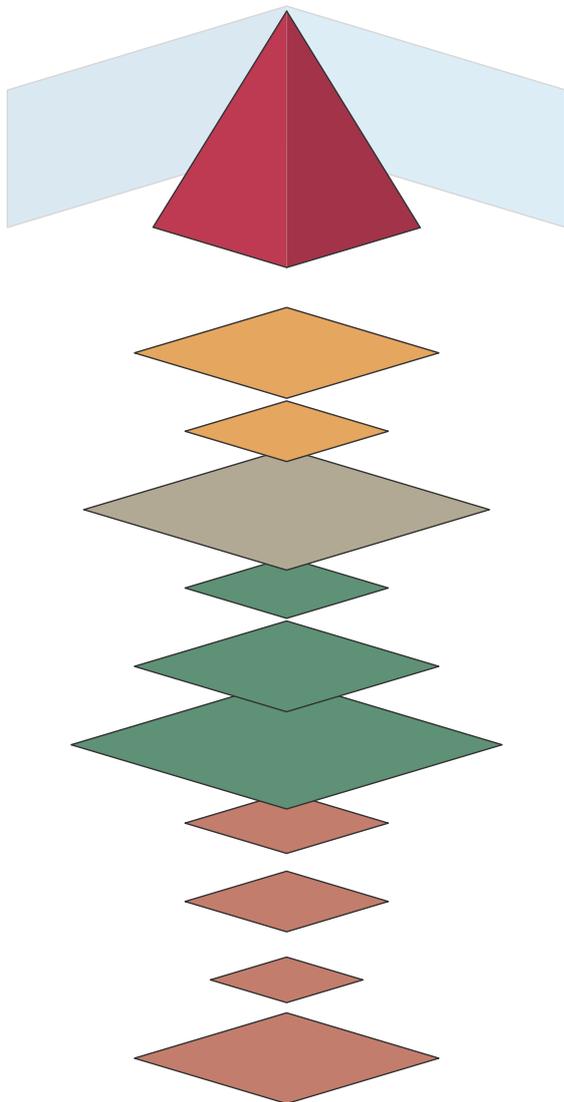


 **BURKINA FASO**



 **5.49**
CRIMINALITY SCORE

67th of 193 countries
21st of 54 African countries
6th of 15 West African countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS** **5.35**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	6.00
HUMAN SMUGGLING	4.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	8.00
FLORA CRIMES	4.00
FAUNA CRIMES	6.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	8.50
HEROIN TRADE	4.00
COCAINE TRADE	4.00
CANNABIS TRADE	3.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	6.00

 **CRIMINAL ACTORS** **5.63**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	3.50
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	6.50
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	6.50
FOREIGN ACTORS	6.00

 **3.63**
RESILIENCE SCORE

150th of 193 countries
28th of 54 African countries
8th of 15 West African countries

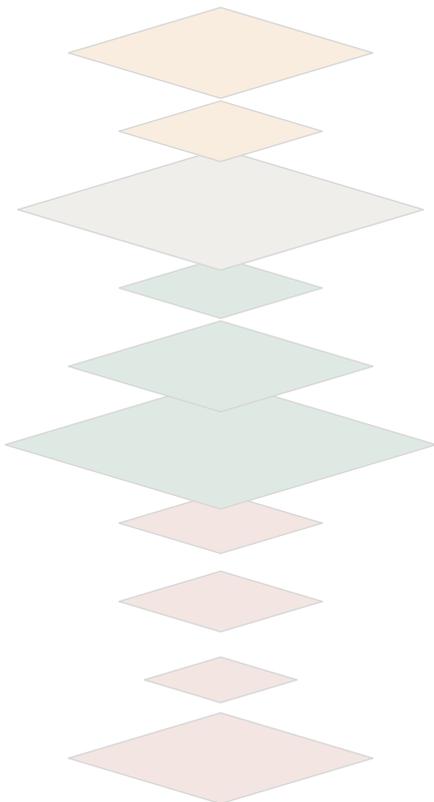
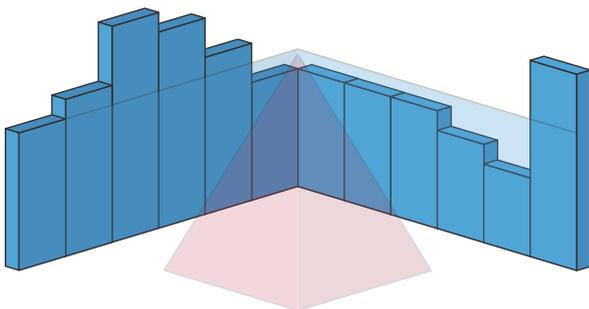


Funding provided by the United States Government.



ENACT is funded by the European Union and implemented by the Institute for Security Studies and INTERPOL, in affiliation with the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime.

