



This project is funded by the European Union

Organised Crime Index methodology

Acronyms

NGO - Non-governmental organisation

UNODC - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

UNTOC - United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

Introduction

The ENACT Organised Crime Index is based on an expert-led assessment of two main components – criminality and state resilience to organised crime. This document outlines the detailed methodology of the Organised Crime Index and supplements the Index report.

Model

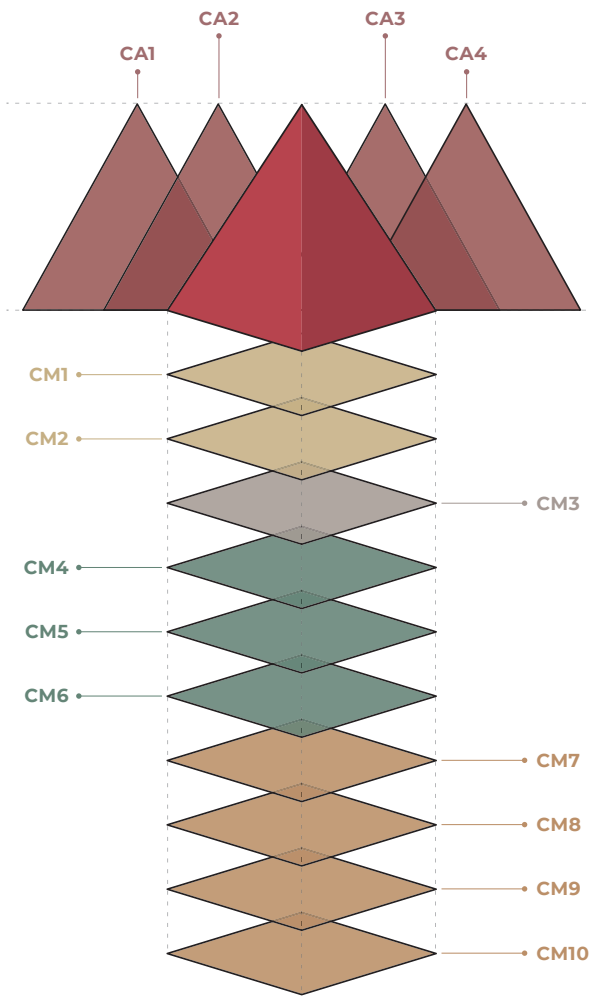
Modelling an index on organised crime is not easy. The inherently clandestine nature of illicit economies, with their ever-changing forms and environments, and the nebulous concept of organised crime itself carry the risk of the Index becoming an overly complex analytical tool. At the same time, oversimplifying the index would risk sacrificing the kind of nuanced analysis needed to inform stakeholders of the conditions within their countries and help guide them in developing effective strategies to combat organised crime.

With this in mind, the ENACT Organised Crime Index is based on three constituent elements:

- **The scope, scale and impact of specific criminal markets**
- **The structure and influence of criminal actors**
- **The existence and capacity of countries' resilience measures against organised crime.**

These are then used to assign each country a criminality score and a resilience score. Both components of the index, criminality and resilience, are scored according to expert assessments and supplemented with information gathered during the data collection.





Criminality indicators

CRIMINAL ACTORS

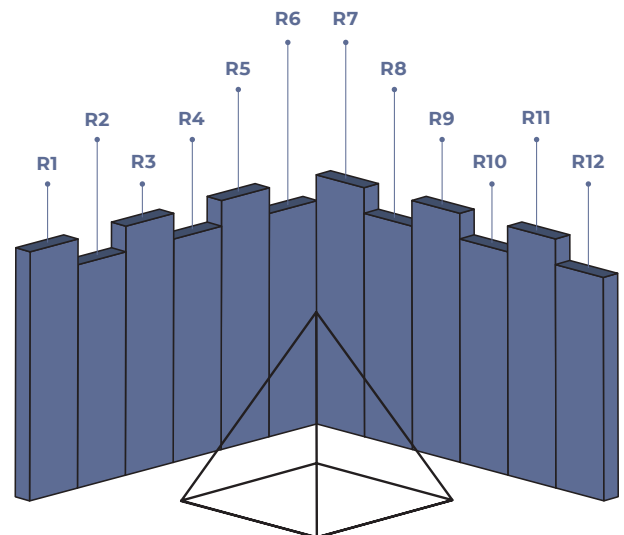
- ▲ **CA1.** Mafia-Style Groups
- ▲ **CA2.** Criminal Networks
- ▲ **CA3.** State-Embedded Actors
- ▲ **CA4.** Foreign Actors

