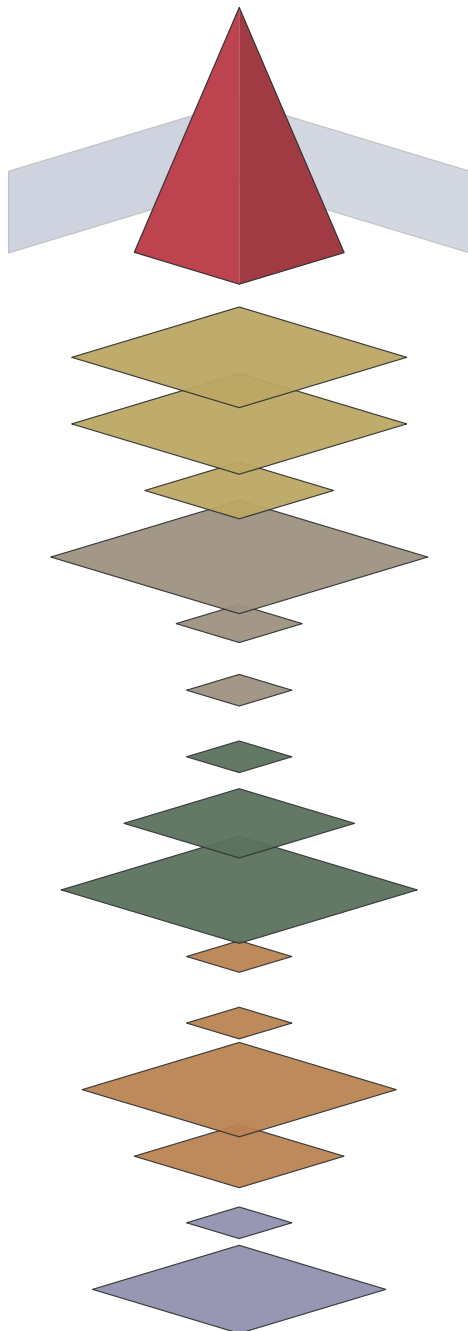


 **SUDAN**



 **6.37  
CRIMINALITY SCORE**

8<sup>th</sup> of 54 African countries  
3<sup>rd</sup> of 9 East African countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS 5.23**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	8
HUMAN SMUGGLING	8
EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING	4.5
ARMS TRAFFICKING	9
TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS	3
ILLICIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS	2.5
FLORA CRIMES	2.5
FAUNA CRIMES	5.5
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	8.5
HEROIN TRADE	2.5
COCAINE TRADE	2.5
CANNABIS TRADE	7.5
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	5
CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES	2.5
FINANCIAL CRIMES	7

 **CRIMINAL ACTORS 7.5**

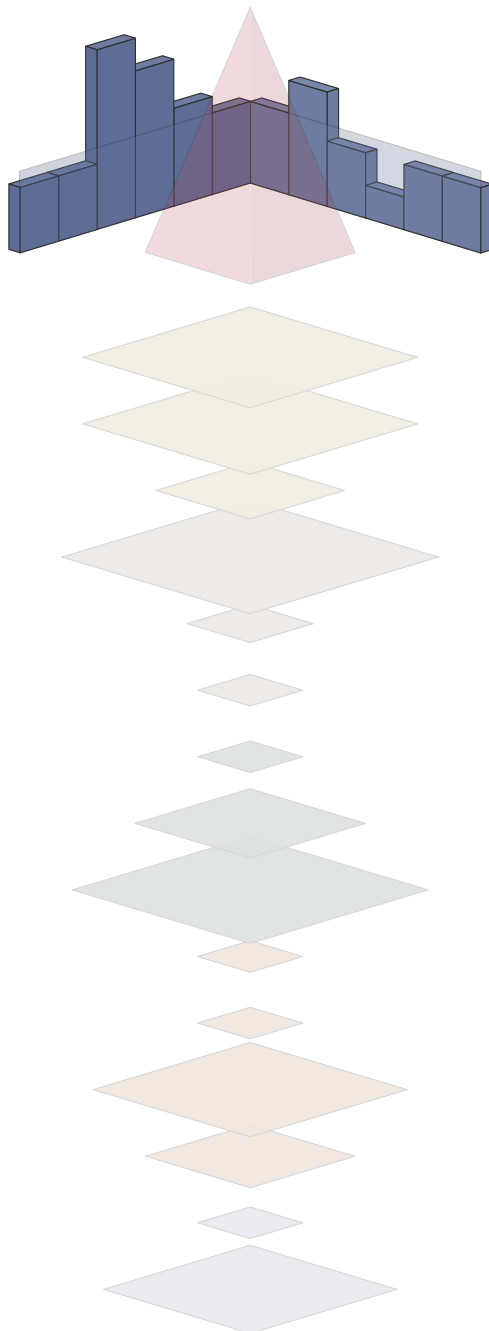
MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	6.5
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	7.5
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	8.5
FOREIGN ACTORS	8
PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS	8

