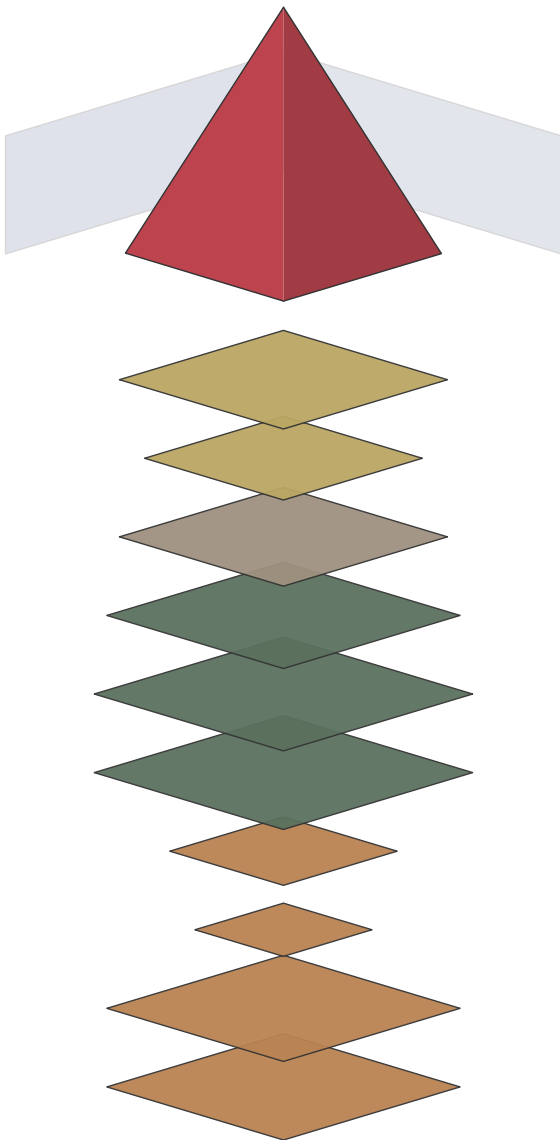




 **CAMEROON**



 **6.31**
CRIMINALITY SCORE
10th of 54 African countries
3rd of 11 Central African countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS** **6.25**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	6.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	5.50
ARMS TRAFFICKING	6.50
FLORA CRIMES	7.00
FAUNA CRIMES	7.50
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	7.50
HEROIN TRADE	4.50
COCAINE TRADE	3.50
CANNABIS TRADE	7.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	7.00

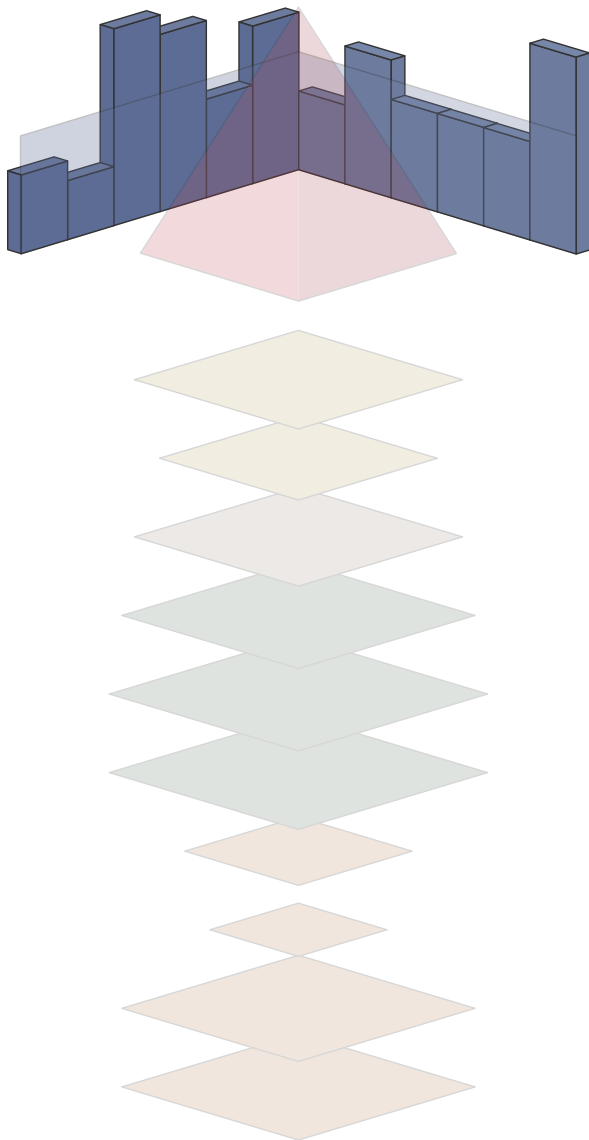
 **CRIMINAL ACTORS** **6.38**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	4.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	7.50
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	8.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	6.00

