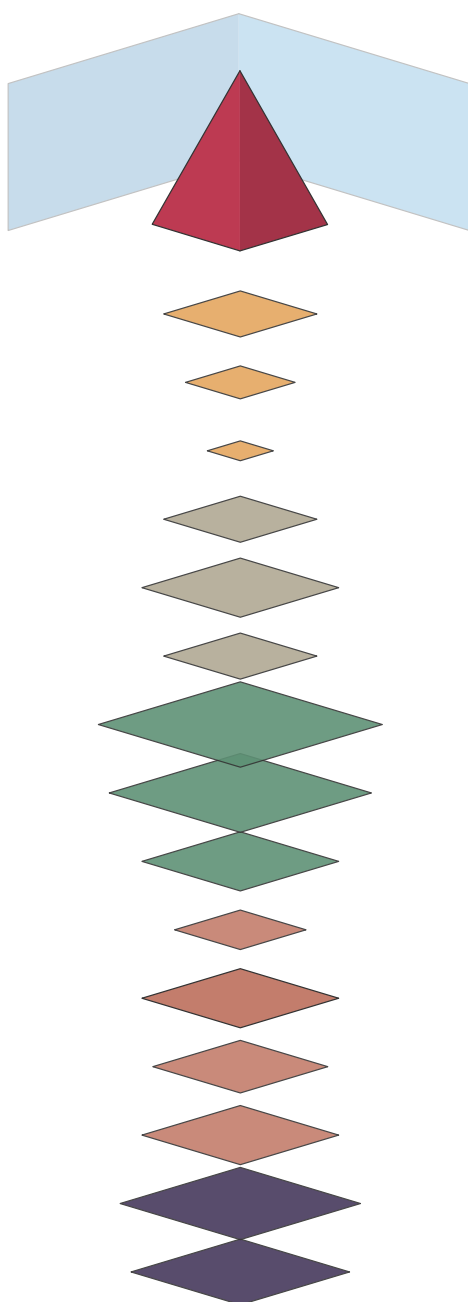


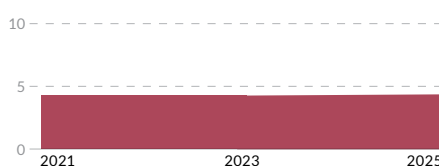


NAMIBIA



4.43 $\nearrow 0.13$
CRIMINALITY SCORE

133rd of 193 countries $\nearrow 8$
42nd of 54 African countries $\nearrow 5$
7th of 13 Southern African countries $\nearrow 3$



CRIMINAL MARKETS 4.17 $\nearrow 0.07$

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	3.50	0.00
HUMAN SMUGGLING	2.50	0.00
EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING	1.50	$\searrow 1.50$
ARMS TRAFFICKING	3.50	$\nearrow 0.50$
TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS	4.50	0.00
ILLCIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS	3.50	0.00
FLORA CRIMES	6.50	0.00
FAUNA CRIMES	6.00	$\nearrow 0.50$
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	4.50	0.00
HEROIN TRADE	3.00	0.00
COCAINE TRADE	4.50	0.00
CANNABIS TRADE	4.00	$\nearrow 0.50$
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	4.50	0.00
CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES	5.50	$\nearrow 0.50$
FINANCIAL CRIMES	5.00	$\nearrow 0.50$



CRIMINAL ACTORS 4.70 $\nearrow 0.20$

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	1.00	$\searrow 1.50$
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	5.50	0.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	6.00	$\nearrow 1.00$
FOREIGN ACTORS	6.50	$\nearrow 0.50$
PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS	4.50	$\nearrow 1.00$



