INTEGRATED SDG INSIGHTS

CAMEROON

This initiative supports the articulation of national commitments to SDG transformation, towards accelerated SDG action in the second half of the 2030 Agenda.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

Integrated SDG Insights provides an overview of a country's economic growth trajectory, highlighting potential conflicts between growth, environmental concerns, and societal well-being (referred to as the **SDG Moment**).

It builds from the foundation of national SDG progress through the lens of the 5Ps and uses machine learning to analyse national development ambition with an SDG lens (**SDG Trends & Priorities**).

Combined, these insights are mapped against SDG interlinkages to define policy choices the accelerate SDG progress, tailored to national context (**SDG Interlinkages**).

These policy choices are made against fiscal constraints and opportunities for stimulus to ensure choices translate to development impact and leave no one behind (**Finance & Stimulus**).

SDG MOMENT:
CAMEROON

While economic growth is a key element in achieving the SDGs, many countries are intent on moving beyond growth as a yardstick for progress. In the short run, growth enables the SDGs; but in the long run, the SDGs aim to transform the pattern of growth itself.

Cameroon's economy during 2023-2025 cycle is in coping phase, characterized by growth rates projected to be 49% higher, on average, than the global figure, but well below the country's growth trajectory forecast before the pandemic.[1]

This pace of growth, however, is not expected to exert a noticeable effect on lowering the incidence of poverty at $2.15 and $3.65 a day. Hence, the country's commitments to achieving the SDGs are focused on increasing people's well-being and on overcoming this lack of progress. Economic expansion, on the other hand, would not be increasingly dependent on carbon emissions as the country's fossil carbon emissions intensity of GDP would remain unchanged, and it would follow a downward trend at an annual rate of decline of almost 7% when also considering land-use change.[2]

[1] The economic cycle is determined by adjusting the country's current GDP growth forecasts (April 2023) by their gap relative to the forecasts made before the pandemic and subsequent crises (October 2019). If the adjusted rates (not shown) are below 2%, the economy is considered in mitigation; it is coping if the adjusted rates range between 2%-4%, and it is in acceleration if they are above 4%.

[2] CO2 emissions intensity of GDP is computed as tonnes of CO2 per $1,000 (2017 PPP).

SDG TRENDS

Understanding how Cameroon performs against the SDG targets provides a baseline landscape against which to build integrated SDG pathways. SDG progress tracking follows UN Stats standards and methodology, and is aligned with country profiles.

Trends in detail:
https://data.undp.org/sdg-push-diagnostic/CMR/sdg-trends

SDG PRIORITIES

Cameroon's national priorities are analysed using machine learning to reveal the most prominent SDGs referenced in national policy documents. This analysis uses a custom-built model for SDG classification. It considers 100k+ terms, including phrases and expressions.

Key documents for analysis:

1. National Development Strategy 2020-2030: For structural transformation and inclusive development
2. Cameroon Vision 2035

Priorities in detail:
https://data.undp.org/sdg-push-diagnostic/CMR/current-priorities

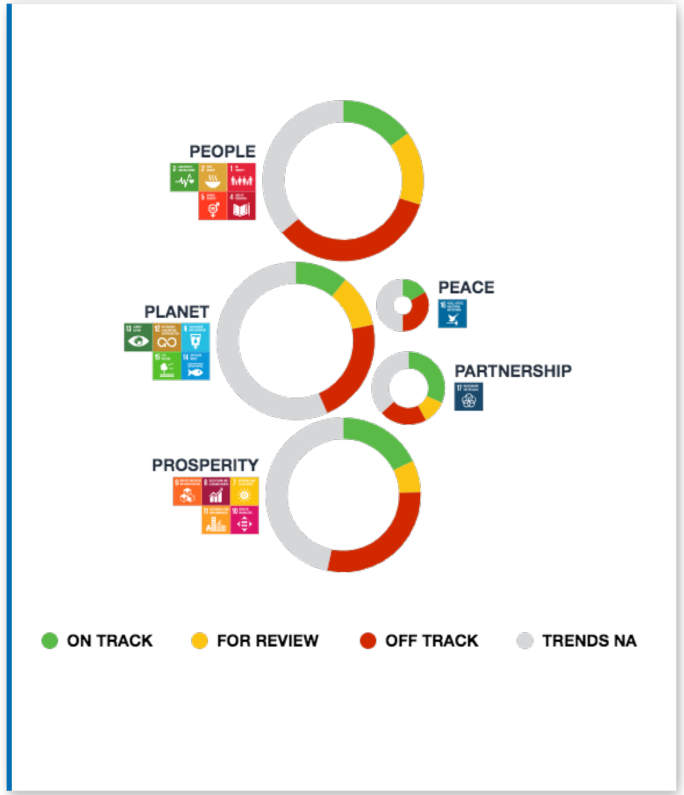
SDG INTERLINKAGES

SDG interlinkages reveal how actions directed towards one SDG can impact others. Uncovering and understanding these interactions can help Cameroon to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to navigate trade-offs.

