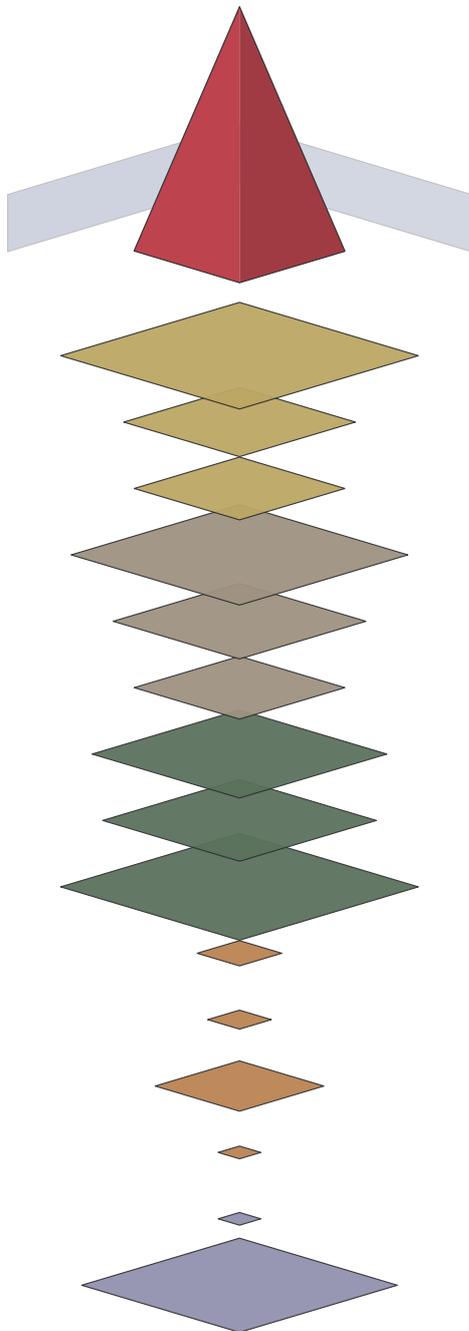


 **SOUTH SUDAN**



 **6.32
CRIMINALITY SCORE**

9th of 54 African countries
4th of 9 East African countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS 5.13**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	8.5
HUMAN SMUGGLING	5.5
EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING	5
ARMS TRAFFICKING	8
TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS	6
ILLICIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS	5
FLORA CRIMES	7
FAUNA CRIMES	6.5
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	8.5
HEROIN TRADE	2
COCAINE TRADE	1.5
CANNABIS TRADE	4
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	1
CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES	1
FINANCIAL CRIMES	7.5

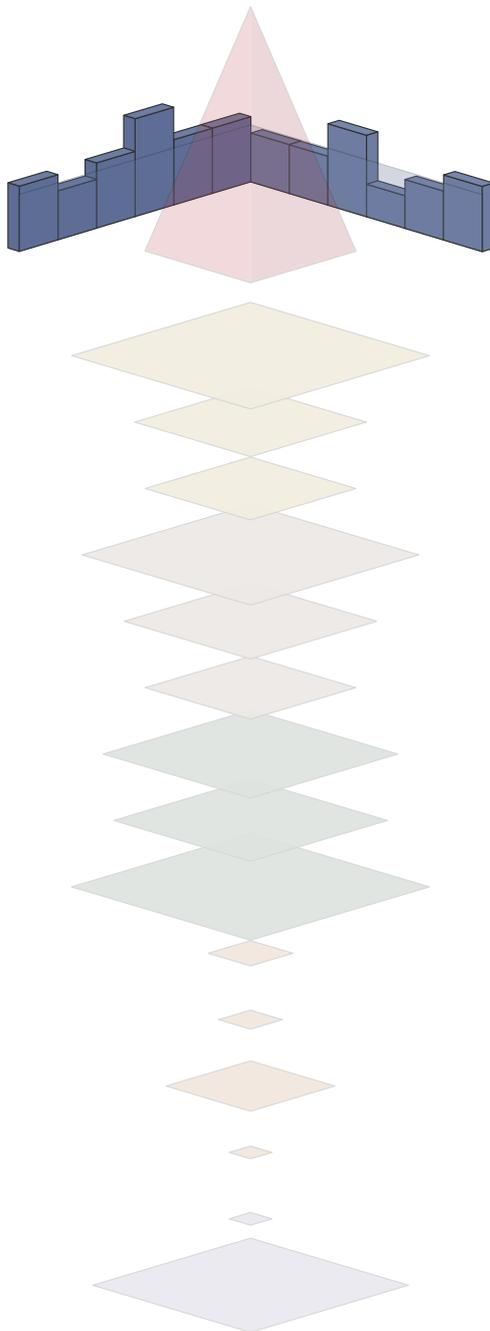
 **CRIMINAL ACTORS 7.5**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	5
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	7.5
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	9
FOREIGN ACTORS	8
PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS	8

