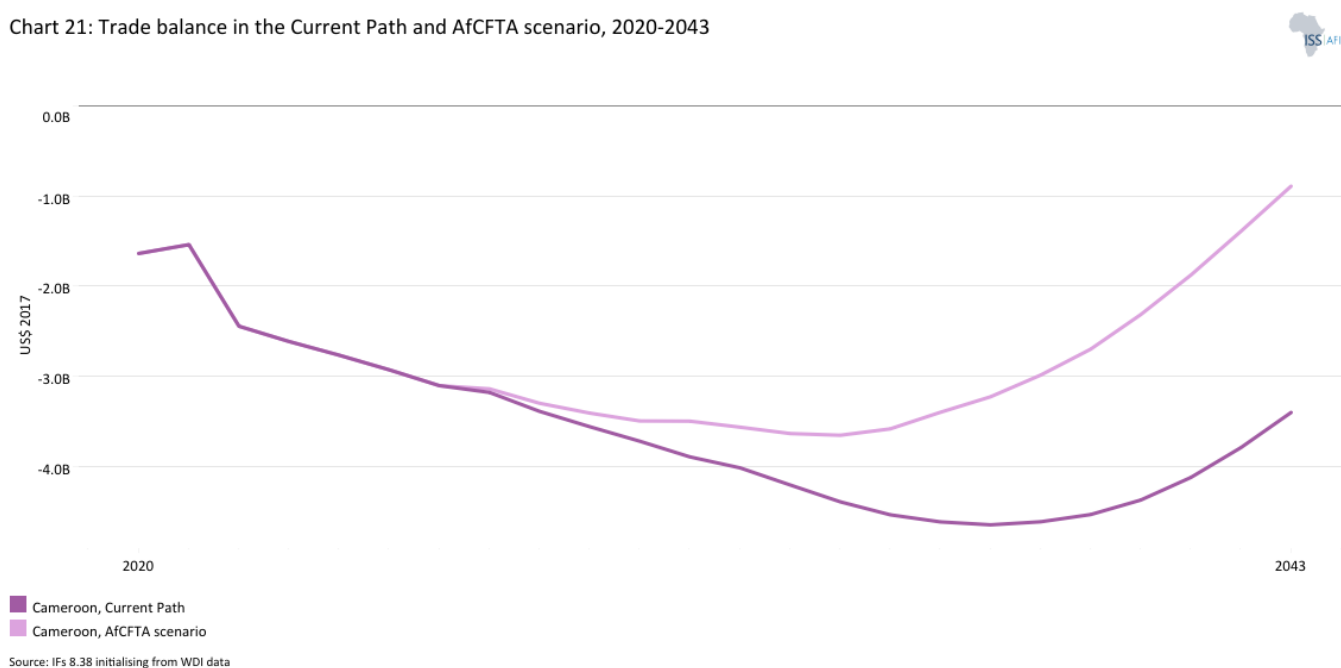


Chart 21 presents the trade balance in the Current Path and in the AfCFTA scenario, from 2020 to 2043 as a percentage of GDP.

Cameroon is a net importer, resulting in a persistent trade deficit largely driven by imports of finished and processed goods. In 2023, the trade deficit amounted to approximately 6% of GDP. In the AfCFTA scenario, this deficit will narrow significantly to 0.73% of GDP by 2043, compared to about 3% under the Current Path. In absolute terms, the deficit will decline to approximately US\$0.89 billion by 2043, compared to US\$2.56 billion in the Current Path. This improvement is primarily driven by stronger intra-African trade and deeper integration into regional value chains. It highlights the potential of trade facilitation reforms, export diversification and regional market access to strengthen external balances and enhance economic resilience.