Based on a global framework for interlinkages, Cameroon's SDG progress is colour-coded at the target level.

Building from national trends and priorities, the following integrated SDG pathways reflect policy choices with the most potential to accelerate the SDGs for Cameroon:

- Target 8.5: Full employment and decent work with equal pay
- Target 9.2: Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization
- Target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions



ACCELERATION PATHWAYS

SYNERGIES

TRADE-OFFS

SDG INTERLINKAGES

8.5: By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

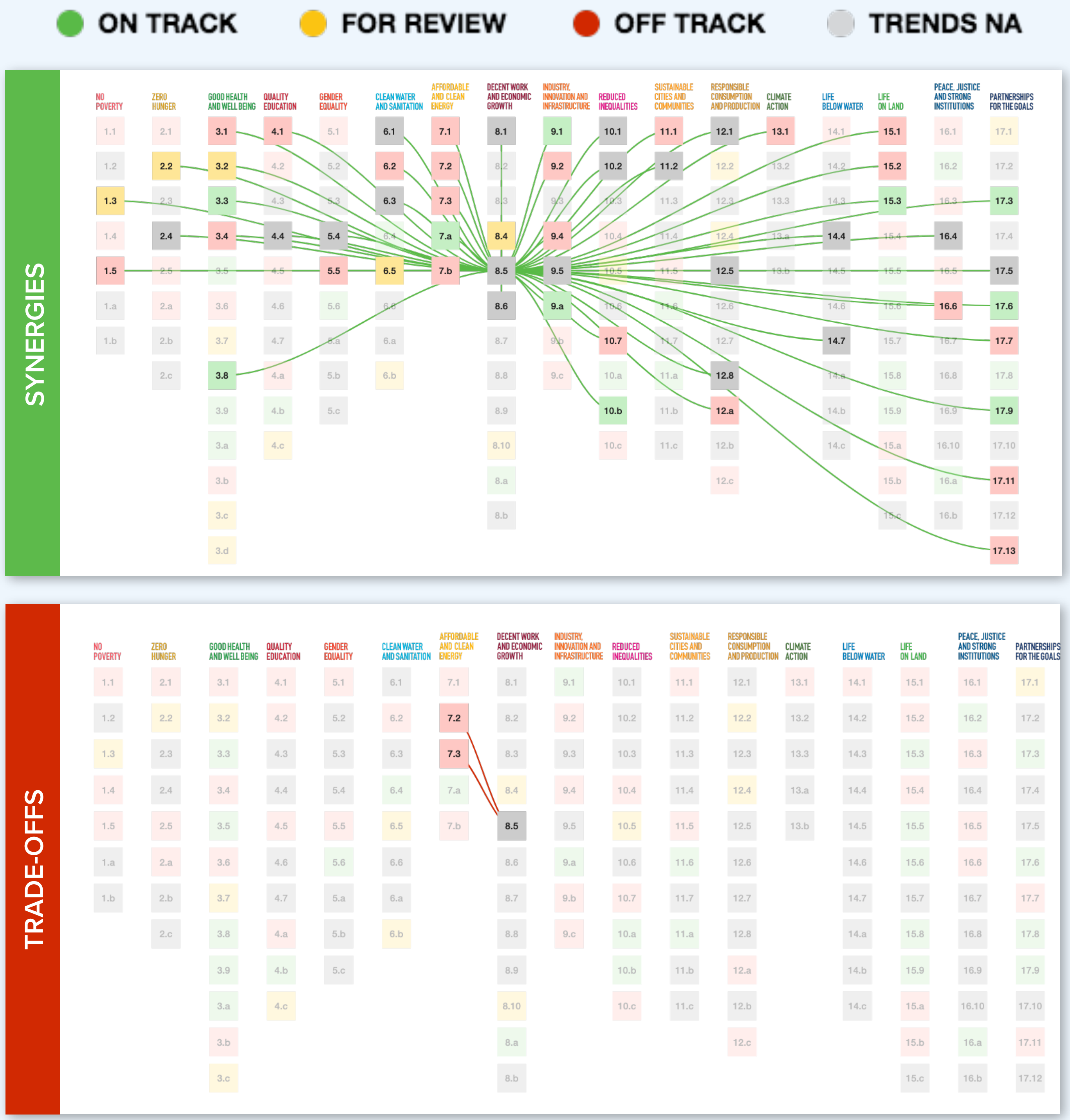
The future of Cameroon lies in its people, with its citizens aged under 35 years comprising more than 50 percent of the population. Young people in Cameroon face difficulties in accessing decent employment. Unemployment and underemployment levels are very high among the youth. Approximately 11 percent of youth aged 15 to 29 years are unemployed particularly in urban areas. Underemployment affects approximately 94 percent of young people aged 15 to 19 years and 84 percent of those between 20 and 24 years.

