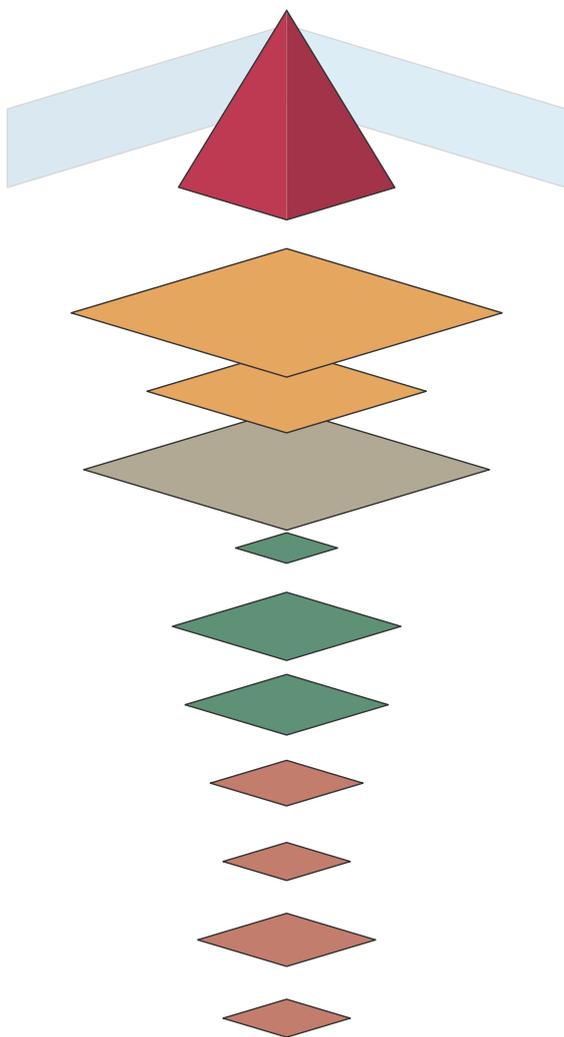


 **BURUNDI**



 **4.51**
CRIMINALITY SCORE

119th of 193 countries
37th of 54 African countries
8th of 11 Central African countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS** **4.40**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	8.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	5.50
ARMS TRAFFICKING	8.00
FLORA CRIMES	2.00
FAUNA CRIMES	4.50
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	4.00
HEROIN TRADE	3.00
COCAINE TRADE	2.50
CANNABIS TRADE	3.50
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	2.50

 **CRIMINAL ACTORS** **4.63**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	1.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	4.50
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	9.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	4.00

 **2.08**
RESILIENCE SCORE

185th of 193 countries
50th of 54 African countries
10th of 11 Central African countries