Large Infrastructure and Leapfrogging scenario

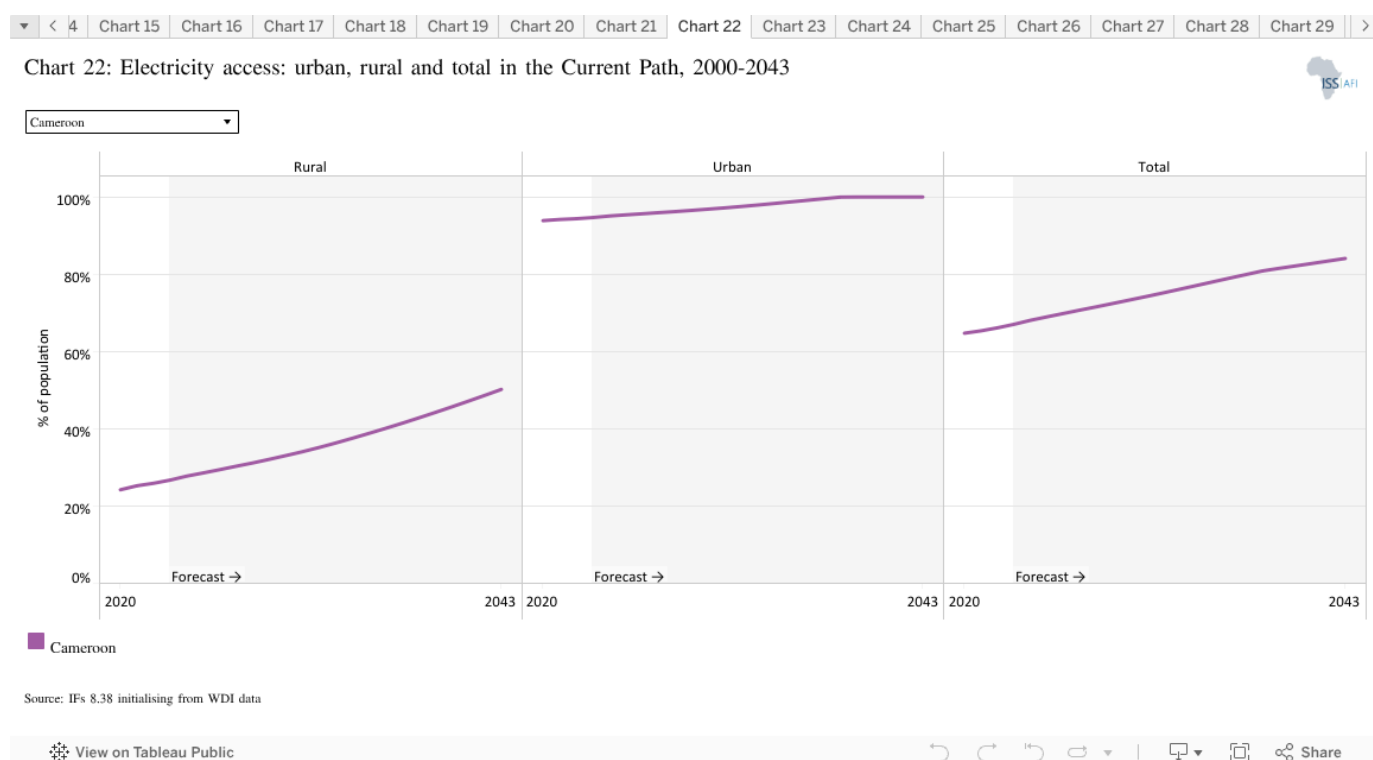


Chart 22 presents the Current Path of access to electricity for urban, rural and the total population from 2000 to 2043.

The Large Infrastructure and Leapfrogging scenario involves ambitious investments in road and renewable energy infrastructure, improved electricity access and accelerated broadband connectivity. It emphasises adopting modern technologies to enhance government efficiency. It incorporates significant investments in major infrastructure projects like rail, ports and airports (other infra) while highlighting the positive impacts of renewables and ICT.

Visit the themes on [Large Infrastructure](#) and [Leapfrogging](#) for our conceptualisation and details on the scenario structure and interventions.

Cameroon ranks **28th** out of 54 African countries in the Africa Infrastructure Development Index (AIDI), indicating that its overall infrastructure quality is just average compared to other African nations. In the transport category of the AIDI, the country ranks 46th, which reflects the poorest transport infrastructure. For electricity, Cameroon ranks 27th, which is considered average. In the information and communications technology (ICT) category, it ranks 23rd, while in water and sanitation services, it also ranks 28th.

Transport infrastructure, such as roads and railways, is a critical driver of economic growth and an important component of development. It facilitates the movement of people and goods, promotes intra-country trade and enables social service provision, such as education and health.

In 2023, the total length of roads in Cameroon was estimated at 156 144 km, of which 99.3% was paved. This figure is above the average of 38.7% for LMICs in Africa. However, while almost all roads in Cameroon are paved, the AIDI shows that the quality is very poor, implying that the government should focus on quality as it endeavours to maintain all roads in the country. In the Current Path, Cameroon's total road network will reach 194 466 km by 2043, with paved roads accounting for 100%, far above the average 61.9% for LMICs in Africa.

In terms of electricity, Cameroon's main source of energy is hydroelectricity, which is the backbone of the national energy system. Approximately 75% of the electricity produced in the country comes from hydro. The country has an immense hydropower potential of about 115 000 GWh/year, ranking third in sub-Saharan Africa after the Grand Inga Dam in the Democratic Republic of Congo. However, less than 5% has been developed so far. The main dams in operation are Song Loulou, Edéa, Lom Pangar, Memve'ele and Nachtigal, the latter being one of the most recent and intended to increase national capacity by 30% by 2025.