CRIMINAL MARKETS

- ◆ **CM1.** Human Trafficking
- ◆ **CM2.** Human Smuggling
- ◆ **CM3.** Arms Trafficking
- ◆ **CM4.** Flora Crimes
- ◆ **CM5.** Fauna Crimes
- ◆ **CM6.** Non-Renewable Resources Crimes
- ◆ **CM7.** Heroin Trade
- ◆ **CM8.** Cocaine Trade
- ◆ **CM9.** Cannabis Trade
- ◆ **CM10.** Synthetic Drugs Trade

Resilience indicators

- **R1.** Political Leadership and Governance
- **R2.** Government Transparency and Accountability
- **R3.** International Cooperation
- **R4.** National Policies and Laws
- **R5.** Judicial System and Detention
- **R6.** Law Enforcement
- **R7.** Territorial Integrity
- **R8.** Anti-Money Laundering
- **R9.** Economic Regulatory Environment
- **R10.** Victim and Witness Support
- **R11.** Prevention
- **R12.** Non-State Actors



Criminality score

The countries in the Index are led by their criminality score, which comprises two subcomponents. The first reflects the prevalence of criminal markets. This subcomponent considers both the forms of organised crime as well as their scope and scale, and classifies manifestations of crime within 10 illicit markets. If applicable, each crime type is disaggregated into sub-crime types or 'commodities' (i.e. their lowest denominator), under a commodity-based measurement framework.

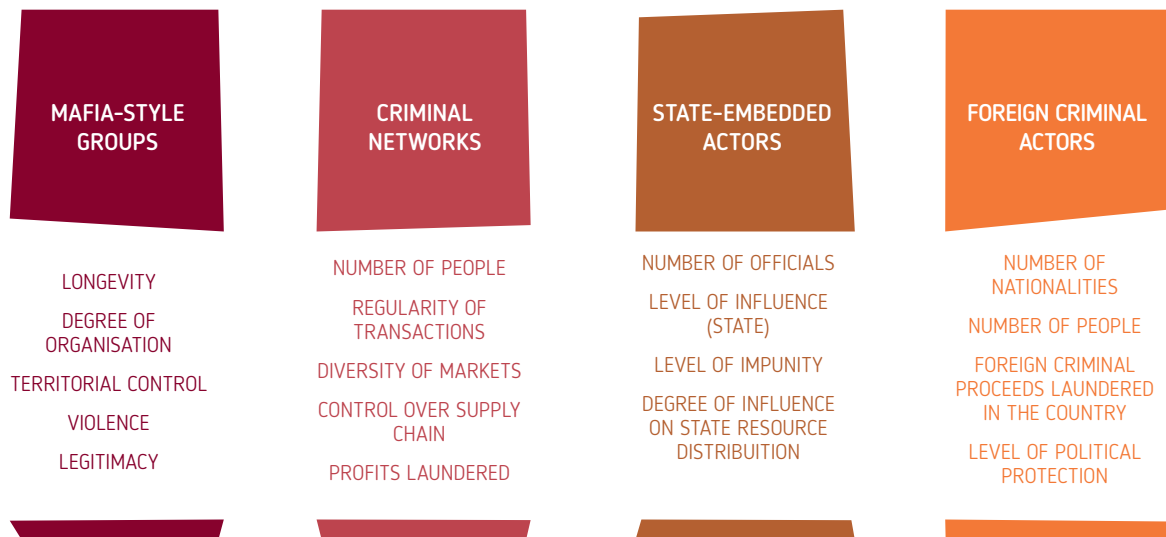
To determine which criminal markets to measure for the Index, ENACT drew on a large knowledge base, taking the continent as a whole. ENACT undertook an extensive literature review and commissioned thematic expert papers, identifying illicit economies by balancing the availability of data with the feasibility of integration into a state-centric tool and considering global priorities.