 **1.88
RESILIENCE SCORE**



 **SOUTH SUDAN**



 **1.88
RESILIENCE SCORE**

51st of 54 African countries
8th of 9 East African countries

<u>POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE</u>	2
<u>GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY</u>	1.5
<u>INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION</u>	2
<u>NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS</u>	3
<u>JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION</u>	2
<u>LAW ENFORCEMENT</u>	2
<u>TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY</u>	1.5
<u>ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING</u>	1.5
<u>ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY</u>	2.5
<u>VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT</u>	1
<u>PREVENTION</u>	1.5
<u>NON-STATE ACTORS</u>	2

 **6.32
CRIMINALITY SCORE**

 <u>CRIMINAL MARKETS</u>	5.13
 <u>CRIMINAL ACTORS</u>	7.5



CRIMINALITY

Criminal Markets

PEOPLE

South Sudan is both a source and destination country for human trafficking, with its citizens and foreign nationals being victims of forced labour, domestic servitude, early marriage and sexual exploitation. Camps for internally displaced persons and child marriage are significant contributors to trafficking, with girls being forced into marriage as compensation for inter-ethnic killings. Child labour is widespread, with young boys used to guard or raid cattle, which serves as a vital source of income. Children are also forced to work in construction, mining and other dangerous jobs. The government continues to employ or recruit child soldiers, with thousands of minors in combat roles. However, more children fight on behalf of locally organized armed groups rather than formally organized groups with centralized command and control structures. Recent improvements in government and social conditions from peace agreements signed in 2022 and 2023 may lead to a decrease in human trafficking and related crimes.

Millions of South Sudanese have left the country due to violent conflict, with Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Kenya being the most common destination countries. South Sudan remains a source, destination and transit country for human smuggling. South Sudanese smugglers are essential in feeding the flows of people from the region to the Maghreb via Egypt, Libya and Chad. South Sudan is also a transit country for individuals from Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia trying to reach Europe or Northern Africa. Kidnapping for ransom is a frequent cause of inter-communal violence in South Sudan.

TRADE

Despite the implementation of arms embargos, arms trafficking continues, with weapons allegedly supplied to various local groups from around the world. South Sudan has agreed with Sudan to curb the illicit arms trade through reinforcing cross-border controls. However, as the conflicts are becoming increasingly politicized, cattle keepers operating as organized militias have been provided with light weapons and heavy artillery by the main parties to the conflict. Overall, South Sudan has a culture of cattle rustling and intercommunal violence, which is accompanied by the use of firearms.

In the East African region, the issue of counterfeiting is not new, with fraudulent traders flooding the market with fake and substandard goods, putting genuine businesses at risk. South Sudan is a destination country for counterfeit goods smuggled through the borders of Kenya and Uganda, with a lack of resources and technology to detect and counter their importation. This exposes the South Sudanese people to health risks due to the consumption of substandard food items, and the government has yet to establish a laboratory for testing imported pharmaceutical and food items, increasing the vulnerability of the country to counterfeit goods. The illicit trade in excise goods such as cigarettes, sugar, non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages in South Sudan is common. As the country relies on Kenya and Uganda for all its imports, non-declared excise goods enter through the porous borders with these countries. Non-declared excise goods also enter along borders areas such as Ahobo, Burungila and Kuaralak along the border with Ethiopia; Raga, Boro and Medina, along the border with the DRC; and along the borders with Sudan and the Central African Republic.

ENVIRONMENT

South Sudan's natural forests and woodlands are heavily degraded due to prolonged conflict, illegal logging and charcoal production. Teak is illegally harvested in heavily wooded areas, mainly near the border with Uganda, with no road access or security personnel to enforce the law. Foreign operators bribe government officials and rebels for protection to trade illicitly. Due to the lack of alternative energy sources, the production of charcoal in South Sudan continues to persist. Despite the ban on charcoal exportation, criminal syndicates smuggle it to neighbouring countries, such as Sudan and the DRC. Also, illegal sandalwood harvesting has resulted in it becoming an endangered species.

The country is a transit and source for fauna trafficking, with ivory, pangolin, hippo teeth and bush meat among the most frequently trafficked products. The spread of unlicensed firearms facilitates poaching in different parts of the country, with resources to combat it being scarce. Additionally, the country's role as a regional wildlife trafficking corridor from Central to North Africa has fueled poaching outside protected parks. As job opportunities are scarce, people kill fauna for money. A lack of resources to combat poaching has made the situation worse.



