SOUTH SUDAN

South Sudan ranks 4th in the Index, with one of the highest criminality scores on the continent.

High scores across the criminal actor types in particular drive the overall high ranking, though the country also has two criminal markets in the environmental sector that are assessed as having an extremely negative influence on society. The interrelationship between illicit markets that finance armed groups and political corruption in a weak, consolidating state, as well as spillover impacts in the wider region, generally lead to the high criminality score.

South Sudan ranks 52nd in Africa for resilience, which reflects extremely low levels of resilience to organised crime, driven predominantly by weak institutions, high levels of corruption and ongoing conflict in the country.
Criminal Markets

The most significant criminal markets in South Sudan are in the environmental sector, where both flora and non-renewable-resource crimes score 8, which reflects their severe negative impact on society. Illegal logging and charcoal production in South Sudan are increasing threats to the country’s forests, particularly in protected areas and conservation zones, and feed the regional war economy. Experts have identified a nexus between local populations illegally felling timber, and foreign-owned firms that illicitly export timber from South Sudan to neighbouring countries.

The poaching of elephants, pangolins and hippos, for their teeth and bush meat, is reported as taking place in national parks, with links to timber trafficking. Though not at the scale of the illegal logging, nor with the same level of organisation or detrimental impact, it has nonetheless
resulted in an above average fauna crimes score of 6.5, which is considered to be of significant influence.

Likewise, the artisanal mining sector, which has been estimated to employ half a million people, has become increasingly marked by violence, as criminal networks have taken control of artisanal sites and co-opted minors. The oil sector is also associated with corruption and conflict.

Unsurprisingly, given the state of conflict, arms trafficking is ranked as the joint highest-scoring market. Despite UN and EU arms embargoes to limit the flow of weapons, the number of unauthorised arms flowing to civilian actors is increasing, with an additional 3.2 million small arms being introduced into circulation over the last five years. South Sudan’s immediate neighbours have also been cited as conduits for weapons flows into the country.

South Sudan has a high human trafficking score because of the extent of conflict-related exploitation, including sex trafficking, forced marriage, child soldiering and forced recruitment into armed forces. Widespread labour exploitation of men, women and children, with the complicity of law enforcement officials, is reported in key sectors. Human smuggling also occurs in South Sudan, as the country is a source and transit country for migrants.

No high-value markets are reported for cocaine or synthetic drugs. There is limited evidence of heroin trafficking, but not of domestic use. In contrast, a rise in cannabis consumption has been observed, particularly among young people, resulting in a score of 5, which indicates a moderate and spreading influence of the cannabis trade on society.

### Criminal Actors

South Sudan has high scores across the criminal actor types, with state-embedded actors scoring 8.5, and foreign actors and criminal networks scoring 8. The scores suggest that across the board they have an extremely negative impact on society.

Expert assessments describe a system by which militia and rebel groups are often aligned with government actors, using violence to achieve control of non-renewable resources, such as extractive industries and natural resources, and extract taxes. Rebel groups are involved in multiple criminal markets, including human trafficking, and illegal mining and logging; and criminal networks facilitate the movement of goods across borders, often with the assistance of corrupt officials.

Foreign actors monopolise certain sectors, including the oil industry, wildlife smuggling and illicit logging. Foreign corporations have captured the power and utilities sectors, often through concessions awarded by corrupt officials. A wide variety of foreign actors are involved in supplying weapons to the government and rebels, in violation of embargoes.
Ranking 52nd in Africa for resilience, South Sudan is assessed to be among the least-resilient countries on the continent. As a newly formed state, with weak to non-existent state institutions, extensive corruption and ongoing conflict, experts deem resilience to organised crime to be extremely ineffective across all resilience categories. There is no area in which experts assess the country as having the functional capacity to respond to organised crime.