



# From the maskani to the mayor

## The political economy of heroin markets in East and Southern Africa

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### Summary

The trafficking of heroin is a crucial component of urban politics and development in East and Southern Africa. The heroin economy has shaped the growth of small coastal villages, border towns and megacities along the Southern Route – a network moving Afghan drugs south across the Indian Ocean and onward through Tanzania, Kenya and Mozambique to South Africa. Rapid and dysfunctional urbanisation, the migration of low-skilled youth throughout the region, unemployment and the inability of local governments to cope with service delivery needs have contributed to the spread of the drug, building fortunes for a few 'big fish' and promoting corruption among police and politicians.

### Recommendations

- Drug markets need to be understood as important elements of urban growth.
- Intelligence should be shared among law enforcement agencies across the region to deal with the strong transnational links in the heroin trade.
- Drug markets drive the systematic corruption of police and local politicians – this needs to be acknowledged and tackled.
- Interventions should be devised to integrate marginalised migrant communities, who are at heightened risk of recruitment as consumers and drug dealers.
- Informal and poorly regulated transport systems are vulnerable to criminal capture for money laundering and drug sales. This adds even greater urgency to the need to develop affordable and sustainable public transport systems around the region.
- The role of the drug trade in fuelling violence should be acknowledged by policymakers who should develop holistic, long-term interventions that deal with both the social drivers of crime and its illicit economy drivers.

## Background

In 2017, almost one ton of heroin was found hidden in boxes of wine on a farm in the Overberg region of South Africa. The 'bust' was made completely accidentally and took local authorities by surprise. Until then, the centrality of South Africa in the Southern Route – a network of routes taking Afghan heroin south across the Indian Ocean and through Africa en route to other markets – had gone largely unnoticed. This evidence of the country's new importance demonstrated how much the dynamics of the Southern Route had shifted since it was first identified as a minor player among three main global heroin routes.

We published *Heroin Coast: a political economy along the eastern African seaboard* in 2018 which analysed this route according to a political economy lens trained on high-level criminal market governance. This research highlighted how the transit of heroin had shaped and been shaped by high-level governance dynamics, and that the criminal governance of illicit markets mirrored the dynamics of political competition and rule.

For the last two years, the Global Initiative (GI) has continued researching this route and the ways it has become embedded across a large swathe of Southern and East Africa. Repeated engagement with dealers, police, users, and experts on the ground has underlined how local markets – rather than transit routes – were themselves crucial to understanding the heroin economy. It became increasingly clear that not only were these markets bigger than commonly understood, but they also had profound implications for urban government, levels of violence and processes of corruption at street and city level.

## Introduction

The Southern Route began in earnest in the 1990s when heroin began to be transported in bulk across the Indian Ocean on dhows that would dock in international waters and offload their cargo to speedboats and fishing boats, which would in turn land it on coastal beaches. But through the 2000s and up until today, as criminal networks accrued wealth from the trade, they bought access to major ports and protection from the criminal justice system. This opened up routes using shipping container-based smuggling and regional airports. In short, one of the most important evolutions of the regional heroin market over time has been geographic,

an evolution which itself implies political and social shifts. Trafficking has moved from sea-based transport that only affected the coast, to the use of a variety of transit modes and a proliferation of interior routes. Control of the trade then shifted from coastal ports towards the greater political, logistical and economic benefits of interior capitals, and markets developed in big and small towns across the interior.

This report builds on our previous work and deepens our understanding of illicit urban markets across Southern and East Africa, as well as the utility of different types of settlements for trafficking. The report is centred on a wide range of case studies. It begins with an explanation of the analytical approach and a description of four broad socio-economic trends related to urban growth across the region. In order to conceptually frame the granular and varied cases that follow, a typology of urban illicit markets related to the heroin trade is then examined.

The case studies are presented according to the geographic transition explained above, beginning with coastal case studies, moving onto the studies of interior cities and towns, and ending with the case studies of two cities which, we argue, have become 'shadow capitals' of the heroin economy. The report concludes with a discussion of the policy implications of this analysis and a presentation of five cross-cutting themes that run through the case studies, revisiting their relationship to broader processes related to urban growth and governance.

## Methodology

The case studies in the report are drawn from reports submitted by multiple researchers working across the region, with qualitative research conducted in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Mozambique and South Africa. Some researchers' remits overlapped – particularly in South Africa, where research was drawn from interviews by five ENACT researchers, including the lead author. There were four researchers covering the other five countries. Some of these researchers were GI analysts, and some were journalists or academics commissioned for this report. All researchers were given a subset of the following issues to consider (depending on their expertise and access) in their analysis of heroin markets and trafficking in a given location:

- local use (including rates of use and methods of use, and local users' access to services);
- the role of the police;

- the composition and activities of street-dealing networks;
- the composition and activities of trafficking networks;
- responses to the heroin economy by local authorities, district/provincial authorities, and national authorities.

Encompassing all of these issues, researchers were asked to compile historical accounts of the development of local markets, and to comment on the use of urban space and the impact on/of urban development.

Researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with a range of respondents. The selection of respondents follows a standard GI methodological approach, which is in keeping with widely held views amongst criminologists about the necessity of researching organised crime without relying overly on law enforcement information.<sup>1</sup>

This approach has two main features:

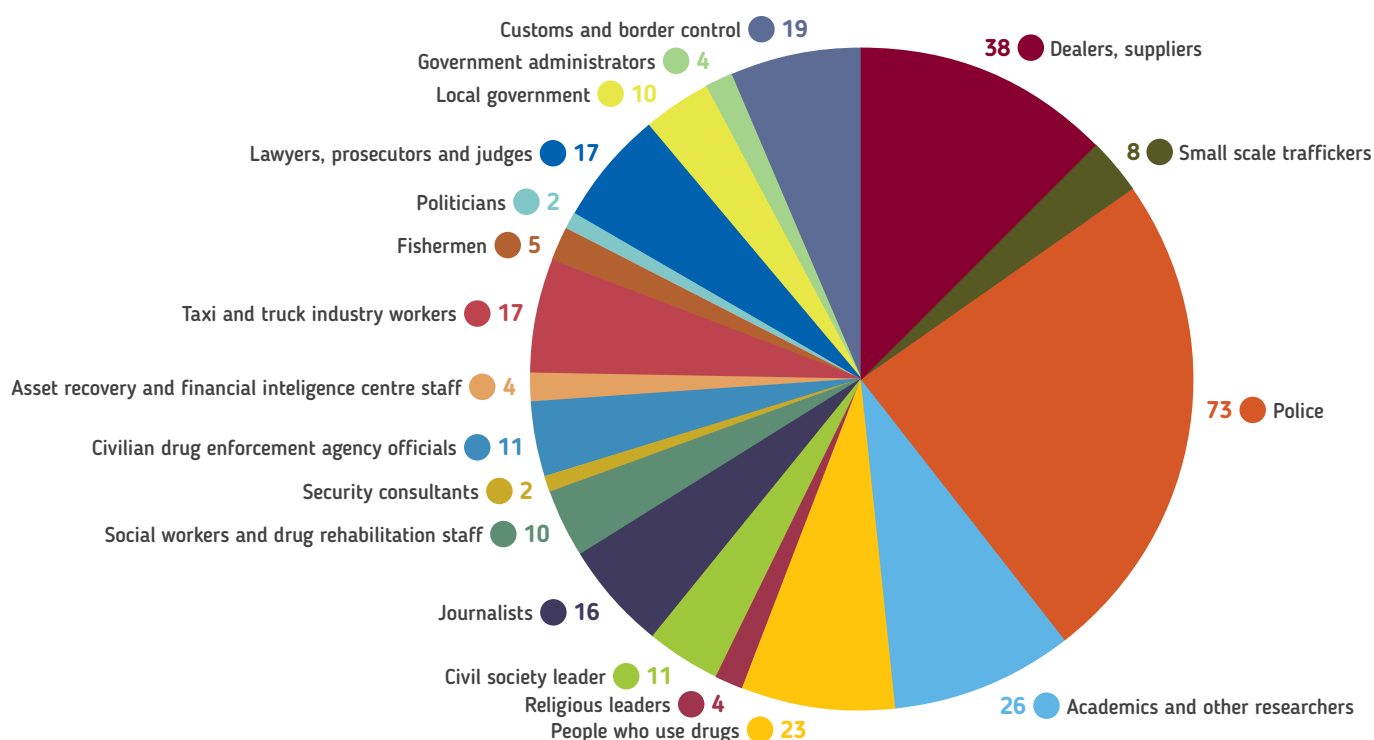
- to speak to people as close to criminal markets as possible;
- to try to solve problems of misleading or biased state and criminal sources by speaking to a wide array of interviewees, corroborating accounts from different perspectives and building up a 'mosaic' picture of criminal markets.

In practical terms, this means researchers were instructed to speak to users, criminal actors such as dealers, traffickers, middlemen, and enforcers (as far as access and safety allowed), law enforcement, business owners and labourers in industries adjacent to criminal activity (e.g. fishermen, truck drivers, taxi owners, or private security company owners or guards), religious leaders (where relevant), local political figures, civil society actors and other researchers.

For background, context and corroboration, researchers also monitored press coverage (including in Swahili and Portuguese), consulted academic sources and policy reports, and drew on governmental or intergovernmental documentation, all while remaining alert to the biases that can be contained in these, particularly media coverage and state documents. We often, as in this report, ask more than one researcher to gather information about a particular trade or network, both to corroborate accounts and to draw in as wide as possible an evidence base.

In total, 300 people were interviewed for this report and key informants were often interviewed multiple times. The graphic below breaks down the distribution between different categories of respondents.

**Figure 1: Breakdown of interviewees by employment**



## Limitations

The research faced some limitations, aside from the obvious difficulties of researching matters which are by nature hidden and secret. Firstly, this study could never be truly comprehensive, covering all urban nodes and countries affected by the regional trade, both because of resource and time constraints and because such an approach would produce a report of unworkable length. Other work by the GI reveals there are heroin markets of some size in – most likely – every Southern and Eastern African country.

We have focused on the locations which we believe, drawing on the past two years of research, to be the most significant to the transit trade or to have the largest and most damaging local markets, or smaller places which are less crucial to the overall trade but which are representative of other such places, e.g. border towns which host land-based transit and small consumer markets.

One notable omission in assessing urban nodes with important consumer markets is that this report does not cover the Indian Ocean islands, despite a considerable heroin consumer market in Mauritius, as well as on other islands. Due to resource and time constraints we were not able to include the islands, but a full report focused solely on their drug markets will be researched in the next year by the GI.

Lastly, research for this report has again revealed that there is transit through Somalia and South Sudan, Burundi and Rwanda. We do not consider these countries to be as important to the regional trade as those further south, but the impact of the trade may still be important and their cases deserve further attention, particularly as some have specific dynamics related to the involvement of armed groups in the illicit economy.

A forthcoming GI report will report in detail on heroin markets and prices in eSwatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.<sup>2</sup>

## Selecting case studies

We have selected certain key hubs within this system in order to meaningfully describe the heroin economy as it currently operates. These case studies include large and economically important places as well as towns that are often considered peripheral to development

debates, but which nonetheless play a crucial role in licit and/or illicit trade in the region. Almost half of these case studies come from one country, South Africa. As the largest economy in the region, it hosts a lion's share of the retail market and suffers some of the worst consequences at local level. As such, it is worth understanding in granular detail how heroin has shaped urban development across the country. The rest of the case studies are distributed across Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda.

## The political economy of illicit urban markets

Our political economy approach to the study of illicit urban markets is concerned with analysing the flow of profit, the use of power, and the negotiation of formal laws and informal regulation in criminal markets. It involves looking in-depth at particular places, as well as understanding their relationship to one another. In this way, it seeks to build a regional picture from a case study approach.

Here we outline four socio-economic and political trends that are features of urban development across the region. Our selection of these trends has been shaped both inductively and deductively, based on our prior engagement with the heroin trade and on insights that derive from research conducted for this report. At the end of the paper we return to these trends and look at their interaction with illicit heroin markets – both the ways they have created the conditions for these markets to flourish or otherwise shaped their growth, and the ways in which illicit heroin markets in turn shape these phenomena.

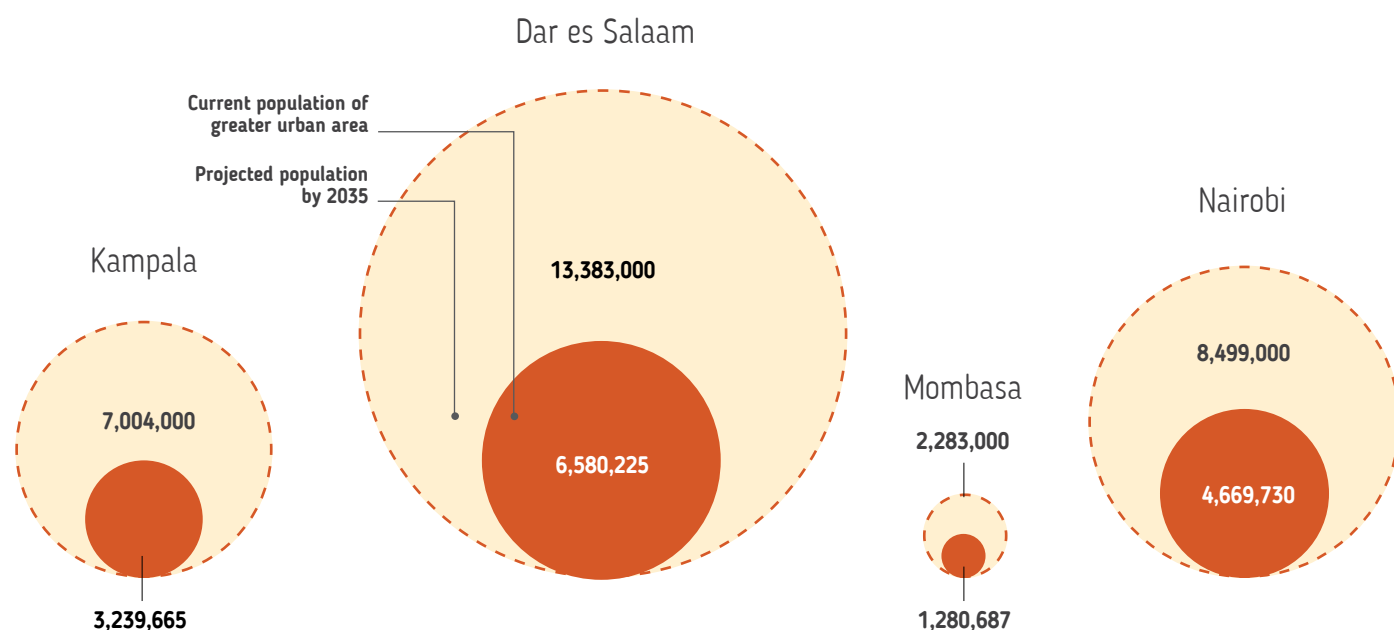
### Urban growth

Africa's urban population is the fastest growing in the world.<sup>3</sup> Urbanisation in East and Southern African countries is expected to increase by 74.3% and 43.6% respectively by 2050.<sup>4</sup>

