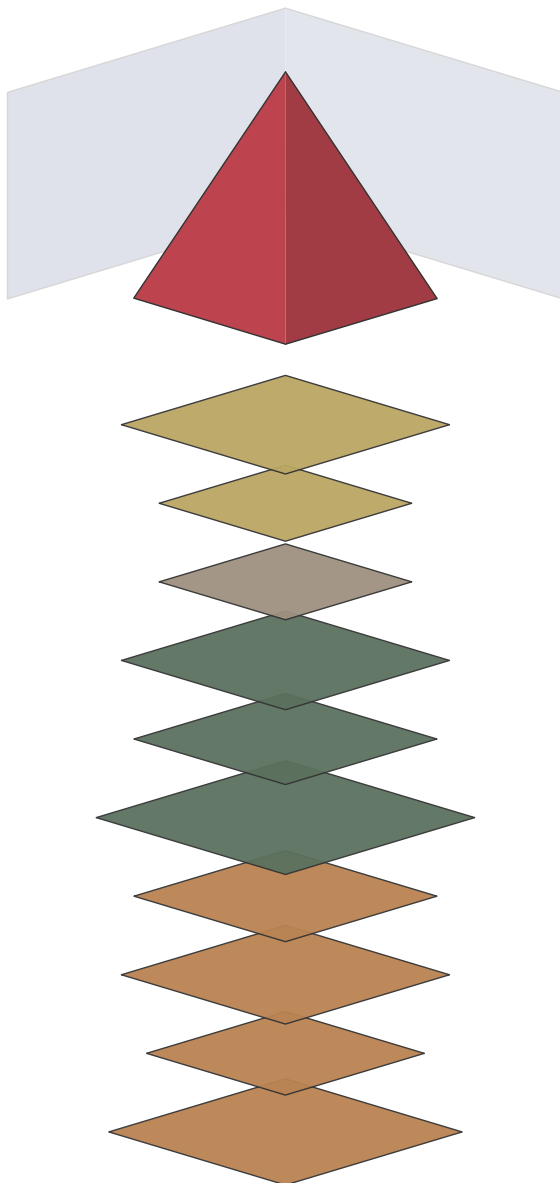




 **GHANA**



 **6.01**  
**CRIMINALITY SCORE**  
14<sup>th</sup> of 54 African countries  
3<sup>rd</sup> of 15 West African countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS** **6.15**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	6.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	5.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	5.00
FLORA CRIMES	6.50
FAUNA CRIMES	6.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	7.50
HEROIN TRADE	6.00
COCAINE TRADE	6.50
CANNABIS TRADE	5.50
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	7.00

 **CRIMINAL ACTORS** **5.88**

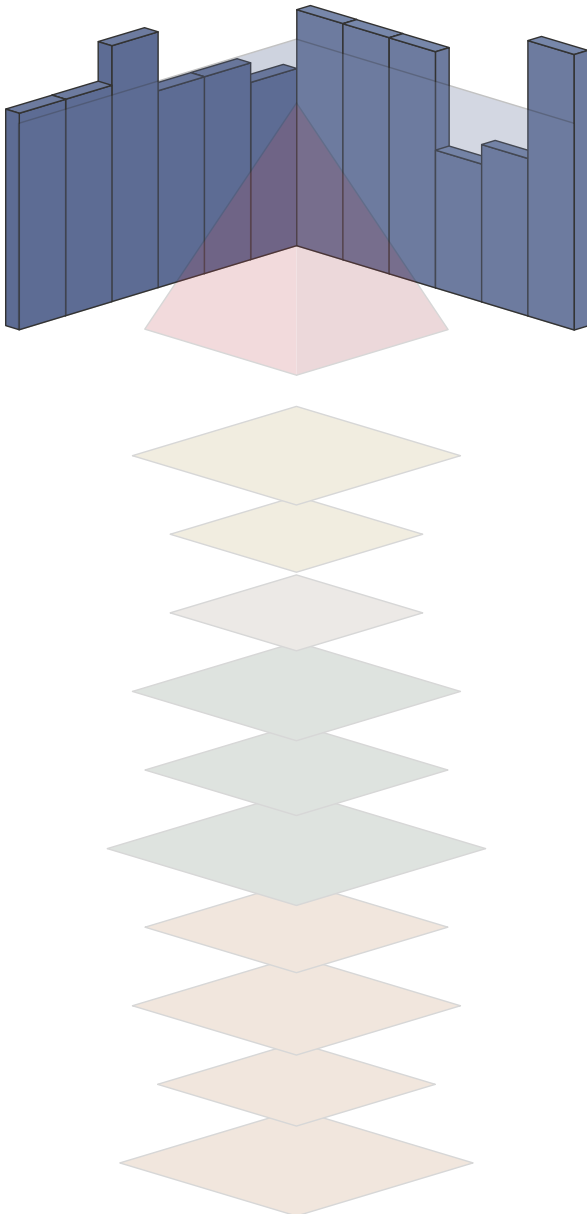
MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	3.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	6.50
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	7.50
FOREIGN ACTORS	6.50