Improving the livelihoods of men and women is a key pathway to greater inclusion and reduced inequality. In 2022, labour force participation among women was 47.4 percent and among men 76.18 percent. The working-age share has been rising, creating opportunity for a demographic dividend to support growth and development.

Maximizing the benefits of the demographic dividend will require (i) increased decent work creation to absorb young women and men who enter the job market each year, (ii) comprehensive workforce skills development to meet labour market needs at a time of rapid technological and structural change in the economy, (iii) improved quality of work for young people in the country and (iv) tackling the gender and inclusion dimensions of work.

The quality and stability of employment remains a challenge in Cameroon. Youth face difficulties to transition in the labour market with preference for skilled workers, leading to certificate inflation and growing possibilities for multiple jobs have reduced employment prospects for new school leavers in accessing decent employment. The creation of decent jobs linked to the economy of tomorrow would further help to build the tax base and reduce the societal vulnerability to economic and climate shocks. The Government of Cameroon is encouraging investments, strengthening Technical and vocational training (target 8.2), skills development and youth employment schemes (target 4.4).

By accelerating target 8.5, the government can strive towards sustainable economic growth, inclusive development and improved livelihoods for its citizens. However, decent employment may be negatively affected by targets related to energy transition (SDG7) as the skills required in the renewable energy sector differ from those in the traditional energy sector, leading to potential skills gap.



Explore the interlinkages at:
https://data.undp.org/sdg-push-diagnostic/CMR/synergies-and-tradeoffs

SDG INTERLINKAGES

9.2: Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries.

Cameroon's growth pattern reflects an economy that is not attractive to private sector investment, is not competitive, and is therefore little diversified, leaving considerable potential untapped. Notwithstanding Cameroon's abundance of natural assets, and tremendous climatic and land potential, the primary sector's contribution to growth is very limited, and is dominated by food crops grown by smallholder farmers. Agriculture productivity is below its potential because of low use of mechanization, inputs and irrigation. The secondary sector's contribution to GDP is also small and relies mostly on extractives and light manufacturing. The largest contributor to GDP growth is the tertiary sector, at about 3 percentage points of GDP per annum. However, it has been driven in part by high public investment levels, and by relatively unsophisticated retail trade and food services activities.

Pursuing SDG target 9.2 can foster inclusive and sustainable industrialization in the Cameroon while simultaneously enhancing its sustainable economic growth and employment prospects. Industrialization can also for speeding up investment capital in the agricultural sector.

However, the pursuit of industrialization also entails trade-offs. It requires careful consideration of environmental sustainability as industrial activities can have adverse ecological impacts—affecting ecosystems (SDGs 15 and 2), potable water (SDG 6), life below water (SDG 14) and life on land (SDG 15). Rapid industrialization could put pressure on energy access (target 7.2) at the expense of energy sustainability (targets 7.2 and 7.3). Ensuring inclusivity in this process is crucial to preventing potential social, gender and territorial inequalities (target 10.5)

By investing in SDG 9.2 (inclusive and sustainable industrialization), Cameroon can improve on its current employment challenges and focus on key priorities, namely poverty eradication, reducing inequality and improving agricultural productivity. This, complemented with policy interventions that promote production value chain, leveraging innovation, science and technology and industrial niches for diversification to generate jobs for women and youth.

