Cameroon: Report on Observance of Standards and Codes—Data Module

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CAMEROON

**Report on the Observance of Standards and Codes (ROSC)
Data Module**

Prepared by the Statistics Department

Approved by Carol S. Carson and G.E. Gondwe

June 11, 2001

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The authorities' commitment to improve transparency and accountability in government
and public sector operations constitutes a major element in the current economic program
targeting growth and poverty reduction. In the area of statistics, this commitment is
manifest through Cameroon's participation in the General Data Dissemination System
(GDDS). Detailed information about Cameroon's statistical system, including plans for
improvement, is available on the internet at www.imf.org.

In recent years, some progress has been made in improving Cameroon's statistics,
particularly for national accounts, balance of payments, and fiscal data. However,
weaknesses in data quality remain in most areas, especially in source data, timeliness, and
dissemination of data to the public. The weakest area in Cameroon's statistics is socio-
demographic indicators, which are critical for identifying and monitoring poverty including
in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. Significant improvements are needed in many
respects. The Department of Statistics and National Accounts needs to assume a stronger
and more centralized role in the collection, compilation, and dissemination of socio-
demographic indicators. In addition, in the medium term there is a need to create a more
independent national statistical office to promote data integrity.

Cameroon's authorities are aware of these weaknesses and are addressing them through the
plans for improvement identified in the context of the GDDS.

The material contained in this report is based on information obtained during a staff visit to
Cameroon in May 2000. The mission team consisted of Mr. Thiet Luu (Head),
Mr. Pierre Papadacci (both STA), and Mr. Mohammad-H. Ordoubadi (IBRD).

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ACRONYMS

1993 SNA	*1993 System of National Accounts* (UN)
BEAC	Banque des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale (Bank of Central African States)
BPM5	*Balance of Payments Manual, fifth edition* (IMF)
CAA	*Caisse Autonome d'Amortissement* (Social Security Fund)
CEMAC	Central African Economic and Monetary Community
COICOP	Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose
CPI	Consumer Price Index
DCEF	*Direction des Controles DCEF Economiques et des Finances Extérieures* (Department of Economic Control and External Finance) of the MEF
DP	*Direction de la Prévision* (Forecast Department) of the MEF
DSBB	Data Standards Bulletin Board (IMF)
DSCN	*Direction de la Statistique et de la Comptabilité Nationale* (Department of Statistics and National Accounts) of the MEF
ERY	End of the reference year
GDDS	General Data Dissemination System (IMF)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFSM	*A Manual on Government Finance Statistics, 1986*
ILO	International Labor Organization
IPI	Industrial Production Index
MEF	Ministry of Economy and Finances
MFSM	*Monetary and Financial Statistics Manual* (IMF)
SDDS	Special Data Dissemination Standard (IMF)
TABORD	*Tableau de Bord des Finances Publiques,* a set of analytical tables compiled by the Departments of Budget, Expenditures (*Soldes*), Taxes, Customs (DP) of the MEF
TOFE	*le Tableau des Opérations Financières de l'État*
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

I. THE STANDARD

1.   The principal standard against which the transparency of Cameroon's macroeconomic and socio-demographic data is assessed is the IMF's General Data Dissemination System (GDDS).[1] The GDDS is primarily a framework for providing guidance on data dissemination, evaluating the need for data improvements, and prioritizing such improvements. The GDDS emphasizes the development of core statistical frameworks and indicators and encourages countries to focus on data quality and dissemination of data to the public.

2.   The GDDS places emphasis on sound practices in four dimensions:

- the data (the coverage, periodicity, and timeliness of the data);

- quality of the disseminated data;

- integrity of the disseminated data; and

- access by the public.

3.   In addition to the four sectors into which economic data are grouped (real, fiscal, financial, and external), the GDDS also includes socio-demographic indicators. Participation in the GDDS is voluntary. It requires a commitment to use the GDDS as a framework for statistical development; designation of a country coordinator; and preparation of metadata, for posting by the IMF on the Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board (DSBB).[2]

4.   Cameroon has decided to participate in the GDDS and is committed to using the GDDS to develop its statistical systems. A GDDS coordinator has been appointed, and the preparation of its metadata, including plans for improvement, has been completed.

II. SUMMARY OF PRACTICES

5.   The coverage, periodicity, and timeliness for macroeconomic data in Cameroon are summarized and set against GDDS recommendations in Table 1. The quality of the data,

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[1] Descriptions of the IMF's General Data Dissemination System and the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) can be found on the IMF's Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board on the Internet at http://www.imf.org/external/standards/index.htm (data dissemination section). The IMF initiated the SDDS as an approach for data dissemination for countries wishing to raise capital in the international markets. The GDDS is proposed as a data development approach for countries not yet ready for the SDDS.