 **2.71  
RESILIENCE SCORE**





# SUDAN





## 2.71 RESILIENCE SCORE

42<sup>nd</sup> of 54 African countries  
6<sup>th</sup> of 9 East African countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	2
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	2
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	5.5
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	4.5
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	3
LAW ENFORCEMENT	2.5
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	2.5
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	3.5
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	2
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	1
PREVENTION	2
NON-STATE ACTORS	2



## 6.37 CRIMINALITY SCORE

 CRIMINAL MARKETS	5.23
 CRIMINAL ACTORS	7.5



# CRIMINALITY

## Criminal Markets

### PEOPLE

Sudan remains a source, transit and destination country for human trafficking, with most victims being trafficked from East, West and Central Africa. Victims are primarily women, who are forced into domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, debt bondage, agriculture and prostitution. Homeless children in Khartoum are coerced into sex trafficking and forced labour. Sudan has one of the largest populations of internally displaced persons and refugees in Africa, who are increasingly vulnerable to forced labour or sex trafficking. Some corrupt officials of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have abused their position as border guards and have been involved in cases of human trafficking. Despite convicting more traffickers, updating the country's National Action Plan and providing training on the illegality of child soldier recruitment, political instability and lack of a functioning government have stalled efforts to tackle human trafficking. Asylum seekers in Khartoum lack economic support and access to justice, making them particularly vulnerable to trafficking.

Human smuggling is prevalent in Sudan and is linked to corrupt state-embedded actors who benefit from the market. Sudan is a prominent human smuggling hub along the East African coast and the Horn of Africa, serving as a transit country for journeys towards North Africa, Europe and the Gulf. Most human smuggling networks use land routes in the Sahel, crossing highly militarized borders at which individuals often fall vulnerable to predatory nomadic groups that both extort and kidnap them for ransom. Human smuggling in eastern Sudan has diminished; however, this crime is susceptible to increase with the Tigray conflict. In western Sudan (Darfur and Kordofan), the re-eruption of violent conflicts further increased the number of forcibly displaced people. Young Sudanese are seeking to flee the country due to the escalation of internal and external conflicts, economic vulnerability and lack of access to justice.

Between 2021 and 2022, there have been several reports of extortion. In some cases, the perpetrators claimed to be representatives of the law and, in other cases, representatives of charitable and UN organizations. Cases of ransom demands are on the rise in various areas, such as that west of the Nile, where the perpetrators kidnap lorries and drivers crossing the region. Foreign nationals

have been kidnapped for ransom by criminal groups, mostly in the Darfur region.

### TRADE

Sudan has long been a hub for arms trafficking due to its porous borders and its internal conflict with the now independent South Sudan. Although violence has decreased in recent years, multidirectional arms trafficking continues to be a problem, and external states continue to supply weapons to the country. The government has relied on proxy armed tribes to fight opposition groups, and there is little transparency or accountability in how state and paramilitary weapons are managed and distributed. In fact, the paramilitary RSF, accused of smuggling arms, is relied on for the implementation of the national disarmament campaign. Sudan has also been accused of violating the UN arms embargo on South Sudan and supplying weapons to rebel groups in the Central African Republic (CAR). The Tigray conflict in Ethiopia is also having an impact on the illicit trade in weapons.