Five of the top 20 fast-growing cities in the world are in East Africa, including four of those profiled in case studies in this report: Kampala, Uganda (expected to grow by 99.5% by 2050); followed by Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (85.2%); Mombasa, Kenya (79%); and Nairobi, Kenya (77.3%).<sup>5</sup>

Urbanisation is not just about megacities: much of Africa's urbanisation will take place in secondary towns,

**Figure 2: The projected growth of four case-study cities by 2035**



which get less media and political attention, and often even less investment.<sup>6</sup>

Around the world, urbanisation has had numerous positive benefits: higher population density makes it less expensive to deliver services, and with the right policies and technologies, to reduce human impact on the environment.<sup>7</sup> Across the developing world, particularly in Asia, urbanisation has also led to huge improvements for gender equality, access to education, and access to information.<sup>8</sup> Lastly, urban growth may also create new possibilities for civil society to organise and advocate with government.<sup>9</sup>

But, currently, Southern and East Africa are going through a period of extremely inadequate investment in housing, transport infrastructure and other services, which forestall or compromise the economic gains that urban growth could herald. In urban areas across the region there are – sometimes, vast – areas of informal housing, and commuters face long and expensive journeys on largely private mass transit systems. Poor waste, sanitation and energy infrastructure, and high rates of urban unemployment are prominent features of many cities in the region.

Africa's urbanisation is also often taking place outside of the process of industrialisation that was a prominent part of the story of urbanisation in other parts of the world – industrial work has historically often served to provide mass employment for uneducated or low-skilled

urban migrants and young people as well as providing tax revenue which governments can invest in urban infrastructure. At the same time, it takes place during an acute demographic youth bulge,<sup>10</sup> particularly in East Africa. In some countries this is, in turn, related to extremely high levels of youth unemployment. Kenya, for example, has a youth unemployment rate of 18.34%, and South Africa, of 53.2%.<sup>11</sup>

### The challenges and promises of local governance

Local government is often described as the 'coal face' between the state and its citizens. Yet as shown by the high level of protests across the region, there are profound challenges at this level. Over the last decade, protests concerning issues of basic service delivery have become common in South Africa and are increasingly a feature of political life in other countries in the region.<sup>12</sup>

Many states in the region remain highly centralised, but donor pressure in the 1990s gave rise to significant moves towards decentralisation in the decades that followed. In some countries, decentralisation has energised sub-national politics and given opposition parties a route into governance through their control over wards, towns and cities. Nonetheless, municipal budgets for basic service provision are often severely underfunded and urban administrations do not always have leeway to chart their own solutions to development



problems. Decentralisation has also created new routes for patronage and highlighted the rents that can be derived from control of strategic urban resources.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, the basic challenges of urbanisation – described above – mean that local government administrations struggle to be effective at producing urban environments that are healthy, secure, and economically dynamic.

## Interregional migration

Contrary to the image often portrayed in Western media, the majority of African migrants do not leave the continent; instead they move to neighbouring countries.<sup>14</sup> Only a small proportion (14%) of international migration within Africa is conflict related, and migration is more commonly driven by people seeking better living conditions, trading opportunities and education in other countries in the region.<sup>15</sup> Climate change is also a significant push factor.<sup>16</sup> Migrants are also likely to be young, as youth unemployment drives people to search for livelihoods outside their home country.<sup>17</sup>

A significant amount of migration within Africa is destined for South Africa. Irregular migrants from East Africa use Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania as routes to reach Southern African countries.<sup>18</sup> Johannesburg and Nairobi are both considered to be the biggest migration hubs (both attracting migrants as a final destination and as transit points to other destinations).

## Urban violence

A notable feature of urban population growth, particularly rapid and unplanned growth, is rising urban violence. Many factors are put forward to explain this, including economic and social factors. Among them are unemployment<sup>19</sup> and low wages<sup>20</sup> as well as the pressure (explained above) placed on local government to deliver services, in which the provision of justice, such as effective policing, is often sidelined.<sup>21</sup> Inadequate public housing and planning of neighbourhoods leads to overcrowding and anomic social conditions, which provide fertile conditions for crime.<sup>22</sup> In many part of the world, the drug trade is a major driver of high levels of violence.

An urban case study approach allows us to explore how these macro trends reflect at the local level. African drug markets are understudied in general – there are

even fewer studies which tease out how big trends play out in particular locations or which try to recreate the history of drug market development in particular places. Case studies of individual towns and cities allow us to explore how the heroin trade affects communities in a granular way, drawing out the impact of the trade on development, and to profile figures operating at the town or city level who may one day have national significance, as well as to understand how corruption operates at a sub-national level.

## Using case studies to understand illicit urban markets

Three questions guide the overall inquiry into the geography of this trade:

1. What type of physical locations have become important in this regional market?
2. Why have these places become important?
3. What are the implications of this?

This report approaches the regional nature of the heroin trade by looking at the way that syndicates are co-operating across the region and at how narcotics are moving both between and within cities. It makes the case that the regional economy should be understood as comprising dozens of urban nodes strung together by transport corridors, which also connect the region with international trade routes.

The analysis therefore looks in depth at individual cases and tries to trace connections between them in order to understand the bigger system in which the heroin market of each town or city functions.

The typology below comes out of the analysis and synthesis of the case study material. It is presented here both as a conceptual framework to guide the reader, and a summary of the findings that follow.

The large and varied case studies that follow could be ordered in various ways. In order to bring out the parallels between urban centres in different countries we have not ordered them by country. Rather there are three rough divisions – coastal trafficking points, including both informal marinas and major port towns and cities; the hubs and towns related to the movement in the interior; and the inland ‘shadow capitals’, which have come to dominate the heroin trade.

## Typology of case study locations and the characteristics that make them amenable to drug trafficking

Type	Drug trafficking characteristics
<i>Bandari bubu</i>	A <i>bandari bubu</i> is a small makeshift port or remote, unmonitored harbour. We use the term as encompassing the towns or villages they are in, or closest to. They are used by subsistence fishermen and small-scale traders, are easily dismantled and reassembled and are highly porous to illicit trade.
Coastal ports	In the East and Southern Africa region, coastal cities have huge economic and sometimes political importance. Many of the region's largest cities are major port cities, and these were the first urban locations to become substantially enmeshed in the heroin economy. Many have at one time played a large role in receiving heroin shipments – either through consolidating dhow-based shipments to nearby <i>bandari bubu</i> , or through container deliveries. Through their role providing transport infrastructure, they generated the first major criminal figures in the economy and now also have the most longstanding local markets. As their own heroin markets have grown and become entrenched, they have generated competition, and violence – these are our Violent Ports. There are however some important container ports – which we called Entrepot ports here – which have been used for the trade but have never grown into large urban areas. These have no or small heroin markets, but they are closely linked to high-level corruption, as container ports are sensitive national infrastructure – criminals must get political protection in order to access them.
Interior hubs	From the coast, heroin tends to travel inland and across the region by road. Interior hubs offer infrastructure such as warehousing space and road and rail connections that facilitate consolidation and onward transport. Over time, these places often develop their own local markets and trafficking dynamics, such as the development of air-based drug muling, if they offer an international airport or an easy connection to one.
Interior towns	Small towns in the interior develop markets due to the deliberate attempts of dealing networks to cultivate a niche in an unclaimed market, often building organically on populations of users who have been exposed to heroin in bigger urban centres. They are often end-of-the-road markets for already substantially adulterated product but can develop surprisingly large markets for relatively remote locations.
Border crossings	Border crossing towns often have grey economies which thrive on smuggling. These small towns can be important bottlenecks for road-based routes shifting smaller parcels of drugs which will be consolidated later. They often have small drug markets selling adulterated product.
Shadow capitals	These are major economic and political centres that attract criminal actors for the same reason they attract licit ones: proximity to political influence, the use of sophisticated transport infrastructure and financial services and the abilities of 'outsiders' to enter the economy. Over time two big cities have drawn the bulk of the consolidation of product and profits from the trade towards themselves from the coast. This has built on patterns of economic migration which have provided pools of foreign migrant labour for use as dealers, or drug mules and other employees.

**Figure 3: An overview of heroin trafficking on the eastern African coast**



The map shows the route of heroin into the region, and the position of case study towns. This map is not to scale.

## The coast

The Indian Ocean coast of Africa has played a crucial role in the regional heroin route. The region's long coastline and its many remote beaches and islands allow relatively unmonitored landing sites for drugs – we discuss their dynamics here under the term *bandari bubu*, the Swahili word for unregistered or unofficial marinas. The dhow-based drug trade (which includes heroin, hashish and cannabis) makes use of small ports, beaches and coves as landing sites for drugs which are usually collected from the dhows by speedboats or fishing boats; the dhows anchor just outside territorial waters (and so outside of prosecutable jurisdiction). Once brought to land the drugs are taken by road to large centers for consolidation, possible processing, and onward transport. Drugs which have come into the region by container or flight are also moved around the region – in either smaller or big, consolidated shipments – by small boats.

## The dhow-based drug trade (which includes heroin, hashish and cannabis) makes use of small ports, beaches and coves as landing sites for drugs

The challenges to effectively policing coastlines in this region are immense. The coastlines involved are incredibly long – of the 10 longest coastlines in Africa, the top four are all part of the heroin route (Madagascar, Somalia, South Africa and Mozambique). Length alone does not tell the whole story, however. Illicit goods that pass through *bandari bubu* are hard to track as Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique still host large subsistence and small-commerce fishing industries, and with it, thousands of unregistered fishing boats. Tanzania's coastline is repeatedly identified as being particularly conducive to smuggling, at 1 424 km in length. In August 2018, authorities in Tanzania said they had identified 134 illegal ports and 58 unregistered airstrips used for smuggling contraband goods.<sup>23</sup> Tanzanian authorities do not know how many fishing boats currently operate in its waters, but the last survey – conducted in 2009 – indicated that there were almost 6 670 dhows, canoes, and small motorised boats, and 73% were unregistered.<sup>24</sup>

In South Africa, by contrast, the fishing industry is substantially industrialised and there are relatively few small fishing enterprises, as well as a much greater institutional ability to monitor the coast. Of the other countries stretching north up to the Gulf of Aden, only Kenya has a national coast guard, and even this is a relatively new development.

These long, poorly monitored coastlines and their *bandari bubu* are key to understanding how the Southern Route developed. *Bandari bubu*, as they provide little to no real infrastructure, are also easily deconstructed and moved. These factors make smuggling through these informal ports appear almost impossible to eradicate.

The two case studies below of Bagamoyo and Angoche sketch out the role that small, informal harbours on the Tanzanian and Mozambican coast, respectively, play in the regional trade, and highlight the ways they leverage connection and remoteness, and their role in the 'grey' coastal trade.

### Bagamoyo

Bagamoyo is a small to medium sized coastal town located about 75 km from Dar es Salaam, with a population of slightly more than 80 000 (and around 300 000 in the surrounding district). Interviews indicate that heroin started to enter into this stretch of coast in around 1999, when tourism was at its peak and foreign visitors first brought drugs for personal consumption. Trafficking routes were subsequently established. Inside Bagamoyo town, particular neighbourhoods such as Magomeni and Mangesani and Mji Mpya developed heroin markets – and, even though there has been a substantial drop in tourist numbers since then, these markets remain due to trafficking routes. When former president Jakaya Kikwete was in power, Bagamoyo was slated for enormous investment under China's Belt and Road Initiative, which promised to transform it into a major port for the container shipping trade. However, this deal has been cancelled by the current regime. Bagamoyo, then, looks to remain on the edges of real economic growth and state investment.

Bagamoyo's economy is officially based on smallholder farming, fishing and mariculture, sea-based trade and tourism. But the town has also been identified as a hub of sugar smuggling, and an important waypoint for human smuggling and trafficking networks. Historically, Bagamoyo and Zanzibar have enjoyed a symbiotic



relationship. Bagamoyo was a place where enslaved people were warehoused before they were taken to Zanzibar, which was the capital of the region's slave and ivory route.<sup>25</sup>

Today, Bagamoyo is only one of many key coastal landing sites for the heroin trade, but it is considered to be an important one.<sup>26</sup> Heroin which has come into Zanzibar is transported to the mainland via Bagamoyo and surrounding villages, where it is consolidated and transported onwards by road. The last notable seizure in Bagamoyo happened in 2011, involving 180 kg of heroin.<sup>27</sup> However, most of the seizures in Lunga Lunga and Hori Hori along the Kenya-Tanzania border are comprised of heroin sourced in Bagamoyo, including the 30 kg seized from three Tanzanian nationals at Lunga Lunga border point, on a bus en route to Mombasa.<sup>28</sup>

About 200 vessels arrive in Bagamoyo daily; however the official port can only handle a few dozen vessels each day. Here screening checks are done manually, and containers inside boats will typically only be counted rather than inspected. 'The officials here are interested in screening bulky stuff, such as refrigerators and cooking oil; light and small merchandise is not checked because of the lack of time and manpower, and screening equipment,' according to a senior police source based in Dar es Salaam.<sup>29</sup>

The rest of the boats landing in Bagamoyo use *bandari bubu*, unsecured natural harbours or informal ports. Bagamoyo's informal marina is called Alfa Zulu beach (though it is referred to by locals simply as *bandari bubu*) and is located just 200 metres from the official port. But while the official port operates from 8am to 5pm, Alfa Zulu is open all night, serving vessels (traditional dhows and boats) arriving from Zanzibar bearing cooking oil, refrigerators, and other merchandise – and sometimes drugs. These boats, as they don't use the official harbour, are not inspected by Customs officials.