[2] Metadata refers to information about the data, such as how data are compiled and disseminated, data coverage, periodicity, and timeliness, as well as plans for improvement.

including their integrity and accessibility features, is assessed through an experimental data quality assessment framework that identifies six key aspects by which to judge the data (see Box).[3] The major aspects of data quality for Cameroon are summarized in Table 2.

A. Data Dimension: Coverage, Periodicity, and Timeliness

Real sector

6.   Data on the real sector generally meet GDDS recommendations on coverage and periodicity. There is, however, room for improvement with regard to timeliness. With respect to national accounts aggregates, beginning in 1999, annual estimates in current and constant prices are derived in conformity with the *1993 System of National Accounts (1993 SNA)*.[4] In principle, GDP covers production activities of all resident units, including those of the informal sector. Estimates for this sector are based on a 1993 survey of activities of the informal sector and indirect methods of estimation. The geographical coverage includes all the national territory and the country's relations with the rest of the world. At present, GDP is produced with a time lag of about 13 months, which is longer than the GDDS recommended time frame (6-9 months).

7.   The industrial production index (IPI) covers the manufacturing industries and the production and distribution of water, electricity, and gas. This index is compiled on a quarterly basis with a time lag of about 2 months; the GDDS recommends a monthly periodicity and a timeliness of 3 months.

8.   The broadest consumer price index (national CPI) measures the final consumption of households in five major cities (Yaoundé, Douala, Bafoussam, Bamenda, and Garoua) using a basket of over 260 commodities and is available on a quarterly basis.[5] However, the basket weights are outdated since they are derived from a 1983/84 budget-consumption survey (although there is a more recent—1996—survey, it is not used for this purpose, because the older survey has more detailed information.). Since the CPI estimates are based on prices in major cities, there will likely be an urban bias for such indices.

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[3] This framework, which draws upon work done in the Fund and in other organizations, especially national statistical offices, focuses on six areas vital to the production and dissemination of statistics. These areas are the statistical infrastructure, including the legal and material basis for data production; the conceptual framework; the nature and characteristics of the source data; the statistical techniques used to compile the data; the serviceability or usefulness of the data compiled; and the accessibility of the data and metadata.

[4] The new series were introduced in *Les Comptes Nationaux du Cameroun, Selon le SCN93, Avril 1999*, published by the Ministry of Economy and Finances. The fiscal year starts on July 1.

[5] A CPI for Yaoundé and a CPI for Douala are also compiled on a monthly basis.

9.   Data on labor market indicators are poor. Data to allow a meaningful analysis of unemployment and wages are unavailable.[6]

Fiscal sector

10.   Data compiled by the Ministry of Economy and Finances (MEF) generally meet GDDS recommendations on coverage, periodicity, and timeliness. While these data are made available to the concerned ministries and foreign institutions, including the IMF, they are, however, not publicly disseminated.[7] The national presentation and classification of data for central government operations as shown in the main government analytical document—*le Tableau des Opérations Financières de l'État* (TOFE)—are basically in accordance with *A Manual on Government Finance Statistics, 1986 (GFSM)*. There is, however, a need for improvement as discussed below (Section II.B). The TOFE covers receipts and expenditures of the State Budget, investments financed by external sources, and Treasury operations of local authorities and public establishments. The TOFE is compiled on a monthly basis with a time lag of about one month.

11.   Data on central government debt are compiled monthly by an autonomous debt management and monitoring unit, the *Caisse Autonome d'Amortissement (*CAA). Although monthly data are not publicly disseminated, a statistical yearbook on public debt is available to all economic agents. Data cover project loans and program loans contracted or guaranteed by the central government. Data exclude loans contracted by the Social Security Fund (*Caisse Nationale de Prévoyance Sociale*) and the National Investment Company (*Société Nationale des Investissements*). Data are made available to bilateral and multilateral donors and international organizations upon request.

Financial sector

12.   Data for the banking system are compiled by the Bank of the Central African States (BEAC) and meet GDDS recommendations on coverage, and periodicity. With respect to timeliness, however, significant improvement is needed. This situation is common to all countries of the economic and monetary community of the central African states (CEMAC) and progress in monetary and financial statistics depends on the central bank of the zone, the BEAC. Data on central bank aggregates and on broad money are produced on a monthly basis. However, because data for one country can be finalized only when data for all

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[6] See *Annuaire Statistique du Cameroun, 1998*, published by the DSCN of Ministry of Economy and Finances (MEF) on an annual basis.

[7] *Tableau de Bord des Finances Publiques*, and *Note de Conjoncture Economique et Financière*, on a monthly basis, and *Rapport Economique et Financier et Loi de Finances de L'Exerc*ice, on an annual basis, prepared by the *Direction de la Prévision* of the MEF. Annual data on government revenue and expenditure are however published in the *Annuaire* with some lags.

member countries are reported to and processed by the BEAC headquarters, the delay for publication is usually 9 months;[8] the GDDS recommends a timeliness of 1–2 months.