 **5.38**  
**RESILIENCE SCORE**  
8<sup>th</sup> of 54 African countries  
4<sup>th</sup> of 15 West African countries





# GHANA



5.38

## RESILIENCE SCORE

8<sup>th</sup> of 54 African countries

4<sup>th</sup> of 15 West African countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	5.50
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	5.50
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	6.50
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	5.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	5.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	4.50
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	6.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	6.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	6.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	3.50
PREVENTION	4.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	7.00



6.01

## CRIMINALITY SCORE

14<sup>th</sup> of 54 African countries

3<sup>rd</sup> of 15 West African countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

6.15



CRIMINAL ACTORS

5.88



# CRIMINALITY

## Criminal Markets

### PEOPLE

Human trafficking in the form of forced labour, sexual exploitation and child trafficking is a significant issue in Ghana. While child trafficking is prevalent in the country's fishing, agricultural and mining industries, girls are also lured by traffickers with the promise of better economic opportunities and subsequently subjected to sexual exploitation or forced labour as porters. Ghanaian adults often fall victim to human trafficking through overseas recruitment agencies. A wave of labour migration of Ghanaian women to the Middle East facilitated by both licensed and unlicensed labour recruitment agencies was revealed to have links to forced labour, sexual exploitation and significant levels of physical abuse.

In recent decades, Ghanaian smugglers have played a pivotal role in the development of West Africa's human smuggling industry. Human smugglers are well integrated into Ghanaian society and are perceived as facilitators of movement rather than criminals. This is the result of high mobility levels across West Africa due to the Economic Community of West African States' (ECOWAS) free movement treaty. As one of the more stable and economically attractive countries in the region, Ghana serves as a significant transit and destination country. Once in Ghana, many individuals are then smuggled beyond the ECOWAS zone, primarily to Europe and the Middle East. Ghana is also a known regional hub for the production of fake travel documents and American and European visas. Ghana's human smuggling market is largely driven by those seeking transportation to the US or Europe, although this has been on the decline in recent years.

### TRADE

Arms trafficking is a widespread and growing phenomenon in Ghana. Local illicit arms manufacturing is increasing in both prevalence and sophistication. Land-based arms trafficking is predominant along Ghana's northern and eastern borders, as well as in the Ashanti region. Illicit arms manufacturers, middlemen and local communities alike perceive small arms as an integral part of Ghanaian society, as arms have been used historically for cultural, economic and entertainment purposes. Many in the country have expressed discontent that stronger restrictions have forced traditional activities involving

small arms underground and, thereby, have fostered the growth of international arms trafficking operations.