The COVID-19 pandemic in Sudan forced consumers to turn to counterfeit products due to exorbitant prices. And while the value and extent of this market is unknown, Sudanese authorities believe it is high compared to global and Arab markets. Sudan is also a transit and destination country for the illicit trade in tobacco products, which are smuggled through Mali, but this illicit trade in excisable goods is not pervasive in the country.

### ENVIRONMENT

Sudan does not have a well-established illicit flora trade organized crime market, and illegal activities are mainly for internal or regional demand. Charcoal consumption is still high, and the restriction of charcoal production from some tree species is not always respected due to inadequate institutional regulatory capacity and corruption. Former rebels have turned to exploiting Sudan's forests and wildlife as they were left without shelter, food or jobs, following the peace deal with the military. They are poaching wildlife and logging trees to sell as timber or burning them for charcoal production. Illegal logging is leading to the desertification of formerly forested areas. The illicit trade of Gum Arabic is ongoing in the Darfur region, with tens of thousands of tonnes being smuggled. The government is trying to fight this by incentivizing farmers to produce their own crops.



Poaching on Sudanese territory is negligible, as nearly all fauna has been decimated. However, Sudan remains a transit hub for wildlife trafficking in the region. Traffickers from neighbouring countries engage in pangolin trafficking, stockpiling scales in the country. The illegal trade of Nile crocodiles also occurs with the species being smuggled to various countries in the region and the Arab world.

Sudan is both a source and transit point for non-renewable resource crimes, particularly with regard to gold smuggling. Criminal networks regularly smuggle Sudanese artisanal gold out of the country, and it has been directly linked to high-level corruption and violence in various states. While the government has made some efforts to reduce black market gold sales, such as requiring miners to sell a percentage of their products to the Central Bank, these efforts have received significant criticism. Gold smuggling accounts for more than three quarters of the total gold produced in the country. Illicit oil siphoning also serves as a major source of criminal income, and diamonds and gold smuggled out of UN-sanctioned countries such as the CAR are also frequently trafficked through Sudan.

## DRUGS

The heroin trade is on the rise in Sudan, with large quantities being smuggled into the country through cargo ships along the Red Sea coast. Small fishing boats are then used to transport the heroin from Sudanese territorial waters. Sudan is also a transit country for cocaine to the Arabian Peninsula, with small amounts reportedly trafficked from neighbouring countries like Egypt. The drug trade in Sudan is facilitated by corruption and the presence of criminal networks, with drugs being trafficked alongside other illicit activities, such as arms and human trafficking.

Cannabis production and consumption are widespread in Sudan. The country is one of the largest producers of cannabis in Africa and the drug is often smuggled to the Arabian Peninsula. Moroccan 'kif' has also been known to transit through the country. Rather than a criminal market, this trade is culturally established and informal. Large quantities of cannabis have been planted in the Radom Reserve, southwest of Darfur, which is a safe haven for drug dealers due to its geography.

Sudan has seen an increase in the consumption of psychoactive substances – particularly prescription drugs like Tramadol and Captagon – over the last decade. They are smuggled into the country and sold in pharmacies, with some tea and coffee sellers also serving as drug dealers.

While Sudan's government has acknowledged a rise in the smuggling, sale and consumption of these drugs, this is not the case for amphetamines, methamphetamines and opioids, which remain uncommon due to their high cost. As a result of their quasi-medical use, prescription medicines such as synthetic opioids or benzodiazepines are also easier to conceal or justify possession of in a society with low levels of tolerance for intoxication. High-ranking officials, or their children, are often implicated in the drug trade. Recent seizures have revealed that Sudan could also be a transit point for synthetic drugs.

## CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

Sudan seemingly complies with the minimum global requirements for cybersecurity such as the creation of a Sudanese Government Information Security Center. It also participates in international forums and organizes awareness-raising campaigns. Despite this, online scams affect Sudanese users. Malicious web pages have allegedly been created on Blogspot and then shared using WhatsApp. It is unclear as to whether these scams are part of a larger criminal network. The Central Bank of Sudan has also warned against the usage of cryptocurrency due to its association with high-risk financial crime and piracy.

## FINANCIAL CRIMES

The financial and economic system in Sudan is plagued by high levels of corruption, primarily carried out by senior political figures and officials. They use their power and position to carry out corrupt activities including the misappropriation of state assets and resources. A network of state and private enterprises fosters illicit activities, corruption and fraud, with companies linked to the army engaging in financial fraud and evading taxes and customs fees.