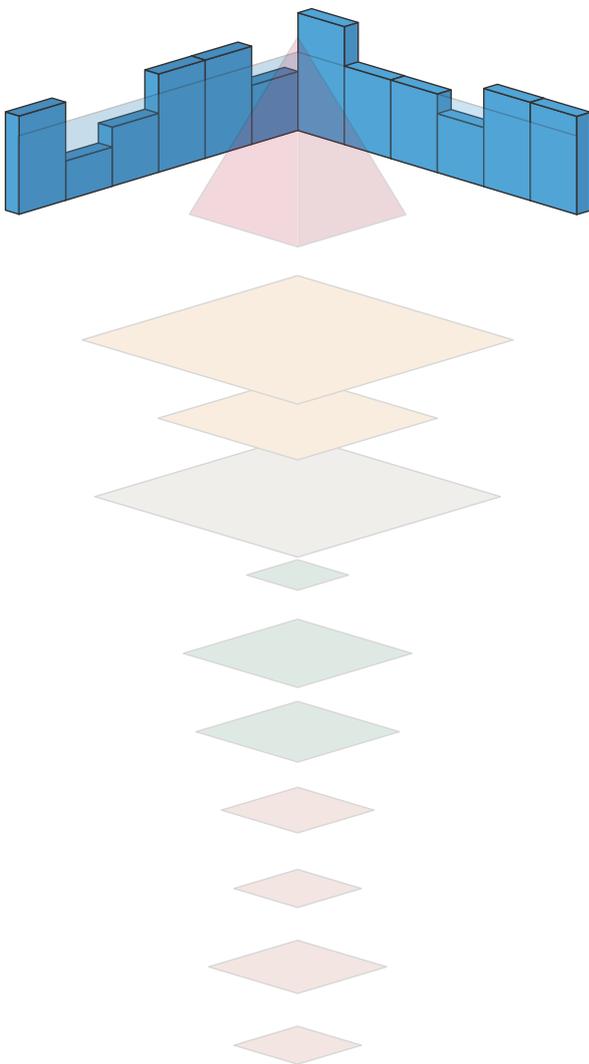


Funding provided by the United States Government.



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.

 **BURUNDI**



2.08
RESILIENCE SCORE

185th of 193 countries
50th of 54 African countries
10th of 11 Central African countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	2.50
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	1.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	1.50
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	2.50
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	2.50
LAW ENFORCEMENT	1.50
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	3.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	2.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	2.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	1.50
PREVENTION	2.50
NON-STATE ACTORS	2.50

4.51
CRIMINALITY SCORE

119th of 193 countries
37th of 54 African countries
8th of 11 Central African countries

 CRIMINAL MARKETS	4.40
 CRIMINAL ACTORS	4.63



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CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Human trafficking is more prevalent in Burundi than in many other African countries and is exacerbated by poor living conditions and human rights violations. The country is also a significant source country for victims of trafficking. Sexual and labour exploitation are widespread, as is trafficking related to the ongoing conflict within the country, and the recruitment of child soldiers. Due to ethnic violence and the political crisis, human smuggling is also rife, and victims are vulnerable to human trafficking, violence, abuse and exploitation. Kenya and South Africa are destination countries for Burundians seeking employment. However, displaced Burundians seek refuge in neighbouring countries, primarily Rwanda, Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Uganda. While some are repatriated, tightening border control measures have rendered smuggling to both Tanzania and Rwanda increasingly difficult.

TRADE

Arms trafficking along Burundi's border with the DRC is rife, despite an arms embargo between the two countries. Along with assault rifles and ammunition, small arms and light weapons are commonly trafficked across the border, including to armed groups in the DRC. In addition, rebel groups often launch attacks on Burundian territory, resulting in a spike in the demand for firearms and ammunition. A significant percentage of violent incidents involve small arms or grenades.

ENVIRONMENT

Flora crimes do not appear significant, however, Burundi is affected by the illicit African hardwood trade, which is a growing regional problem in the Congo basin. Timber trafficking occurs in the eastern DRC and across the region, however once it leaves the DRC, the trade is well regulated, and no evidence points to it being a consolidated criminal market in Burundi. Although Burundi lacks the wildlife diversity found elsewhere in the region, it was historically an ivory hub in Central Africa and has an ivory stockpile. Additionally, poaching has continued unabated and is believed to be a significant issue affecting the populations of elephants, pangolins, mountain gorillas and African Grey parrots. Burundi is also a transit country for wildlife trafficking, largely facilitated by corrupt officials, as is the case with gold smuggling. Illicit gold is mined locally, with a large proportion smuggled to the United Arab Emirates, as well as being imported from the DRC. In addition to gold, the prevalence of valuable minerals, such as copper,

cobalt and platinum; along with Burundi's dire economic situation, are incentives for mineral smuggling. After gold, tin, tungsten and tantalum are the most profitable and most commonly smuggled minerals throughout the country, and the wider region.