Cameroon also uses thermal energy sources (diesel and natural gas), which account for around 25% of production, mainly to secure supply in non-interconnected areas, particularly the North and Far North. Renewable energies (solar, biomass, wind) remain marginal but are developing, supported by public programs and private partnerships.

In 2023, an average of 67% of Cameroonians had access to electricity, below the average of 68.9% for LMICs in Africa, with urban access of almost 95% but rural access limited to roughly 27%. Cameroon will reach universal electricity access in urban areas by 2039 under the Current Path, while only half (50.2%) of the rural population will have access to electricity by 2043.

Faced with such an electricity deficit in rural areas, the Cameroonian government has implemented several major projects to increase density and expand access to electricity, as part of the National Development Strategy 2020–2030 (SND30). The main program is the Cameroon Electricity Access Project (PERACE), financed by the World Bank to the tune of US\$225 million, which aims to connect over 400 000 additional households by 2026 in the Central, Littoral, West and North regions. The Rural Electrification and Densification Program (ERD), supported by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the European Investment Bank (EIB), is strengthening low- and medium-voltage networks to connect rural communities close to existing lines. These initiatives are complemented by the South-North Interconnection Project (PISN) and the Electricity Network Extension and Reinforcement Project (PERRÉ), which improve distribution through the National Electricity Transmission Company (SONATREL).

The digital economy in Cameroon is expanding as ICT adoption increases. The government's Digital Cameroon 2020-2025 strategy aims to modernise administration, improve public service delivery and foster economic growth through digital technologies.

In 2023, Cameroon had a mobile broadband subscription rate of 33.6 per 100 people, which is almost half the average of 61.5 for African lower-middle-income countries. In the Current Path, mobile broadband subscriptions will rise to 138.2 per 100 people by 2043, remaining below the average of 148.9 for its income-group peers. In the same period, the country's fixed broadband subscriptions will increase from about 2.9 per 100 people to 30.5 per 100 people.

Chart 23: Cookstoves usage in the Current Path and Large Infra/Leapfrogging scenario, 2020-2043

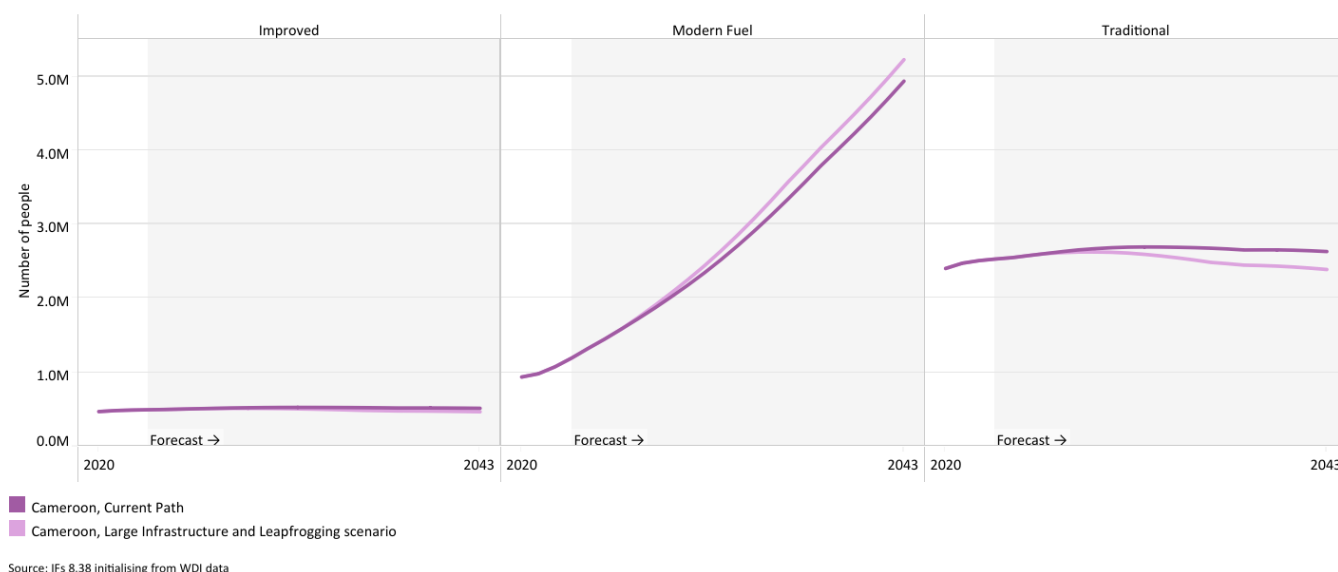


Chart 23 presents the number of people using cookstoves in the Current Path and in the Large Infrastructure and Leapfrogging scenario, from 2020 to 2043.