Bagamoyo *godowns* have been used to store drugs and precursor chemicals used in the manufacture of heroin. For instance, in May 2017, Tanzanian authorities seized five tons of chemicals that can be used to manufacture heroin, found in backyard storage in Bagamoyo, Dar es Salaam and in Moshi.<sup>30</sup> Further underscoring Bagamoyo's utility to drug syndicates, a disused beach house, about half a kilometre from the official port, is reportedly the abandoned residence of a European

trafficker. According to a source at the Tanzania Drug Control and Enforcement Agency, this trafficker received shipments in Bagamoyo and distributed the goods through the use of his private airstrip.<sup>31</sup> He deserted Bagamoyo after President John Pombe Magufuli ascended to power in October 2015, when, presumably, he lost political protection.

## The boats landing in Bagamoyo use *bandari bubu*, unsecured natural harbours or informal ports

Bagamoyo has a sizeable local market relative to its size, with a number of heavily dependent heroin users. 'A lot of youths have died here,' says 56-year old Doto Amchoro, a tour guide.<sup>32</sup> 'I have lost more than 12 of my friends, including former schoolmates, to drugs.' Opioid substitution programmes are provided by the state, and private facilities too. On the outskirts of Bagamoyo town is the privately-run Sober Life and Hope Rehabilitation Organisation, considered the biggest drug treatment clinic in Tanzania. It hosts 55-60 drug users every three months. It was founded in 2015, and every recovering addict pays TSh1.2 million (about US\$522) for the three months.<sup>33</sup>

## Angoche

For the networks that have their logistical base at Nacala port (see below), it has become hard to bring in heroin on the Northern Mozambican coast because of an insurgency in the northern province of Cabo del Gado and military patrols along the coast and the road routes. This has rendered certain network access to the *bandari bubus* near the Tanzanian border and around Mocimboa da Praia inaccessible (though other networks are still able to use them). As such, they have moved their heroin landing sites further south to Angoche, an old port which was slated to be modernised in 2017, though this never happened.<sup>34</sup>

That Angoche appears to have risen in prominence since the insurgency broke out in Cabo del Gado province shows that remoteness also has its drawbacks – because while remote coastal areas, like remote inland border zones, promise less state observation and intervention, they can also carry risks for smugglers. The example

of Angoche suggests that for one prominent heroin trafficking network, such risks are undesirable – and also that there is plenty of coast to choose from when one section becomes too dangerous.

The Angoche corridor is, however, not new. In August 2011, a former banker and a former local government official were arrested with 26 packages of hashish and in 2012, three people were arrested in Angoche when they were found with 187 kg of hashish.<sup>35</sup> In Counter Maritime Force (CMF) seizures at sea, hashish is often shipped with heroin.

In 2013, Nampula-based journalist Aunício Silva published an article in *Canalmoz*, an online newspaper, claiming that drug trafficking was providing an income to fishermen in Angoche.<sup>36</sup> Silva wrote that fishermen were hired by traffickers to fetch drug shipments far out to sea and carry them back to shore, where they would be stored in rented houses and backyards. Silva wrote: [Translated from Portuguese]: 'The name of the owner of the drug was not revealed, but we have information that it is an important member of the political elite. We can't mention the name because we don't have enough evidence of his involvement.'

Due to the poor road network, towns like Angoche are relatively remote and not subject to regular patrols. For example, Angoche is about 180 km from Nampula City, but this journey takes about six hours by car because of the state of the road.

Due to the poor road network, towns like Angoche are relatively remote and not subject to regular patrols

Traffickers in Mozambique use new cars and fill the spare-tyre space with drugs.<sup>37</sup> They hire the drivers to transport heroin from Angoche and other landing sites on the coast to Nampula, from Nampula to Maputo, and from Maputo to South Africa, the final destination. The Nampula government believes that the 32 kg of heroin seized in February in Nampula Province was offloaded first in Angoche and then taken to Nampula, from where it was dispatched towards Maputo.<sup>38</sup>

Interviews suggest that aside from Angoche, there are other potential sites for drug deliveries in Nampula

province, each capable of serving as a *bandari bubu*: Memba, Mogincual, Ilha de Moçambique and Moma (see Figure 8 on page 28). These small centres are not reported to have local users, but the consolidation point – Nampula, which is also the regional capital – is reported to have a growing users base.

In its earliest origins *bandari bubu* were central to the development of the Southern Route, and they continue to be vital offloading points for many trafficking networks. The fact that they occur repeatedly along an immense coastline raises difficult questions about the chances that all such sites can ever be effectively sealed to illicit trade, not limited to heroin, but also entailing the transport of grey trade goods, ivory, and even arms and militants. While the porosity of the coastline entails enormous risk for the countries in the report, the bulk of the people involved in the illicit trade at *bandari bubu* are likewise not serious organised criminals, but rather fishermen and transporters offering their services to licit and illicit traders alike.

They are also no longer the only entry point to the eastern seaboard of Africa, as this report shows, major seaports and (to a lesser extent) airports have also become important entry points. The drivers of East and Southern Africa's role in heroin trafficking are not just a feature of these remote and unmonitored spaces but also the increasing integration of heroin trafficking in the global economy and the development of its transport infrastructure.

## The port cities

For Africa as a whole, seaports provide crucial access to shipping to the interior and typically serve as gateways to several countries, as there are many landlocked countries in the interior. Cross-continental trade routes are also difficult, as the road and rail networks are poor – so places which offer an amenable crossroads through the continent develop important leverage as waypoints in licit and illicit economies.

Five port cities stand out as being central to the heroin economy in the region – Stonetown, Dar es Salaam, Mombasa, Durban and Cape Town. Dar es Salaam, in alliance with the island state of Zanzibar, has the dubious distinction of being the historical epicenter of the regional heroin economy. Kenya's role in the heroin trade was pioneered by families

based in Mombasa, and key figures in the trade still live there and draw political support from the region. In fact, the Akashas who, until recently, ran one of the most powerful and lucrative syndicates dealing in heroin, grew their empire in Mombasa, though they later came to rely on Nairobi more.

Cape Town does not have the same foundational role in the heroin economy, but it does play an outsized role in South Africa's drug markets as a whole. It is also the home base for several of the most powerful leadership figures in the South African so-called underworld.

Cape Town and Mombasa have both been crucial nodes for the transit trade due to their interface with the sea: Mombasa for its proximity to coastal landing points, and Cape Town for its shipping container-based trade links to Europe.

Cape Town and Mombasa share another similarity with Durban: the development of the largest and most lucrative retail markets, and accompanying criminal gang structures, which make violence a pronounced feature of criminal markets in all three.

Lastly, some port towns emerge as being crucial to the transit trade without having substantial local drug markets. Often these are small urban centers hosting large transport infrastructure, like major container shipping ports (if on the coast) or dry ports or airports, if inland. These places distinguish themselves as being particularly useful and permeable gateways.

Here we present a case study of Nacala, a deeply corrupted and criminalised port which has successfully hosted the trade routes for several criminal syndicates for some decades.

## Zanzibar

The route began on a small scale in the mid 1980s, as Zanzibaris employed in the shipping industry were introduced to drugs and began to bring them back to the island – and as tourism began to grow, bringing in more European drug consumers. One Zanzibari man, 'Salim', told the GI how he began a career in the drug trade in the mid-1980s after smuggling himself into Europe illegally in the hope of getting employed in the shipping trade in Greece.<sup>39</sup>

Though he did arrive successfully in Athens, he did not get a shipping job and instead found work selling

drugs on the street. Over a few years he saved up to go to Pakistan directly and buy from one kilogram of heroin directly from a Pakistani named Majid in Peshawar. He sold half of the kilogram in Zanzibar – to spend the profits on his family there – and the other half in Greece, where his return was higher.

Salim says he primarily sold his heroin to the elite. Through the 80s and 90s, the number of users was relatively few, almost entirely based in Stonetown, and the quality of product was high, indicating a small-scale direct supply line.<sup>40</sup> Salim's trafficking career never took off – something he attributes to a lack of capital with which to make the initial purchases. He did go on to be a renowned drug 'packer' – concealing drugs in Zanzibari craft and in people's clothes and babies's nappies – working for many men who did manage to set up more substantial supply lines.

Heroin is available in the furthest corners of Zanzibar, though it is more expensive on the east coast of Unjuga

In the late 90s, the population of users began to grow substantially, as did the rate of injecting drug use and HIV prevalence. The use of heroin spread around the island as users in Stonetown moved to work in hotels around Unjuga and Pemba – the two islands which make up Zanzibar – and dealers followed to set up regular supply lines. Heroin is now available in the furthest corners of Zanzibar, though it is more expensive on the east coast of Unjuga.

In Zanzibar today, the largest traffickers are businessmen and hotel owners who make regular campaign contributions to political actors.<sup>41</sup> Some are believed to receive shipments at sea. These are collected from dhows or other large vessels which can cross the Indian Ocean, either by small boats typical of the kind which ply the island, or speedboats. Businessmen are also able to buy essentially free passage through the Zanzibar port, and import drugs in hidden in containerised goods which are unpacked in their *godowns*.<sup>42</sup> From Zanzibar, heroin enters the Tanzanian mainland through Bagamoyo (see above).

The local market appears to be supplied from several avenues – the continued journeys of small-time international traffickers like Salim, supply that comes from Dar (and may have already passed through many hands), and some of the traffickers who are engaged in transit trafficking. There are numerous dealers who control drug sales in small patches of territory or, particularly, in villages in the island, and may also employ three or four street hustlers to conduct sales. There appears to be no or limited violence among them and a system of police protection around the local market is fairly well organised. According to one such baron, Stonetown is divided into roughly 10 territories, with 10 to 15 dealers operating. Every Friday one of three police officers who have been appointed to the job by superiors collects a payment from each of the dealers, an amount of either Tsh20 000 (US\$8), Tsh30 000 (US\$12) or Tsh 50 000 (US\$21), depending on the size of the dealer's territory.<sup>43</sup>

If a dealer is short, other dealers will contribute towards his shortfall, or heroin will be planted on the street hustler and he will be arrested. Within the local market, all law enforcement is directed at users, who are regularly arrested and put in cells where they detox without medical assistance.<sup>44</sup> However, occasionally foreigners who have not paid for passage will be imprisoned, or Zanzibar businessmen who are in arrears or otherwise out of favour with political protection will have their goods seized.

According to the last survey, completed in 2012, there are around 10 000 heroin users on Zanzibar, out of a population of 1.5 million. However, around 13% of these are injecting drug users, who carry greater health risks.<sup>45</sup> Since 2015, a government-run (but donor-funded) opioid-substitute therapy programme was established in Stonetown, with a clinic providing methadone and other health services. Users report this had the effect of diminishing the market slightly, as people transitioned out of use.<sup>46</sup> (A recently conducted survey, which has not yet been published, should provide an up-to-date picture of patterns of use.) As on the Tanzanian mainland, there is also an organised group called the Zanzibar Association of People who Use Drugs (Zanpud), which advocates for users' rights and participates in regional and international fora.

## Dar es Salaam

Dar es Salaam has played a crucial role as an epicenter of both the transit and the local retail heroin trade.

Given accounts of where the first small populations of heroin users occurred, it is likely that the first people to set up as middlemen in the transit route in the early 1990s were based in Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam, and then along the Kenyan coast. Heroin landing points for the dhow-based trade then proliferated along the coast north to Somalia and south to northern Mozambique.

The urban growth patterns of Dar es Salaam in the 70s and 80s also fed into its primacy. Driven by the collapse of rural economies, Tanzania's urban centres grew at faster rates than cities in neighbouring East African countries in this period. Among Tanzania's urban centres the population of Dar es Salaam increased the most, fed by the decline of industry in regional capitals like Tanga, Mwanza and Arusha. This growth was not planned for. By 1979, three-quarters of Dar es Salaam's population was living in unplanned settlements.

## Dar es Salaam has played a crucial role as an epicenter of both the transit and the local retail heroin trade

Working age youths were absorbed into the ballooning informal economy, which, starting in the 90s, included traffic in heroin, an opioid increasingly imported into East Africa directly from Dubai, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Thailand.<sup>47</sup> In Tanzania, the local consumption trade in Dar es Salaam was not constrained by political agreements between traffickers and ruling elites as it was in Kenya and Mozambique. (In Kenya, this agreement later fell apart, leading to the explosion of the local market, but in Mozambique it largely held for the next three decades, as we explain in *Heroin Coast*).

In the 1990s a hub of informal trade called Maskani grew up in the Dar es Salaam port suburb of Kariakoo, dominated by recently arrived internal migrants known as *wamaskani*, who identified strongly with Rastafarianism.<sup>48</sup> Smoking marijuana or dealing in it in the Maskani area was apparently discouraged by the *wamaskani*, but the same could not be said of the many other areas of informal trade arising in the city.<sup>49</sup>

Although the term in Kenya denotes a meeting place between friends, by the early 2000s *maskani* had become Dar es Salaam slang for any area where local

petty criminals congregated to gamble and/or sell/ use illicit substances, with marijuana and the home-brewed fruit spirit *gongko* being the major *maskani* commodities of this time.<sup>50</sup> Most of the *wamaskani* operating in the original Maskani in the 90s were internal migrants from Arusha,<sup>51</sup> but the *maskanis* that arose throughout Dar es Salaam in the 2000s were more diverse, and often drew in migrants from poor villages in the region of Pwani, who were poorly educated and carried feelings of marginalisation. According to one Tanzanian dealer, now based in Johannesburg: 'Most Pwani [coastal] people are Muslims and because the government ignored us for a long time the education was poor. When the young men from Pwani come to the city they have no choice but to hustle.'<sup>52</sup>

The trade and use of heroin grew relatively quickly in the city, but in the late 1990s, it was rare to see men smoking heroin in the *maskanis*. When one dealer returned to Dar es Salaam in 2005 after six years abroad, however, the scene had changed: 'Heroin was everywhere. It was the main business in the *maskanis*.'<sup>53</sup> The Dar es Salaam *maskanis* were largely controlled by men who came from the town of Tanga, and they lived in abandoned buildings. These places later became the *unga* (heroin) houses of Dar es Salaam, where users went to smoke in private.<sup>54</sup>

Heroin also spread across the country and significant populations of users can be found all along the coast as well as inland, particularly in Arusha. As Dar es Salaam drew in migrants from other urban centres, they may have helped to spread the use and trade of heroin as they made return trips to their areas of origin. As heroin is highly dependency-forming, you need a consistent supply, and this helps to facilitate the spread of the drug's use.

