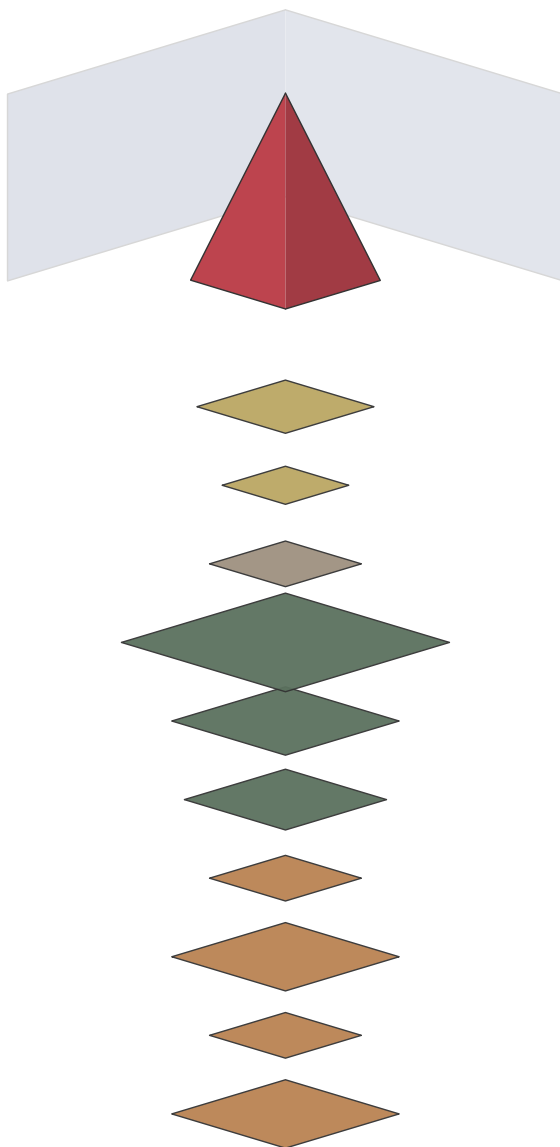




# NAMIBIA



## 4.33 CRIMINALITY SCORE

42<sup>nd</sup> of 54 African countries  
7<sup>th</sup> of 13 Southern African countries



### CRIMINAL MARKETS **3.90**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	3.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	2.50
ARMS TRAFFICKING	3.00
FLORA CRIMES	6.50
FAUNA CRIMES	4.50
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	4.00
HEROIN TRADE	3.00
COCAINE TRADE	4.50
CANNABIS TRADE	3.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	4.50



### CRIMINAL ACTORS **4.75**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	3.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	5.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	5.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	6.00

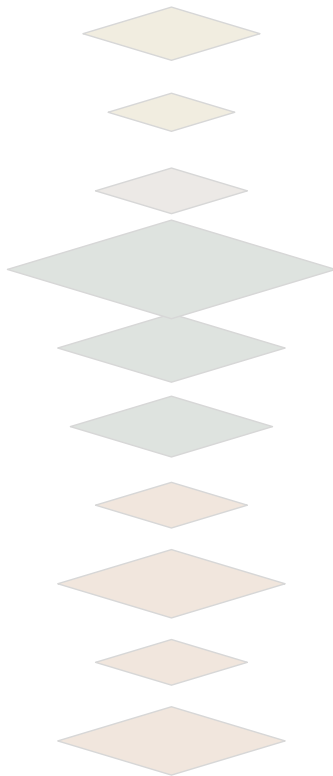
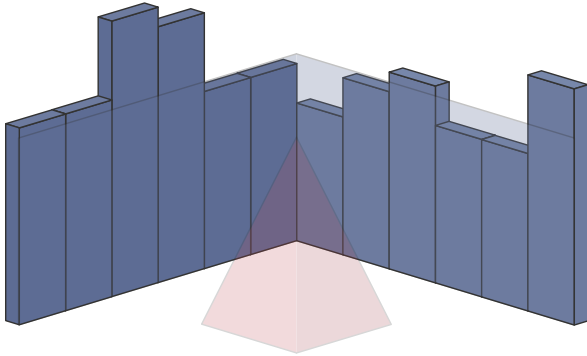