In 2023, 60% of Cameroonian households (2.53 million people) relied on traditional biomass stoves using firewood or charcoal, while 11.7% (0.49 million) used improved cookstoves and 28.3% (1.19 million) used modern stoves. The continued dominance of traditional fuels contributes to indoor air pollution, deforestation and adverse health outcomes, particularly for women and children.

In the Large Infrastructure and Leapfrogging scenario, 64.7% of households (approximately 5.22 million people) are projected to use modern fuels for cooking by 2043, compared to 61.1% on the Current Path. The share of traditional and improved cookstoves will correspondingly decline. Expanding access to modern cooking energy would reduce environmental degradation, improve public health and support a cleaner energy transition aligned with sustainable development objectives.

Chart 24: Access to mobile and fixed broadband in the Current Path and Large Infra/Leapfrogging scenario, 2020-2043

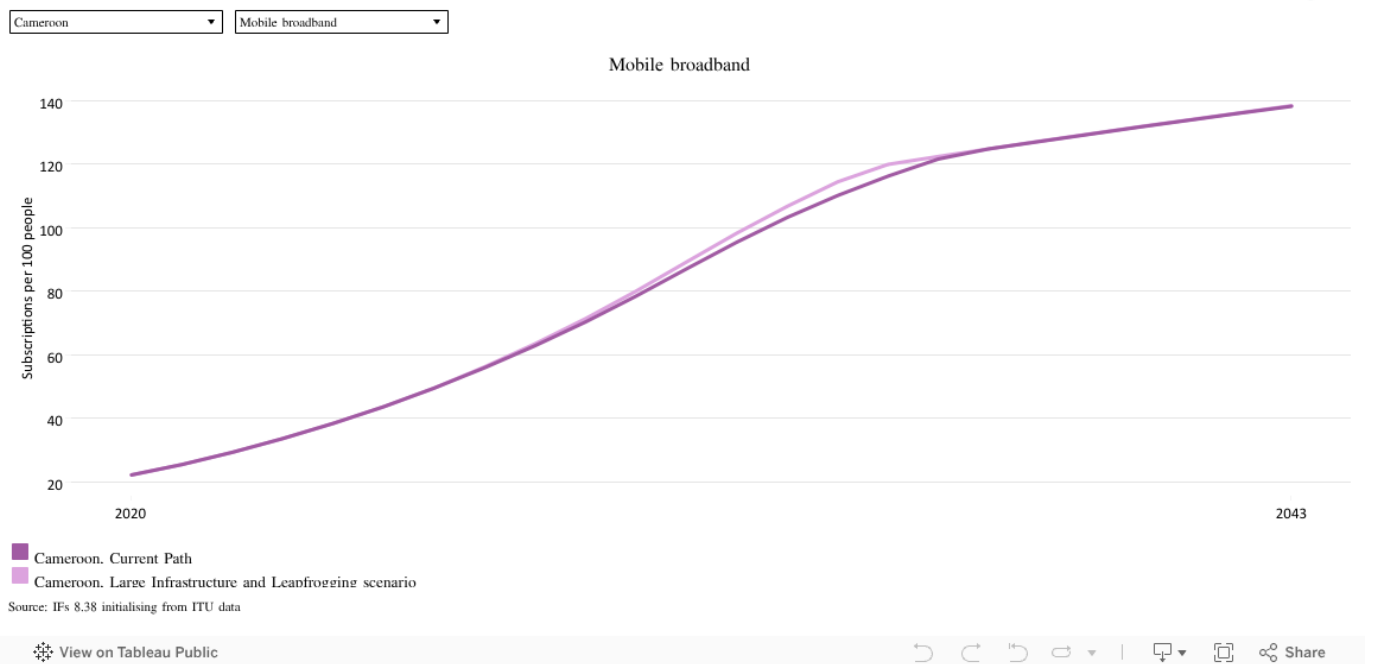


Chart 24 presents the percentage of the population and number of people with access to mobile and fixed broadband in the Current Path and in the Large Infrastructure and Leapfrogging scenario, from 2020 to 2043. The user can toggle between mobile and fixed broadband.

In the Large Infrastructure and Leapfrogging scenario, fixed broadband subscriptions will increase to 31.9 per 100 people by 2043, slightly above 30.5 under the Current Path. Mobile broadband subscriptions will rise to 138.4 per 100 people, compared to 138.2 in the Current Path. Although the quantitative gains appear modest relative to the Current Path, enhanced digital connectivity can generate significant productivity spillovers by improving access to markets, financial services, public administration and innovation ecosystems. Digital infrastructure, therefore, remains a critical enabler of structural transformation and inclusive growth.