 **3.13**
RESILIENCE SCORE
39th of 54 African countries
6th of 11 Central African countries



 **CAMEROON**



 **3.13
RESILIENCE SCORE**

39th of 54 African countries
6th of 11 Central African countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	2.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	1.50
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	5.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	4.50
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	2.50
LAW ENFORCEMENT	4.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	2.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	3.50
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	2.50
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	2.50
PREVENTION	2.50
NON-STATE ACTORS	5.00

 **6.31
CRIMINALITY SCORE**

10th of 54 African countries
3rd of 11 Central African countries

 CRIMINAL MARKETS	6.25
 CRIMINAL ACTORS	6.38



CRIMINALITY

Criminal Markets

PEOPLE

Cameroon plays an important role in numerous forms of human trafficking, including forced labour and trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Local facilitators who collaborate with international syndicates aggravate the situation. Conflicts in the far north (Boko Haram insurgency) and south-west/north-west (secessionists) contribute to the prevalence of human trafficking by creating large numbers of displaced people, diminishing the presence of security forces, damaging livelihoods and disrupting education. There is also a rural-urban dimension to human trafficking, where young people are lured to cities with the promise of employment before being subjected to forced labour or sex trafficking. Evidence exists of trafficking, child-labour exploitation, and sexual exploitation in the country's artisanal mining sites and gravel quarries, as well as fishing and agriculture operations. Victims are also exploited abroad, with fraudulent labour brokers facilitating trafficking to the Middle East, Europe, the US, and other parts of Africa. The COVID-19 pandemic has a negative impact on labour and mobility and has reinforced modern slavery and human trafficking practices in Cameroon.

The lines between human trafficking and human smuggling are often blurred in the context of Cameroon. However, there is a fairly high prevalence of women being smuggled to the Middle East, Europe, the US, and multiple African countries for employment, who are subsequently trafficked into slavery or sex work. There is also a growing new phenomenon involving the smuggling of young boys and girls identified as young football talents in urban areas. Overall, many young people in the country are willing to pay exorbitant fees to go abroad, using migration 'brokers' who secure fraudulent documents and visas for travelling overseas. A resurgence of violence and conflict may trigger an upsurge in displaced people and subsequently an upsurge in migration facilitators.

TRADE

Arms trafficking is one of the fastest growing criminal markets in Cameroon, particularly in regions affected by violence, and in porous border areas with Nigeria and the Central African Republic (CAR). Arms trafficking has, however, been a fixture in Cameroon for many years.

Before 2016, the manufacturing of artisanal weapons was not prohibited by law, and these weapons were accessible to criminal actors, mostly urban youths in large cities. The armed conflict with secessionists in the southwest and northwest regions since 2017 has only increased demand for illicit arms. Since 2012, Boko Haram has also been active in Cameroon and involved in the trafficking of arms.

ENVIRONMENT

In Cameroon, flora smuggling is a major concern in the forestry sector, with heavy involvement from government officials and traditional authorities. In particular, there is widespread illegal timber logging and smuggling to Europe and Asia. Additionally, most timber consumed locally comes from informal sources. Illegal activities reported in the forestry sector include illegal allocation of concessions, illegal logging, laundering of illegally harvested wood, and corruption in the allocation of logging permits.

In regard to fauna crimes, Cameroon is considered a source and transit country for the trafficking of wildlife, including elephant tusks and rhino horn, as well as pangolins, snakes, lizards and monkeys. Illegal trade in bushmeat also remains a concern. The country has already lost several species, including black rhinos and cheetahs, due to poaching, loss of habitat, and human-wildlife conflict. Theft and trafficking of cattle and other livestock are also common in various parts of the country, as well as a plethora of fisheries-related crimes. The country is a key transit point for wildlife trafficking originating in Central African countries, with the town of Djoum in the southern Dja region serving as crucial transit hub for ivory coming from the country's southern and eastern neighbours.

As for non-renewable resource crimes, Cameroon is a destination and transit country for illicit fuel from Nigeria. Local consumption of stolen fuel is facilitated by corruption. Moreover, mining sector operations are opaque and include unauthorized, unlicensed mining, and deserted pits posing safety hazards. There is also evidence of gemstone trafficking, including diamonds from the CAR.



DRUGS

Cameroon is considered a major importer and transshipment point for cannabis produced domestically and in other African countries. Even though it is illegal, cannabis is the most commonly used drug in the country. Cannabis is mostly produced in the southwest and northwest and then trafficked primarily to Nigeria. Tramadol is the main synthetic drug of concern in Cameroon, and the most in-demand drug in the country after cannabis. It is generally trafficked from India via West Africa, and Nigeria in particular, and distributed within Cameroon and other Central African countries. High unemployment rates and widespread poverty are among the drivers of the rising number of people selling synthetic drugs on street corners across the country.

Cameroon is a transit and destination country for heroin. While previously only a transit site for heroin, consumption has increased among elites. There are alleged links between domestic-based terrorists and other violent non-state actors and the illicit trafficking of drugs, including heroin. The cocaine market is the least pervasive drug market in Cameroon. The drug is mostly just moved through Cameroon, but an increasing number of local elites are believed to be consuming the drug.