## 4.96 RESILIENCE SCORE

12<sup>th</sup> of 54 African countries  
4<sup>th</sup> of 13 Southern African countries



# NAMIBIA





## 4.96 RESILIENCE SCORE

12<sup>th</sup> of 54 African countries  
4<sup>th</sup> of 13 Southern African countries

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

## 4.33 CRIMINALITY SCORE

42<sup>nd</sup> of 54 African countries  
7<sup>th</sup> of 13 Southern African countries

 <u>CRIMINAL MARKETS</u>	<b>3.90</b>
 <u>CRIMINAL ACTORS</u>	<b>4.75</b>



# CRIMINALITY

## Criminal Markets

### PEOPLE

A market for human trafficking exists in Namibia, but it is not widespread. It is generally confined to specific groups, such as the San and Zemba, as well as to particular areas, such as Windhoek and Walvis Bay. Children are most at risk and are trafficked mainly for forced agricultural labour and sex work. Several instances of missing children who had travelled into Zambia through unofficial border crossings indicate potential cases of human trafficking.

Voluntary migration via smuggling routes takes place, but it is uncommon. A number of Congolese nationals were accused of smuggling people into Namibia in 2018, and migration to Zimbabwe has increased, but overall, the human smuggling market in Namibia remains limited.

### TRADE

Namibia is not a major hub for gun trafficking, but domestic gun ownership levels are high. There are apparently almost as many owners of unlicensed guns as of licensed ones. Cattle theft is common near Namibia's porous border with Botswana and is often carried out using illicit guns. Firearm theft is common.

### ENVIRONMENT

Despite the fact that Namibia has very little tree cover, illicit timber from the north of the country is exported to China and Vietnam, and criminality surrounding flora species is rife. Corrupt forestry officials issue fraudulent permits for the harvesting and exporting of rosewood, in particular. The trade is facilitated by local criminal actors and Chinese cartels, and stimulated by high and increasing demand from East Asia. The market for exotic hardwood is one of the largest illegal enterprises in the country and runs parallel to the legal markets for timber and charcoal. Walvis Bay is a transit point for other African wood destined for Asia, including timber from Mozambique and Angola.

Namibia has a large market for ivory, rhino horn and pangolins. Since 2016 it has lost an average of 50 rhinos a year to poaching. Although it draws less attention than other wildlife species, the poaching of hippos is prevalent in Namibia. Illicit fauna products take the same route as wood, and are often hidden among illegal stacks

of timber on smuggling missions. Criminal syndicates appear to be increasingly involved in poaching and wildlife trafficking. While the majority of poachers in the country are Namibians, foreign citizens from countries such as Zimbabwe and Angola are also involved. Illegal fishing also takes place in Namibian waters, primarily by foreign vessels. Overall, however, the illegal trade in animal species is thought to have decreased in recent years, and a decline in the volume of seizures appears to support this.

Namibia has a considerable market for illicit diamonds and gemstones. Approximately 80% of small-scale mining activity in the country is illegal. However, there are no major diamond-smuggling syndicates. This is because the country's geography and Debmarmine Namibia's control of large-scale mining make smuggling and illegal extraction difficult.

