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Organised crime

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# ORGANISED CRIME LOW IN NAMIBIA - REPORT

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Namibia is among the top 10 countries in Africa with the lowest rates of organised crime.

Namibia ranks 47th on the continent, and is therefore 8th lowest.

The Africa Organised Crime Index 2023 was compiled by the Enhancing Africa's Response to Transnational Organised Crime (Enact) project and ranked all 54 countries on the continent.

This is the third edition of the index, which has been published every two years since 2019.

The rankings are based on a scale from zero to 10, and Namibia's overall criminality score for 2023 is 4.3, a decrease of 0.03 from 2021.

“Over the past five years, criminality across Africa has steadily increased and shows no sign of slowing down. Human trafficking remains a serious challenge, the cocaine markets have spiked in east, west and southern Africa, and financial crimes are endemic in many regions,” the report said.

## Criminal market scores

Fifteen illicit activities are ranked with ‘criminal market scores’. These include human trafficking, human smuggling, arms trafficking, extortion and protection racketeering, financial crimes and flora crimes.

Namibia's average criminal market score was 4.1, an increase of 0.2 since 2021.

The country scored 3.5 on human trafficking and 4.5 in arms trafficking. For flora crimes, Namibia scored 6.5, and for fauna crimes - which would include rhino poaching and the linked trade in horns - it scored 4.5.

Furthermore, it scored 5.0 for cyber dependent crimes and 4.5 for both synthetic drug trade and cocaine trade.

## Human smuggling

According to the report, there are some southern African countries that play distinct roles in the human smuggling market.

“For instance, South Africa (5.0), Namibia (2.5) and the Seychelles (3.5) are destination countries for irregular migration.”

Meanwhile, Zambia (3.0), Mozambique (5.5) and Malawi (4.5) are transit hubs for migrants coming from other African countries - such as Ethiopia and Somalia - and South Asian countries, according to the report.

They are then smuggled into South Africa.

The report further noted that the majority of countries in Africa do not meet the common expectation that high resilience translates into low criminality and vice versa.

Half of all African countries are in the low criminality–low resilience quadrant, including Namibia with a score of 4.45.

“Countries with comparatively low levels of resilience and low levels of criminality may have a few pervasive criminal markets, but not enough to bring up the average criminality score.”

Illicit economies

This does not mean that these countries have no issues, the report stressed.

“On the contrary, given the low resilience levels, political and economic fragility might deepen to the extent that other illicit economies could develop to levels that are difficult to contain.”

Other factors include geography, as illicit economies make use of the global trade infrastructure. Therefore, a country might not have strong resilience frameworks, but could be isolated from trade routes used to move illegal goods, making it less attractive to organised crime.

Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Africa topped the continental charts when it comes to organised crime, while São Tomé and Príncipe scored the lowest.