In measuring criminal markets, the Index considers both the value and reach of each market. While value refers to the entire value chain (e.g. from income generated by farmers harvesting crops, to profits

earned selling finished products), reach may be thought of as the non-monetary impact of a criminal market – in other words, the level of pervasiveness that a particular illicit market has achieved in a society. Reach may be divided into a number of general categories, including the number of people the market affects; the number or kinds of victims; the extent of illicit flows; violence involved in the market; and whether the commodity is in decline and/or renewable. Both the value of markets as well as their reach are based on expert assessments and supplemented with information gathered during the data-collection period.

To focus solely on criminal markets, however, offers a limited lens through which to view the evolving organised-crime landscape in a given country. The term 'organised' does not reflect the activity being undertaken, but rather the nature of the perpetrators. The other sub-component of the Index's criminality score is criminal actors. Actors refer to the types or structural forms of criminal organisations and their influence in the political, economic and social spheres of the countries they operate in.

Figure 1: Features of criminal actor types



Often, these categories are not always clear-cut or readily definable, particularly in the context of Africa. Just as forms of illicit activity vary and adapt to changing social, security and economic landscapes, criminal actors may evolve, oscillating between modalities, routes, degrees of violence

and commodities in pursuit of material benefit. For more detailed definitions and explanations, refer to the 'Guiding Questions' document on the ENACT Organised Crime Index website (see www.ocindex.net/downloads).



Resilience score

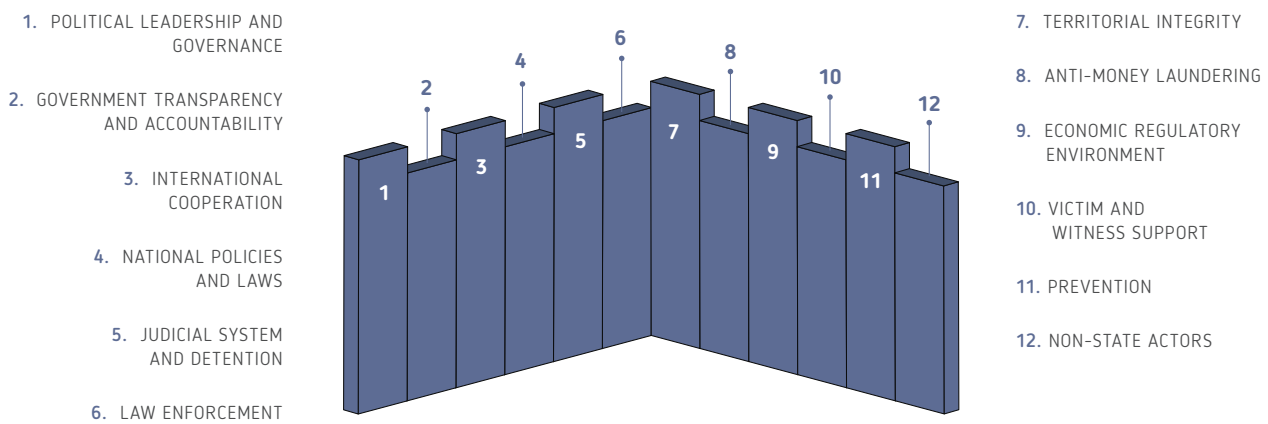
The ultimate purpose of the Index as an analytical tool is to help identify and implement practical measures to successfully combat organised crime. Whereas the criminality score allows users to identify problems and their scale, the resilience score is an indicator of the kinds and effectiveness of measures that countries have in place to achieve solutions to the problem. Resilience capacity and effectiveness are evaluated to assess the level at which states have established appropriate legal, political and strategic frameworks to address organised crime. The resilience component of the Index therefore provides essential analysis of data that have political and practical repercussions.