Financial Flows scenario

Chart 25: FDI, foreign aid and remittances as % of GDP in the Current Path, 1990-2043

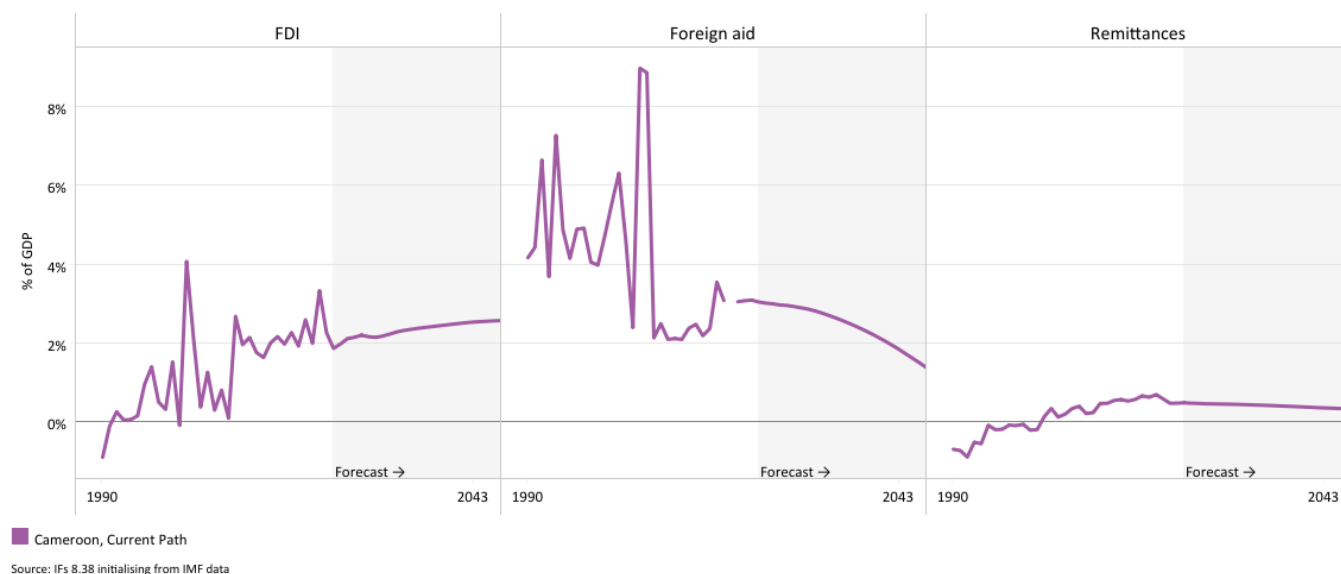


Chart 25 presents the trends in FDI, aid and remittances in the Current Path and in the Financial Flows scenario as a percentage of GDP, from 1990 to 2043.

The Financial Flows scenario represents a reasonable but ambitious increase in inward flows of worker remittances, aid to poor countries and an increase in the stock of foreign direct investment (FDI) and additional portfolio investment inflows. We reduce outward financial flows to emulate a reduction in illicit financial outflows.

Visit the theme on [Financial Flows](#) for our conceptualisation and details on the scenario structure and interventions.

The composition of Cameroon's external finances consists of foreign aid, foreign direct investment (FDI) and remittances. Aid has constantly dominated this structure, though it has decreased from 4.2% of GDP in 1990 to approximately 3% in 2023. It will decline further to 1.8% by 2043 under the Current Path. FDI follows and has slightly increased from -0.9% of GDP to approximately 1.9% in the same period. The Current Path shows that this positive trajectory will continue, reaching 2.5% by 2043 and surpassing aid by 2037. Remittances have also increased from -0.7% to 0.5%, albeit will drop to 0.3% by 2043 on the Current Path.

Most of the FDI to Cameroon [comes from](#) the European Union, particularly France and Germany, and targets the mining industry, including oil extraction. China has become one of the main investors in the country, also pursuing mineral resources.

Cameroon's main strategy for attracting FDI is centred on its [National Development Strategy 2020-2030 \(NDS30\)](#) and the adoption of the [2013 Investment Code](#) and [the Investment Promotion Agency \(IPA\)](#), which emphasise a multi-pronged approach comprising structural transformation of the economy, the provision of investment incentives and the improvement of the business climate. The Financial Flows scenarios show that initiatives to attract FDI can expand its contribution to GDP to 3.9%, which is 1.4 percentage points above the Current Path forecast. Remittances from migrants are an important aspect of the country's migration and economic development. Migrant transfers in Cameroon take [two main](#) forms: remittances sent by migrants abroad to their home country, which help reduce poverty and stimulate the

local economy through investment, and material transfers, often linked to the trade in second-hand goods (flea markets), which have become a significant economic activity. Key sources of remittances to Cameroon are Europe and North America, with Europe being the largest single source due to large Cameroonian diasporas in countries such as France, Belgium and Germany. Remittances also come from other regions, but intra-African flows remain marginal. The most common methods for sending money are through digital channels like mobile money services, which are often faster and cheaper, as well as through traditional money transfer operators, banks and post offices.