### ENVIRONMENT

Ghana is a major supplier of illicit rosewood trafficked to Asia. The number of criminal networks involved in illicit logging is allegedly on the rise, and an alleged collusion between Ghanaian and Chinese criminal loggers exists. Rampant corruption in Ghana also facilitates illicit logging and timber trafficking. Notably, business elites are known to tap into criminal networks for profiteering purposes by supplying guns or other services. Moreover, a nexus exists between illicit timber logging and opaque cocoa and mineral mining operations in Ghana. Alongside the illicit flora market, a fauna one exists in Ghana as well. The country is a transit point for the illicit pangolin trade, as well as illicit trade in other rare species found in both Mole National Park and Kakum National Park. Elephant poaching is known to occur, although locals believe that its prevalence has decreased in tandem with the decline of Ghana's elephant population. As such, some poachers have allegedly shifted their focus to large-bodied birds such as hornbills. Poachers also target the African grey parrot. Additionally, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing has heavily impacted Ghana's marine fish stocks.

Ghana is one of the most significant source countries for illicit gold on the African continent with gold exports far exceeding official production. As such, Ghana is a major supplier of semi-pure gold to refineries in both India and the UAE. Paperwork related to gold imports is largely forged. Ghana also serves as a transit country for the laundering of stolen oil.

### DRUGS

Ghanaian drug trafficking groups have played a significant role in the massive expansion of the global drug trade, as well as in the expansion of illicit drug markets across the West African region. The country is both a transit point and a destination market for heroin coming primarily from Afghanistan. Corrupt officials play a significant role in the facilitation of heroin trafficking through Ghanaian seaports and airports. Ghana's domestic heroin market is believed to have expanded throughout the country. In regard to cocaine, Ghana is among the most important African transit countries for cocaine trafficked globally and across Africa.



Meanwhile, the country is one of the largest cannabis cultivation hotspots in Africa. As cannabis is perceived as an 'indigenous' drug, it is seen as less harmful in communities and is primarily used by younger people. Ghana legalized the use of cannabis for health and industrial purposes in March 2020 and is reportedly considering the decriminalisation of all drugs, which would include cannabis cultivation, production, possession and use. The synthetic drug market in Ghana is rapidly growing. Tramadol abuse has been a significant issue since 2016, with the drug being largely imported from India. Tramadol use has also been linked to rising levels of violence in Ghana. Other synthetic drugs such as Fentanyl are also slowly appearing in the country. Moreover, a large number of precursor chemicals are believed to be diverted towards criminal networks in Ghana.

## Criminal Actors

State-embedded actors in several of Ghana's security and intelligence services play a key role in the facilitation of organized criminal activities. State-embedded corruption is also believed to significantly affect legislative capacity and processes. While Ghanaian officials have historically turned a blind eye to organized criminal activities, the infiltration of drug money into the public sphere has reportedly triggered a hardening of this approach. Informal Ghanaian criminal networks are known to be

involved in drug, arms and human trafficking as well as in human smuggling, internet crimes and vehicle theft. Many criminal networks in Ghana are linked to African criminal networks. Informal networks of smugglers, particularly in the Brong Ahafo region, also have links to criminal groups in Burkina Faso and beyond. Criminal networks in Accra have known links to Nigerian criminal groups. Overall, criminal networks affect everyday life in Ghana and significantly undermine public institutions. Many of these groups are bound together by ethnic, religious, blood or other ties. Their criminal activity is not only facilitated by corruption, but also exacerbated by Ghana's low state capacity to counter organized crime.

Chinese criminal actors in particular are known to have taken advantage of state-embedded connections to circumvent the requirement for fishing, logging, mining and other certifications in Ghana. Foreign criminal actors from other parts of Africa are also active in Ghana, especially on the country's illicit gold mining, drug trafficking and illicit logging markets. Meanwhile, although South American cartels have significant links to Ghanaian criminal networks, they do not physically operate in the country. There is little evidence of mafia-style groups in the country. However, some studies point to both hierarchical and non-hierarchical forms of mafia-style groups existing in Ghana.