The goal of the resilience component of the Index is to help users understand which policies and other responses tangibly reduce the value and reach of organised crime. While the relationship between resilience and impact of organised crime may never

be linear, the Index does nevertheless identify key response factors. Along with the other two subcomponents of the tool, these provide a means by which states can monitor and evaluate the success of their interventions, and a base from which to develop new anti-organised-crime strategies.

In determining the overall resilience scores, the Index identifies underlying 12 'building blocks' of country resilience to organised crime, covering a range of areas, including political leadership, policies and laws, government transparency and economic regulatory capacity. Although each building block is treated as a discrete indicator of resilience, categories of resilience blocks appear, reflecting the political, legal, criminal-justice, economic and social spheres of society that have the potential to provide holistic and sustainable responses to organised crime. The resilience blocks are presented below.

Figure 2: Building blocks of country resilience



Given the wide range of areas and information covered by resilience, it is important to unite the 12 blocks in a meaningful way, and to underscore the importance of a holistic and multisectoral approach to organised crime. In measuring the influence of each resilience block, the Index asks two fundamental questions:

- Does the resilience measure or framework exist in a given country?
- Is the resilience measure or framework effective in combating the organised-crime conditions in the country?

The resilience score assesses anti-organised-crime measures in place and other state actions that may

be used to combat organised crime, while noting that capacity and will are precursors to actual implementation. The aim of these two fundamental questions is to ensure that countries' efforts reflect local conditions – it is not to reward or penalise states for having resilience measures in place for organised-crime problems that do not exist within their territories.

The Index takes a pragmatic approach by relying on both empirical data and expert assessment in its analysis of resilience capacity and effectiveness. Evaluating resilience in this way is particularly pertinent, as it captures the dynamics of resilience and allows Index users to identify which measures – if any – have been taken to combat organised crime.



Scoring and verification process

Together, **criminal markets, criminal actors and resilience** are combined in the Index to provide a multifaceted overview of each country's relationship with organised crime and of the impact of illicit flows. While the Index serves as a tool offering a holistic framework of a state's overall relationship to organised crime threats, its constituent elements allow users to disaggregate the information and determine correlations with various impact areas in any given country and/or region.

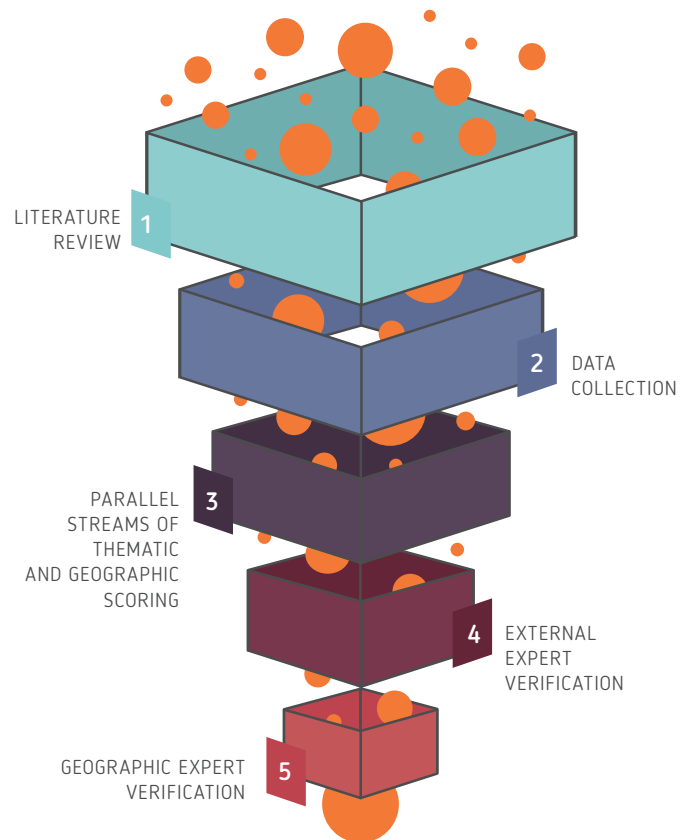
These components and subcomponents also allow for flexibility in future iterations of the tool. As the Index becomes replicated globally, sub-crime types and commodities will be determined by taking into account local and regional contexts. The Index will serve as a longitudinal study, aiming to show how organised crime has evolved, as well as its current state in a particular country. Impact areas are highlighted, adding value over time as the Index develops into a comprehensive picture of individual and global trends. Sharp changes in crime trends, both transnationally and within countries, will be reflected in data gathering and collection. This way, the Index is intended to be used as both a political tool and an assessment, illustrating the effects of specific policies and allowing stakeholders to better refine their efforts to combat organised crime. The scores are based on an expert led-assessment, supplemented with data gathered.