This project was funded in part
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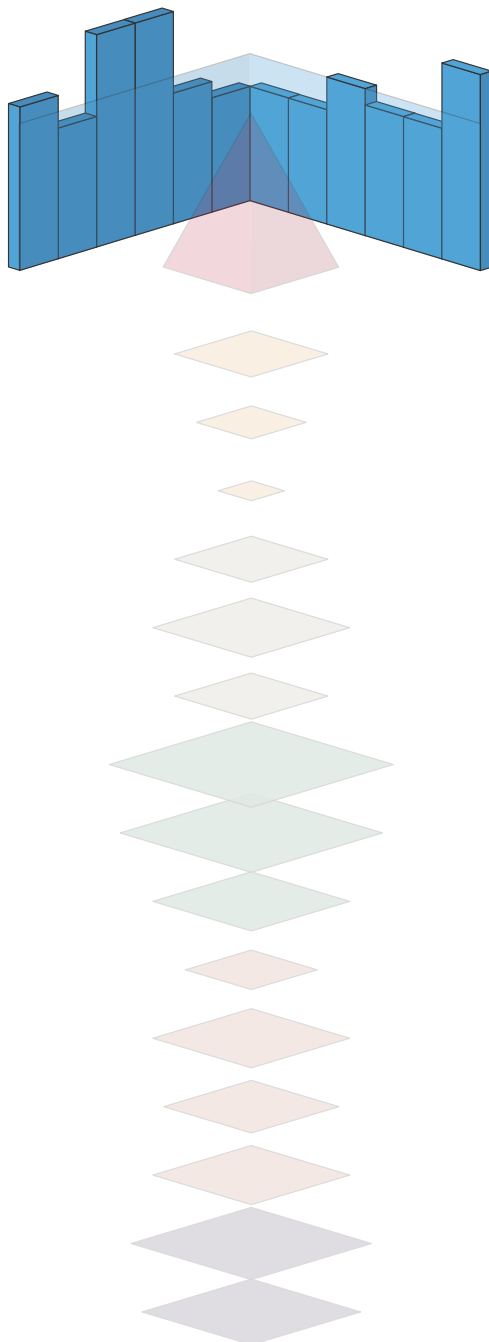


Funded by
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NAMIBIA



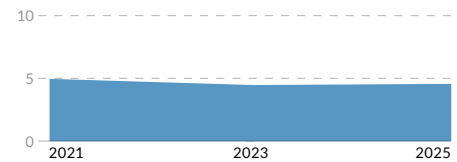
4.58 $\nearrow 0.04$

RESILIENCE SCORE

109th of 193 countries $\nearrow 1$

16th of 54 African countries $\nearrow 1$

6th of 13 Southern African countries -



POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	5.00	$\nearrow 0.50$
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	4.00	0.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	6.50	$\searrow 0.50$
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	6.50	$\nearrow 0.50$
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	4.00	0.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	3.50	0.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	3.50	0.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	3.50	$\searrow 0.50$
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	4.50	$\nearrow 0.50$
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	4.00	0.00
PREVENTION	4.00	0.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	6.00	0.00



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CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Human trafficking in Namibia is relatively limited. The issue is concentrated among specific groups and geographic regions, and victims are primarily subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. The fishing and agricultural sectors have been particularly affected. Reports indicate that child trafficking has become more pronounced, especially in Windhoek, Walvis Bay and Grootfontein. Children, mainly from Angola and Zambia, are exploited in domestic work, cattle herding and agricultural labour. The drought in Angola has displaced thousands, many of whom are vulnerable to trafficking after seeking refuge in Namibia.

Human smuggling is not a major criminal market but the country is a destination and a transit point for migrants from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Rwanda and neighbouring countries seeking better economic opportunities. Voluntary migration often occurs on smuggling routes, especially through the Namibian-Zambian border, and there are reports of law enforcement officers accepting bribes to facilitate illegal crossings. Persistent droughts and economic crises in Angola have driven many individuals to seek refuge in Namibia, heightening their susceptibility to exploitation. Although human trafficking and smuggling are legally distinct, law enforcement agencies face challenges in differentiating between the two, contributing to underreporting of cases. Extortion and protection racketeering are not widespread in Namibia, though isolated incidents have occurred.

TRADE

Arms trafficking is a notable issue. High levels of gun ownership contribute to firearm-related crimes and increased regional weapons flows undermine security. Reports indicate that firearms are stolen, mainly from police armouries, and illegally sold, sometimes by state-embedded actors supplementing their incomes. Kaisosi settlement in Rundu has been identified as a hotspot for illegal firearms, many of which are believed to originate from Angola's past conflicts. Weapons from Namibia have also been recovered in South Africa and Angola. The government launched an amnesty in 2023 to encourage the surrender of illicit weapons, though its success is unclear. Reports suggest that some government-issued firearms have been trafficked, raising concerns about accountability in security institutions. Counterfeit goods trafficking is well established in Namibia, where products including clothing, electronics and perfumes are widely available. Informal 'order-with-me' networks facilitate bulk orders

of counterfeit products for resale. China is the primary supplier of counterfeit goods and criminal networks and private sector actors are involved in distribution. Namibia is a destination and a transit country for counterfeit products, particularly those moving to South Africa. Enforcement of legislation is inconsistent and few major seizures are reported. Counterfeit cigarettes have also become more prevalent, especially in Windhoek and Walvis Bay. The illicit trade in excise goods, including alcohol and tobacco, is not pervasive in Namibia and the criminal market has limited influence. Namibia's porous borders facilitate smuggling, particularly of Angolan whisky and illicit cigarettes. Corrupt border officials reportedly accept bribes to allow contraband through. Namibia is used as a hub for reimporting cigarettes into South Africa, and discrepancies in trade data suggest involvement in ghost exports.