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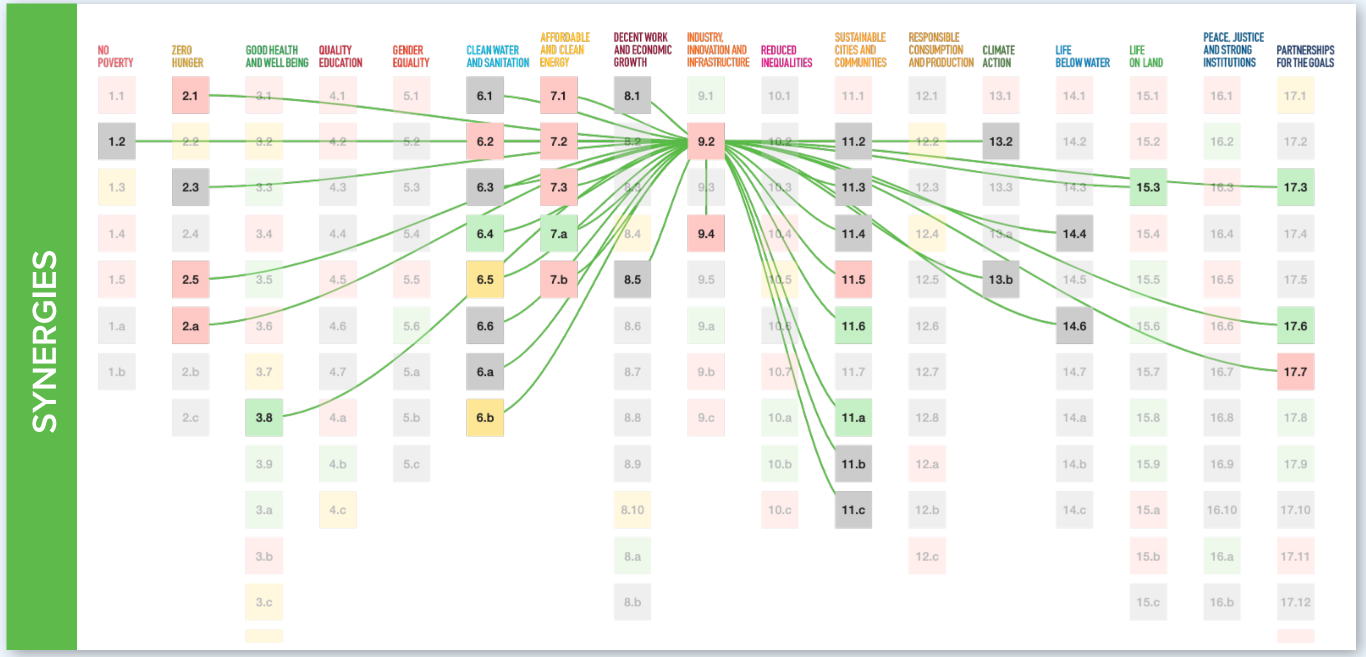
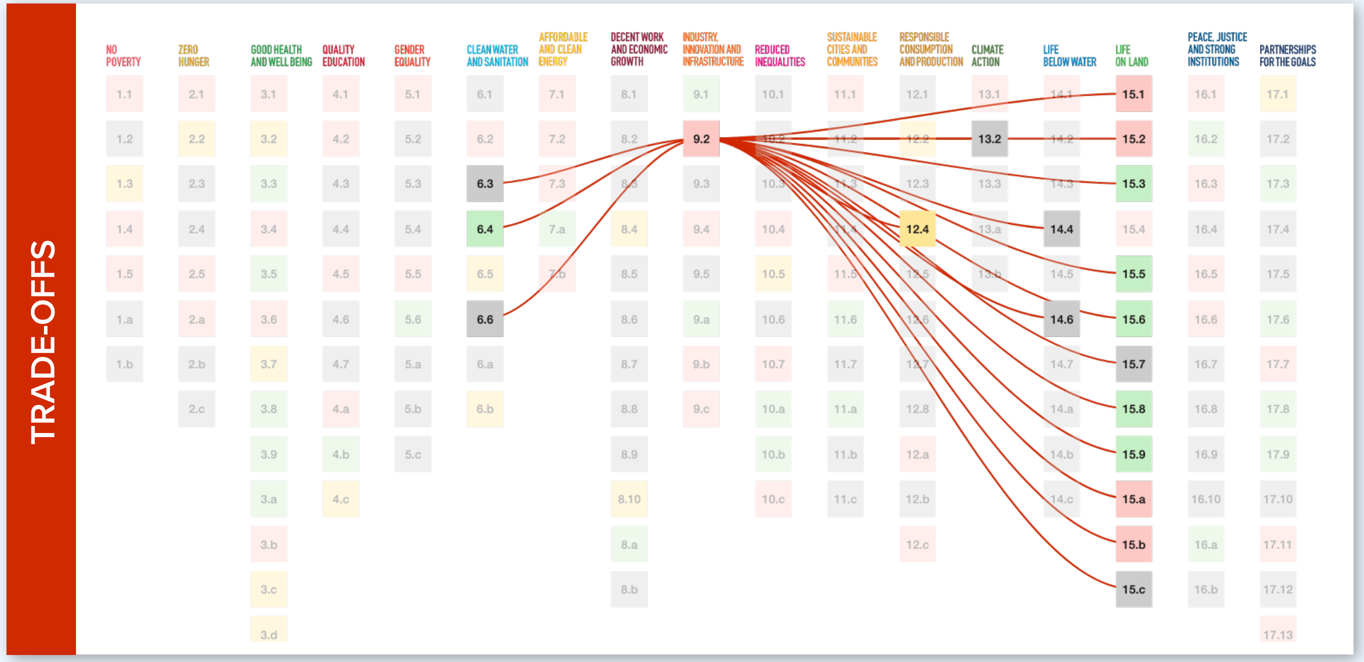