13.   Interest rate data are adequately produced by the BEAC on a monthly and timely basis, and meet GDDS recommendations.[9]

External sector

14.   The compilation of balance of payments aggregates generally follows the IMF's *Balance of Payments Manual, Fifth Edition (BPM5)* and meets the GDDS recommendations on coverage and periodicity. Data collection is assumed by the BEAC and the production of the final balance of payments statement for Cameroon is handled by the MEF. Balance of payments data are made available to international and official entities upon request but are not regularly disseminated to the public. Data are compiled on a semiannual basis and annual final data are usually available with a delay of 12 months.[10] Currentness of the data has been affected by the use of a set of comprehensive and long report forms for enterprises. With technical assistance from the Fund, these report forms are being simplified and revised report forms are to be introduced by the BEAC in 2001. Improvement to the quality and timeliness of the data will require a closer collaboration between the BEAC and the MEF.

15.   Data on external trade are compiled on a monthly basis by the Customs Department of the MEF. Their coverage, periodicity, and timeliness are within the GDDS recommendations.

16.   Data on international reserves, which are compiled by the BEAC, suffer from lack of timeliness, for the reasons mentioned in paragraph 12. Exchange rate data are not published on a daily basis, but daily rates are derivable since the CFA franc is pegged to the Euro, rates for which are available on a daily basis.

Social and demographic indicators

17.   Data on socio-demographic indicators suffer from several weaknesses. They are available irregularly, and often based on outdated surveys. The DSCN compiles data on population and poverty. Population data are based on a census that took place in 1987.[11]

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[8] *Bulletin "Etudes et Statistiques"*, published by the BEAC on a monthly basis. Although the publication of monetary statistics suffers a long lag, comprehensive data are available with a one-to-two month delay for program monitoring

[9] *Bulletin du Marché Monétaire,* and *Situation Hebdomadaire du Refinancement* published by the BEAC.

[10] *Balance des paiements du Cameroun,* published by the *Direction des Controles Economiques et des Finances Exterieures* of the MEF on an annual basis.

[11] *Annuaire Statistique du Cameroun,* 1998.

Data on poverty are not yet collected on a regular and systematic basis.[12] Data on health and education are collected on an irregular basis by the Ministries of Health and Education, respectively. There is a need to harmonize and centralize the methodology for compiling data on socio-demographic indicators, and to regularize the collection, production, and dissemination of these data.

B. Data Quality, Integrity, and Access

Statistical framework

18.   Two institutions are primarily responsible for the production and dissemination of data covered by the GDDS: MEF and the BEAC. At the MEF, the Department of Statistics and National Accounts (*Direction de la Statistique et de la Comptabilité Nationale*, or DSCN) compiles the real sector data, the Forecast Department (*Direction de la Prévision*, or DP) prepares the fiscal data, and the Department of Economic Control and External Finance (*Direction des Controles Economiques et des Finances Extérieures*, or DCEF) compiles the balance of payments. Dissemination to the public is carried out by the DSCN and the BEAC through various publications (with and without charge by subscription.) The DP and the DCEF mostly provide data to international and governmental entities upon request.

19.   The Statistical Law 91/023 of 1991 and Decree 93/407 of 1993 govern the collection, production, and dissemination of data by the DSCN. These statutes provide the DSCN with the authority to undertake surveys and censuses which have been sanctioned by the ministry in charge of statistics, which presently is the MEF. The articles of these statutes guarantee the confidentiality of the information on individuals and enterprises and prescribe penalties for noncooperation. A National Statistical Council, created with Decree 93/407, functions as an advisory board and coordinating agency on statistical matters. In addition, a coordinating role in the gathering of the data required for implementing and monitoring economic programs is assumed by the Technical Committee, *Comité Technique de Suivi des Programmes Economiques*, created in 1997.

20.   Economic data in Cameroon are also collected by statistical units in other government ministries and central government institutions, and civil registration offices. These statistical bodies are responsible for implementing the statistical programs of their institutions and collecting statistical information relevant to their work. For example, the statistical activities of the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, and Education are independent from the DSCN's jurisdiction. There is a need for closer coordination and collaboration among all statistical agencies. In particular, with respect to socio-demographic statistics, there is a lack of communication among the statistical units, as well as a lack of resources, training, and material to promote an adequate collection of data.

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[12] The GDDS does not have recommended standards for socio-demographic indicators. The World Bank, in collaboration with international institutions, is developing a set of recommended good practices.

21.   The MEF is responsible for compiling and disseminating data for central government operations. Government accounting legislation requires that the central government and local governments produce their financial statements each fiscal year.[13] However, these accounts often suffer delays and lack completeness (especially the local governments' accounts). To date there are no consolidated data on general government. Presentation of budget data is governed by the 1962 *Ordonnance* which prescribes the principles of unity and universality in budget operations. Since extrabudgetary accounts were abolished in 1986, revenue and expenditure items of all central government units (except the social security system) are included in the data on central government operations.