The GI recently compiled the first results from a countrywide survey of drug prices in Tanzania which show just how much the local markets for heroin have grown (see Figure 4 on page 14).

City to city in-migration dynamics have been significant in the development of the Dar es Salaam heroin scene and its control, and remain so, with the difference being that where the early wave of migrants from Dar es Salaam came to grasp a significant measure of control of the nascent heroin scene, successive in-migrant waves have rather more swelled the market for the drug. This is particularly clear in the case of Tanga, and the dominance that men from Tanga have not just in Dar es

Salaam, but also, as the case studies will demonstrate, in Cape Town and Johannesburg, in South Africa.

The men of the *maskanis* are usually at or close to the bottom of the hierarchy in drug markets, and typically only use or sell small amounts. However some have risen to be locally important dealers or have become powerful suppliers in other countries. However in Dar es Salaam the figures who rose to powerful positions controlling wholesale supply for the local market or along transit routes for international markets tended to be businessmen or men with political connections.

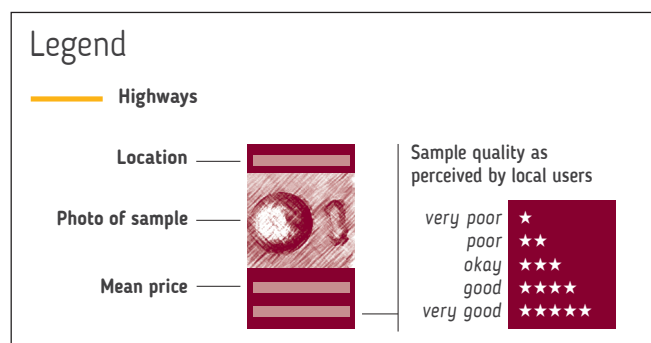
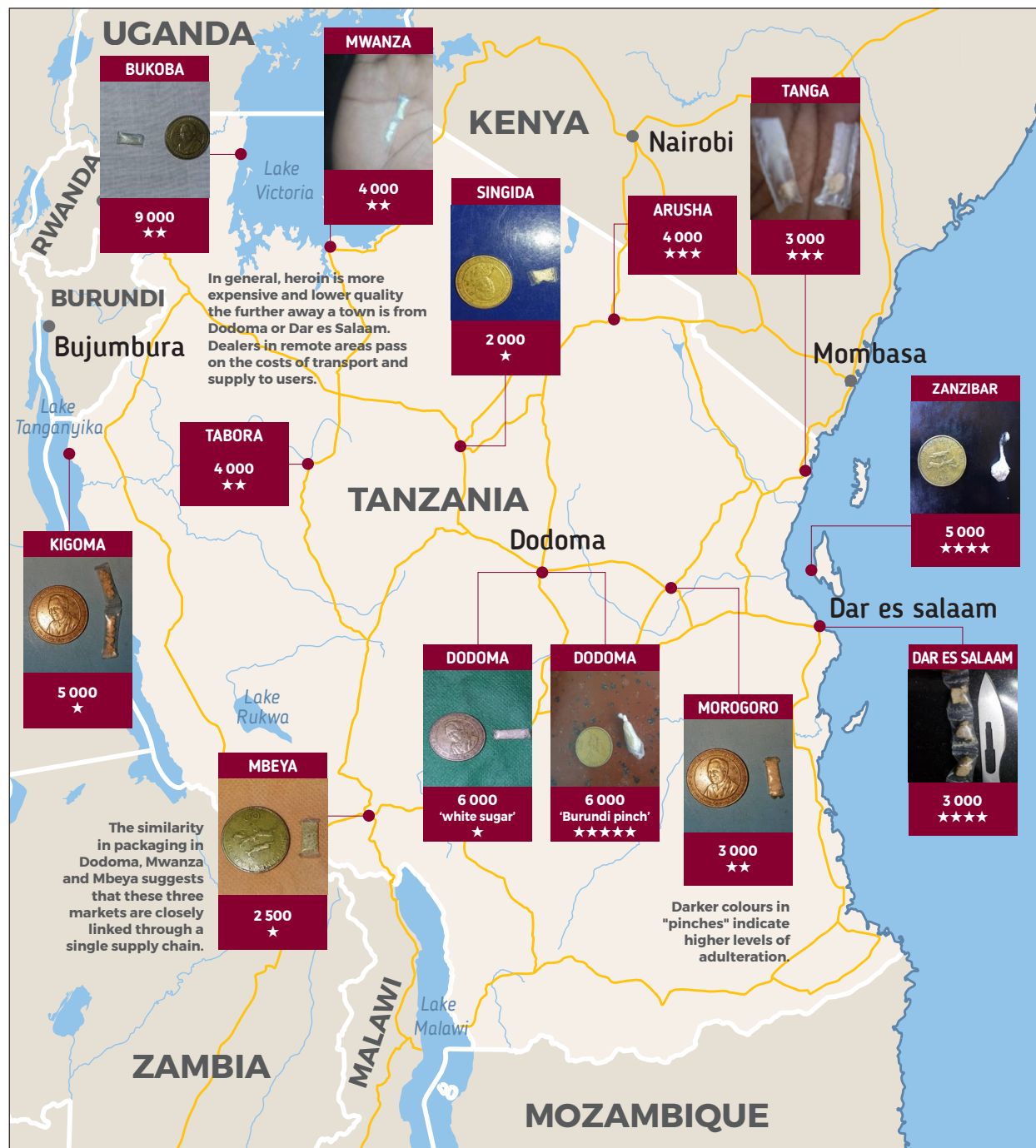
Since coming to power in 2016, Magufuli has made the drug trade a central concern of his administration. In 2016, the governor of Dar es Salaam, Paul Makonda, held a press conferences to make public the names of individuals he accused of being drug pushers and ordered them to report to the police within 24 hours. Magufuli himself has made public statements about the fierce and unsparing nature of his crackdown on drugs, in which 'no-one is too prominent to be arrested even if they are politicians, security officers, cabinet ministers or the child of a prominent person'.<sup>55</sup>

In practice, no high-profile people in business or politics have been charged for drug trafficking. In May 2017, the Tanzanian government also extradited three traffickers – including Ally Khatibu Haji, known as 'Shkuba', who was linked to the Akasha network – to the United States to face drug charges, despite an appeal still pending on their bid to halt the extradition. There has also been law enforcement action at some border points and in some areas of the coast, and for a short period, at the Dar es Salaam Port. Interviewees who were or are resident in slum areas of Dar es Salaam report that this crackdown has taken the form of military and police raids in those areas, in which suspected street dealers have been killed by security forces. Periodically, it has also taken the form of police crackdowns on heroin users who congregate in *maskanis* and on beaches in the city.<sup>56</sup>

This has displaced some drug routes within the region – and crucially some gang leaders and traffickers linked to the local trade – but it has not fundamentally diminished Dar es Salaam's importance, as many traffickers are still based there, making use of the protection and networks they have there, and focusing expansion on markets outside Tanzania. The majority of enforcement is directed instead at drug users and figures operating in the slums.



Figure 4: A map of drug price samples taken in Tanzania<sup>57</sup>



## The Akasha family

The Akasha family began trafficking Afghan heroin through Mombasa in the 1990s. After the family patriarch, Abdullah, was murdered in 2000, his sons Baktash and Ibrahim took over the business and diversified into mandrax for the South African market, the transit of Colombian cocaine to Europe, and were in the process of setting up factories to produce methamphetamine when they were arrested in 2014. All around the world, they forged links to criminal networks that controlled the supply of precursors and drugs which fed into retail markets in destination countries in a stunning example of deviant globalisation. They had proven links to criminal actors or networks in Pakistan, China, India, Colombia and Amsterdam. Through their regional drug trade, they became involved in, or were linked to, other criminal enterprises: stolen cars in South Africa, East African ivory and Southern African rhino horn, and the small arms trade. They bought guns and grenades from the Somali terrorist group Al Shabaab.

Corruption was central to their ability to operate – even after their arrest in 2014, and pending their extradition, they managed to continue operating as drug dealers by bribing police, judges, and political figures.<sup>58</sup> In 2017, the US forcibly extradited the Akashas to stand trial in New York on charges of drug trafficking, along with their accomplice Vicky Goswami. The brothers pleaded guilty. In August 2019, Baktash was sentenced to 25 years in prison, and Ibrahim was sentenced to 23 years.

Following the Akasha trial, more pressure has been heaped on other figures who were believed to be their competitors, such as businessmen Ali Punjabi. Punjabi fits the brash Akasha mould: he courted politicians very publicly and flaunted his wealth. Of the transactions that are on record, in 2009, he donated more than double the donation made by the Kenyan president to victims of a fire in Lamu, and in 2013 he donated 10 police vehicles to the Mombasa police. Such donations are rumoured to have bought him control of law enforcement, including the ability to use police officers to intimidate rivals. But a warrant is now out for Punjabi's arrest, and he remains a fugitive in Mumbai.<sup>59</sup>

## Violent Ports

### Mombasa

Mombasa is Kenya's second largest and most economically important city, after the capital. Mombasa Port is a crucial trade gateway into and out of the interior of the continent. It has also long been regarded

as a prime site of illicit trade in East Africa and a major port through which local drug syndicates attached to Pakistani and Indian organised crime moved heroin, Asian criminal networks moved ivory, and in which Italian organised crime had interests too.<sup>60</sup> In 2011, it was memorably described as a 'tunnel' in the *Termites at Work* report by Peter Gastrow: 'All illicit business happens here, and it is controlled by traders supported by Customs personnel and powerful people in government. Whoever controls the port controls the illicit business in Kenya.'<sup>61</sup> Yet since 2016 or 2017 Mombasa's fortunes have waned, and while ivory poachers might have moved to other ports, the heroin markets that the local syndicates fed and grew remains.

While Nairobi is now the key trafficking hub in Kenya, the coast remains the region with the largest market for heroin consumption. Of the seven counties with the highest rates of drug trafficking and smuggling, six are on the coast.<sup>62</sup> The National Council Authority for the Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NACADA) records the highest level of heroin use and heroin injection at the coast.<sup>63</sup> In Lamu, heroin use and smoking have the same prevalence amongst the youth – 15% of the population.<sup>64</sup> While different studies carry slightly varying assessments of the prevalence of drug use, all of them portray a region in the grip of heroin.

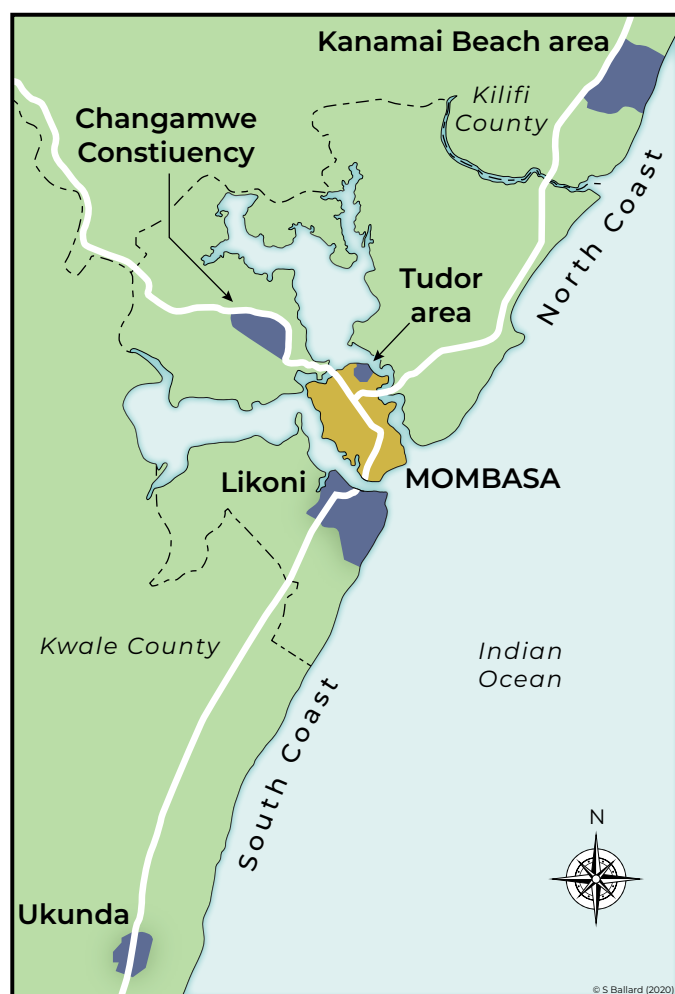
While Nairobi is now the key trafficking hub in Kenya, the coast remains the region with the largest market for heroin consumption

However, this market (and, less acutely, the transit trade) has been destabilised by the extradition of the Akashas, which appears to have affected the control and supply of the local market. It has, however, created an opening for small players who had been operating in the local market to move into larger roles in heroin transit routes. 'If I was selling ice cubes and I stop, what happens? Someone else will come to fill the void,' we were told by a civil society activist.

Police sources say no kingpin now holds sway over the whole Mombasa heroin market.<sup>65</sup> A person who goes by the alias 'Diru' has a hold on Mombasa West.

The South Coast is controlled by three people: a drug baron known as 'Kamara' and a drug baron known as 'Azo' controls Likoni, while allegedly Bosire Nyaigoti Magoti controls Ukunda (a small town in neighbouring Kwale County). The North Coast is controlled by Swaleh Yusuf Ahmed (a.k.a 'Kandereni'). In the Tudor area, a businessman, who owns a fleet of trucks that operate within East Africa, is in control. These are only the dealers who are known to the police, who believe there are other newcomers who have not been profiled yet.<sup>66</sup>

**Figure 5: Territories held by “drug barons” in Mombasa<sup>67</sup>**



In this destabilisation, police have been taken aback by the number of 'new faces' they have arrested in Mombasa, including a rise in the number of women arrested as part of police crackdowns on drug syndicates.<sup>68</sup> So far this year, two women were arrested in Mombasa, two in Nairobi and four in Kiambu, a town 22 km from Nairobi. Women's careers have in some cases grown out of their experience as air mules, or through

working in partnership with their husbands.<sup>69</sup> Nairobi businesswoman Joyce Akinyi, who was arrested last July, is considered a key drug trafficker in Nairobi.<sup>70</sup> She started off as a mule for her Nigerian husband, Anthony Chinedu, but he was deported when they fell out.