Aid has played a significant role in both humanitarian and donor-funded projects, helping improve living standards, especially for the rural population. With aid cuts across several African countries by the Global North, the gap will be difficult to fill. However, it is also a starting point for Africa to shift away from aid dependency.

Chart 26: Government revenue in the Current Path and Financial Flows scenario, 2020-2043

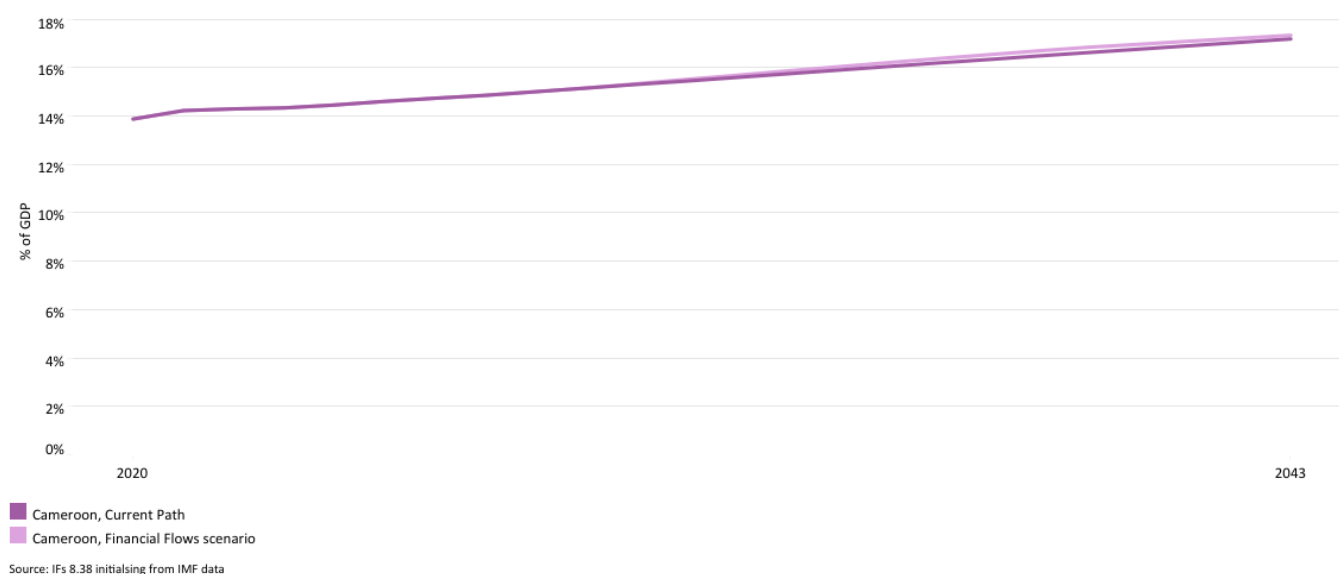


Chart 26 presents government revenue in the Current Path and in the Financial Flows scenario, from 2020 to 2043. The data is in US\$ 2017 and % of GDP.

Wagner's law, or the law of increasing state activity, states that public expenditure increases as national income rises. In the Financial Flows scenario, it is reasonable to expect that government revenues will increase as a percentage of GDP compared to the Current Path.

The structural transformation challenges facing Cameroon's government require increased funding. Theoretically, **Wagner's Law** holds that public spending increases with national income. Intuitively, public revenue as a percentage of GDP will increase in the Financial Flows scenario, compared to the current trajectory.

In 2023, total government revenues in Cameroon stood at US\$6.2 billion, or 14.3% of GDP, which was lower than the average of 16.2% of GDP for LMICs in Africa. In the Current Path, total government revenues in Cameroon will be US\$19.4 billion, or 17.2% of GDP, in 2043. In the Financial Flows scenario, government revenue will rise to US\$20.2 billion in 2043, representing 17.3% of GDP, above the average of 20.3% for LMICs in Africa in the same year. Compared to the Current Path, the Financial Flows scenario will improve Cameroon's government revenues by an extra US\$760 million in 2043. Thus, if the country pursues its policy of efficient management of its public finances, notably by strengthening its institutional capacity to provide quality, manage public expenditure and guarantee greater budget transparency, the Financial Flows scenario will enable it to meet its debt challenges and the dual challenge of investment.