22.   The CAA is an autonomous institution responsible for managing, compiling, and monitoring data on external debt and domestic debt of the government. The recently reorganized CAA is a dynamic institution with adequate human resources and equipment to perform its functions. However, while there has been significant improvement in the institutional infrastructure for compiling external debt data, some weaknesses remain in the monitoring and management of domestic debt.[14]

23.   Cameroon is the only country of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), for which the balance of payments is not compiled by the BEAC. In the past, there had been a lack of cooperation between the BEAC and the MEF, which had affected the compilation of balance of payments data. While the BEAC has profited from substantial assistance from the Fund to improve the collection and compilation of balance of payments data, the balance of payments unit (DCEF) of the MEF lacks qualified staff and adequate computer equipment.

Source data

24.   The national accounts are compiled on the basis of data provided by enterprises, households, and government institutions. However, shortcomings persist in the way source data are obtained and estimated. The list of enterprises currently operating in Cameroon is outdated (a project to update this list is underway). Data on households are mostly based on a population census that dates from 1987. Data on agriculture are mostly based on a 1984 survey.

25.   Since 1991, there has been no reliable information on primary and secondary education. The recent launching of education statistics is a step in the right direction. However, the coverage is still lacking comprehensiveness. The statistics on nonpublic schools are not adequately captured. On health, as in the case of education, lack of resources

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[13] The fiscal year starts on July 1.

[14] Domestic debt data are limited to information gathered by the CAA and exclude most payments effected by the Treasury. Recently, some progress was made in coordinating information between the CAA and the Treasury to enhance compilation of domestic debt data.

has affected the quality of source data. The same is true for poverty-related indicators. A new general population census would be a crucial measure to support the country's poverty reduction initiatives.

26.   Data on central government operations are compiled by the DP from administrative records of the Treasury, the CAA, and the Departments of Budget, Expenditures (*Soldes*), Taxes, Customs, and the BEAC. Data are collected at the end of every month from the various primary sources. There is a need for better coordination among the providers of the primary data and the DP to improve the links between budgeted and realized balances. The *Tableau de Bord des Finances Publiques (TABORD)*, a set of analytical tables compiled by the DP, and the *Balance des Comptes du Trésor*, a comprehensive set of Treasury accounts, constitute two major tools used by the authorities to monitor the budget execution and the state's financial operations. The coverage of foreign grants is not complete. Data on local governments (*communes*) are insufficient and not yet collected in a systematic way.

27.   Data for the monetary and credit aggregates are based on the monthly balance sheets and other accounting records of the BEAC and the commercial banks. Final monetary data are compiled by the BEAC headquarters. Primary data for balance of payments are collected by the BEAC via a set of standardized forms designed to accommodate various types of enterprises and institutions. Final balance of payments data are compiled by the DCEF of the MEF.

Statistical techniques

28.   Weak or incomplete source data mean that estimates have to be made in compiling real and external sector statistics and socio-demographic indicators. For example, current annual data on socio-demographic indicators are estimated by the DSCN on the basis of results of the 1987 General Census, the 1996 Survey of Households, and the 1998 Survey on Population and Health, by using some indirect methods. Cross checking the results of these surveys and census is difficult because of the gaps between the periods in which they took place. With respect to health and education sectors, no statistical techniques are used to compensate for nonreporting.

29.   For the balance of payments, adjustments are made using information on bank notes displaced (issued by country A and found in country B) and postal operations within CEMAC countries to reflect activities that were not registered. No statistical adjustments are made to financial data.

30.   Tracking budget execution performance is rendered difficult by a major deficiency in the budget execution reporting system. The budget plan is prepared on a commitment basis while budget execution is recorded on a cash basis. Approximate adjustments are made to produce budget execution reports on a commitment basis. Because the complementary adjustment period stretches over 2–3 months, the accuracy of the monthly reporting in the early part of the fiscal year is particularly unreliable. The reporting problem could be overcome if the budget execution reporting system could match current period payments with previous budget plan commitments. The authorities are committed to rectifying this shortcoming.

Serviceability

31.   With regard to the provision of information that allows users to assess aspects of the *quality of data*, there is no publicly available documentation on the methodology used by the DSCN. With respect to the compilation of central government accounts and balance of payments, there is also no methodological document that is accessible to the public (methodological documents are being planned). The BEAC provides notes to the monetary tables published in its monthly bulletin and yearbook.