# RESILIENCE

## LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The Ghanaian government has been somewhat vocal regarding the need to tackle organized crime. Nevertheless, political will to do so is lacking, evident in the emasculation of the Office of the Special Prosecutor and the Auditor-General. Regardless, Ghana is one of the most progressive and democratic countries in Africa and is a relatively stable country. Nevertheless, while several anti-corruption bodies exist in Ghana, concerns regarding their independence and lack of resources call their efficacy into question. Furthermore, since 2017 public approval for government efforts to fight corruption has decreased sharply.

On the international level, Ghana is party to a number of relevant international treaties related to organized crime, although implementation remains a challenge. Ghana is active in a number of regional initiatives focused on

combatting transnational organized crime, and works closely with a number of international organisations, including Western nations. Ghana receives significant aid in its efforts to prevent organized crime, and is the focus of several international law enforcement initiatives. The country's main challenge lies in intra-regional cooperation, implementation and communication. On the domestic level, Ghana has laws pertaining to organized crime, and the country benefits from a relatively robust rule of law in the African context. Despite legislation being in place, powers are often split across different bills, rendering the prosecution of organized crime difficult.



## CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Ghana's judiciary lacks specialized units tasked with countering organized crime and the judiciary has been historically perceived as an extremely corrupt institution. Low levels of pay in the judiciary are believed to render rent-seeking opportunities commonplace. Bribery in civil courts is reportedly common. Consequently, fewer than half of Ghanaians trust the court system. Such perceptions of judicial corruption have in some instances led to the attempted implementation of mob justice. In terms of law enforcement, Ghana's capacity against organized crime remains limited. Corruption runs rampant across all levels of the police infrastructure as well. At the same time, reporting on corruption remains rare and impunity is rampant. The porosity of Ghana's land borders and high levels of corruption among border officials enable various illicit cross-border activities to flourish. Additionally, Ghanaian seaports are poorly patrolled and are believed to be transit hubs for human and drug trafficking. Nevertheless, efforts to enhance border patrol capacity are ongoing.

## ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Ghana has a strong formal banking system, although a significant proportion of the population lacks access to a bank account and is thus reliant on informal service providers. While the government seeks to promote private sector development, corruption runs rampant and a significant informal economy continues to pose barriers. Meanwhile, Ghana has one of the best Financial Action Task Force assessments in Africa. Ghana also has a highly developed banking sector, equipped with Know Your Client checks and other measures, and the country's Revenue Authority is involved in several international initiatives to enhance regulatory capacity. Ghana's Financial Intelligence Unit is also reportedly operational and heavily engages with international organizations, and a significant level of aid flows to anti-corruption institutions. Nevertheless, gaps in law enforcement remain and money laundering is believed to pose a significant threat. Moreover, the influence of drug actors in Ghana's political system triggers delays in anti-money laundering legislation and initiatives.

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Ghana's victim and witness support capacity is limited. However, victim and witness support programmes have been implemented in the Kumasi and Ankaful prisons. Meanwhile, support for drug users is scarce, and only four state-funded facilities providing drug rehabilitation and treatment exist. Instead, support for drug users

usually stems from NGOs, personal networks or families. Ghana is currently collaborating with international organisations to implement programmes aimed at combatting organized crime. The country also has a number of national policies that address specific types of organized crime. Nevertheless, the implementation of preventative policies and plans remains limited, and a lack of resources has restricted the operational capacity of new government agencies.

Overall, Ghana's civil society sector is relatively active, and despite government criticism and attacks, addresses a wide range of issues and continues to expand. Civil society activism mainly occurs through electronic and print media, with radio media in particular playing a key role in criticizing government measures. However, an estimated one third of Ghana's media is either state-owned or owned by business people linked to the government. As such, print media in particular is known to often align with government interests.