Governance scenario

Chart 27: Government Effectiveness score in the Current Path, 2002-2043

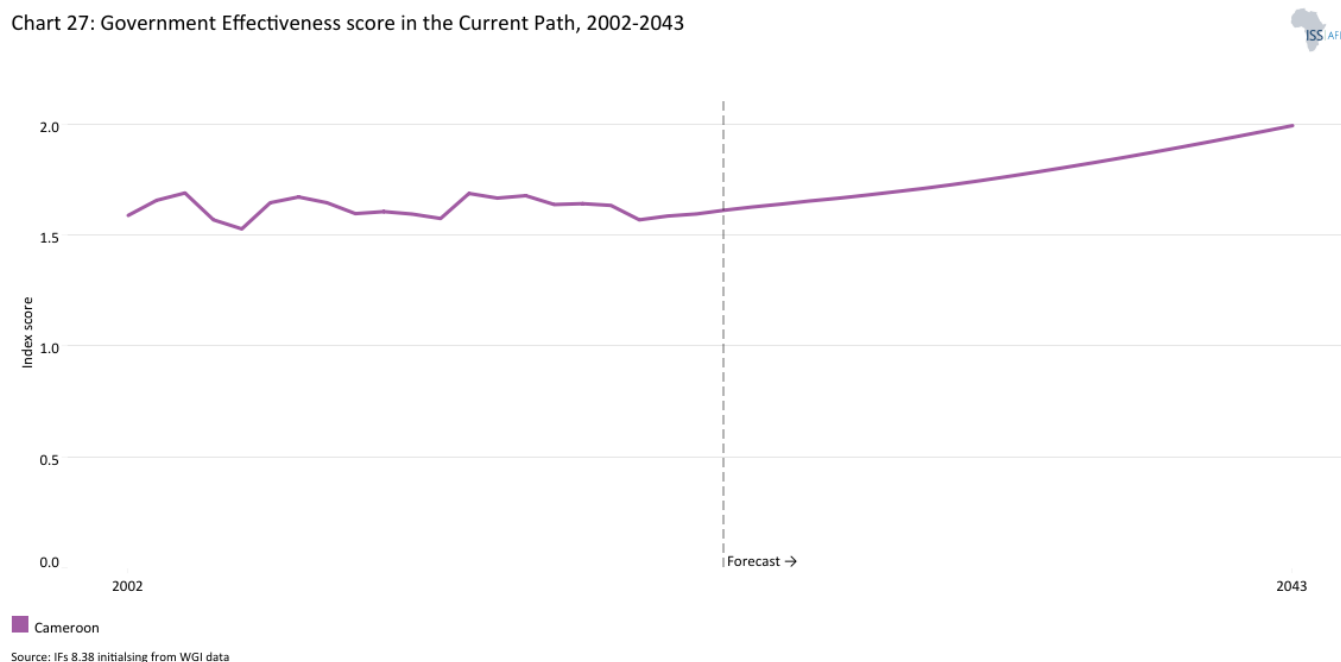


Chart 27 presents the Current Path of government effectiveness comparing the country to the average for the African income group, from 2002 to 2043.

The World Bank's [index](#) on government effectiveness captures perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies.

Good governance is crucial for economic advancement. Enhanced national security and stability foster a favourable environment for both domestic and foreign investment, enabling governments to implement sustainable development strategies more successfully. In 2023, Cameroon scored 42.9 out of 100 in the [Ibrahim Index of African Governance \(IIAG\)](#), ranking 39th out of 54 African countries. This score is higher than the regional average for Central Africa at 39.9, but lower than the overall African average at 49.3.

The Corruption Perceptions Index is the leading global indicator of public sector corruption. In 2023, Cameroon [received](#) a score of 26 out of 100, a drop from 27 in the previous year, and was ranked 140th out of 180 countries. This ranking reflects a perception of increased public sector corruption. The economic freedom score is an average of four indexes: rule of law, government size, regulatory efficiency and open markets. Cameroon's economic freedom score is a complex and evolving figure, but the most recent data [shows](#) an overall score of 54.2 out of 100 for 2024. This is a slight decrease from the 2023 score of 51.9, which made it the 135th most accessible country in the index.

In 2023, Cameroon scored a rank of 1.6 out of 5 for government effectiveness. This score is considered low, indicating a weak level of government effectiveness. In the Current Path, the governance effectiveness score will slightly increase to 2.0 out of 5 by 2043, below the average of 2.3 for LMICs in Africa in the same year.