32.   Macroeconomic data are not checked for intersectoral consistency by the authorities. However, in general, data needed to support cross-checks and assurances of reasonableness within one sector exist. For example, GDP estimates by sector of activity and by expenditure exist. External debt data are periodically reconciled with those of creditors and also with the BEAC. To ensure the reasonableness of data on population, the 1987 census was subject to a post-census survey. Balance of payments data are verified with reports published by international organizations (e.g., the French Development Agency, UNDP). Fiscal data and monetary data are derived from administrative records and certified by the relevant offices for their authenticity.

Accessibility

33.   Recently, with participation in the GDDS, the Cameroonian authorities have placed considerable emphasis on articulating principles and establishing practices with respect to *data integrity* and *access to the data by the public*. Metadata on availability of series in all statistical sectors, lags in dissemination, analytical framework, concepts, definitions, and classification are available on the Internet on the IMF's Data Standards Bulletin Board (DSBB) (www.imf.org/external/standards). In addition, projects planned by the authorities to tackle weaknesses in the data are also described and available on the DSBB.

34.   The schedule for establishing national accounts data envisages that annual data will be published each year. In the *Comptes Nationaux du Cameroon Selon SCN93*, it is envisaged that provisional data will be available six months after the end of the reference year (ERY), "semifinal" and more detailed data twelve months after ERY, and comprehensive "final" data no more than 24 months after ERY.[15] Other macroeconomic statistics and socio-demographic data are also published in the *Annuaire Statistique du Cameroun*. Although monthly data on government operations are not published, annual data on government revenue and expenditure are contained in the *Annuaire*. Although the *Balance des Paiements du Cameroun* document is not publicly disseminated, annual balance of payments data are published in the *Annuaire* with some lags.[16]

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[15] The last edition of *Comptes Nationaux du Cameroon Selon SCN93* (published in April 1999) contained provisional data for 1997/98, semifinal results for 1996/97, and final results for 1989/90 through 1995/96.

[16] Balance of payments data up to 1995 are also published in BEAC publications.

III. IMF STAFF COMMENTARY

35. The authorities' commitment to improve transparency and accountability in government and public sector operations constitutes a major element in the current economic and financial development program targeting growth and poverty reduction. During recent years, the authorities have made some progress in improving their statistical database, particularly on national accounts, balance of payments, and fiscal operations. Work has also been initiated on the collection of socio-demographic indicators. However, weaknesses in data quality and timeliness in most areas of statistics remain, which hamper policy making. In addition, dissemination to the public of core statistics in several areas, notably the fiscal accounts and balance of payments, needs to be enhanced.

36. The authorities are aware of these weaknesses and have adopted the GDDS as a framework to further statistical development. Under the GDDS, the availability of macroeconomic series and socio-indicators is described, as well as the way they are compiled or estimated. The authorities have formulated and initiated short- and medium-term projects to tackle these data weaknesses and improve data transparency. With the publication of the GDDS metadata in the Internet, and the authorities' commitment to give priority to the undertaking these projects, real progress in data quality and transparency could be achievable and monitorable.

37. The weakest area in Cameroon's statistics, and consequently one demanding urgent action, is socio-demographic indicators, which are critical for monitoring poverty reduction. Significant improvements are needed in many respects. The DSCN would need to assume a strengthened and more centralized role in the collection, compilation, and dissemination of socio-demographic indicators.

38. In addition, there is a need for creating a more independent national statistical office to promote data integrity.

39. In the real sector, the authorities have recently moved to the *1993 SNA* for compiling the national accounts. However, although the methodology for establishing the final data has improved, the quality of the source data is still weak, as many estimates are based on outdated census and surveys.

40. Shortcomings in the fiscal data include: (1) mixture of cash and commitment bases in recording transactions; (2) insufficient coverage of foreign grants; (3) insufficient geographical coverage of government operations; (4) lack of information on financial operations of local governments; (5) lack of clarity regarding domestic arrears; and (6) lack

of documentation on the methodology used to prepare the analytical accounts (*Tableau de Bord*). The authorities have formulated specific plans for tackling these shortcomings.[17]

41.   Monetary statistics in Cameroon, as well as in other CEMAC countries, are not very current. Although the coverage of the data is comprehensive, the quality is affected by large cross-border movements of currency among members of the CEMAC.[18]

42.   The substantial lag in producing balance of payments data is mainly due to (1) a lack of qualified staff and equipment; and (2) weak cooperation between the BEAC, which assumes the responsibility for collecting the source data, and the MEF, which compiles the final data. The authorities should give priority to the undertaking of statistical development projects, and this implies seeking international assistance as well as including expenditures for some of these projects in the government's budget.

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[17] The published ROSC module on fiscal transparency also refers to shortcomings in fiscal data.