Explore the interlinkages at:
https://data.undp.org/sdg-push-diagnostic/CMR/synergies-and-tradeoffs

SDG INTERLINKAGES

16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

In Cameroon approximately 37.8 percent of the population are satisfied with the public services they receive. By focusing on SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions), and specifically target 16.6, Cameroon can increase its ability to achieve sustained, inclusive and high economic growth needed to reduce extreme poverty.

Investments and policy choices that strengthen institutions is recognized in Cameroon as a fundamental driver for the eradication of extreme poverty (target 1.1) over the medium term with significantly higher and more inclusive growth (target 8.1) with positive benefits to national efforts to build resilience to shocks and disasters (target 1.5)

Explore the interlinkages at:
https://data.undp.org/sdg-push-diagnostic/CMR/synergies-and-tradeoffs

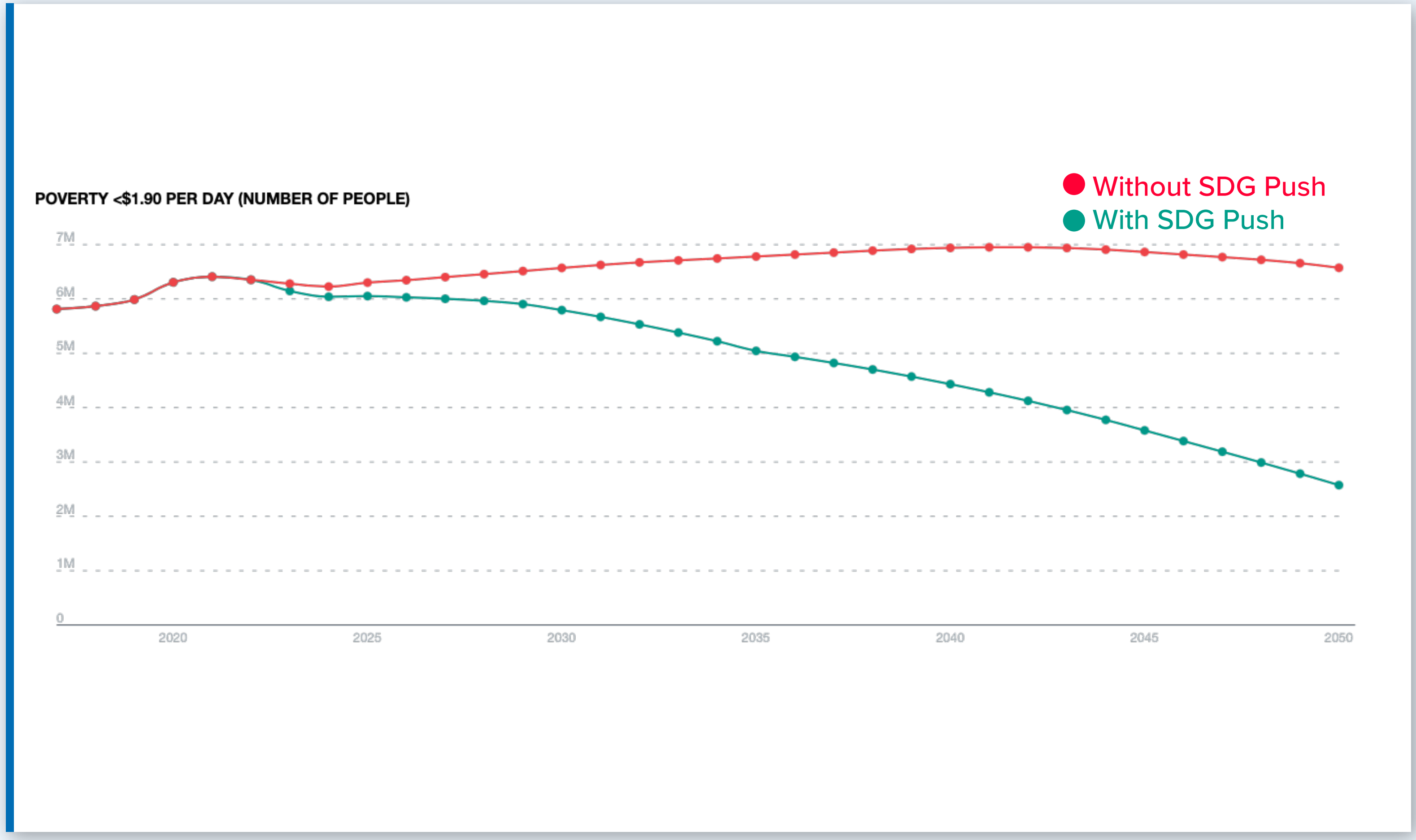
FUTURES SCENARIOS

Achieving the SDGs is possible.