DRUGS

Burundi is a minor waypoint for drugs, including cocaine and heroin, largely due to inadequate border controls. Heroin is imported via the eastern border en-route to Europe by air, or elsewhere in Africa, via land routes. Domestic heroin consumption is rising, and it is often consumed in combination with anti-inflammatories and paracetamol in a local mix known as 'boost'. As it is relatively expensive, cocaine consumption is low; however, crack cocaine use is growing given its lower cost and preferred effect. Burundi is an emerging cocaine transit country, connecting South American cocaine imports from the DRC and Kenya to European markets via land routes to Entebbe International Airport in Uganda. Most shipments are concealed as luggage or cargo, or as internal body concealments by 'mules'. While synthetic drug consumption is low, Burundi is a source country for cannabis, which is often trafficked to neighbouring Rwanda. It is also a transit country for cannabis produced by its neighbours, and a destination country for cannabis trafficked from the DRC.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Criminal groups involved in activities such as arms and human trafficking include both non-state armed militias and government-affiliated militias. The former are the most prevalent, while smaller criminal syndicates appear heavily involved in organized criminal activity. Notably, smugglers cooperate extensively with corrupt state officials, primarily border control officials, who facilitate illicit goods smuggling between Burundi and the DRC. The Imbonerakure, the youth league of the country's ruling party, the CNDD-FDD, constitutes the country's main criminal network, and is involved in extortion, kidnapping, illegal taxation, smuggling and murder. In some areas, it has more authority than the Burundian police or local administrators, although many members have been arrested. Moreover, organized forms of violence are often perpetrated by members of the state security apparatus as well, consolidating repressive government rule by intimidation and enabling corruption. Petty corruption among police officers is commonplace, and the complacency of high-ranking officials has rendered Burundi a logistical hub for arms trafficking, gold smuggling and human trafficking operations. In particular, state officials across various departments, including the police, as well as teachers, and the families of human-trafficking victims, are

known to be complicit in human trafficking. Leading officials in the ruling party are especially corrupt and involved in both organized crime and illicit economic activities at the national level. The CNDD-FDD has established ties to foreign criminal actors that engage in both smuggling and money laundering.

Rwandan officials have also allegedly been involved in the recruitment of Burundian refugees into militias supporting the Burundian opposition, and human smugglers in Burundi

often originate from Rwanda or the DRC. Chinese nationals are also involved in ivory trafficking out of Burundi, while foreign businesspeople from Lebanon and elsewhere in Africa participate in trafficking networks under the protection of corrupt officials. No evidence points toward the existence of mafia-style groups in Burundi, although some militias are known to feature organized hierarchies and it is likely that they are involved in illicit trade.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Persistent political unrest and ethnic tension undermines governance, and as such, the government has made minimal effort to combat organized crime. Although the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Secretariat is headquartered in Bujumbura, the government has demonstrated near indifference in addressing illicit mineral mining and smuggling, which contribute to the wealth of key officials. Several high-profile scandals involving the presidency have come to light, one resulting in the murder of a prominent activist in 2009, and armed rebellions have failed to destabilize the government. As a one-party state, accountability is nearly non-existent, with ruling-party securocrats, the police and local administrators engaging in malfeasance. Burundi is one of the most corrupt regimes in the world, with rampant crime and nepotism. Its zero-tolerance policy lacks credibility, as only low-level police have been arrested. Moreover, authorities are known to allocate public funds to the Sangwe Cooperatives, composed of ruling-party members. Some government ministries have ceased publication of economic data and annual reports, and the government has been accused of failing to respect legal obligations, evidenced by the post-electoral crackdown in 2020. Many leaders also failed to declare their assets, while government subsidies and public sector salaries are used to ensure regime loyalty.

Although Burundi is party to international organized crime agreements and is a member of the Great Lakes Judicial Cooperation Network, the country's regional cooperation efforts fail to prevent or combat organized crime. Authorities have previously arrested UN personnel, banning them from investigating sensitive matters, and as such, the US and European security services severed ties with their Burundian counterparts. Moreover, Burundi withdrew from the International Criminal Court, and threatened to withdraw from the UN Refugee Agency. In 2020, the government expelled the country's World Health Organization (WHO) representative, as then president Pierre Nkurunziza was in denial about the COVID-19 pandemic. Since Nkurunziza's