The scoring and verification process of the Organised Crime Index spanned six stages and was carried out along two streams of analysis to ensure transparency and accuracy. Drawing extensively on the data gathered, expert knowledge and – where needed – field research, each country was assigned scores for all elements of each of the three constituent elements – criminal markets, criminal actors and resilience – to create separate country profiles. In parallel and independently, thematic scores were assigned to all countries for each criminal market.

Index scores for all indicators were based on a scale from 1 to 10, along with a justification. For **criminality**, a score of '1' signifies the best possible scenario, in which a criminal market or actor group is non-existent. A score of '10' signifies the worst case, in which no aspect of society is untouched. Conversely, for **resilience** the scoring system is inverted, with '10' the best possible scenario and '1' and worst. Notably, even if a country exhibited a total absence of a criminal market, actor type or resilience indicator, it was assigned a score

of 1. Rather than exclude an indicator completely from the analysis, it was given a minimum score for non-existence to ensure comparability between and consistency among countries.

Figure 3: Index scoring process



In addition to numeric scores and score justifications, all expert verifiers were asked to provide a 'certainty level' score for each indicator where they provided input. Certainty level scores acted as a safeguard when experts were not knowledgeable about every aspect of a specific country. At the same time, they allowed the ENACT team to cross-reference expert inputs on the same indicator or country. Certainty level scores were based on a scale of 0 to 10. A score of '0' indicates the expert had no knowledge of a particular component. A '10' meant that the expert was completely certain in their verification assessment of a particular component.

All elements of each component and subcomponent were evenly weighted. While no explicit weightings were applied, implicit weighting does exist. For example, drug markets clearly predominate in the illicit



economies considered in the **criminality** component of the Index, even though **heroin, cocaine, cannabis** and **synthetic drugs** are considered as independent illicit markets. Nevertheless, this majority does reflect the predominance of drugs in terms of value when compared to other criminal markets.

All experts asked to verify and/or score were given an overview of the structure and methodology of the Index. A series of documents, including a 'Guiding Questions' note, framed definitions for each component of the tool; highlighted questions to consider in the assessment of all scores and justifications; and outlined data sets and information gathered that were available for consideration during scoring and/or verification. Additionally, a set of **criminality** and **resilience** thresholds were provided to add a framework of standardisation to the assessment process. These documents are available on the website (<https://ocindex.net/downloads>).

The ENACT team carried out the first three stages of the scoring and verification process internally, with the assistance of the Regional Organised Crime Observatories.¹ Initial scores and score justifications were assigned along both analysis streams and distributed for internal review. During stage 4, the scores and justifications were shared with external thematic experts for comparative valuation of criminal markets, reach criteria and score verification for all three components. In stage 5, the ENACT team reviewed all inputs and consolidated them for verification by geographic experts during stage 6. This final stage allowed the geographic experts to review scores and justifications to ensure compatibility within broader regional contexts. It was also an opportunity for a final check on accuracy, relevance and timeliness. Scorers and reviewers beyond the ENACT team were kept anonymous to mitigate the chances that scores might be influenced.