The oil industry, despite being the country's primary source of revenue, is significantly diverted by the government, especially during the war, leaving much of the population without basic services. South Sudan has substantial gold deposits, employing tens of thousands of unregulated artisanal miners, who are vulnerable to violent competition, corruption and mismanagement. However, profits are mostly captured by bigger players that provide financing to people active in the illicit market, including political elites, foreign nationals and non-state armed groups. Most of the gold produced in South Sudan is smuggled, with the main supply chains running from South Sudan across Uganda, Kenya, the DRC and Sudan, and then to international markets in Dubai and China. The South Sudan government is still awarding contracts to companies owned by individuals designated for international sanctions.

DRUGS

South Sudan is a transit country for heroin trafficking, with the drug smuggled from Brazil to Juba before being trafficked through Kampala to Nairobi and arriving in Mombasa, Kenya, as a final destination. The country is part of the southern route for heroin trafficking that allows the drug to filter into landlocked countries inside Africa. South Sudan, however, does not have a considerable user population for heroin as people are unable to afford the drug.

Cannabis is the most profitable and prevalent drug in the country and is smuggled through the Nadapal and Nimule border points. Cocaine and synthetic drugs do not appear to play a prominent role in South Sudan drug markets.

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

There is no evidence in South Sudan indicating the existence of cyber-dependent crimes linked to organized crime. The most common crimes reported in the country are related to hacking.

FINANCIAL CRIMES

South Sudan has been severely impacted by corruption and tax evasion by its ruling elite. The high levels of insecurity in the country have made it easier for government and military officials to steal money from state coffers. Much of these funds have been moved to offshore accounts in Kenya, Uganda and the UK. This money has been used to purchase real estate and for other personal benefit. Grossly overpriced public procurement contracts have

also been used to transfer funds out of the country. Lines of credit have been used to facilitate the award of multimillion US dollar contracts to intermediaries and foreign-run companies that existed only on paper. Businesses with connections to the ruling elite have been the beneficiaries of these funds, with this eventually having to be repaid by the public, mainly through oil production. Tax evasion is also a major financial crime committed in South Sudan. Companies from different sectors, including construction, general trading and airlines, have been involved in tax evasion. The shortage of foreign currency – primarily US dollars – in South Sudan has resulted in a parallel black market, and the difference between the official exchange rate and black-market exchange rate creates significant distortions in the economy.

Criminal Actors

The country's political factions use the land under their control to enrich themselves by engaging in illegal activities, such as smuggling people, arms and goods, and illegal mining and logging. State-embedded actors appear to be involved in all criminal markets and levels in South Sudan. Checkpoints in roads are likely the largest non-oil source of cash for government agents and security forces, with government forces accused of extorting citizens. Government officials and businesspeople in South Sudan are involved in disguising or converting the proceeds of crime into legitimate money. Politically exposed persons have infiltrated neighbouring countries' banking, real estate, trade, defense and corporate enterprises with their ill-gotten gains. Over half of the domestic commercial banks are owned or controlled by political elites, which use them for money laundering and other illicit activities. South Sudan is becoming a haven for criminals to launder the proceeds of their illicit activities, as corruption is rampant, rule of law is weak and predatory networks are thriving. State-embedded actors are known to assist criminals by granting citizenship, lucrative contracts, and other benefits and titles.

Foreign actors, such as arms dealers, are involved in supplying weapons to the government and rebels alike, and exploitation of human and material resources, such as oil and gold, is a fast-rising area of crime. The international corporations in South Sudan are known to provide material support to a pro-government militia that committed atrocities against civilians. Criminal networks are involved in different criminal markets, including human trafficking, child recruitment and illegal mining. Some areas of the country are controlled by heavily armed



networks that use violence to protect their interests. These groups are often engaged in petty robbery, homicide and grave bodily injury. They are known to be recruited by prominent businessmen and political leaders. South Sudan is also plagued by mafia-style criminal groups involved in a variety of illicit activities, including illegal logging, gold mining and extractive industries. Violence in the country has moved from the national army to

communal militias. Rebel groups are characterized as a collection of militias accused of human rights atrocities, war crimes and crimes against humanity. These groups control illegal taxation and extractive industries, which have been linked to significant violence and corruption related to organized crime since the renewed outbreak of the conflict.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The government of South Sudan has failed to prevent and suppress organized crime, with government elites themselves being involved in criminal activities, such as human trafficking and smuggling, and gold mining. Insecurity remains high due to ethnic unrest, poor inter-state cooperation and a lack of infrastructure, among other factors. Economic crisis, driven by hyperinflation, resulted in increasing levels of crime. Political rivalry between different ethnic groups has led to social disintegration in the country and internal fighting continues. Corruption is pervasive in all spheres of government, with high-ranking government officials implicated in supplying heavy military-grade weapons to local militias. In fact, there is no transparency or accountability, and corruption worsens an economy already in crisis. Political and military elites have looted the country's natural resources and gained enormous wealth through corrupt procurement deals. Officials who were previously accused of embezzlement have been appointed to key positions.