[18] The published ROSC module on transparency of monetary and financial policies also refers to weaknesses in financial indicators

Table 1. Cameroon: Data Categories and Indicators[1]

Data Categories	Indicators	Periodicity (GDDS Recommendation)	Timeliness (GDDS Recommendation)
Real Sector			
National accounts aggregates	GDP (nominal and real)	Annually (Annually)	Provisional: 10 months Semifinal: 22 months Final: 34 months (6-9 months)
Production index/indices	Manufacturing or industrial	Quarterly (Monthly)	4 months (6 weeks–3 months for all indices)
Price indices	Consumer price index	Monthly (Monthly)	1 month (1–2 months)
Labor market indicators	Employment Unemployment Wages	Annually. Unavailable. Unavailable. (Annually—all items)	12 months (6–9 months)
Fiscal Sector			
Central government budgetary aggregates	Revenue, expenditure, balance, and financing; with breakdowns, as relevant	Monthly [2] (Quarterly)	1–2 months [2] (1 quarter)
Central government debt	Domestic debt (by debt holder and instrument) External debt (by currency, maturity, debt holder and instrument)	Monthly [2] (Quarterly)	10 days [2] (1–2 quarters)

Table 1. Cameroon: Data Categories and Indicators[1]

Data Categories	Indicators	Periodicity (GDDS Recommendation)	Timeliness (GDDS Recommendation)
Financial Sector			
Broad money and credit aggregates	Net external position, domestic credit, broad or narrow Money	Monthly (Monthly)	9 months (1–3 months)
Central Bank Aggregates	Reserve money	Monthly (Monthly)	9 months (1–2 months)
Interest rates	Short- and long-term government security rates, policy variable rate	Monthly (Monthly)	1 month (1 month)
Stock market		Not applicable (Monthly)	Not applicable (1 month)
External Sector			
Balance of payments aggregates	Imports and exports of goods and services, current account balance, reserves, overall balance	Semiannually[3] (Annually)	12 months[3] (6 months)
International reserves	Gross official reserves denominated in US dollars	Monthly (Monthly)	4 months (1–4 weeks)
Merchandise trade	Total exports and total imports	Monthly (Monthly)	1 month (8 weeks–3 months)
Exchange rates	Spot rates	Daily (Daily)	Monthly[4] (Disseminated on a high frequency)

Table 1. Cameroon: Data Categories and Indicators[1]

Data Categories	Indicators	Periodicity (GDDS Recommendation)	Timeliness (GDDS Recommendation)
Socio-Demographic Data			
Population	Population size, births, deaths, migration flows	Annually	12–24 months
Health	Mortality rates, morbidity rates, health inputs, health services	Irregularly; according to surveys	
Education	Enrollment rates, repetition and drop-out rates, inputs, achievement scores	Annually	1 year
Poverty	Characteristics of the poor: household composition and size, income and access to credit, sources of income, consumption, assets	Irregularly; according to surveys	

[1] In the columns on Periodicity and Timeliness, the GDDS recommendation, in parenthesis, is noted directly below the actual practice.

[2] Although available to official entities and international organizations on demand, monthly data are not publicly disseminated; annual data are published in the *Annuaire Statistique du Cameroun*, with a 16-month delay

[3] Available to official entities and international organizations on demand, but not publicly disseminated; annual data are published in the *Annuaire*, with a 16-month delay.

[4] As reported by the BEAC to the Fund. However, the CFAF is pegged to the Euro, which is available on a daily basis.

[5] The columns on Periodicity and Timeliness in the socio-demographic data relate to the actual practice. The World Bank, in collaboration with other international institutions, is developing a set of recommended good practices.

Box 1. An Approach for the Assessment of Data Quality

Statistical infrastructure	The institutional and legal foundation for the collection, compilation, and dissemination of macroeconomic statistics.
Conceptual framework	The body of features relating to concepts, definitions, coverage, classification, sectorization, and other aspects of macroeconomic statistics that is intended to provide the analytical basis for the compiled statistics.
Source data	The nature of the source data and the manner in which they are processed.
Statistical techniques	The body of statistical estimation, adjustment, and other methods, together with methods of ensuring arithmetic precision, as applied to data collection and processing.
Serviceability	The features relating to requirements of users in terms of general usefulness, consistency, and revisions policy and practices.
Accessibility	The availability of data and metadata to users.