ENVIRONMENT

Flora crimes are a consolidated market in Namibia, where illegal logging and timber smuggling cause significant environmental damage. Timber, including rosewood, is trafficked to China, often with the involvement of state-embedded actors who circumvent legal restrictions. The Kavango regions are key sourcing areas and illegal shipments move through Walvis Bay for export. Local enablers also participate in the trade, further contributing to deforestation. Despite efforts to replant seized trees, illegal logging continues to threaten biodiversity.

Fauna crimes, particularly poaching of rhinos, elephants, pangolins and big cats, are a concern. Poaching networks exploit timber shipments to smuggle wildlife products, primarily to Asian markets. NGOs and local rangers collaborate to combat poaching, but challenges remain. Namibia is a transit point for abalone trafficked from South Africa to Hong Kong. Corruption among park officials has hindered enforcement and some allegedly collaborate with poachers. Instances of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing have also increased modestly in recent years. Despite conservation efforts, illegal fishing activities have led to significant economic losses as foreign vessels violate quotas.

Non-renewable resource crimes involve diamond and gemstone smuggling, as well as illicit fuel trade. Namibia is mainly a destination for smuggled fuel from Angola, and the illicit fuel trade is particularly pervasive in northern regions of the country. Institutional corruption has enabled foreign actors to exploit small-scale mining permits, undermining local miners. The lack of transparency in the mining sector facilitates continued illicit activities, and there are reports of foreign companies disregarding local laws. Illegal mining operations have caused environmental degradation, and damage has been observed in protected areas.

DRUGS

Heroin trafficking is limited in Namibia, which is primarily a transit route for heroin moving from Afghanistan to South Africa. Local heroin consumption is low, though authorities have reported increasing activity among domestic drug networks. Law enforcement has intercepted heroin shipments but the overall market is secondary to other illicit substances.

Cocaine trafficking is also relatively minor, Namibia acting as a transit country. Walvis Bay is a distribution hub for cocaine shipments moving to Europe and Asia. Namibian nationals are increasingly being recruited as drug mules and there are reports of domestic circulation in private venues and nightclubs. Law enforcement has intensified efforts to curb cocaine trafficking, and recent seizures and arrests highlight these activities.

Cannabis is the most widely consumed drug in Namibia, driven by affordability and a perception of low harm. The market is supplied primarily from Eswatini via South Africa, and there is no significant domestic production. Cannabis is prevalent despite strict penalties, and authorities have made many large-scale seizures. There have also been concerns about cannabis sales at schools, prompting increased law enforcement scrutiny.

Trafficking of synthetic drugs, including mandrax and methcathinone, is present but less common than cannabis use. Namibia acts as a transit country for Afghan methamphetamine moving through Mozambique and Tanzania to South Africa. Law enforcement has seized synthetic drugs in recent years, but concerns remain about detection and enforcement capabilities.

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

Cyber-dependent crime is growing in Namibia, where ransomware attacks, data leaks and cryptocurrency scams are becoming more common. There are thousands of cyber-attacks daily and foreign actors are frequently implicated. Among the most notable incidents, in December 2024 Namibia's state-owned telecommunications company suffered a major ransomware attack that led to the leak of sensitive customer data, reportedly including information about high-ranking government officials. Despite growing threats, there is little evidence of government efforts to strengthen cybersecurity infrastructure. The shift to online banking and digital payments has increased vulnerabilities.

FINANCIAL CRIMES

Financial crimes are a persistent issue and include tax evasion, fraud and pyramid schemes. Ponzi schemes, bank fraud and consumer scams undermine financial stability, particularly targeting vulnerable populations. Informal moneylenders operate with little oversight, often charging exorbitant interest rates that contribute to financial distress.

Reports indicate a rise in digital fraud targeting government institutions and private citizens, leading to coordinated international efforts to combat illicit financial activities, with notable arrests and asset seizures.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

There are no indications of hierarchical mafia-style structures engaging in illicit markets, but Namibia has a presence of loosely organized criminal networks involved in illicit activities. While local groups such as the Numbers and Hosh-Hosh gangs primarily engage in theft and violent crimes, more structured syndicates control major organized crime activities, including human trafficking, wildlife crimes and human smuggling. Namibia is a key transit hub connecting national criminal networks to international markets, particularly in South Africa and China. Reports suggest that many illicit operations involve the complicity of state actors, further enabling organized crime. Armed robberies, home invasions and vehicle parts theft have also surged, high unemployment rates contributing to increased criminal activity.