Criminal Actors

Mafia-style groups in Cameroon are predominantly either terrorist groups that engage in organized criminal

activity, or armed secessionist groups. Boko Haram finances its operations primarily through criminal activities such as kidnapping-for-ransom, extortion and burglary. In the southwest and northwest parts of Cameroon, members of secessionist groups have also transformed into criminal networks and mafia-style groups involved in arms trafficking, kidnapping, and racketeering of business owners for financial gain. There are also criminal networks operating as kidnapper groups in the Adamawa region, as well as armed robbers and traffickers in the eastern region, and criminal networks exploiting the conflict in the southwest and northwest regions of the country. They are involved in a variety of criminal activities.

High levels of corruption exist in state institutions, which potentially provide a safe haven for criminal actors. Corruption by state officials involves embezzlement of public funds and abuse of office, and foreign actors are known to operate across the country. Criminal groups from neighbouring countries have been accused of kidnapping herders for ransom as well as cattle theft within the country. Boko Haram is also known to have foreign members who facilitate transnational organized criminal activity, such as arms trafficking and trafficking of opioids. Additionally, research suggests that criminal groups with Asian ties are involved in the illegal exploitation of timber and mining resources. Similarly, fisheries-related crimes involve local and foreign industrial-fisheries stakeholders.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Trust and faith in the current regime have significantly diminished due to its inability to respond effectively to the various security threats facing the country. Furthermore, there is a worsening of inter-communal tensions, as well as politically motivated arrests and other acts of repression in response to demands for social and political reform. The national capacity to address organized crime remains limited and current legislation does not comply with international standards. Moreover, the government is marred by high levels of corruption, and has been reported as a facilitator in many of types of crime.

At an international level, Cameroon has ratified many treaties related to preventing and combating organized crime. However, the country has struggled with implementation. It has also participated in bilateral and regional initiatives to address human trafficking, human smuggling, drug trafficking and arms trafficking. At the domestic level, Cameroon has a number of laws pertaining to organized crime in its legislative framework. However, full implementation of these laws is lacking. There are also gaps in domestic legislation that benefit traffickers.



CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

In Cameroon, the judiciary is poorly equipped and there is a huge backlog of cases awaiting prosecution. Also, there are no judicial units with the specific aim of countering organized crime. In the past, the state has encouraged some victims of human trafficking and smuggling to settle cases out of court due to weak cooperation between state and NGOs. Additionally, the judiciary in Cameroon is not independent and is controlled by the executive branch of the government. There is also perceived impunity for government officials accused or suspected of involvement in organized crime, notably economic crime, despite some arrests of high-profile officials. Moreover, prison conditions fall far below international standards. Law enforcement agencies have received some training and regularly make critical interceptions, including seizures of illicit goods. However, there is no general law enforcement unit specializing in organized crime in the country. There are several reports of chronic corruption in law-enforcement agencies, particularly in customs services and the forestry sector. This has weakened national efforts to effectively deal with organized crime. In regard to territorial integrity, Cameroon's borders are notoriously porous. This is worsened by armed conflict and unrest, as well as corruption among border police and customs officers.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The Cameroonian economy is highly regulated and influenced by governmental price controls. As such, operating freely within the business environment is difficult. Low productivity rates and poor economic governance has led to Cameroon having one of the largest informal economies in the region, with the overwhelming majority of workers in the country operating within the informal sector. Cameroon also has laws and institutions governing its anti-money laundering responses, and although it is part of a regional task force tackling the issue, significant gaps remain. Cameroonian banks are also alleged to have collaborated with criminal networks, facilitating their illicit activity.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

With respect to human trafficking, the treatment of victims and victim support remains weak and varies significantly from case to case. The government does not have policies in place to encourage victims to participate in investigations, or the prosecution of traffickers; to provide counselling, legal support, or any other assistance to victims testifying in court; or to protect victims cooperating with investigations despite reports of

trafficking networks threatening victims during trials. The government has also not made any meaningful efforts to systematically prevent organized crime. Meanwhile, civil society is active in combating organized crime in some areas, such as human trafficking and human smuggling, where it plays a crucial role with respect to direct services to victims. Similarly, in regard to trafficking of flora, notably timber, and fauna, there is significant and effective cooperation between the state and civil society organizations. Nevertheless, the government is increasingly criticized for cracking down on civil society organizations that oppose or criticize government policies. Legislation on civil society participation is obsolete and does not comply with international standards. Moreover, relations between the state and privately-owned media are contentious. The Biya regime has continued its repression of journalists and the media environment more broadly, with journalists reporting an ever-increasing number of threats and attacks. Arbitrary detention of journalists is not uncommon, and the worsening situation for press freedom was highlighted by the death of journalist Samuel Wazizi while in detention, arrested in 2019 following his criticism of the government.