Table 2. Cameroon: Salient Features of the Data Quality Matrix

	Statistical Infrastructure	Conceptual Framework	Source Data	Statistical Techniques	Serviceability	Accessibility
Real Sector						
National accounts aggregates; Production index	The 1991 Statistics Law provides the DSCN with the authority to undertake surveys and censuses which have been sanctioned by the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF). A National Statistical Council, created in 1993 functions as an advisory board and coordinating agency on statistical matters. There is a lack of resources, training, and material. There is a need for creating a strengthened and more independent national statistical office.	Beginning in 1999, annual estimates are derived in conformity with the *1993 System of National Accounts*.	Although the methodology for compiling the final aggregates is sound, shortcomings persist in the way raw data are collected and estimated. The coverage of enterprises operating in Cameroon lacks comprehensiveness. Data on households are mostly based on an outdated population census. Data on agriculture are mostly based on an outdated survey.	Nonresponses from enterprises and possible under-reporting are estimated using indirect methods. The industrial production index (IPI) is a Laspeyres index based on a basket of 240 goods and services representative of the covered industries (manufacturing and public utilities).	There is no publicly available documentation on methodology. Data and computer software exist to allow cross checking of national account aggregates calculated from different methods (production, expenditure, or income)	The last edition of *Comptes Nationaux du Cameroon Selon SCN93* (published in April 1999) contains *provisional* data for 1997/98, *semifinal* results for 1996/97, and *final* results for 1989/90 through 1995/96. The IPI is produced on a quarterly basis with a time lag of about 4 months.

Table 2. Cameroon: Salient Features of the Data Quality Matrix

	Statistical Infrastructure	Conceptual Framework	Source Data	Statistical Techniques	Serviceability	Accessibility
Consumer Price index (CPI)	See national accounts	The broadest CPI covers 5 cities. A price index for Yaoundé and a price index for Douala are also compiled. The indexes are based on a basket of about 260 items, with December 1993 as the base period.	The weights are derived from results of the 1983/84 survey of households' budget/consumption.	The price indexes are of Laspeyres type.	A detailed breakdown of the indexes is available for 7 major categories: food, drinks/tobacco, clothing/shoes, house expenditures, health/ personal care, transport/ communications, education/ entertainment	The broadest CPI is published in the quarterly bulletin: *Evolution des prix à la consommation finale des ménages*, published with a lag of one month after the end of the quarter. Price indexes for Yaoundé and Douala are produced on a monthly basis with a lag of about 10 days.
Labor market indicators – employment, unemployment, and wages	See national accounts.	However, the coverage lacks comprehensiveness. Data on unemployment and wages are not available for a meaningful analysis.	The AEI results are derived from the Declaration Forms for Statistics and Taxation (*Déclarations Statistiques et Fiscales*, DSF) completed by enterprises		The number of enterprises responding to the DSF vary substantially from year to year, which does not facilitate intertemporal analysis	Statistics on employment are published in an annual document: *L'Industrie Camerounaise*, with a twelve-month lag.

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	Statistical Infrastructure	Conceptual Framework	Source Data	Statistical Techniques	Serviceability	Accessibility
Fiscal Sector						
Central government budgetary aggregates; Central government debt	Government accounting legislation requires that the central government and local governments produce their financial statement each fiscal year. The *Direction de la Prévision* (DP) of the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) is responsible for compiling and disseminating data on central government operations. Debt data are compiled by an autonomous institution, *La Caisse Autonome d'Amortissement* (CAA).	Compilation methodology is broadly consistent with the analytical framework in the IMF's *A Manual on Government Finance Statistics (GFSM) 1986*. However, the coverage of government (especially local governments) lacks completeness. To date there are no consolidated data on general government.	Data for government operations are compiled from administrative records of the Treasury, the MEF Departments of Budget, Expenditures, Taxes, and Customs, the CAA, and the BEAC. There is a need for better coordination among the providers of the primary data and the DP. There are some inconsistencies between the final analytical data and the Treasury accounts. The coverage of foreign grants is not complete. Data on local governments are not collected in a systematic manner.	The budget plan is prepared on a commitment basis while budget execution is recorded on a cash basis. Approximate adjustments are made to produce budget execution reports on a commitment basis. While there has been significant improvement in the institutional infrastructure for compiling external debt data, some weaknesses remain in the monitoring and management of domestic debt.	There is no document describing the methodology followed by the DP (although it is planned to be produced in the last quarter of 2000). Projects for improving the government finance statistics have been initiated or formulated.	Quarterly and monthly fiscal statistics are mostly made available to official entities and international institutions on demand, but are not publicly disseminated. However, annual data on revenue and expenditure are published in the. *Annuaire Statistique du Cameroun,* with substantial lag.