Corruption among state-embedded actors is a significant issue and officials at various levels of government use their positions to facilitate organized crime. Reports indicate that some officials provide insider information to external criminal actors, granting them an advantage in securing government tenders and contracts. This corruption takes many forms, including the sale of tax compliance certificates and residency permits, as well as bribery to make legal cases disappear. High-level officials have also been implicated in colluding with Chinese mining corporations, granting permits for mineral exploration and exportation that have resulted in significant financial losses for the state. Lower-level officials are involved in facilitating the smuggling of illicit goods at border points in exchange for bribes.

Foreign actors play a substantial role in the organized crime landscape, particularly in resource-related crimes and illicit trade. The most prominent foreign national groups involved in organized crime include South African, Angolan, Zimbabwean, Chinese and Congolese actors. South African and Angolan nationals are linked to human trafficking, drug trafficking and the smuggling of excise goods, while Chinese actors dominate illegal mining, environmental crimes and the counterfeit goods market. There have also been cases of eastern European individuals involved in illicit activities. Chinese mining corporations exert considerable influence over the mining sector, often with the assistance of corrupt state-embedded actors. Foreign actors have also been known to apply pressure on Namibian officials by threatening to withdraw investment if their demands for illicit deals are not met.

Private sector actors are involved in organized crime in Namibia, particularly financial crimes, human trafficking and non-renewable resource exploitation. Businesses in

the uranium, oil and emerging green hydrogen sectors have been linked to money laundering schemes, and high-level officials reportedly use the private sector to conceal illicit financial flows. Companies operating in the fishing and agricultural industries have been implicated in the exploitation of trafficked individuals for forced labour. The private sector has also been accused of facilitating the laundering of proceeds from organized crime, and there is little evidence of government action to address these concerns. Professionals such as accountants and lawyers are

increasingly scrutinized for their potential roles in enabling financial crimes. Private companies have been found to exchange falsified references to gain competitive advantages in securing government tenders, entrenching corruption in public procurement processes. These schemes often involve reciprocal arrangements, where companies that win tenders compensate others in the network through commissions or future business favours. Government officials play a critical role in sustaining these corrupt practices.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Namibia demonstrates governance strengths as well as challenges. Democratic institutions are in place but concerns persist about political patronage, transparency and corruption. The country has experienced a decline in electoral competitiveness as a longstanding ruling party maintains significant influence over political and administrative structures. Weak enforcement mechanisms and limited accountability contribute to ongoing governance issues, and there are reports of officials engaging in corrupt practices or shielding influential figures from scrutiny. Resource limitations and political considerations have affected the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies. Recent electoral processes have faced logistical and administrative challenges, raising concerns about procedural transparency. Despite these issues, Namibia continues to mark milestones in political representation such as the election in 2024 of its first female president, and is engaged in democratic governance frameworks.

The government's efforts to combat corruption have been inconsistent and investigations often fail to reach senior officials. Reports of political interference in oversight institutions undermine public trust. Transparency is a challenge, particularly in public procurement and budget allocations, where opaque decision-making processes have raised accountability concerns. The awarding of contracts in key industries, including energy and natural resources, has been criticized for lacking full disclosure. Regulatory gaps in sectors such as oil and gas contribute to uncertainty about ownership and oversight. Efforts to improve governance are hindered by weak enforcement mechanisms and limited accountability for political officeholders.

Internationally, Namibia generally upholds legal obligations and participates in treaties addressing organized crime. It is part of the Southern African Development Community and cooperates in regional security efforts. The country has signed several extradition agreements and participates in initiatives aimed at combating illicit financial flows.

However, it has struggled with enforcing international legal requirements, particularly in high-profile corruption cases, and delayed the extraditions of suspects in recent corruption scandals. The country has yet to ratify the firearms protocol of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, indicating gaps in alignment with global frameworks.