The country has signed agreements with neighbouring countries to fight cross-border crimes and ensure security along these borders. The UN Security Council has adopted a resolution on extending the arms embargo on South Sudan, a travel ban and financial sanctions for targeted individuals to prevent the flow of weapons that would likely be used in abuses against civilians. In general, South Sudan's legislative framework fails to adequately address organized crime, which has led to some communities refusing to acknowledge the government's conflict resolution initiative.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

The justice system in South Sudan is plagued with corruption and inefficiency, leading to a weak rule of law and poor access to justice for its citizens. The capacity of the judiciary to investigate and prosecute organized crime is low, as evidence of crime is not well-preserved, and instances of tampering are common. While customary law is integral to the legal environment of South Sudan, the substance of such laws, as well as the relationship between customary systems and the formal legal system, is unclear.

Law enforcement efforts are sporadic, and the deep-seated culture of impunity makes it nearly impossible to investigate corruption and prosecute powerful actors. Law enforcement agents are highly criticized by the South Sudanese population for the rampant violence carried out across the country. Police presence in rural areas is limited or absent, and many people see the South Sudan Police Service (SSPS) as perpetrators of crime and human rights abuses. Further, the proliferation of illegal arms combined with a lack of training and equipment for the SSPS means that law enforcement officers are often unable to disarm civilians.

The territorial integrity of South Sudan remains fragile, with the official recognition of the border with Sudan still outstanding and the borders with neighbouring countries being extremely porous and challenging to control. Also, despite the presence of the UN peacekeeping mission in the contested Abyei Administrative Area, violence between Sudan and South Sudan has intensified. Smuggling of goods, people and arms is prevalent, especially in the south and through Juba airport. The conflict in neighbouring countries exacerbates the vulnerability of the border areas to criminality. The South Sudanese state's monopoly on the use of force is also contested by multiple smaller armed groups, such as



militias and self-defense groups connected to clans or villages. The splintering of several opposition forces further undermines state capacities. Large parts of the country cannot be accessed by government forces or officials due to a lack of infrastructure, especially during the rainy season. The continuing presence of the UN mission in South Sudan is a testament to the fact that the South Sudanese state does not have a clear monopoly on the use of force.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Currently, the country is grey-listed due to strategic deficiencies in its Anti-Money Laundering/Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) regime. The country's financial governance capacity is weak, and awareness among government officials on AML/CFT issues is low. High-value cash transactions are common in the cash-based economy, and foreign exchange bureaus are proliferating and largely unregulated. Political and economic elites usually utilize money laundering mechanisms to move and invest in assets in foreign economies, notably Kenya, Uganda and the UAE. The country is vulnerable to exploitation by criminal networks seeking overland routes for bulk cash smuggling, financing terrorist activities and perpetrating other forms of financial crime.

Regarding economic regulatory capacity, business development in South Sudan is constrained by weak rule of law, widespread corruption, an unstable security situation, poor infrastructure, lack of reliable transport routes, poor access to electricity and internet connectivity, and extremely low levels of education and skills among the population. Senior military and government officials are heavily engaged in economic activities and are frequently local partners of international investors. Large businesses tend to allocate specific market sectors amongst themselves, resulting in some degree of monopoly. The government and military are both important contractors, and therefore good relations with high officials are essential to do business. The banking sector is seriously underdeveloped in South Sudan, and international bank transfers are complicated. There is a substantial shortage of foreign currency, resulting in a parallel black market. Banks are heavily influenced by political actors, and due diligence when providing credit is only negligible.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

No significant progress in addressing human trafficking has been recorded in South Sudan. Although the government has taken some steps to address the issue, including releasing child soldiers and launching a nationwide awareness campaign, victim and witness support services are not available. In fact, there is no government policy or pattern for preventing the recruitment of child soldiers, identifying potential trafficking victims or protecting them. On the contrary, the government and its allied forces have been accused of employing child soldiers and there are no laws protecting victims from prosecution for unlawful acts that traffickers compelled them to commit. Officials often arrest women involved in commercial sex without screening for indicators of trafficking. Also, social stigma and fear of punitive actions prevent people from reporting crimes.

South Sudan's civil society and NGOs are facing increased attacks and restrictions from the government and security forces. While the number of NGOs is growing, their impact is very limited. South Sudan is known as one of the most violent places for aid workers. Prominent human rights defenders, journalists and civil society actors have been threatened, harassed and intimidated, with many fleeing the country fearing for their lives. Government orders have resulted in the blocking of bank accounts belonging to civil society actors, including NGOs. Forced by the government not to cover issues linked to the conflict, the media is very sparing in its reporting on important developments. Close surveillance and intimidation are also part of the regime's predatory methods, and security agents often go directly to printing presses to censor content. Journalists are being detained and news outlets shut down. Internet access has also been cut throughout the country to prevent anti-government protests.