The 'SDG Push' is a futures scenario based on 48 integrated accelerators in the areas of Governance, Social Protection, Green Economy and Digital Disruption. It uses national data to explore the impact on human development by 2030 and by 2050 across key SDG indicators.

Incorporating 'SDG Push' accelerators into development interventions in Cameroon can reduce the number of people living in poverty over time.

People living in poverty	By 2030	By 2050
Without the SDG Push	6.6M	6.6M
With the SDG Push	5.8M	2.6M



Explore SDG Futures Scenarios at:
https://data.undp.org/sdg-push-diagnostic/CMR/future-scenarios

FINANCE & STIMULUS

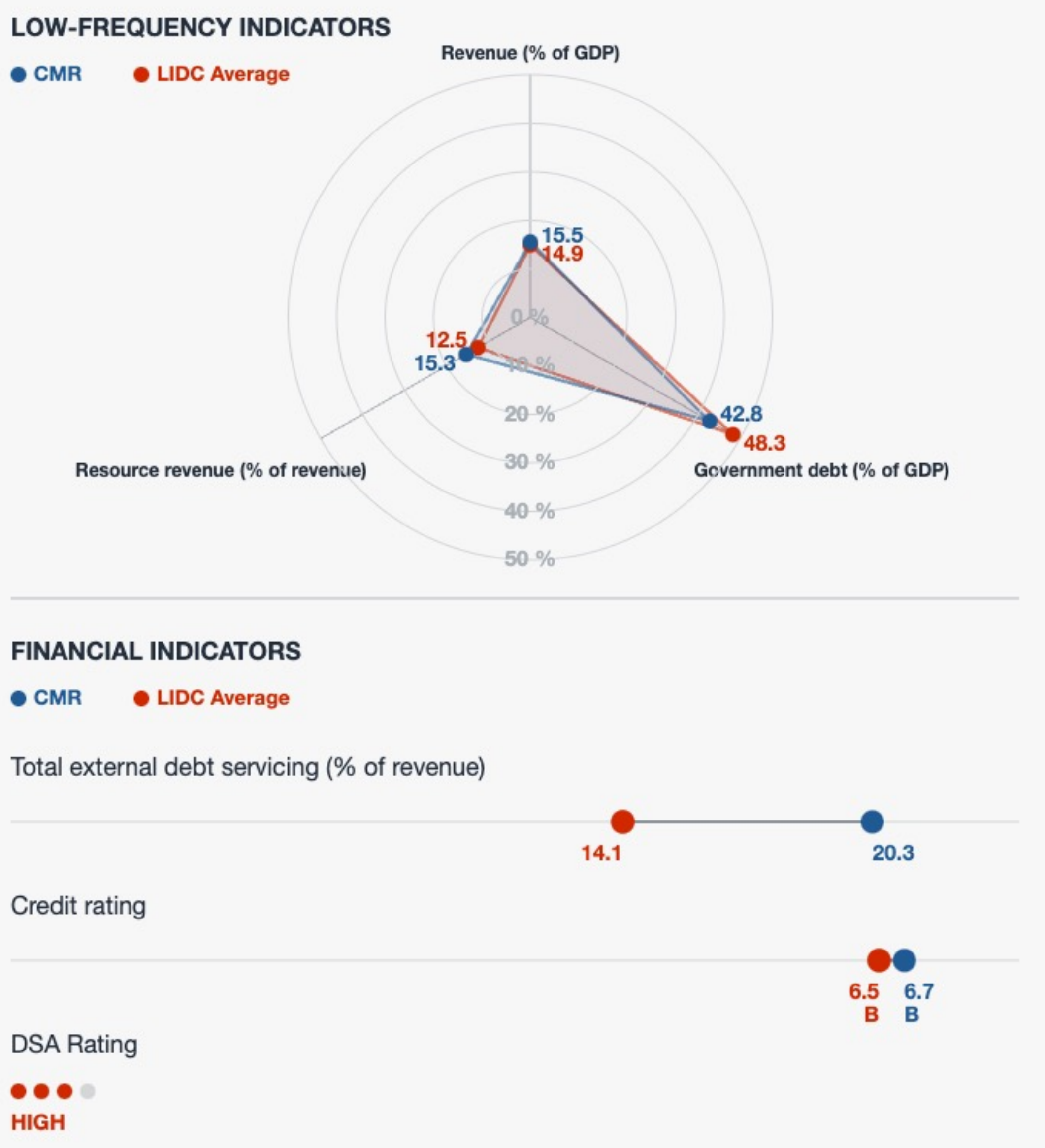
Many countries are facing reduced fiscal space, high debt levels, rising interest rates and downgrades on credit ratings. Fiscal and financial constraints tend to slow or even reverse SDG progress.