Table 2. Cameroon: Salient Features of the Data Quality Matrix

	Statistical Infrastructure	Conceptual Framework	Source Data	Statistical Techniques	Serviceability	Accessibility
Financial Sector						
Broad money and credit aggregates; Central Bank aggregates; Interest rates	Monetary and interest rate data are compiled by the Bank of the Central African States (BEAC), central bank of members of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC). Preliminary monetary data are compiled by the local BEAC branches in each member country, and the BEAC headquarters compile the final data. Because data for one member country can be finalized only when data for all members are reported to and processed by headquarters, there is often a substantial delay in publication of the final monetary data.	The banking survey is compiled in accordance with the analytical framework in the IMF's *Monetary and Financial Statistics Manual (MFSM)*. The survey consolidates the positions of the central bank, the commercial banks, the postal checking deposits, and other banking institutions eligible for central bank refinancing (such as credit institutions and savings and loan associations).	Monetary data are based on the monthly balance sheets and other accounting records of the central bank and on the monthly returns of commercial banks. Accounts are distinguishable by currency (CFA francs and foreign currencies), by residency (resident of the country or nonresident), and by CEMAC appurtenance (member of the zone or nonmember). Debtors or creditors are classified by economic sectors: central government, other government, public enterprises, and private sector.	Monetary data are compiled on an accrual basis; transactions in financial instruments are valued at market prices. Currency in circulation is adjusted by BEAC headquarters on account of the amounts of expatriated bank notes (issued by country A and found in country B).	Data revisions and changes in the data compilation practices are noted in footnotes to the tables published in the monthly Bulletin *Etudes et Statistiques*. While the coverage of monetary data is comprehensive, their analytical usefulness is diminished by the lack of timeliness. The large cross-border movements of currency among CEMAC members also affect the quality of monetary data.	Monthly monetary data are published in the Bulletin *Etudes et Statistiques*, with a nine months lag. Interest rate data are published in the *Bulletin du Marché Monétaire* and the *Situation Hebdomadaire du Refinancement*, on a timely basis.

Table 2. Cameroon: Salient Features of the Data Quality Matrix

	Statistical Infrastructure	Conceptual Framework	Source Data	Statistical Techniques	Serviceability	Accessibility
External Sector						
Balance of payments aggregates; International reserves; Merchandise trade; Exchange rates; and International Investment Position (IIP)	Cameroon is the only country of the CEMAC for which the balance of payments is not compiled by the BEAC. Primary data are collected by the BEAC local branches, while the final balance of payments statement is compiled by the *Direction des Contrôles Economiques et des Finances Extérieures* (DCEFE) of the MEF. The BEAC also compiles data on international reserves and exchange rates. Merchandise trade data are compiled by the Customs. There is no International Investment Position. The DCEFE lacks appropriate staffing and computer equipment to ensure tangible progress in data compilation.	The framework of the balance of payments conforms with the basic principles of *BPM5*. The definition of international reserve assets follows the methodology of *BPM5*.	The main sources for balance of payments compilation are, Customs data (for merchandise trade); bank reports, enterprise questionnaires, reports from insurance companies (for services, income, transfers); enterprise questionnaires, BEAC information on external position of banks, and CAA and Treasury information on public sector (for financial accounts). Timeliness and quality of the data have suffered from inadequate design of enterprise questionnaires. New questionnaires have been developed and will be introduced by the BEAC in the near future.	Incomplete source data require various estimations. Adjustments are made using information on bank notes displaced (issued by country A and found in country B) and postal operations within CEMAC countries to reflect activities that were not registered.	There is no methodological document on procedures followed by the DCEFE that is available to the public. The internal document *Balance des Paiements du Cameroun* contains some methodological notes. Balance of payments data are verified with reports published by international organizations (e.g., French Development Agency, UNDP). Lack of cooperation between the BEAC and the MEF had affected the quality and timeliness of the balance of payments data.	Balance of payments data are produced on a semiannual and annual basis, with a twelve months delay. Although the document *Balance des Paiements du Cameroun* is only made available to official entities and international organizations on demand, annual data are published in the *Annuaire du Cameroun*, with substantial lag. Monthly merchandise trade data are published in the document *Résultats du Commerce Extérieur*, published by the DSCN, and the document *Importations et Exportations du Cameroun*, published by Customs.

Table 2. Cameroon: Salient Features of the Data Quality Matrix

	Statistical Infrastructure	Conceptual Framework	Source Data	Statistical Techniques	Serviceability	Accessibility
Socio-Demographic Data						
Population; Health; Education; Poverty	See national accounts. Statistical bodies are responsible for implementing statistical programs of their institutions and collecting information relevant to their work. There is a lack of communication of information among the statistical units. There is a need for a coordinating role by the DSCN in the collection and compilation of the socio-demographic data.	Most socio-demographic indicators are not yet established in a regular and methodological manner. Statistics on education are compiled in accordance with UNESCO international standards.	Administrative records and surveys of public health, social care, and education institutions; population censuses; living conditions and household budget surveys; civil registration offices; declaration forms filled for tax offices.	Annual data are estimated on the basis of results from the 1987 General Census, the 1996 Survey of households, and the 1998 Survey on Population and Health. Cross checking the results is difficult because of the gaps between the periods in which they took place and the difference in coverage. In most cases, no statistical techniques are used to compensate for nonreporting.	Methodological documents describing estimation procedures are not publicly available.	Data on socio-demographic indicators that exist are uncurrent. Some data are published in the *Annuaire du Cameroun*, published by the DSCN on an annual basis with a two years lag. Documents are first disseminated to government bodies and development partners who support the ministerial department. In most cases there is no information about revisions and advance notice of major changes.