death in June 2020, the government has re-established ties and appointed a new WHO representative. Notably, Burundian legislation addresses wildlife, arms, drug and human trafficking. The latter was updated to include formal penalties, but although this resulted in a decline in human trafficking, the issue persists. Furthermore, wildlife-related legislation is generally not enforced, and arms traffickers operate with a large degree of impunity.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Although Burundi's judge appointment process enables judicial independence, judges are subjected to intense political pressure and are known to be subordinate to the state, evidenced in the conviction of activists for their criticism of the government. The Supreme Court lacks a records management programme, triggering inefficient liaising with lower courts and prompting lower courts to make decisions based on outdated precedents. Moreover, prisons are poorly managed, understaffed and overcrowded, and over half of the prisoners are pre-trial detainees. Due to the involvement of high-ranking officials in organized crime and illicit business, law enforcement supervisory and investigative capacity is limited and undermined, despite anti-corruption and anti-organized crime legislation. Members of the Public Security Police in particular are often involved in facilitating crimes, and the rebel and military backgrounds of most police have become apparent in their inappropriate handling of suspects, and the general public. Since 2015, the government has focused on consolidating its control over the country rather than on combating organized crime, which is exacerbated by insufficient infrastructure.

Burundi's territorial integrity is extremely fragile, largely due to border porosity, especially along its border with the DRC. Border officials lack proper training, and as such, cross-border smuggling and trafficking activities occur unabated, with most illicit commodities entering via Tanzania. Since the outbreak of conflict, army and militiamen from the Imbonerakure have been deployed to border regions.

However, armed rebels based in the DRC have successfully organized attacks in Burundi. Despite strict surveillance, border infiltration from Rwanda also occurs, especially around Kibira National Park and the Ruzizi Plain.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The largely informal nature of the Burundian economy raises significant money laundering concerns. Despite having legislation in place and the country being party to relevant conventions, inadequate resources hinder implementation and efficacy. Moreover, the government lacks political will to combat money laundering, and has failed to provide adequate funding or implement training. The ruling party controls the Central Bank and the small national banking sector, devising methods to launder stolen assets with impunity. Although banks are legally obligated to report large deposits or suspicious transactions, this does not occur, and the Ministry of Finance's Financial Intelligence Unit has yet to become operational. Regulations on the electronic transfer of funds are also lacking.

Leading government officials own hotels in the capital, where a hotel construction boom occurred as a result of money laundering activities. Unemployment rates are high, and most people live in rural areas, without economic prospects, thus triggering rising rates of human smuggling and trafficking. Illicit mining also presents a significant economic challenge; individual mineworker registration is nearly non-existent, and the sector contributes little to the economy, reflecting inefficient regulation. Officials also infringe on property rights, and land conflict management is often driven by political motives, with the properties of prominent opponents in exile illegally seized. The rise of the informal economy is also a hindrance to the state's limited economic regulatory capacity and doing business in Burundi is extremely difficult.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

The limited support that is available to victims of organized crime in Burundi is provided by NGOs. Drug rehabilitation centres are insufficiently stocked and understaffed. Burundi also lacks prisoner reintegration programmes, and support for victims of human trafficking and modern slavery, and has failed to update human trafficking statistics. Although increased screening for human trafficking indicators has been introduced at the Melchior Ndadaye International Airport in Bujumbura, the implementation of prevention mechanisms remains limited.

Government repression has severely restricted civil society capacity, and since the outbreak of conflict, only civil society organizations that serve as government allies are allowed to operate successfully. NGOs have been banned, and repressive state policies target independent media and anti-corruption activists. As such, the Anti-corruption and Economic Malpractice Observatory is the only anti-corruption

organization in operation. Media freedom has significantly deteriorated, with many journalists forced into exile, detained on false charges, or intimidated when reporting on the misuse of public funds. Human-rights activists have also been arrested and sentenced to lengthy prison terms. In 2018, online accounts were temporarily suspended for readers of the independent website Iwacu, as well as the BBC. Furthermore, during the 2020 election, authorities arrested opposition militants and staged a digital blackout, blocking social media platforms.

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