The radar diagram shows low frequency data points linked to government revenue and debt as a proportion of GDP and the natural resource share of total revenue. The financial indicator graphs show external debt servicing relative to revenue, the sovereign credit rating and the country's latest Debt Sustainability Assessment (DSA) risk rating.

Cameroon's gross government debt, projected at 42.8% of GDP in 2023, is 5.5 percentage points (pp) below the low-income developing countries (LIDC) average of 48.3%. The country is expected to collect 15.5% of GDP in revenue this year, thus slightly above the LIDC group ratio of 14.9%, with natural resources accounting for an above-LIDC average share of 15.3% of this revenue.

Cameroon's public external debt servicing this year is expected to be as high as 20.3% of revenue compared to 14.1% for the LIDC average. The country's credit rating – as is the LIDC average – is in the 'highly speculative' category. According to its latest World Bank and IMF DSA, Cameroon is rated as in 'high risk of debt distress'.

Cameroon is using an Integrated National Financing Framework to address key fiscal and financial constraints and to build a more sustainable financial architecture at the national level. Priority actions include strengthening domestic revenue mobilization and tax administration via improving the e-monitoring of invoices and the turnover of companies and tax collection; strengthening environmental taxation and local tax reform for optimal financing of decentralization; addressing debt by making use of regular and reliable debt service forecasts and a public securities issuance plan; promoting investment via the creation of a single development bank covering various windows of support (including SMEs, agriculture, housing and guarantee funds) and via legal and regulatory reforms; and developing a Climate Investment Plan to establish a strategic portfolio of concrete and bankable projects to mobilize climate finance.



Notes: External debt covers public and publicly guaranteed debt. The LIDC average of resource revenue (% of revenue) only includes the 38 countries that reported data for that indicator. The credit rating shows the numerical average of S&P's, Moodys', and FITCH's ratings, expressed in S&P's scale in brackets.

Sources: UNU-WIDER GRD (resource revenue, data from 2021), IMF WEO April 2023 (debt and revenue, forecasts for 2023), IDS (external debt, data from 2023), S&P, Moodys and FITCH (credit ratings, data from 2023), IMF/World Bank (DSA Rating as of 31 May 2023).