Namibia's legal framework includes provisions for combating organized crime and there are laws addressing human trafficking, wildlife crimes and financial crimes. However, enforcement is inconsistent and gaps in implementation weaken the laws' effectiveness. The country has adopted measures to improve legal frameworks, including updates to anti-money laundering legislation and higher penalties for financial crimes. Even so, enforcement is hindered by resource constraints and corruption. Efforts to regulate the mining and logging industries have also faced challenges due to loopholes in enforcement mechanisms, allowing illicit activities to persist. Namibia has made progress in aligning its national policies with international legal frameworks, but compliance and effective implementation continue to be problematic.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Namibia's judicial system is largely independent but faces challenges such as inefficiency and resource constraints. The system operates without specialized courts for organized crime cases, resulting in lengthy case backlogs. Bribery has been reported in the judiciary, though the courts have secured convictions in significant corruption cases. The recent establishment of a permanent wildlife crime court demonstrates some commitment to tackling organized environmental crime, but overall the judicial system is underfunded and struggles to process cases efficiently. The prison system is under state control but faces issues related to overcrowding and poor conditions. Gangs exert influence in prisons, and corruption among staff allows the smuggling of contraband, including drugs, into facilities. Reports of violence and abuse in prisons highlight

broader concerns about the effectiveness of detention as a deterrent for organized crime figures.

The Namibia Police Force has specialized units dedicated to tackling organized crime, wildlife trafficking and financial crimes, though there is limited information on their overall effectiveness. Law enforcement is a critical weakness in Namibia's fight against organized crime, and the police are frequently cited as a key factor in inefficacy or alleged complicity. This has contributed to a potentially strained relationship between law enforcement and the public. To address concerns about accountability, the police complaints and discipline department has undergone reforms aimed at enhancing its autonomy, as its independence had long been questioned. However, many reported cases of police misconduct and criminal involvement have remained unresolved for years, undermining trust in law enforcement institutions.

Namibia's vast territory and low population density make border monitoring a significant challenge. However, its borders are relatively less porous than those of other African nations. The primary vulnerabilities lie along the Angolan and Zambian borders, which are frequently exploited by smugglers. Namibia's strategic location heightens its susceptibility to illicit activities. Its access to major criminal markets through the Walvis Bay port and land borders with Angola, Zambia and South Africa positions the country as a key transit point for drug trafficking, contraband smuggling, human smuggling and wildlife trafficking. Corrupt border officials accepting bribes undermine enforcement efforts, exacerbating these security risks.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Namibia has made strides in strengthening its anti-money laundering framework, but enforcement is inconsistent. Banks are required to investigate sources of funds for even small transactions, but oversight is weak. In 2024, the country was placed on the Financial Action Task Force grey list, highlighting deficiencies in addressing financial crimes. The Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC) has increased its scrutiny of transactions but a lack of prosecutorial powers limits its effectiveness. Once the FIC concludes its investigations, the findings are forwarded to other law enforcement agencies, such as the police and the Anti-Corruption Commission. These bodies must then conduct their own investigations before referring the case to the Prosecutor General's office for a decision. However, this process is often slow and inefficient, allowing suspects to flee the country. Additionally, concerns about corruption within the police raise the risk of cases being undermined or sabotaged. There is also little capacity to address underground financial networks, such as informal remittance schemes.

In terms of economic regulation, Namibia has introduced beneficial ownership requirements for registered companies to enhance transparency. However, enforcement challenges

persist and powerful individuals often avoid scrutiny. Controversial cases before the courts have raised concerns about regulatory integrity. Loan sharks operating outside formal financial systems charge exorbitant interest rates, contributing to financial instability for vulnerable populations.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Support for victims of organized crime has seen mixed results. The government has improved identification mechanisms for human trafficking victims and there has been a notable increase in recognized cases. However, services for victims remain underdeveloped and shelter facilities lack operational funding. The Witness Protection Act, although operationalized, has not yet demonstrated effectiveness in securing victims and key witnesses in organized crime cases. Reports indicate that some law enforcement officers penalize human trafficking victims for immigration violations, reflecting inconsistent victim support mechanisms.

Crime prevention initiatives have primarily focused on environmental crimes, such as poaching, and local communities participate in conservation efforts. The recent amendment to the relevant regulatory framework demonstrates a national commitment to crime prevention, though enforcement is underfunded. Persistent challenges in human trafficking include gaps in law enforcement training and inconsistent application of referral mechanisms.

Civil society organizations play a crucial role in Namibia, particularly in supporting victims of human trafficking and combating wildlife trafficking and illegal mining. They are also instrumental in calling for transparency and accountability. However, media freedom has reportedly declined. Concerns have been raised about the ruling party's influence over civil society, particularly investigative journalism. Additionally, resource constraints faced by some media institutions hinder their ability to hold authorities accountable. Despite these challenges, Namibia maintains a relatively open environment for non-state actors compared to many other African nations.

This summary was funded in part by a grant from the United States Department of State. The opinions, findings and conclusions stated herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Department of State.