 **BURKINA FASO**



 **3.63**
RESILIENCE SCORE

150th of 193 countries
28th of 54 African countries
8th of 15 West African countries

<u>POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE</u>	3.50
<u>GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY</u>	4.00
<u>INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION</u>	5.50
<u>NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS</u>	5.00
<u>JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION</u>	4.00
<u>LAW ENFORCEMENT</u>	3.00
<u>TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY</u>	3.00
<u>ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING</u>	3.00
<u>ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY</u>	3.00
<u>VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT</u>	2.50
<u>PREVENTION</u>	2.00
<u>NON-STATE ACTORS</u>	5.00

 **5.49**
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 CRIMINAL MARKETS	5.35
 CRIMINAL ACTORS	5.63



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CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Burkina Faso is a country of origin, transit point and destination for human trafficking in the form of forced labour, begging and sexual exploitation. Although trafficking affects all demographics, the trafficking of children is the most widespread. Families are often complicit with traffickers, who promise education opportunities, but instead make children pan for gold, or work as washers in artisanal mines, as farmhands, street vendors or domestic servants. Begging tends to be organized, with some children forced into it when attending Quranic schools. Many children are also trafficked to Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger and Togo for forced labour or sexual exploitation. Additionally, women from neighbouring countries are often lured to Burkina Faso with fake job offers, and then subjected to prostitution, or forced labour in bars. Mineworkers from neighbouring countries, particularly Niger, are also exploited and increasingly controlled by jihadist groups.

Due to unemployment, drought and tough socio-economic conditions, many people, especially the youth, leave Burkina Faso in search of better opportunities. While the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) allows free movement within the region, citizens have also started using northbound smuggling routes towards Libya, as well as the Mediterranean route to Europe.

TRADE

With crises continuing in neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire and Mali, Burkina Faso has become a significant transit hub for weapons trafficking. Weapons are often stolen from security services, and small arms and light weapons have been used by criminal networks to attack law enforcement and civilians. These arms are also used during inter-ethnic and inter-community tensions, most notably in the Liptako Gourma region, which extends through Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso. The conflicts within the three countries have contributed to illicit arms flows, and groups affiliated with al-Qaeda and the Islamic State have become increasingly active in the arms trafficking market.

ENVIRONMENT

Criminal actors are involved in both flora and fauna trafficking in Burkina Faso. Armed groups, primarily affiliated with al-Qaeda and the Islamic State, have taken over territory and increased resource extraction in previously protected areas, sometimes offering livelihoods to local people. Armed groups seeking to earn profits through the sale of wood,

charcoal and other materials contribute to increasing rates of environmental degradation. While most of the annual loss of wooded areas is linked to farming, some species have been destroyed by criminal gangs trafficking timber. With regard to fauna, pangolins and desert tortoises are illegally hunted and sold to criminal gangs meeting demand from South-eastern Asia. In 2017, a record seizure in Côte d'Ivoire of three tonnes of pangolin scales was reported, representing approximately four thousand pangolins, a portion of which were captured in Burkina Faso. Illegal primate hunting is also known to be a problem in Burkina Faso, as they are used in traditional medicine markets.

Burkina Faso is a major gold producer, heavily linked to livelihoods, criminality and corruption. Analysis of atmospheric mercury emissions show significantly more gold is mined annually than reported. Gold is smuggled to neighbouring countries as well as to countries abroad, including those in the Arab Gulf. Rising insecurity in areas near mines involves mineworkers, criminal networks, entrepreneurs, the state and foreign actors. Gold mining and smuggling are key revenue streams for violent extremist groups in Burkina Faso, and it is likely that proceeds go to groups in Mali and Niger as well. Groups aligned with al-Qaeda and the Islamic State control gold-mining sites and have allowed artisanal gold mining in areas previously off limits. Formal artisanal and small-scale gold-mining operators have been banned in some areas where the groups are most active and where the government has been driven out.

DRUGS

The capital, Ouagadougou is a significant illicit drug trafficking hub, which includes heroin, destined for European and North American markets. A luxury drug, often linked to tourism and the upper class, heroin is smuggled by air along the Mumbai, Addis Ababa, Bamako or Ouagadougou axis and by road along the Bittou, Lomé, Cotonou, and Lagos axis. As with heroin, most synthetic drugs are also considered luxury drugs, although the market is limited. Notably, Tramadol trafficking and consumption is growing rapidly, and it is distinctly non-luxury, feeding a larger market. Moreover, annual seizures of amphetamines are high. Burkina Faso is also increasingly a source country for cannabis, trafficked to Benin, Ghana and Mali, and grown along the border with Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo. However, it is not unusual to find the drug in Ouagadougou, in the north-western periphery, in Bobo Dioulasso in the Kou Valley, and the region of Boromo. While relatively limited, cannabis is mainly consumed by unemployed youth and the expat community. Although cocaine trafficking is limited, the country is at risk of becoming a transit country for the drug through Sahelian routes and nearby countries.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

In Burkina Faso, terrorist groups affiliated with al-Qaeda and the Islamic State are active and operate mainly in the northern and eastern areas of the country, with several attacks occurring in Ouagadougou. Many groups have a known name and control territory, and though they receive support from regional and international jihadist groups, they are also involved in organized crime and exploit local criminal networks. Such activities include the smuggling of counterfeit cigarettes and pharmaceutical drugs as well as illicit gold mining, in areas where the government has been pushed out. Criminal networks are built around actors with transactional, overlapping criminal relationships. The influence, scale and scope of local criminal networks has spread to include illegal gold mining, narcotics trafficking,

smuggling, contraband sales, endangered fauna trafficking and money laundering. Most are low-level transporters linked to criminal networks based in neighbouring countries.