## Criminal Actors

Sudanese mafia-style groups, whether pro-government or linked to rebels, maintain a degree of territorial control through extortion and looting, and are known to recruit children, and to engage in the trafficking and smuggling of illicit goods. Pro-government militias and heavily armed Darfuri rebel groups carry out criminal attacks against vulnerable groups. Despite some armed actors having joined the transitional government, state control remains limited, leading to an increase in all sorts of crime. Criminal networks operate in Sudan on a loose and uncoordinated basis, surviving alongside either pro-government or pro-rebel armed groups.



These networks play a crucial role in the smuggling of illicit goods, drug trafficking, arms trafficking, human trafficking and wildlife crimes. They deceptively promise Sudanese nationals employment in Libya and the Middle East, and then sell them to Libyan traffickers for forced labour.

Foreign criminal actors in Sudan are involved in human trafficking, the smuggling of gold and other goods and attacks on civilians. They collaborate with local criminals, smuggling people along the Darfur route to Libya and the Egyptian route to Europe. Criminal actors from the CAR and South Sudan are particularly active in border areas and are known to be involved in the smuggling of goods into Sudan. Hamas allegedly had a tight grasp on several private sector companies in Sudan due to the former government's support for the organization, but the crackdown on the former regime's institutions has had an impact on their networks in the country. However,

private sector companies, often with the help of foreign owned companies, have been accused of involvement in organized criminal activity. The current situation in Sudan is described as chaotic and opaque, with armed looting and kidnapping occurring in the northern state. Gangs, probably from the Libyan Toubou tribes, also operate in the desert west of the Nile, looting lorries, kidnapping citizens and demanding ransoms for their release. The RSF, comprising former Janjaweed militias and with links to other mafia-style groups in Sudan, are known to facilitate a variety of criminal activities, including human trafficking and increasingly engage in other corrupt practices, despite some of their leaders participating in Sudan's transitional government. The smuggling of gold by the RSF through airports and seaports has increased with its close collaboration with the international mercenary groups.

# RESILIENCE

## LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Sudan is one of the most unstable countries in the world, with the situation showing no signs of improvement. Currently, the country is going through a governance crisis due to the military coup, with the transitional government mainly dominated by the military. Protests have taken place, with activists demanding a civilian government. The current situation has resulted in growing insecurity, escalating tribal violence, and deteriorating economic and humanitarian conditions. The signatories to a recent agreement have consented to a civilian-led transition made up of democratic elections; however, critics claim that it lacks a clear roadmap or detailed action plan. Meanwhile, the military, the RSF, and rebel groups are tightening their grip on power and diverting Sudan's resources for their own benefit. The RSF is working to expand its influence, with land grabbing a common practice along the Nile. The former regime left Sudan with deeply entrenched corruption, a key pillar of the system of oppression under the former leadership. Sudan's governance system is undermined by the prevalence of decrees and directives, which significantly undermine the rule of law, the separation of powers between various branches of government, transparency and accountability. Despite public officials being required to disclose their

personal assets, enforcement and compliance mechanisms remain weak. Mechanisms making it possible for civilians to denounce the government safely are also lacking.

Sudan has ratified several international treaties relevant to transnational organized crime, except for two key protocols from the Palermo Convention. Despite this, generals in power often do not implement international agreements. In fact, local authorities do not fully support international cooperation as they see it as fortifying and advancing the interests of international actors. Sudan is also known to be in violation of international law by not respecting the arms embargo on South Sudan. Nevertheless, the Sudanese government has agreed to cooperate with the International Criminal Court (ICC) on specific cases related to war crimes and crimes against humanity. After the ousting of former president Omar al-Bashir in 2019, cooperation with the ICC continued, with Sudan handing over four Sudanese nationals, as well as al-Bashir, indicted for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. Sudan only has a limited legislative framework to combat organized crime. Nevertheless, the transition government has been making efforts to reform certain regulations, including anti-trafficking laws with the goal of aligning them with international standards.



## CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Sudan's judicial system is flawed, with a lack of specialized judicial units tasked with countering organized crime. The judiciary is also compromised by the arbitrary dismissal of qualified judges, lawyers and law officers. Generally, it is subservient to either the executive branch or security forces, particularly in cases regarding crimes against the state. Judicial appointments have been made by members of the ruling party, and judges that fail to support the state are relatively easily removed. As such, it is extremely difficult for judges to produce independent rulings in cases in which state officials, corrupt or otherwise, express interest. While Sudan's Ministry of Justice has reportedly made attempts at reform, Sudan's judiciary continues to lack the capacity and resources to counter organized crime effectively. Carceral facilities in Sudan are also problematic, including the use of torture; some detainees are prevented from seeing their relatives.

The RSF, established to combat human smuggling and trafficking, terrorism, the illicit trade in weapons and firearms collection, has increasingly undertaken operations for crowd control and law enforcement under the transitional government. This has led to the arbitrary detention of civilians and political activists. Sudanese authorities lack the necessary resources to confront organized crime networks and often utilize pro-government militias, which are sometimes themselves engaged in smuggling and trafficking activities, especially with Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Sudanese government struggles with preventing and responding to organized crime due to limited resources and capacity, resorting to states of emergency and border closures to control the country. Military decrees and emergency laws serve to undermine the rule of law.

Managing a lengthy land border shared with seven other countries presents a significant challenge in terms of border control. Sudan's vast and unpoliced land borders with Libya and the CAR make it relatively easy for illicit vehicles to enter undetected. Regarding cybersecurity, Sudan meets the minimum requirements in cyber technical measures, such as computer incident response teams, for a prompt and systematic response to national incidents. However, the country has weaknesses in cybersecurity cooperative measures at the national, regional and international levels.

## ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Despite being assessed as compliant with international recommendations, implementation remains a challenge, especially since the military coup in 2021. In fact, decisions taken were revoked, including the seizure of bank accounts with money laundering/terrorism financing risk. Among them were accounts linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, and companies associated with corrupt operations in gold smuggling and foreign exchange. The poor status of the Sudanese economy and notable differences between Central Bank and black market exchange rates for foreign currency are likely to be perpetuating the illicit flow of funds in Sudan. Furthermore, it has not been possible to determine whether measures are in place to prevent the abuse of crowdfunding and online gambling from becoming channels for money laundering.

Sudan lacks an efficient economic regulatory regime, leading to a largely informal economy. Poor and unstable governance, rigid labour markets and almost non-existent rule of law continue to hinder economic diversification. The Sudanese Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning announced a relatively high tax addition to business profits, which was seen by business owners as unfair and unreasonable given the current economic recession and inflation. This led to an open suspension of commercial activities in general, and the complete closure of public crop stock and livestock exchange markets in several states. Doing business in Sudan is difficult and international governments have warned their companies about the reputational risks of doing so. Financial assistance from the IMF and the World Bank, as well as other financial institutions, was halted due to the coup.

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Sudan is still falling short of meeting minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking in terms of sentencing mildness, holding trafficking criminals accountable and protecting trafficked victims. Although the government reported identifying more potential trafficking victims compared to the previous reporting period, a lack of training and conflation between human smuggling and trafficking meant that the government did not always distinguish between the two. Additionally, the government's existing shelters were reported to be in dire need of refurbishment, with a lack of trained mental health professionals making it difficult to provide care to victims. While Sudan has made improvements in terms of investigations into child soldiers' recruitment, there are still concerns about the government's protection of vulnerable populations. Further, there have not been



efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex, and there are concerns about corruption among state officials in this regard.

The Sudanese transitional government has continued to treat civil society organizations as government opposition despite recommendations to open a dialogue between political parties and civil society. In response to peaceful protests, security officials under the former regime cracked down on such organizations. This crackdown continues, and protesters have faced harassment and intimidation from security agencies. The Sudanese Professionals Association has emerged as a leader in the protests, which are focused not only on the lack of health services and other essentials, but also on environmental issues and the call for a civilian rule. However, the government has cracked down on journalists and media outlets, regularly arresting journalists and shutting down the internet. The situation has worsened since the military coup. Journalists face permanent surveillance, electronic monitoring, and the threat of violence, which has led to fatalities in certain instances. Female journalists occupy few media management positions and are often targets of harassment and violence.