Among 12 traffickers arrested in Mombasa in March 2017 was Hawa Abdallah, a businesswoman. Abdallah owned a salon and spa in Mombasa and had placed several bids for tenders in the Mombasa and Kwale counties through her private company. At the time she was arrested, she had won a tender for placing 20 private security guards at Mombasa Port, through which she may have intended to smuggle drugs.<sup>71</sup> (It is also notable that women are at higher risk of being recruited as drug mules by drug dealing syndicates, and that the majority of Kenyan citizens imprisoned for drug trafficking in China, where the sentence carries the death penalty, are female.)

Two new family organisations appear to be making serious bids to dominate the heroin trade in Mombasa. Among the people police consider to be key players in the Mombasa heroin market are two couples, Wanjohi and his wife Jane Wambui Wanjiru<sup>72</sup> and Swaleh Yusuf Ahmed and his wife, Fatuma Ahmed. Last February, the State Assets Recovery Agency (ARA) applied for a grant to confiscate more than Sh10.5 million held in six bank accounts, three luxury cars and prime plots of land belonging to Joseph Wanjohi and his wife Jane Wambui, who are accused of heroin trafficking and wildlife poaching.<sup>73</sup> Police believe Swaleh Yusuf Ahmed is the main supplier of heroin in Mombasa County,<sup>74</sup> and his career appears to have been nurtured when he was functioning as a small-time operator, trading during the time of the Akashas (see box below).

### The Rise of 'Candy-Rain'

Swaleh Yusuf Ahmed's story is of a typical Mombasa drug lord. Similar to Ibrahim Akasha – who started his career running a small transport business – Ahmed began as a *matatu* driver and has now risen to be one of the kingpins of the Kenyan Coast. His alias 'Kandereni' is derived from the 1994 hit song *Candy Rain*, by Soul for Real. During his time driving a *matatu*, he loved playing the *Candy Rain* song, which drew in young customers with its loud sound system. Kandereni would sell drugs to his *matatu* customers, mostly rohypnol, known locally as *bugizi*. According to multiple law enforcement sources, he was a small-time player during the Akasha empire. Later, as his business expanded, he reached out to dealers in

neighbouring Tanzania, and rose into the ranks of the 'big league'.<sup>75</sup>

In 1996, he was sentenced to a 15-year jail term but escaped from Mombasa's Shimo la Tewa prison in unexplained circumstances. He was rearrested in 2001 after it emerged that prison officers had forged documentation indicating that the Court of Appeal had cleared him. Again, he was released for reasons that remain unexplained in 2010. Then in 2013 he was again charged, and then acquitted, of drug-dealing charges.<sup>76</sup>

Ahmed appears to be a slippery fish – one that, most likely, has been able to pay his way out of prison. Currently he, along with his wife Fatuma, is charged with trafficking 91.7 kg of heroin, which was seized in September 2018, hidden in brown suitcases and a gunny bag at Kikambala Housing Estate, Mombasa. He faces an additional charge of trafficking cocaine worth US\$350 000.

Competition to win turf that has been left unoccupied by an absent drug dealer, and bids to leverage disruption to take over others' territory, is typically a major driver of violence in drug markets where gangs operate. Unsurprisingly, there has been a steep rise in gang-related violence in Mombasa over the past decade or so.

Mombasa currently appears to have the most acute problems with violent gangs in Kenya – a problem that is typically associated with election periods. In Mombasa, Kisauni criminal gangs killed 20 people in 2018, forcing the Internal Security cabinet secretary Fred Matiangi to publicly declare war against the groups: 'We are going to look for them wherever they are, even under the bed, until they are found.'<sup>77</sup> In March 2018, security agencies arrested 119 suspects in a crackdown on suspected criminals in Mombasa.<sup>78</sup> Farther up the coast, Lamu East has been especially affected by gang competition for drug turf. Local youth are now frequently seen armed with crude weapons in public.<sup>79</sup> The coastal counties also have the highest number of gangs, according to police sources.<sup>80</sup>

The gangs are primarily composed of men between the ages of 15 and 30, though younger members have been reported, and women are increasingly recognised as playing important support roles in the gangs. Some gang members are recruited from football clubs, and others from among the ranks of drug-dependent young men in Mombasa's slum areas. As in Nairobi, gang membership surges close to election time when

politicians become patrons to gangs which act as their enforcers or troublemakers.<sup>81</sup>

The gangs do not appear to have elaborate hierarchies or rituals but do take names. Apart from Wakali Kwanza (dangerous first) in Mombasa's Kisauni, there are Wakali Wao (most dangerous), Wakali Kweli (dangerous indeed) and Wakali Che (dangerous till dawn). Others include(d) Wajukuu wa Bibi (wife's descendants) and Funga File (kill and close the file). In Mombasa's Kisauni area (a crime-prone neighbourhood about 20 minutes from the Mombasa CBD)<sup>82</sup>, the Wakali Kwanza gang has set up an operation base in Magodoroni, meaning a place of mattresses. The name derives from its earlier inhabitants: Magodoroni was originally used as a sleeping place for homeless and drug dependent young people, who would lay down their bedding there each night.

Many of these gangs are formed at the outset by powerful individuals, usually politicians, who use them as enforcers who attack their rivals in business and politics. As they grow in size, or when patronage payments lapse after elections have passed, some find alternate income streams, often in organised theft and extortion. While it is indisputable that these gangs are a key feature of life elsewhere in Kenya, drugs and gangs appear to have been enmeshed since their early appearance in the coastal counties (Mombasa, Lamu and Kilifi). Some local gangs were established to protect drug barons, and the provision of drugs to members by a leader is widespread, with smoking *bugizi* often mentioned as a vital precursor to staging an attack on the public.<sup>83</sup>

The Mombasa gang phenomenon links the city's problems of violence and substance abuse to allegations of high-level sub-national corruption related to the drug trade. Whilst residents are reluctant to go on record with their allegations, specific serving and former MPs are repeatedly accused of setting up gangs for political reasons (including, in our interviews, by gang members themselves, who claim they were recruited by their campaign managers).<sup>84</sup> These MPs are also accused of deriving profits from drug trafficking, or allegiance with drug traffickers. Most notoriously, the Governor of Mombasa, Hassan Joho, has for decades been dogged by allegations of drug trafficking, including by then-internal security minister George Saitoti in 2010, when Joho was the MP of Kisauni in Mombasa, and in 2019 by his political rival, Nandi Governor Stephen Sang.<sup>85</sup> Joho has repeatedly denied these allegations as well as any links to the drug trade and has never been charged with drug-related offences.



## Cape Town

As the second biggest city in South Africa, the seat of Parliament, and the country's biggest urban tourist attraction, Cape Town is also famous for its violence, particularly since the army was deployed to quell fierce gang fighting in July 2019.

Of South Africa's nine major cities, Cape Town's murder rate stands head and shoulders above the rest (see the box below).<sup>86</sup> Almost 2 500 people were murdered in Cape Town in the 2017/18 reporting period, which is 69 murders per 100 000 people.<sup>87</sup>

The large majority of murders and other crimes are concentrated in about a dozen policing precincts, all of them poor and working class neighbourhoods and many of them with high levels of informal housing. Cape Town's drug markets are the largest and the most tightly territorially controlled in South Africa, with gangs providing parallel authority in large swathes of the working-class Cape Flats.

### Murder Rate in Cape Town vs Other SA Cities<sup>88</sup>

<b>Cape Town</b>	<b>69</b>
Nelson Mandela Bay	54
eThekweni (Durban)	46
Buffalo City	43
Msunduzi	40
Mangaung	39
Ekurhuleni	32
Johannesburg	31
<b>City of Tshwane</b>	<b>17</b>

The causes of the city's high murder rate are complex and interdependent, but gang violence is considered a major driver of the violence, which has been exacerbated by the supply of thousands of illegal firearms to criminal gangs.<sup>89</sup> Police investigations and court proceedings have implicated corrupt police officials as one source of the illegal firearms. In 2016, former police colonel Chris Prinsloo was found guilty of selling 2 400 firearms meant to be destroyed by police to gang members between 2007 and 2015. It is believed that 1 066 murders were carried out with 888 of the guns between 2010 and 2014.<sup>90</sup> At least 261 children were murdered or wounded between 2010 and 2016 with the guns.<sup>91</sup>

In our previous research, we have claimed that the expansion of the heroin market is one factor driving up murder rates in Cape Town. This primarily refers to how expansion of the drug market fuels gang conflict over the control of turf on which to sell drugs. New substances reach new and different clients, and heroin has particular dynamics as a product which make it particularly lucrative, most notably the fact that users need to take it every day, several times a day, to forestall symptoms of withdrawal. A bigger drug market entails more money for gangs to spend on weapons and on corruption. As such, heroin should be seen as crucial input to broader dynamics around drug markets, corruption and gang violence, but also as part of the wider landscape of competing groups, illegal firearms and the wider criminal economy.

## The expansion of the heroin market is one factor driving up murder rates in Cape Town

Cape Town's heroin market has a long and complex history and has enabled the entry of wholly new criminal syndicates in South Africa's underworld. Police intelligence has seemingly done little to halt the proliferation of drug trafficking networks in Cape Town and across the country over the last decade, a period which correlates with the criminal justice system being undermined by corruption and politicisation. Meanwhile, the police crackdown on drug related crime at the street level has become increasingly heavy handed.

Heroin use appears to have begun in Cape Town's city centre and nearby suburbs, then spread to outlying suburbs and Wynberg, which functions as a transport and commerce hub for the southern suburbs. Since at least the mid-90s, local actors sold heroin in the vicinity of Woodstock, which was traditionally the territory of the prominent Cape gang the Hard Livings. One user – recovering from heroin dependence – recalls buying 'expensive' heroin from a building on Woodstock's Gympie Street in the mid-90s – R50 for an eighth (of a gram), and 'cheaper' heroin (R30-R40) from Tanzanian street dealers on Grand Parade.<sup>92</sup>

Tanzanian networks then became influential in increasing the city's use of heroin and were the first to expand heroin markets in a residential suburb,



though Cape gangs have since taken over retail sales to the majority of customers in the Cape Flats. This development has been linked to irregular migration from Tanzania from around the mid-1990s, as men who had migrated internally to Dar es Salaam and were caught up in the informal economy there, many of whom were using heroin, began to find their way to Cape Town. An interviewee, a man who has dealt heroin on and off and lived through many of the shifts in the migrant and drug worlds of South Africa over the last two and a half decades, divides the Tanzanian migrants of this time between those who identified as 'Dar es Salaam boys' and 'Tanga boys':

*'When Bongo [Tanzanians] arrived in Cape Town in the 90s the Dar es Salaam boys were strong and they took the areas like Culembourg, near to Grand Parade. A lot of people from Dar es Salaam did not want to live in Cape Town, they wanted to stowaway on ships and go somewhere else.'* The Tanga group, on the other hand, looked for entry points to make new lives and livelihoods in Cape Town, and become enmeshed in the criminal economy: *'The Tanga boys were pushed to Woodstock, to the railway yards, and they made business like scrap metal, drug dealing and house breaking.'*<sup>93</sup>

Tanga boys then were instrumental in bringing the Tanzanian *maskani* to South Africa. At first they operated in very loose and small-time syndicates, often receiving supplies of heroin from Tanzania in very small shipments, often brought by other migrants, but they began to eat into the market of local gangs.<sup>94</sup> Local gangs were also under more police pressure in the inner city, and this limited their ability to hang onto their market.

'We couldn't compete,' says a former heroin dealer, born and raised in Woodstock. 'We used to deal from buildings off Gympie and Essex, but it knocked us when the foreigners started to influence the scene by establishing their own supply lines and street networks. The cops knew us – they knew where we slept, where we sold heroin, all of that. A lot of people preferred to buy from guys selling out in the open, as there was less chance of being caught up in a raid and that sort of thing, plus the street stuff was cheaper, cut with all kinds of shit.'<sup>95</sup>

As the men from Tanga lived in a neighbourhood controlled by the Hard Livings they developed connections to this widespread and powerful Cape gang. These connections gave them the local protection

to move 'out of their *mchondolos* and into houses' in the suburbs, specifically to an area they call 'The Vlei', in Athlone, from as early as 2001, a move that would otherwise have been blocked by Cape Town gangs.<sup>96</sup> These relationships were also cemented through time spent incarcerated with people who were members of Cape gangs. Crucially, some Tanzanians had been inducted into the country's premier prison gangs – like The Number – which play a powerful legitimating role in the Cape underworld.<sup>97</sup> According to one Tanzanian dealer: 'A lot of Tanzanians have spent time in Pollsmoor and many of us have been given the number, always 26 because 26 are smugglers, and local guys say Tanzanians can smuggle anything.'<sup>98</sup> This is vital to their ability to network with and seek protection from Cape Town's street gangs.

In 2010, members of the Tanga syndicate also moved into the area known as Blikkiesdorp, Afrikaans for 'tin can town'. Established in 2007 to house people evicted by the City from other neighbourhoods, it appears Tanzanians were given houses in Blikkiesdorp as a part of a poorly-managed plan to clear the Cape Town inner city of rough sleepers before the 2010 Football World Cup.

As they increased in number, Tanzanian dealers began moving into Delft, which was (and is) controlled by Cape gangs. Delft was considered to be dangerous territory to enter, and they did so with explicit negotiation with the gangs who controlled the drug market. As part of their agreement, Tanzanian networks were forbidden to carry firearms.<sup>99</sup> A Tanzanian dealer can only carry a gun if he is officially a member of a Cape gang, and there are violent consequences for breaking this rule. According to one interviewee, a 27 General, Tanzanians and Nigerians aren't allowed to make their own gangs, but must pay for protection from the Cape gangs. This protection is negotiated with the same gangs that sell their heroin.<sup>100</sup>

Although the importance of heroin to the Cape Town drug markets on the Cape Flats is hard to pin down with certainty, several of our interviewees placed the real arrival of heroin in the Cape Flats at around 2011, as the longstanding market began to gather pace. Around this time, there was perceptibly a shift towards a growing user base<sup>101</sup> – this is likely to have been driven by the Tanga boys developing their networks and securing a more stable and voluminous wholesale supply.