Many state actors are involved in corruption and embezzlement in Burkina Faso, and while state-embedded actor cooperation with jihadist groups has declined over past decades, security forces and government elites are now believed to facilitate drug and contraband trafficking, including fuel and cigarettes. Furthermore, as a transit country for illicitly traded commodities, many foreign actors are involved in the criminal networks in Burkina Faso. While the key actors are local, most of the drugs networks are connected to individuals from Latin America. Many other gangs, including jihadist groups, operate in the greater Sahel-Saharan region.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Historically, there has been little political will to address organized crime in Burkina Faso. Since 2015, the government has taken steps to address the systemic corruption which has undermined previous efforts. However, existing state structures struggle to provide basic services and remain functionally deficient in many areas. While the government has made efforts to investigate and punish economic and political crimes, as demonstrated by passing anti-corruption legislation, shortcomings remain. Corruption is perceived to be fairly high and access to information is also relatively poor. Entrenched elites have precluded meaningful reforms since the transition from the Compaoré regime (1987–2014), but there are initiatives to increase government transparency, accountability and cooperation with civil society, largely due to pressure from civil society and the general public.

Burkina Faso has ratified all international treaties relevant to organized crime, and the country closely cooperates with international organizations including the UN, INTERPOL, the EU, ECOWAS and foreign governments, to effectively counter organized crime and terrorism. Burkina Faso also has a more robust rule of law compared to many other African nations. Although these domestic laws address organized crime and specific criminal markets, the country lacks capacity for effective enforcement, and extrajudicial killings by law enforcement have been recorded.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Burkina Faso has lost significant territorial control to violent extremist groups. Bordering six countries, many of which face insecurity and insurgency issues, Burkina Faso's border control efforts endure many challenges. This necessitates outside assistance, provided by the international community. The threat of Islamic extremism has prompted international and national investments into strengthening law enforcement and investigative capacity, however, this is predominantly focused on counterterrorism rather than targeting organized crime. While terrorist groups occasionally attack drug trafficking convoys, and routinely pillage villages and steal livestock, such activities cannot be characterized as organized crime and are seldom prioritized for investigation.

With the growing threat of terrorism spilling over from Sahel-based Islamic extremist movements, judicial authorities and instruments are being developed to respond to the threat. Additionally, the judicial system benefits from technical support and capacity building. Efforts are still needed to strengthen units and aid the investigation, prosecution and adjudication of organized crime and terrorism cases. A significant portion of the prison population consists of pre-trial detainees, which suggests a case backlog and judicial inefficiency in processing cases. Several attacks on civilians, including extrajudicial killings, have been carried out by members of the security services who operate with impunity, and zero accountability. There are documented cases of the Burkinabe state supporting 'self-defence' groups or ethnic militias carrying out massacres on its behalf. The country has one law enforcement unit tasked

with countering organized crime, however there are no judiciary-related specialized units to support it.

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ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Although basic anti-money-laundering laws and structures exist, effective enforcement remains a challenge due to the weak capacity of the financial intelligence unit and because of the country's large informal economy. This is due in part to state actor complicity, but also the informal and cash nature of the economy. Progress has been made, but money laundered by the former regime is still in use and the government has failed to respond to requests for asset recovery. Poverty remains high, while many shortcomings in respect to health, education and gender equality still exist. Furthermore, programme implementation is typically left to local institutions due to decentralization and a culture of self-help, but financial support often depends on foreign donors. Notably, a portion of the economy is no longer in the state's control because of the jihadist insurgency. However, a recent government plan focusing on structural transformation of the economy and welfare may reduce incentives to engage in criminal activities. Despite this, doing business remains difficult in Burkina Faso because of the levels of poverty as well as complicated regulations.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

While Burkina Faso does not have a witness protection programme, significant measures have been implemented to address human trafficking. The government has attempted to improve procedures to identify victims and opened a 24-hour shelter in Ouagadougou, where food, clothing, health care and legal assistance is provided with the support of international and non-governmental organizations. Still, long-standing care for victims remains insufficient. With service providers needing funds and resources to offer protection and treatment, the government acknowledges that victim services are lacking, which often results in the re-trafficking of victims. Although no formal state-based strategy to promote victim participation in trials exists, and support mechanisms for victims of modern slavery need enhancing, the country is better off in this respect than other African nations.

Some initiatives are ongoing to prevent organized crime, including the training of law enforcement and better management of porous borders, however, there are no community-driven prevention activities. Burkina Faso has considerable civil society traditions and numerous organizations, including village groups and other community-based associations. A wide range of non-state actor groups including professional unions, human-rights groups and associations promoting literacy, environmental issues and advocacy for vulnerable groups, are critical to the country's civil society. While social cohesion is relatively high, the country has experienced unrest and public discontent with government institutions.