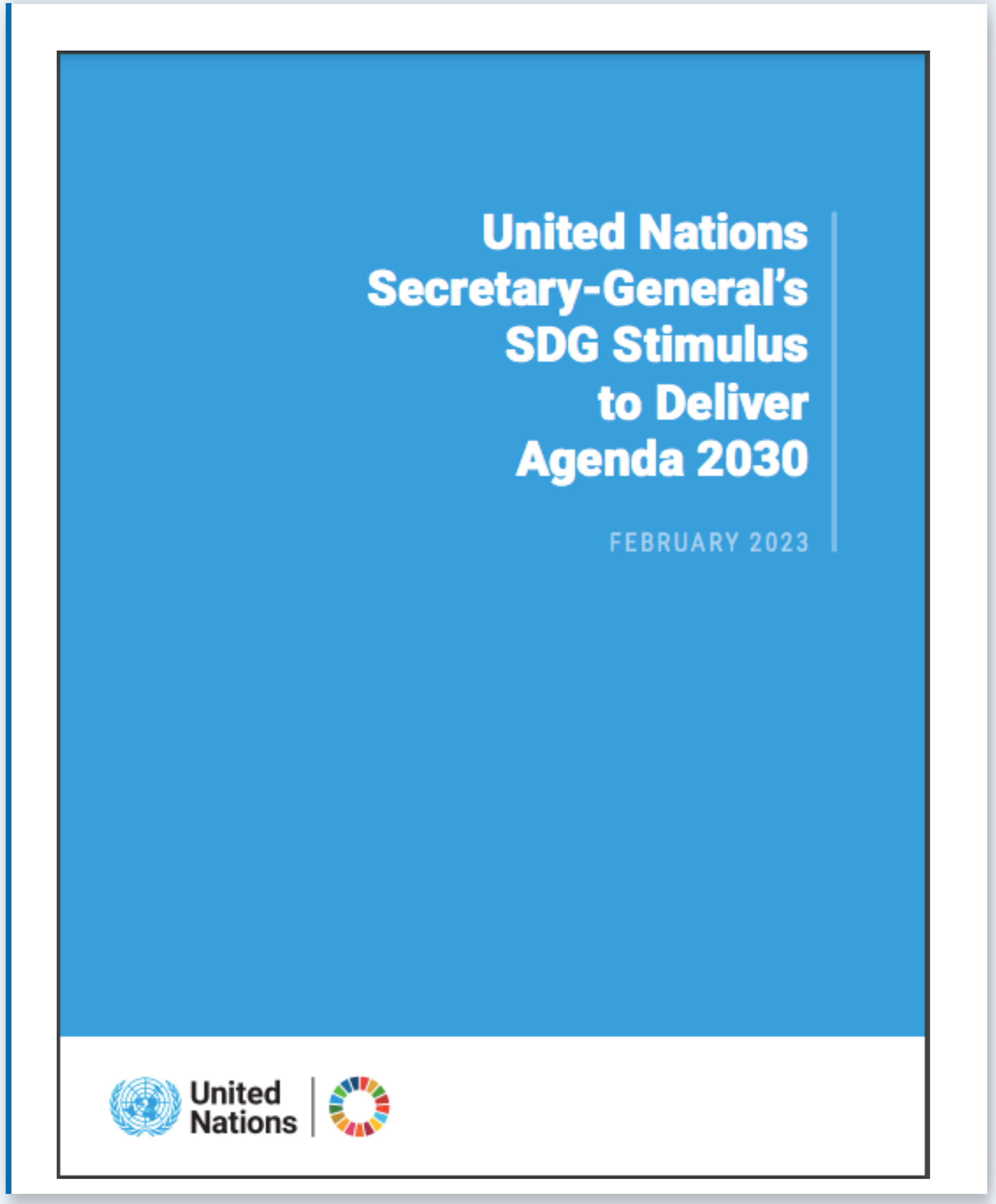
SDG STIMULUS

The UN Secretary General's SDG Stimulus Plan lays out a blueprint for action within the existing financial architecture. It includes:

- Providing liquidity to support recovery in the near term
- Enhancing debt relief for vulnerable countries
- Expanding development financing by MDBs
- Aligning financial flows with the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, according to country-level priorities and needs, for example through the roll-out of the UN Integrated National Financing Framework (INFFs).

Given the projected fiscal and financial constraints faced by Cameroon, possible funding options for the investments derived from the identified interlinkages are as follows:

- Tax and revenue reform
- Debt for SDGs
- Climate finance
- Blended and public-private finance
- SDG-aligned business environment and investment
- Accessing financial markets and insurance
- Remittances, philanthropy and faith-based financing



METHODOLOGY

Click here to view the Methodological Note for the Integrated SDG Insights

SDG MOMENT

Methodology
Assesses challenges and opportunities in national growth trajectories with insights on environmental sustainability and inclusiveness.

Data Sources
Future trajectories to 2025 are based on IMF-WEO GDP projections, distributions of per capita income or consumption from the World Bank, and CO_2 emissions from the Global Carbon Budget 2022 and EDGAR (JRC and IEA).

TRENDS & PRIORITIES

Methodology
SDG trends tracks progress from 2015 to date for the 231 indicators. National priorities are analysed
using machine learning to reveal the most prominent SDGs referenced in national policy documents.

Data Source
Trends utilizes official UN statistics to assess SDG progress, supplemented with national data when available. Priorities uses a custom-built model for SDG classification. The policy documents analyses are provided by Governments.

INTERLINKAGES

Methodology
Global target-level interlinkages are drawn from the KnowSDGs Platform by European Commission. SDG interlinkages were retrieved through a structured literature review in Scopus and Google Scholar to tap both grey literature and peer-reviewed publications as a source of information.

Data Source
The exercise globally considered a total of 454 documents published from 2015 to August 2022. (Miola et al., 2019 updated in 2021-2022)

FINANCE & STIMULUS

Methodology
Provides insight into indicators of fiscal and financial stress with options (INFF) for stimulus and other means to accelerate progress.

Data Source
Most recent resource data from UNU-WIDER GRD (between 2018 and 2021), debt and revenue from IMF WEO (between 2020 and forecasts for 2023), external debt from IDS (2023), yields from Haver Analytics (8 June 2023), credit ratings from S&P, Moodys and FITCH (2023), and DSA ratings from World Bank/IMF (31 May 2023).