By 2015, the heroin scene on street level in the Cape Town city centre was controlled by Tanzanian men in their 20s and 30s, with rough-sleeping Tanzanian men

selling heroin on the streets, and Tanzanian groups operating out of Vygieskraal in Athlone, and Blikkiesdorp alongside Delft (and in Delft) supplying the street dealers, with some smaller scale freelance suppliers operating out of Upper and Lower Woodstock and Salt River.<sup>102</sup>

### Interview with a member of the Americans gang

*Abraham is a member of the Americans gang in Hanover Park and has been in the drug trade for almost two decades. He is known as being a fierce 'soldier'. He lives in a house extended by a backyard shack and his car is broken down.*

*'Unga started 15 years ago but it grew bit by bit. Heroin is a great product because you can't do without it. The price doesn't change – it's been R20 for a long time – but the size and quality does.*

*The gangs have different supply lines for different drugs – mandrax comes from Durban, unga from the Tanzanians, and tik from Johannesburg. It's the drug suppliers [e.g. not the dealers] who drive the fancy cars in Hanover Park.*

*In Hanover Park, it's the gang bosses who deal. They used to class me as a high-flyer. I would get drugs on credit. Not everyone wants to be in the drug trade. But in our community, if you don't join a gang, you're a *poes* [slang term for a woman's genitals]. People walk all over you.'*

Today, syndicates operating out of the Vlei supply the whole city market, including the residential suburbs on the Cape Flats, with heroin, as well as several township markets.<sup>103</sup> But outside of the city centre, other groups control retail sales, and the Tanzanians act as wholesalers. In the city centre, increasing competition has since pushed the price per quarter gram down to R15. On the Cape Flats, the price is around R20.

## By 2015, the heroin scene on street level in Cape Town city centre was controlled by Tanzanian men

Wynberg has also become a neighbourhood where users congregate to buy and use heroin. Here, the

drug market is controlled by Nigerian syndicates, who also control the sex trade in that neighbourhood. An exploitative system of prostitution and heroin use are intertwined in the suburb, as well as a resident rough-sleeper population of people who use heroin, many of whom are injectors.<sup>104</sup> Nigerian syndicates also control a section of the drug market in the city centre (particularly the supply of methamphetamine and cocaine). In Cape Town, as in other South African urban centres covered in this report, if and when Nigerian syndicates do sell heroin, it appears to be purchased from Tanzanian syndicates and hence retailed at a higher price.

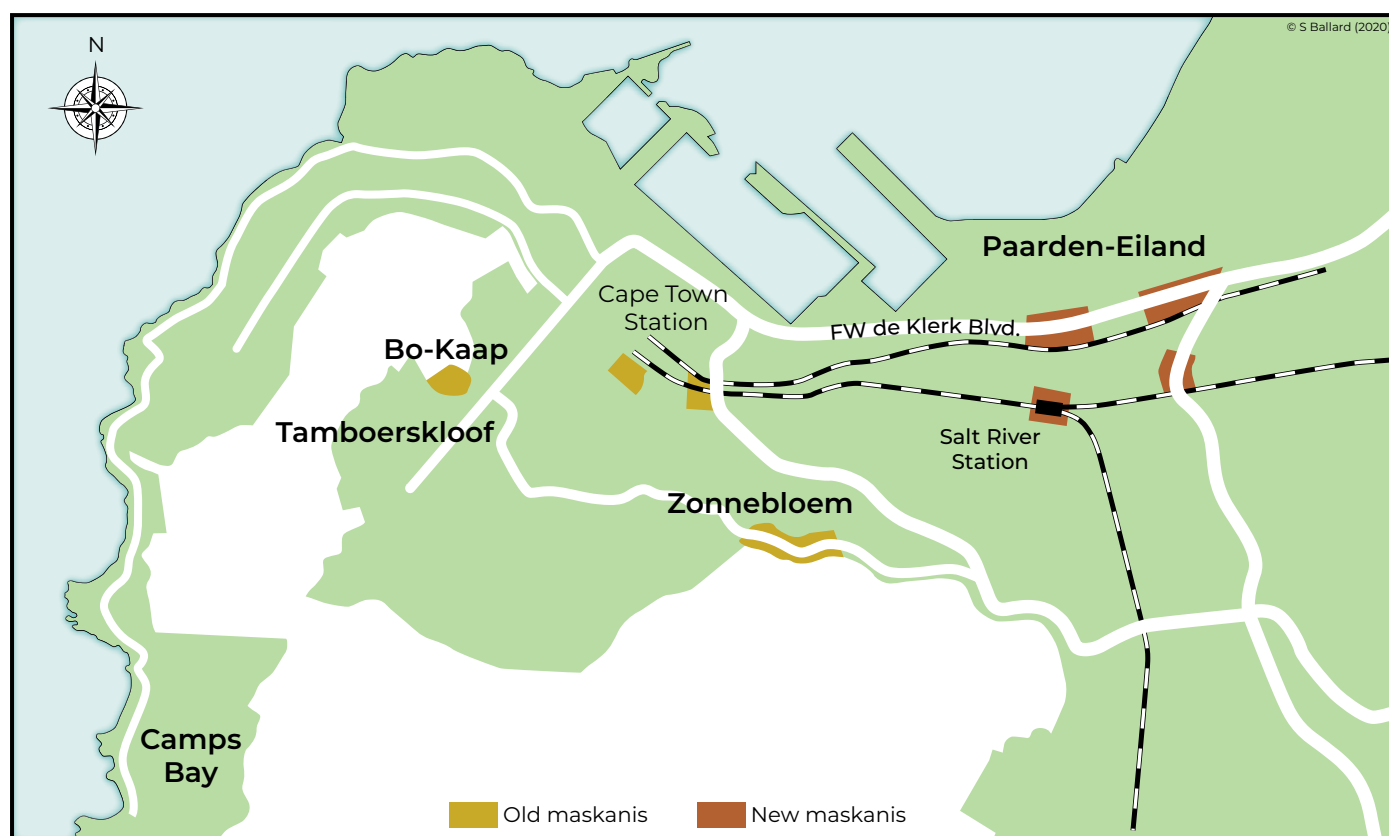
## Some interviewees say heroin is for sale in all gang-controlled neighbourhoods, others say gangs have been selective about introducing it

While some interviewees say heroin is for sale in all gang-controlled neighbourhoods, others say gangs have been selective about introducing it: 'Some areas have their own rules. They don't allow heroin because it destroys the community – but it also brings in money. So, there you go.'<sup>105</sup> Some dealers claim it is the mainstay of their sales and others that it is still far eclipsed by the popularity of methamphetamine and mandrax. But everyone maintains that heroin use has become a regular and unremarkable feature of Cape Town life.

In the city centre, the price has halved in the last four years, falling from R30 for a section in 2015, to R15 in 2019. Injecting has also become much more prevalent and is commonly seen in both Wynberg and the city centre though dealers claim most users still smoke.<sup>106</sup> The sale of heroin has also moved into more and more spaces. While heroin was predominantly sold on the streets in 2015 by street dealers, it is today being sold over the counter in certain cafes in Woodstock.<sup>107</sup>

The number of *maskanis* has multiplied. New *maskanis* have been set up, targeting both users working or living in wealthy neighbourhoods, and those in the informal waste economy. There is, for example, a new *maskani* in the Oudekraal eucalyptus forest alongside the extremely wealthy suburb of Camps Bay, where dealers in

**Figure 6:** Cape Town city center's old “maskanis” (yellow) and new ‘maskanis’ (brown)<sup>111</sup>



Tanzanian networks can sell a section for R50.<sup>108</sup> Another new *maskani*, between Voortrekker Road bridge and the Salt River railway station platforms, was established to serve customers in the informal waste market. It has a close relationship to heroin use. One interviewee said about this *maskani*: ‘People are cutting copper there, and they are mostly junkies, so it made sense to go to them.’<sup>109</sup> The new and old maskanis in the city centre can be seen in Figure 6 below.<sup>110</sup>

## Group rivalries and violent competition

Overall, Tanzanian dealers say there is mutual respect between Tanzanian dealers and city gangs.<sup>111</sup> But in settings outside the city centre, such as in Athlone and Delft, Tanzanian heroin traffickers and dealers occupy a precarious space, and their safety would appear to depend to a significant degree on the fact that Tanzanian groups dominate the supply of heroin to these areas.<sup>112</sup>

In the city centre, where they share drug markets with Nigerian and Cape gangs, there has been at least one violent confrontation between Nigerian and Tanzanian groups,<sup>113</sup> though on the whole, there appears to be

mutual tolerance arising from market segmentation: Tanzanians sell and supply heroin, and other groups sell and supply other drugs such as meth and crack. More broadly, though Tanzanian and Nigerian syndicates are not averse to the use of violence, any attempt to take turf would be violently quashed, since none of the foreign syndicates have anything close to the arsenal, manpower and police protection enjoyed by the South African criminal networks. In the words of one policeman: ‘They will never let someone come to Cape Town and take their gold away.’<sup>114</sup> None of these dynamics, however, should be taken for granted.

There is also the risk of violence between rival Tanzanian drug syndicates – referred to as ‘bongo-to-bongo violence’ by Tanzanian interviewees – and the transference of violent gang behavior from Dar es Salaam to Cape Town. Of this there is already evidence, though ‘big dealers’ appear to have a keen interest in preventing this phenomenon from evolving.

Theft of drugs or drug money causes most of the violence experienced within the Tanzanian community, and the violence often has inter-group and inter-generational dimensions. Violence is often fueled by

the abuse of alcohol and punitive rape is a strategy often used by Tanzanian groups.<sup>115</sup>

Most of the inter-group violence is between 'Dar es Salaam boys' and 'Tanga boys', but men in Tanzanian drug syndicates do not generally consider themselves to be in gangs, as such. At certain times, younger Tanzanian males have formed gangs in South African cities, but these gangs have been broken up, mostly by older groupings of Tanzanians. It would appear the formation of Tanzanian gangs in South African cities to an extent reproduces the gang scene in Dar es Salaam, following brutal anti-gang crackdowns there.

In 2009, young Tanzanian men living along the port's edge in Cape Town formed a gang called Al Qaeda. They were males from Magomeni in Dar es Salaam, and had been in a gang there called Kommando Yosso, which was broken up when the police allegedly 'started killing the members one by one', says Kabiru, a former Kommando Yosso member. Kommando Yosso members specialised in surrounding house parties in Dar es Salaam's western and north western townships, not leaving until all guests present had handed over their valuables. 'Many of the boys ran away to South Africa, bringing their gang mind. In Cape Town they started Al Qaeda, and raped a young Tanzanian ... It was just a fight over two kattes (1/4 grams of heroin) ... after that happened the older guys came together and broke Al Qaeda, and after that we made a rule that there must be no more gangs,' says a Tanzanian dealer, SK.

In 2015/2016 violent Tanzanian groups again formed in Cape Town and Johannesburg and were again disbanded. This also involved men who had been members of a gang in Dar es Salaam, this time the notorious Mwiba Mwitw (Wild Dogs) gang from Mbagala, an unplanned settlement on the southern outskirts of Dar es Salaam.<sup>116</sup> In Cape Town, towards the end of 2015, two mid-level Tanzanian heroin dealers contracted former Mwiba Mwitw members to help them win greater control of street sales in the city centre, both through overt violence and through manipulation of divisions within the Tanzanian drug dealing community. Their attempts ultimately failed but they marked the beginning of a period of greatly increased 'bongo-to-bongo' violence in the lower parts of Cape Town.<sup>117</sup>

Former Mwiba Mwitw members also formed up in Johannesburg in 2015/2016, and there, too, a spike in acts of violence in areas occupied by Tanzanians appears to have resulted. A Tanzanian heroin dealer interviewed

by anthropologist Matthew Wilhelm-Solomon<sup>118</sup> reported that a *mnyama indawo* called 'Cape York' became Johannesburg's 'junkie house', and that the violence for which Cape York became known was largely perpetrated by former Mwiba Mwitw members, including the rape and murder of a young South African woman in early 2015.<sup>119</sup>

## Tanzanian dealers in Johannesburg say that big Tanzanian kingpins have imposed a 'no gangs' rule on inner city dealers

A fire led to the relocation of Cape York residents, but the Mwiba Mwitw members' violent reign was quashed from within the Tanzanian community in 2016. 'They started walking around with pangas and it caused too much shit for Tanzanians selling heroin in the city, so the big [Tanzanian] dealers paid people to chase them away,' says one dealer.<sup>120</sup>

Tanzanian dealers in Johannesburg say that big Tanzanian kingpins have imposed a 'no gangs' rule on inner city dealers. 'Any Tanzanian is allowed to sell anywhere in the city because they mostly selling what they buy from the big guys, but gangs are banned because they make noise and threaten business. This agreement was made between the big guys and the police,' claims another Tanzanian dealer.<sup>121</sup>

## Durban

Durban has one of the oldest, largest and most deeply entrenched heroin markets in South Africa. While there is not a recent or reliable figure for the number of heroin users, law enforcement and community actors consider heroin to be the most widely used 'hard drug'<sup>122</sup> in the city with the greatest value to organised crime figures. 'In Durban, heroin is a huge issue – the main issue, even, in the underworld,' we were told by a law enforcement actor who had worked on organised crime issues in the city for over a decade.<sup>123</sup>

As in the rest of the country, Durban's heroin market grew through the activities of both migrant networks and local actors, with consumption spreading

organically through transport routes linked to employment patterns and deliberate cultivation by dealers, enabled through territorial control. Several interviewees tell a largely congruent story that traces the markets' origins to key early figures in the suburb of Chatsworth, a mixed working and middle-class township south of the Durban city centre that was designated as 'Indians-only' under the apartheid-era Group Areas Act, and where the drug was known as 'sugars'. Several observers say that heroin use began in the early 2000s in the township, with small-time dealers who arose to service the needs of taxi drivers. 'The first guy to sell drugs was allegedly 'Budgie'<sup>124</sup> and his wife. Originally people just smoked dagga [marijuana], and white pipes [mandrax] for a better high. Sugars started in Dalton Hostel [in the city centre] with foreigners, and the first supplier was said to be a Nigerian guy. Our taxi guys used to stop there on the way to Chatsworth and the taxi drivers started using. And with addiction, your tolerance increases, and you need it urgently – you can't wait for the next trip to Dalton. As more drivers, conductors, passengers took it, it became important to sell it in Chatsworth. So, the first sales points were at the taxi rank – at a sweets and fruit and veg stall – and from there it took off.'<sup>125</sup> Budgie was soon eclipsed by more serious players who created organised systems for supply and retail in the township.