While Cameroon's path shows a modest improvement in governance by 2043, the country still faces systemic issues (corruption, exclusion, embezzlement, economic dependence). The experience of Seychelles, for example, where institutional integrity has enabled a leap in economic freedom (score of 66.4 in 2025) suggests that the answer is in

thoroughgoing institutional reform, supported by international cooperation (IMF, World Bank) and a firm dedication to inclusion.

Chart 28: Composite governance index in the Current Path and Governance scenario, 2023-2043

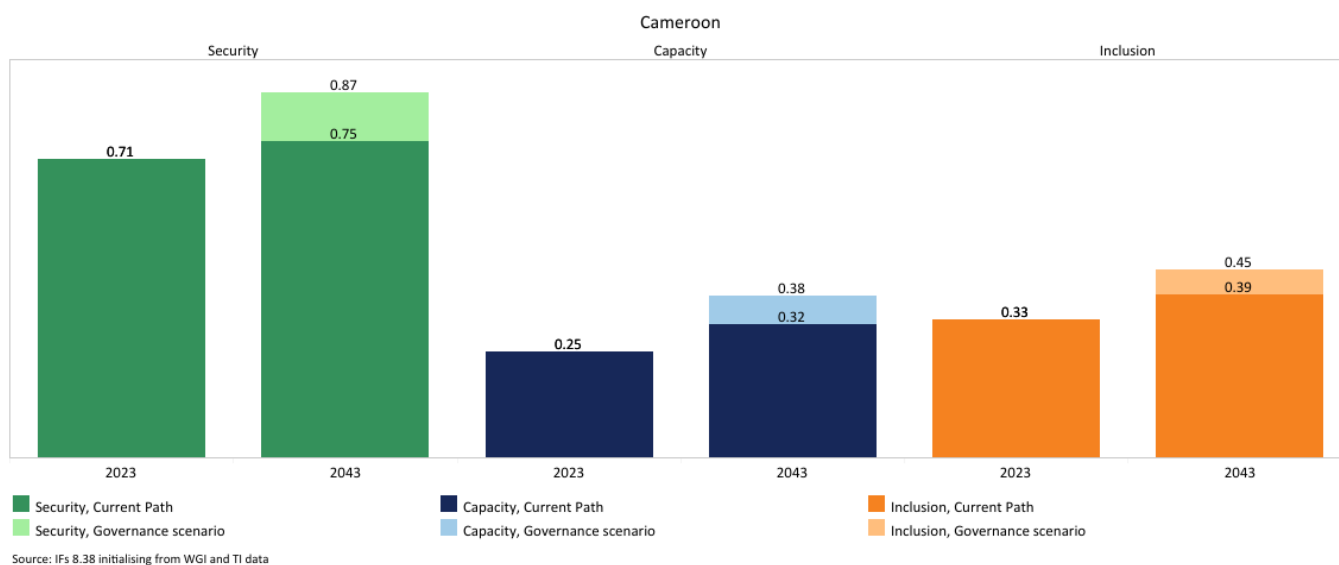


Chart 28 presents the security, capacity and inclusion index for the Current Path versus the Governance scenario, for 2023 and 2043.

This scenario assumes better governance: stability, capacity and inclusion. It measures a state's progress by averaging these three indices. To this end, it includes an index (0 to 1) for each dimension, with higher scores indicating better outcomes. participation rates, particularly among females, where appropriate.

Note that the scenario includes increased welfare transfers to unskilled workers, funded by taxes on skilled workers. Note: the two should roughly balance one another in US\$ terms. In the context of high poverty levels and inequality, social transfers have proven the most effective short- and medium-term measures of alleviating both.

Visit the theme on [Governance](#) for a full conceptualisation and details on the scenario structure and interventions.

As in many African countries, the quality of governance remains a real challenge in Cameroon. In 2023, its score on the composite governance index was 0.43 out of 1, below the estimated average of 0.50 for LMICs in Africa. However, the decomposition of this indicator into its three dimensions of security, capacity and inclusion shows that the country has managed to improve its governance in terms of security (0.71), despite inclusion (0.33) and capacity (0.25) remaining a real challenge.

In the Governance scenario, Cameroon's score on the governance security index will improve to 0.87 by 2043, above the average of 0.76 for LMICs in Africa in the same year. Capacity will also improve in the Governance scenario, with its score increasing to 0.38 by 2043, representing a 22.6% improvement above the Current Path in 2043. The inclusion index will improve in the Governance scenario by 15.4% compared to 0.39 in the Current Path in 2043. In the Governance scenario, Cameroon aims to improve its governance practices and the governance effectiveness is projected to rise to 2.4 by 2043, compared to the 2.0 under the Current Path.

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