### DRUGS

Namibia is emerging as a trans-shipment point for Afghan heroin, which enters the country overland from the south. From Namibia, it either continues into West Africa or is shipped to destination markets in Europe. Domestic consumption is growing, especially of adulterated and cheaper versions of the drug. Nevertheless, no foreign organized crime groups have succeeded in establishing a foothold in the heroin market, its seizures rates are lower than for other drugs and overall, the heroin market in Namibia is fairly limited. Namibia's involvement in the cocaine trade has grown, both in terms of its domestic consumption and its role as a transit country. Namibia is a minor trans-shipment point for cocaine coming from South America, with onward shipping to South Africa. Namibian nationals have been arrested for their role in the cocaine industry, where they operate alongside foreign actors, most commonly Angolans and Congolese. Seizures are becoming relatively common, with US\$72 000 worth of cocaine being seized on a flight from Johannesburg in 2020.

Namibia is not a noteworthy transit hub for cannabis, which is the most-seized drug in the country. According to the Namibian police, for example, 316 297 kilograms of cannabis worth US\$214 000 was seized in May 2020. Most cannabis that is seized is intended for local consumption. Any cannabis that makes its way into the country comes predominantly from eSwatini. Criminal convictions are mainly for distribution and possession. The availability



of synthetic drugs is growing, particularly in urban and tourist centres. It is dependent on cross-border supplies from South Africa. Mandrax is commonly seized by officials. Synthetic-drug use is likely to have increased during the COVID-19 liquor ban. However, the incidence of synthetic-opioid use is marginal, as pharmacies and medical doctors are well regulated and law-enforcement agencies have a strong grip on distribution networks.

## Criminal Actors

There is little evidence of mafia-style groups in Namibia except for the Numbers gangs, who are active in prisons. While they have some links to outside street gangs, their reach is either limited or not well documented. Criminal networks are well established and work across all the main illicit markets, especially wildlife crimes and human trafficking. Syndicates smuggling hardwood to Eastern Asia appear to be particularly well organized, operating on an industrial scale and using Namibia as a transit hub.

There are state-embedded actors in Namibia who facilitate the work of criminal networks. The Fishrot saga of 2019 is an example of corruption at a high level of government, and other corruption scandals have emerged in recent years, including in 2020, involving government ministers. Corrupt practices are also commonplace, however, at lower levels of the state apparatus. Lower-level border-control officials are complicit in cross-border smuggling, while local politicians in port towns have been involved in the smuggling of contraband.

Foreign criminal actors in Namibia include South African gangs who traffic synthetic drugs into Namibia and Chinese nationals who export exotic hardwood to Asia. These groups sometimes work hand in hand with corrupt state actors and mask their activities by setting up legitimate businesses in strategic ports such as Walvis Bay. There are also Angolan, Zambian and Congolese groups involved in Namibia's drug- and human-trafficking markets.

# RESILIENCE

## LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The Namibian government enjoys a relatively high level of legitimacy in the country; however, they have not used this to articulate a stance against organized crime. President Geinob has publicly announced that corruption is not a major issue in the country, in spite of evidence to the contrary – including the Fishrot saga, in which government officials irregularly sold fishing rights to an Icelandic corporation. The government has taken strides in addressing human-trafficking and fauna crimes, but issues remain in other markets – in particular, the hardwood trade. The government's decision to temporarily ban liquor during the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an increase in the smuggling and use of drugs.

Namibia is considered to be a flawed democracy, and the general population is becoming increasingly dissatisfied about socioeconomic issues related to corruption. The Namibian anti-corruption agency is generally weak, lacking both political will and the resources to investigate crimes. Namibian electorates showed their disapproval of the ruling party's performance in government during the 2020 municipal and regional elections, with survey respondents citing corruption as the primary reason

for voting against the ruling party. Most government institutions are unresponsive to requests for data and information. Political dissent is grudgingly tolerated by the presidency, but it is often criticised.

Namibia is a signatory to most major international treaties on organized crime, and it automatically enshrines ratified treaties into national legislation. However, it has not ratified the firearms protocol of the UNTOC. Coordinated efforts with neighbouring governments, particularly Angola, have helped combat human and wildlife trafficking. A joint operation by US law enforcement and the Namibian police in 2020 succeeded in apprehending four people attempting to traffic pangolins. The country has also signed an agreement with South Africa to tackle the issue of illegal fishing. Namibia maintains a good relationship with the UNODC, and has an active relationship with the Australian Transaction Reports Analysis Centre, which it assists in its efforts against money laundering. It has also signed the Southern African Development Community's protocols on extradition and corruption.