According to one law enforcement source, the heroin trade developed more sophisticated retail operations over time: 'First it came wrapped up in 'chalk' sticks – dongas. Dealers used municipal bags to wrap it up, and we could identify the territory it was sold from the colour of the plastic. There was one main supplier who started in Chatsworth, called Yunus Satar Essa. Yunus was buying large quantities, up to 100 kg at a time, that would deliver in 2-5 kg parcels to a network of dealers.'<sup>126</sup>

The heroin market soon spread to the township of Phoenix, also a large mixed-income, formerly Indians-only neighbourhood, to the north of the Durban city centre. As businesses and households in Chatsworth and Phoenix employed black South Africans who lived in adjacent townships, people from these neighbourhoods were introduced to heroin in employment or at the taxi ranks they travelled through to reach work. At the same time, local and migrant dealers, particularly a community of Tanzanian migrants who settled near the port in order to stow away on ships, began supplying and cultivating an inner-city market.

**Figure 7: Chatsworth, Phoenix and Sydenham are some of the oldest heroin markets in Durban**



Over time, the packaging and distribution operations of large dealers has also become more sophisticated, indicating a growth in the market. While heroin was first packaged in the plastic wrapped 'dongas', it was later packaged in straws, though these also involved manual labour. Recent busts, however, have led to seizures of lab equipment used to manufacture thousands of capsules over the course of a day. This equipment allows the production of much higher quantities of street-ready heroin.<sup>127</sup>

In March 2019, a laboratory in a warehouse in Springfield Park in Durban was raided by police who seized capsule-pressing machinery and tens of thousands of empty capsules, as well as methaqualone (used in making mandrax). Police told the press that they believed 10 000 heroin capsules were being packaged in the warehouse every day.<sup>128</sup> 'The dealers here use similar methods to those in the Netherlands – there are mobile labs, hidden compartments in cars. All made up to an international standard.'<sup>129</sup>



The cost of heroin has also fallen. A capsule of heroin costs between R12-R20 on the street, though the price drops when there is a greater supply. Around 15 years ago, the same quantity would have cost R25-30.<sup>130</sup> Mixtures of marijuana and heroin – for smoking – are also sold in even cheaper packages, with prices as low as R3 to R10 for a ‘matchbox’ being raised as illustrative of how cheaply weakly dosed heroin highs can be bought.<sup>131</sup>

A further shift in the market has been the greater role Tanzanian networks play in providing wholesale supply to the market (as well as controlling retail in some areas of the inner city), though some big South African actors appear to have their own connections in East Africa or even directly to figures in Pakistan.<sup>132</sup> Nigerian networks are reportedly in control of wholesale cocaine, crack cocaine, ecstasy and the methamphetamine supply.

## Durban, like other places in South Africa, appears to have undergone a transition from a drug-using population that primarily smokes heroin, to one which primarily injects

As state statistics are lacking or inadequate it is hard to get a solid understanding of the scale and impact of the heroin market on Durban. Today, the growth and presence of the heroin market is most visible to the broader Durban population through the large number of dependent users present in a large homeless community – perhaps numbering in the thousands – that lives in the inner city. These heroin users prefer to congregate in derelict spaces such as the railway reservation and highway underpasses, out of sight, but are often dispersed into close proximity with the highways by police action. As such, they have become the face of the heroin epidemic in Durban. There are similar communities of homeless people, usually men under the age of 40, in Phoenix and Chatsworth, amongst whom heroin dependence is common. These communities go under several names: ‘*amaphara*’ (a word derived from Zulu that connotes either parasites or furiously moving individuals), ‘whoonga boys’ and ‘outters.’ One Phoenix activist told us: ‘There are hundreds of outters in Phoenix. They are concentrated in

different areas. They live in parks, they live in parking lots, they live in overgrown valleys.’<sup>133</sup>

Mostly likely because it is both cheap (which encourages drug users to put aside questions of risk), heroin use is concentrated amongst the homeless, and in poor and working-class households in Indian and black communities. But it is also present in white and middle-class households, where its impact is probably hidden by the greater availability of private space in which to use the drug and greater access to private medical care to treat dependence.<sup>134</sup> An academic who has a public-facing role working with communities of users and on drug policy in the city says she is inundated with requests for assistance from university students and their families.<sup>135</sup>

Without active and immediate state intervention to provide appropriate health services to these populations, the public health dimensions of the epidemic look set to get much worse. Durban, like other places in South Africa, appears to have undergone a transition from a drug-using population that primarily smokes heroin, to one which primarily injects. Health workers observing the transition said that in 18 months injecting had gone from being the modality of use in a minority of cases, to the modality of use for the overwhelming majority of the homeless drug users they provide services to.<sup>136</sup> It is unclear whether this has been a rapid transition, or just that a commonly observed switch to injecting (for reason of economy) and a growing drug-using population has made injecting-use much more visible.

At the same time, public treatment services for drug users are inadequate and ineffective (see box). The Newlands Park Center, a state-run detoxification centre, takes (according to different sources) 12 referrals a week, or about 20 every two weeks. Health workers who regularly referred heroin users there said, “Most people drop out during detox. The centre doesn’t give OST (opiate substitution therapy) or strong painkillers – they just get vitamins and weak painkillers.”<sup>137</sup> People involved with advocacy around the drug market are inundated with requests for help and referral to treatment centers. For those with the means, private GPs can prescribe methadone or can check into private ‘rehab’ facilities, but for most users private treatment is unaffordable. ‘There is a huge demand for rehab centers from users in Phoenix – but there isn’t anything available,’ we were told by a community activist working there. ‘I can’t tell you the number of kids who come to me saying ‘If you don’t help me, I’m going to kill myself. But what can we offer them?’<sup>138</sup> Community actors

have started providing methadone and other opioid replacement therapies to users who want to reduce or stop use. They do this through private channels, and without state guidance.

### Services for heroin users in South Africa

Despite the clear risk to public health that injecting drug use presents through heightened risk of HIV and hepatitis C transmission, as well as the ways in which criminalised heroin abuse deepens poverty and social dysfunction, South Africa's state response to the heroin epidemic is weak in many respects. There is no reliable national survey on the number of heroin users, or their modalities of use, meaning the state lacks the basic data needed to mount a nation-wide response. There are also very few health services specifically designed for the needs of heroin users. In general, there is limited availability of recognised, evidence-based treatment programming, with the majority of treatment in detoxification-only facilities offered by private providers. OST is rare, expensive, and largely detoxification-focused (rather than maintenance-oriented), and viewed by many officials – law enforcement and health workers alike – as being inappropriate. Needle syringe programmes (NSP), designed to reduce the risk of PWID sharing their needle syringes by providing free ones throughout drug-using areas, have also faced stiff state resistance. While Cape Town, Gauteng, and Durban have been trying to expand local programmes for OST and NSP, often run by NGOs on international donor funding, there is still reluctance among national and provincial government officials to these approaches, even though they are recognised as international best practice.

The impact of the drug trade has also been felt in the growing number, influence and violence of criminal networks associated with the drug economy, and in the corrupting effect that it has had on the police service.

Drug dealers in Chatsworth and Phoenix are violent and deeply entrenched. According to estimates by local activists and police officers (using a subjective definition of 'big'), there are around 10 drug dealers operating in Phoenix with noticeable numbers of regular clients, obvious relative wealth and some degree of police protection. Such dealers operate on the basis of both their neighbours' fear and dependence.

In Phoenix, one notorious dealer, Kevin Moodley, a.k.a 'Barney',<sup>139</sup> is rumoured to be behind four deaths that have occurred at his property,<sup>140</sup> which leads

onto a valley where a number of people with heroin dependency squat in the open. Moodley has confessed to being a drug dealer and to bribing policemen.<sup>141</sup> Since 2017, three mutilated bodies have been found in the stream below his house in two separate incidents, mauled to death by dogs.<sup>142</sup> Moodley is known to own pitbulls, and in the second incident, a witness testified that they had seen Moodley set his dogs on the victims after accusing them of stealing drugs. In 2019, a person was reportedly burnt to death in what Moodley claimed was a vigilante attack, but which was also rumoured to be revenge for unpaid drug debts.<sup>143</sup>

Charity is another tactic. When the GI visited Chatsworth, an alleged drug dealer,<sup>144</sup> Yaganathan Pillay, a.k.a 'Teddy Mafia', had a queue of people outside his home, waiting to receive food distributed from his driveway or to ask for loans. As we drove past, men in nearby hostels blew on whistles which triggered a chorus of replies from nearby streets. Community activists say this system is used to alert sellers to stash their wares and weapons, or otherwise prepare for a raid. Pillay was charged with drug-dealing offences in 2013 and 2016 but denies accusations that he is a drug dealer.

Community activists say that dealers in the neighbourhood pay for people's electricity bills, funerals, host religious celebrations, and provide funding for school end-of-year functions. When they are arrested, people are bused to court to show support for their bail application.<sup>145</sup> Police officers claim that dealers have invested in local gyms and soccer fields and offer residents cut-price contracts or free use of these facilities, laundering money and buying community support at the same time.<sup>146</sup> Similar dynamics occur in Phoenix, where dealers have been known to pay for people's rent or groceries.<sup>147</sup>

This does not mean that drug dealers enjoy widespread acceptance or support – in fact, residents claimed that there are frequently protests outside their homes (which are known to the community) but that their complaints are never taken further by the police. 'We demonstrate but nothing ever comes of it. The drug dealers always know when they are going to be searched. The police are part of the problem.'<sup>148</sup>

The growth of the drug markets has also been accompanied by police corruption, which is a severe problem at all levels. Community activists and health workers in various sites across the city – Chatsworth, Phoenix, Umbilo – claimed to have frequently witnessed

police vans drawing up to dealing points to receive bribes, or said they had seen police in vehicles pull up outside drug dealers' homes for the same purpose.<sup>149</sup> The author has also seen CCTV footage of police officers receiving bribes in the inner city. This state of affairs was confirmed by policemen working in stations in both suburbs, including policemen with senior positions. A police officer with a leadership role within the station said that Phoenix would not be home to numerous powerful and well-known dealers without police providing tip-offs about raids, or sabotaging investigations: 'Dealers don't get big without a policeman behind them.'<sup>150</sup>

## The growth of the drug markets has also been accompanied by police corruption, which is a severe problem at all levels

The most scathing indictments of the level of corruption within the police service came from police officers themselves. Several police officers complained that corruption was both so pervasive and so hard to tackle that it had made it difficult and dangerous for them to do proper investigative work around the drug trade. Lack of trust prevents information sharing: 'We do get information about the big players, but we have no one to pass it on to in the station or in other units because we don't know who is honest or not.'<sup>151</sup> Lack of support for whistleblowers and poor enforcement of laws against policemen discourage police officers from taking the initiative to expose corruption, or even to distinguish themselves in the course of drug investigations. 'I know who the corrupt policemen are,' said one officer involved in undercover work, 'but I can't prove it without an investigation, and if you start that, they'll come for you.'<sup>152</sup> Another police officer said he avoided big drug cases or commenting on corruption to protect his career: 'If you raise yourself up, you'll be squashed. Everyone knows that. It's safer to stay out of things.'<sup>153</sup>

The issue of corruption was considered to be further complicated by false accusations – one police officer said that people in his station avoiding working on narcotics, because drug dealers would themselves level accusations against people who were not on their payroll, in order to discredit their work.<sup>154</sup>

Investigating police officers complain that their work is obstructed by senior colleagues and that criminal patronage relationships that protect dealers survive different administrations. Each of these problems constitutes a severe obstacle to effective policing, but these problems compound each other and erode the morale to act professionally. 'I'm not condoning corruption,' said one police officer who worked on undercover investigations, 'but I've helped confiscate over R600k in cash and drugs in the last six months and I take home R11k a month in pay. I've got to pay rent, loan repayments, school fees, all that. And when we do make progress on a case, we don't get any support.'<sup>155</sup>

A long-standing community activist expressed frustration at trying to work with the police: 'Since the early days, we knew the dealers, we knew the trade. We knew their pawn shops. We knew the names of the cops who arrived to collect tax. And we supplied that information to the relevant bodies in law enforcement, but there was no will to shut them down. Some of them do get arrested, but there are no convictions.'<sup>156</sup>

A significant shift in last few years is the integration of drug syndicates with the tow truck industry and the frequent use of drive-by assassinations. The tow truck industry is used for money laundering and to protect turf. High level figures in the heroin market now hold leadership positions in taxi and tow truck associations.

This shift exposes Durban's shifting gang dynamics. Historically, there have been gangs present in several neighbourhood in Durban, some of them with a continuous presence of several decades, such as the Town Duchene Kids. However, these gangs were largely considered to be 'street gangs' rather than serious criminal enterprises, a distinction which seems to embody the idea that gangs formed to provide a sense of identity and playing a small scale role in extortion and protection services were a much less serious phenomenon than the gangs which now vie for market share.

According to one police officer, gang dynamics are starting to resemble those in Cape Town with pitched gun battles and competition over turf, particularly in Sydenham Heights and other inner-city suburbs, and this is related to the growth of the trade: 'They are causing chaos. Durban didn't have that kind of violence before.' In part, this shift has also been

driven by a direct transfer of skills and operating procedures from Cape Town to Durban. It is not clear who has initiated the links between the two cities, but, in numerous cases, interviewees have pointed to incidents where figures in Durban's criminal world have hired in assassins from Cape Town, hired Capetonians to work in their drug processing or packaging labs, or where an association between a Durban figure and Cape Town gang members have accompanied said figure's more aggressive bids to control turf and expand business.<sup>157</sup>

However, whereas in Cape Town several generations have grown up in neighbourhoods where gangs are strong social institutions, and over the last two decades, powerful criminal enterprises too, the gangs in Durban do not yet appear to have same deep hooks in youth culture and local identity. In Phoenix and Chatsworth, gangs are not credited with the same level of social disruption – existing gangs such the Dre Boys and TDK are seen to be low-level enforcers, while drug syndicates do not employ large armies of soldiers.