Selection of benchmark countries

Organised crime is by no means an exclusively African phenomenon; after all, illicit supply chains are global in nature. Thus, while this, the first iteration of the ENACT Organised Crime Index, focuses on an assessment of organised crime across the African continent, the intention is for the tool be replicated globally over the coming years. By extending, over time, the criminal markets and geographic scope of the Index, it aims to become a comprehensive

instrument that accurately reflects the nature of organised crime as a global phenomenon, offering policymakers an all-encompassing source of information enabling them to better understand organised crime and develop effective measures to respond to the phenomenon.

With this objective in mind, data collection and Index development within the first year considered 11 'benchmark' countries in addition to all 54 countries of the African continent, as recognised by the United Nations. The benchmark countries are shown below.

Global benchmark countries	
Albania	Mexico
Australia	Philippines
Canada	Singapore
Colombia	Sweden
El Salvador	United Kingdom
Japan	

The selection of these benchmark countries was based on a desire to demonstrate a geographically, ethnically and linguistically diverse sample, and the variation of organised-crime activities and priorities in each country. These 11 countries were selected as global benchmark states in developing and reviewing the tool. ENACT instructed all experts to score and/or verify based on global comparisons. In other words, country scores were adjusted to take into account countries across the continent and around the world.

Data collection

ENACT undertook a lengthy process of literature review, data creation and collection, analysis and verification to determine **criminality** and **resilience** scores for each country listed in the Organised Crime Index. As an initial step, it carried out a literature review to understand the kind of information that was available, as well as the existence of other relevant indices and their methodologies. As previously mentioned, ENACT commissioned a number of expert-led papers about each criminal market to home in on key elements to measure, relevant sources and past attempts to quantify criminality aspects, as well as challenges in doing so.

¹ The ENACT programme's network of Regional Organised Crime Observatories monitor and analyse regional trends in Africa, and act as the information conduits through which the Index is established and built upon.



Drawing on a wide knowledge base, ENACT's commissioned experts developed a number of protocols to guide a team of researchers in collecting data on the value and reach of criminal markets, actor typologies and resilience measures that exist in Africa. In some instances, data were collected in the original language – Arabic, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish – and where information was missing, the ENACT team created new data sets. For example, under **resilience**, the intangible nature of political will was quantified and codified, and new data sets developed to measure various indicators, such as public statements made against organised crime, the presence of a specialised organised-crime unit and the ratification of relevant treaties.

The wide range of complex organised-criminal markets, evolving criminal actor types and varied resilience indicators necessitated expert-led data collection. This streamlined the development of the **criminality** and **resilience** components of the Index and ensured comprehensive and accurate information gathering.

Thematic experts were appointed to draft or guide the drafting of data-collection protocols (downloadable at <https://ocindex.net/downloads>) in their respective areas of knowledge. Where possible, these experts were also eligible to serve as members of an independent thematic index reference group (see below). Under **criminality**, for example, each expert defined a protocol for each criminal market. The purpose of these protocols was to provide step-by-step guidance notes for data gatherers on how and where to collect data, and what to collect data on. Specifically, protocols identified the quantitative data sets to use for data gathering, the sources to use for qualitative assessment and the criteria to use for the scoring system.

In other words, the protocols provided guidance on the collection of two main categories of information:

- **Data sets** – These include 'hard' data or information that may easily be quantified.
- **Non-codable qualitative information** – This set of information refers to reports and other qualitative sources that provide information and discuss concepts that are not easily quantifiable.

Data collection – guided by the protocols – considered the following available data sources:

- **Quantitative data** – Depending on the specific criminal market, for example, protocol authors – as thematic experts – determined the quantitative data sets that were relevant and outlined them in the

protocols. Data sets – drawing on official statistics and relevant datasets created by NGOs – included:

- Seizure data
- Usage data
- Pricing data
- Relevant national crime data
- Other data – Protocols contained a bibliography of key texts, as well as guidance on sources of additional qualitative assessments to look for and consider. Types of data considered included:
 - **Academic literature reviews**
 - **Grey literature reviews**
 - **International organisations literature review** - Examples of these types of sources included:
 - Direct sources, including UNODC publications, crime commission reports, annual statements issued by UNTOC's Conference of the Parties working group on migrant smuggling, and so on.
 - Indirect sources, such as using the work of the UN Commission on Human Rights on extrajudicial killings and the death penalty to consider drug-trafficking offences that have triggered the death penalty and led to a rise in extrajudicial killings.
 - Global or regional studies and other data or analytical exercises that are carried out regularly or periodically and serve as indicators of the prevalence of a given criminal market.
 - **Documents that flag up topics of international concern** – These sources include resolutions, statements, directives and/or regular meeting reports from groups or organisations that are global leaders in information or research on any given criminal market

Information gaps

Data collection for Africa presented a number of challenges, as information varied in terms of availability, reliability, uniformity and compatibility. Nevertheless, ENACT tried to overcome such challenges by cross-checking data sources where available and identifying proxy indicators, as needed.

These challenges and others were addressed through a series of discussions with an expert technical reference group (see below) to enhance transparency and minimise obstacles in developing and disseminating information to the greatest extent possible.



Expert selection and expert groups

The successful implementation of the Index depends not only on its tailored structural conceptualisation and data collection, but also on its ability to offer sound and reliable information to stakeholders and policymakers in their fight against organised crime. Over the course of developing the Organised Crime Index, several experts were consulted, representing a variety of backgrounds and expertise. Broadly speaking, these experts can be divided into three general groups.

A technical reference group was periodically convened to advise on the practical steps to undertake in developing the Index tool. As an advisory support and quality-control body, this group worked to evaluate the Index's suitability for replication on a global scale, enhance transparency and mitigate the risk of the tool not reaching intended audiences and drawing criticism. The group discussed and evaluated potential problems, such as the challenges arising from reliance on seizure data, multi-collinearity, variable selection and weighting.

The experts were instructed to score each country and/or verify their scores based on global comparisons. In other words, scores were adjusted to take into account countries across the continent and around the world.

Through regular meetings, members of the technical reference group provided input, peer review and quality assurance, supporting the development and implementation of the Index. The group, drawn from around the world, comprised multi-disciplinary experts in transnational organised crime, metrics and index development. They met regularly to exchange experiences and allow ENACT to draw on their expertise to develop the Index.

In addition to technical consultations, a second group of international organised-crime-specific – or thematic – experts was consulted throughout the data collection, scoring and verification phases of the Index. Both internal and external organised-crime experts were invited to provide feedback on country profiles and thematic sheets, including those with specific backgrounds in working on organised crime in Africa, as well as on illicit markets generally.

Finally, a group of external geographic experts, with specific expertise in and knowledge of one or

more countries and/or regions in Africa served as a final review and verification mechanism for Index scores and justifications. Using their expertise and knowledge of the five regions of Africa,² they advised the ENACT team on the scores presented, considering the coherence of content, contextual relevance, timeliness and conflict sensitivity.

Unlike the thematic experts, the geographic experts did not necessarily have backgrounds in organised crime specifically. Rather, they had extensive knowledge of geographic regions more generally and came from a wide range of backgrounds, including academia, civil society, the criminal-justice sector, journalism, economics and security.

The experts were asked to modify scores and justify their changes, where necessary, assessing the three elements comparatively, in relation to other countries as well as the other Index components.

Drawing on a large pool of experts, the ENACT team selected all individuals based on their academic backgrounds and extensive work experience in relevant fields. All experts had to be able to show evidence of their knowledge in a particular area, such as publication and conference-presentation records. Notably, no serving government officials were invited to participate in developing the Index to ensure independence in analysis. Nevertheless, ENACT expects that consultations with governments to assist in filling data gaps will take place in the coming years.

The input these independent technical, thematic and geographic expert groups have provided ensures the Index's credibility, accountability and transparency. All data, scores, justifications and reports have undergone a rigorous evaluation process, ensuring the tool's criminality and resilience scores provide detailed insight into states' overall relationship to organised crime.

² North Africa; East Africa; Southern Africa; West Africa; Central Africa.