Namibia's Prevention of Organized Crime Act is its primary legislation against organized-crime activities. The Trafficking in Persons Act was finalised and brought



into force in November 2019. The Anti-Corruption Commission has achieved some success, in spite of the legislation failing to define corruption properly. The Nature Conservation General Amendment Act combats the killing of animals, but it does not adequately address the trafficking of parts. The country's minerals policy is inadequate and ineffective.

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Namibia's judiciary is considered independent and its ethical codes of conduct are in line with the Bangalore Principles. The former minister of education was convicted of corruption in 2019, and a number of significant cases against wildlife crimes, human trafficking and corruption are ongoing. Nevertheless, there is negative public perception of Namibia's judges – and its justice system is seen as dysfunctional, under-resourced and burdened by backlogs. Corruption cases against state officials are often delayed, and many citizens face barriers to accessing justice. Prison conditions are substandard, and the Numbers gangs allegedly have a large degree of control over prison life. Namibia's law enforcement is hampered by inadequate training, skills shortages, a lack of resources and corruption. Mistreatment of citizens by the police has been reported. However, the number of arrests relating to wildlife, human-trafficking and financial crimes appears to be increasing. Namibian law-enforcement's cooperation with other jurisdictions, including the US and Rwanda, appears to be yielding good results, such as the arresting of pangolin poachers and the training of officials.

Namibia's border controls remain weak and the country's borders are porous. Fencing is often absent, especially along the Angolan and Zambian borders, across which illicit fuel and liquor were often smuggled during the COVID-19 lockdowns. In spite of the lack of fencing, many smugglers still prefer to send their illegal products through Namibia's official border posts because of the convenience of travelling via established routes. The country is a hub for the illicit transporting and exporting of forest products, especially hardwood, via ports such as Walvis Bay. The trafficking of drugs into and through Namibia appears to be increasing, with border officials complicit in these operations.

## ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Namibia has comprehensive legislation in place in the form of its Financial Intelligence Act. However, once a case has been brought to court, a dysfunctional and under-resourced judiciary hampers prosecutions. While

research indicates that the country has made good progress with regard to combating money laundering, it still remains a substantial problem. The Fishrot scandal exposed Namibia's susceptibility to corruption – especially given that it came to light through leaked documents rather than intelligence operations, suggesting that the country's law enforcement agencies do not have the capacity to implement its financial laws. The scandal also damaged Namibia's reputation by indicating that well-connected criminal actors are not subject to the rule of law in a business environment.

While Namibia's economic regulatory framework is adequate, growth remains slow, due mainly to an overdependence on government subsidies in key areas of the economy. The uneven distribution of income makes illicit activity attractive to poorer parts of the population. Property rights are constitutionally guaranteed but seem to be under increasing threat as movements are made towards land expropriation.

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Namibia's victim- and witness-support programmes are insubstantial. The country meets only a third of the mechanisms that have been identified to help victims exit modern slavery. While various ministries and NGOs work in tandem to provide support to the victims of human trafficking, shelters and other facilities are under-staffed and under-resourced. Namibia has had some success in crime prevention related to elephant and rhino poaching in recent years. However, no major successes have been reported in other areas and criminal activities continue largely unabated.

Namibia hosts a large number of active civil society groups, but they are in decline due to a lack of funding. The country has one of the freest media environments in Africa, with protection of the press enshrined in its constitution and often defended by the courts. However, the government has begun to crack down on the media, with pro-government media houses receiving an ever-larger chunk of state advertising revenue, while others find themselves under attack if they produce stories with an anti-corruption stance.