## A significant shift in last few years is the integration of drug syndicates with the tow truck industry and the frequent use of drive-by assassinations

But this situation may be changing – in both neighbourhoods, drive-by shootings related to tow-truck competition have been a frequent occurrence for several years. The Periasamy brothers, alleged drug dealers operating in Phoenix (see box), made bold moves to establish a mafia-like reputation and 'American gangster' image, as well as borrowing imagery from the Numbers gangs, an important source of symbolic power for Cape gangs. This is captured in videos of Calvin Periasamy's funeral process which were spread on click bait-oriented social media platforms, like Dala U Crew.<sup>158</sup> The video shows a long 'funeral procession' of vehicles which include expensive four-by-four vehicles, two trucks, minibus taxis, and a Metro Police van. Funeral attendees make gun salutes and chant prison slogans, and men gather to imitate a Numbers ritual.

### The Case of the Periasamy brothers

Brothers Calvin and Kevin 'Cheezy' Periasamy were known as leaders of the 'Bloods' gang that operated in Phoenix. Both were awaiting trial on drug-related charges when Calvin was assassinated in front of a shopping mall in June 2019. The family had recently been raided by police, with seizures of large and varied quantities of drugs, unregistered firearms and ammunition, and almost R100k in cash.<sup>159</sup> The Periasamys and their gang are suspected to be behind a criminal enterprise centred on selling drugs in Phoenix, but which saw 'the Bloods' move into the tow truck and taxi industry, in order to secure turf and launder money. At the time of his death Calvin owned several minibus taxis, tow trucks, a pawn shop and a security company.

To grow their drug business and to violently take over tow truck turf, the brothers reportedly secured the protection of corrupt police officers. Over a decade, over 175 cases were opened against the brothers by the state and by ordinary residents of Phoenix, including victims and relatives of victims. Of these cases, not one resulted in a conviction. Instead, the brothers were found not guilty in 45 cases, and over 131 were withdrawn. Many cases fell apart because of witness intimidation, withdrawal of statements, and witnesses or complainants who disappeared, suggesting the brothers played a direct role ensuring they stayed out of jail.

But in 2018 a leaked Crime Intelligence report into the matter alleged that Lieutenant-Colonel Gavin Jacob, who was head of the Hawks's Narcotics Unit in the province at the time, was crucial to sabotaging investigations. Interviewees claim that Jacob would have used his high rank to take cases out of the station on the pretext that members of his unit would apply specialised skills to solving them. Instead, the cases were mothballed. Many cases against the Periasamys were simply never prosecuted.

However, in July this year a probe by the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) cleared Jacob on these charges, saying there was no evidence to support the allegations. According to press reports, Jacob claimed in an affidavit that he was the victim of attempts to smear him by another drug dealer and other corrupt police officers in the Hawks who were complicit with the dealer. While the matter remains undoubtedly murky, one obvious conclusion is that the brothers received protection from within law enforcement – and that people within the police are still working to obscure where that protection came from. Calvin is now the leader of the Bloods, and the trial against him continues.

With these case studies of violent ports, we try to sketch out the way some drug markets have become lethal to the cities that host them. It is these cities, where longstanding drug markets compound problems of police corruption, access to weapons, and social dysfunction, where the developmental impacts of the heroin trade are most dire. The costs of mounting successful responses to curb violence, provide services to dependent users, and scale back the corruption of local enforcement are also now likely the highest, with any response likely to trigger unintended consequences in interconnected systems of violence, territorial control and illegal profits. The violent port cities all deserve unique strategies of their own – collectively they argue for preventative intervention in other cities where drug markets are at risk of developing violent logics.

## Entrepot ports

Several urban centres emerge as being crucial to the transit trade without having substantial local drug markets. Often these are small urban centres hosting large transport infrastructure, like major container shipping ports (if on the coast) or dry ports or airports, if inland. These places distinguish themselves as being particularly useful and permeable gateways. For Africa as a whole, seaports provide crucial access to shipping to the interior and typically serve as gateways to several countries, as there are many landlocked countries in the interior. Cross-continental trade routes are also difficult, as the road and rail networks are poor – places which offer amenable crossroads through the continent develop important leverage as waypoints in licit and illicit economies. Here we make a case study of Nacala, which is a deeply corrupted and criminalised port, which has successfully hosted the trade routes for several criminal syndicates for some decades.

### Nacala

Nacala Port is the third largest port in Mozambique, in terms of the volume of cargo handled, but it is also the largest natural deep-water port on the east coast of Africa. This characteristic allows for unrestricted entry and exit of vessels, regardless of draught, 24 hours a day, and requires no dredging. It also makes it a crucial piece of infrastructure, with various licit and illicit interests vying for strategic access to the port.

Nacala's utility, like many coastal entrepôts, is its links to far-flung markets and jurisdictions. Previous GI

research has explained how the port is used by networks smuggling gemstones and ivory that are hidden in shipments of coal and timber and exported through the port. It is also an entry point to interior economies. Nacala helps to feed commodities to Mozambique's neighbouring landlocked countries, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and provides an exit point for their goods.

**Figure 8: The deepwater port of Nacala and the towns closest to *bandari bubus* allegedly used for heroin shipments**



Begun in 2018, an ongoing modernisation drive seeks to increase the port's importance for regional trade. Total investments are estimated at US\$200million and will include the construction of a bulk grain terminal and bulk fertiliser facilities. As part of this plan the port aims to increase its share of Malawian cargo from 8% in 2015 to 39% in 2030.<sup>160</sup>

In 2018 a new management and ownership structure was created for Nacala, with the intention of expanding



and upgrading the port and its related transport corridor. The port concession is now run by Corredor de Desenvolvimento do Norte (CDN), which has a complex and shifting ownership structure, involving a private-public partnership that includes several state-owned companies, Vale,<sup>161</sup> a Brazilian multinational mining company, and Mitsui, a Japanese conglomerate involved in several industries, along with smaller private investors.

CDN is 49% owned by the national railway company, CMF (Caminhos de Ferro de Mocambique) and 51% by SDCN (Sociedade de Desenvolvimento de Corredor de Nacala), a vehicle for investment in a transport corridor from the interior to Nacala. It is SDCN which has multiple private and public owners: Since 2014, Vale and Mitsui have each held 42.5% in SDCN, while the remaining 15% belongs to several investors, including Mocambique Gestores, in which former president Armando Guebuza, among others, has a stake.

Nacala has the potential to become one of the most important ports in the region, and an ongoing schedule of investment and upgrading aims to get it there. It has also previously been identified, by the GI, as one of the most criminalised ports in the region, with tight and long-standing abuse by criminal networks for the purpose of illicit trade.

*The Heroin Coast* described Nacala Port 'as the personal fiefdom of businessmen linked to illicit trades' who leveraged political and personal donations to the Frelimo elite to ensure privileged access to the port, with regular Customs control and with protection for the illicit goods on the country's road network too.

Under what we described as 'an elite pact', these networks exchanged political donations for protection for their role in trans-shipping heroin through Mozambique ports to South Africa, for onwards shipment to more lucrative markets, or for South African consumption. These networks received heroin shipments both through dhow-based landings on small beaches and islands along the coast – which would be later consolidated – and also through smuggling heroin inside other shipments received by container at the port. Nacala was also where the transport companies, warehouses and other logistics services they used for illicit (and licit) trade were based.

The protections they received included an effective exemption on having their goods scanned by Customs officials.<sup>162</sup> Interviewees who have worked for individuals

involved in smuggling in Nacala, and who were involved in some of the deals they struck with the political elite, say that Nacala networks contribute about US\$4million dollars to the Frelimo electoral campaign each year. (Different individuals contribute amounts ranging from US\$500 000 to US\$1million). These arrangements have been in place from 1994 onwards.<sup>163</sup>

Many of their imports simply fed their retail businesses in Nacala and Nampula – so called white goods smuggling. But Customs exemption may also have been used to smuggle in heroin. In fact, according to one interviewee, who had done a security assessment of the port, a common approach was to import containers of drugs hidden in electronic goods, marked for export to Malawi. But at Nacala, networks would use both their tax exemptions and access to handling areas to 'win three times over'.<sup>164</sup> The electronic goods would be offloaded and sold in the local market (undercutting legitimate competitors, as taxes were not paid) and the drugs would be shipped onwards. The container would then be resealed and exported to Malawi, where they would declare to insurers that their goods had been robbed en route and file for re-imburement.<sup>165</sup>

A common approach was to import containers of drugs hidden in electronic goods, marked for export to Malawi

This arrangement between a relatively small group of families and actors at the highest levels of government created a level of protection and advantage that closed the market off for other operators. But the arrangement was already showing signs of destabilisation in 2017 and has sailed into troubled waters in the last few years. Firstly, in 2014 a civil society organisation exposed the misuse of political party exemptions which had been given to private individuals to use.<sup>166</sup> This scrutiny was embarrassing for the government. Heightened awareness of Mozambique's heroin trafficking route, and Nacala's role in it, has also increased international pressure to clean up business at the port.

In addition, measures by private actors at the port have made a difference. As part of the shifts in management

entailed in the creation of CDN, Vale, which already ran the coal terminal, took over control of the management of containers and bulk cargo.<sup>167</sup> Carlos Mesquita, the Mozambican minister of transport, appears to be making further moves to dislodge Mocimboa do Gestor from ownership of SDCN, in what is seen as a move to disentangle former President Guebuza's commercial interests from the port.<sup>168</sup> Modernisation has also entailed implementing tighter security measures, including installing non-intrusive inspection facilities.<sup>169</sup>

Interviewees also claim that there have been upheavals in the powerful families that hold influence at Nacala Port and that there are new emergent and young entrepreneurs in Nacala and Nampula.<sup>170</sup> Rassul, previously a primary player, has suffered a reversal of fortunes – it is not clear whether his financial capital or political capital went first (as they are interrelated), but both appear to have collapsed. This year he stood trial on charges of money laundering – he was ultimately acquitted but he still owes the state, one interviewee estimates, more than 2.5 billion Meticals (about US\$40million).<sup>171</sup> This includes bills for unpaid taxes, debts he owes to the now defunct Nossobanco, and a debt of 1.140.000.000 MT (about US\$20million) that his company, the S&S Oil Refinery, owes the state. His collapse might unravel the broader impacts of Nacala's criminal capture: S & S Oil Refinery is partly owned by South Africa's Public Investment Corporation, the result of a deal that is suspected to have been corrupt.<sup>172</sup>

## There have been upheavals in the criminal networks that use Nacala Port and that there are new emergent and young entrepreneurs in Nacala and Nampula

On the other hand, Gulamo Moti, who has in the past been linked with illicit trade, is now investing heavily in tourism and is building, simultaneously, three new big hotels in Nacala. His star still appears ascendant. Likewise, though he is said to be old and in poor health, law enforcement in South Africa continues to identify Mohammed Bachir Suleman as the primary heroin kingpin in the country, though they, too, say that there

are now multiple networks running heroin into South Africa, including South African ones.<sup>173</sup>

The Nacala story, then, is still one of a strategic trade infrastructure asset over which the private sector, criminal interests, corrupt government interests and, externally, civil society contest over control and management.

Elsewhere in Mozambique, there is also anecdotal evidence of rising drug use in Nampula, Cabo del Gado and Maputo – a phenomenon which would indicate that the 'quid pro quo' to prevent local markets in exchange for political protection is weakening. While there has been a small heroin market in Mozambique since the 1980s, information previously conveyed to the GI was that in the past the state had moved quickly to contain local markets and had been able to exert pressure on traffickers to keep 'leakage' into the domestic market from the transit trade to a minimum. But current GI research reveals that highly adulterated heroin is entering the north of the country through Tanzanian networks that supply a large consumer base amongst artisanal ruby miners near Montepuez (a predominantly migrant community). Heroin is also available, at various levels of quality, in Pemba, from shipments that land on the coast; and in Nampula, though we do not have a good view of the dynamics of this market.<sup>174</sup>

Drug markets also appear to have grown in the capital. Tanzanian dealers, who have passed through Maputo at several points in the last decade, claim that Maputo's drug trade has grown considerably: mid-level 'freelance' dealers, operating in South Africa, buy their heroin supply directly from the Tanzanian-controlled Strela Market area in downtown Maputo, where the street price of a kilogram of heroin is US\$3 000. According to one Tanzanian dealer, Maputo is now 'a huge corner'.<sup>175</sup>

## Movement into the interior

While the first heroin transit routes across the region relied heavily on sea-based transport to enter the continent, the transport modes and urban centres of the interior have become increasingly important. Interior hubs have developed around air-transport nodes with important regional and international connections, such as Entebbe/Kampala, which is a transit hub for several illegal commodities. As the continent's air routes have multiplied and become more efficient, so their utility for the heroin trade has increased.

Heroin is also consolidated on land and shipped over a frequently shifting web of road routes in a westerly and southern direction across the continent. This has the greatest impact on secondary towns on this road network, which have developed local markets and become waypoints. Here we profile the role of border towns and also explore how heroin became so deeply embedded in industrial towns in South Africa's coal belt.

While the first heroin transit routes across the region relied heavily on sea-based transport to enter the continent, the transport modes and urban centres of the interior have become increasingly important

### Kampala and Entebbe

Kampala is the capital city of Uganda, as well as the economic and cultural centre of the country, which has itself become a crossroads for illicit trade transiting from all four cardinal points. Kampala exists in a certain amount of symbiosis with Entebbe, a town 37 km from the capital on the shore of Lake Victoria where the Entebbe International Airport is located. Over the last two decades, Entebbe Airport has become a prime site of major drug and wildlife commodity seizures, highlighting Uganda's role as an entrepot hub which is able to leverage its central interior location and facilitate the fast and smooth passage of goods across the continent. Kampala and Entebbe have become prime sites for traffickers to set up operational bases from where they recruit couriers and set up fronts for their criminal businesses. Over time, the capital has also developed its own small drug market.

Kampala and Entebbe's dual role as a busy transit node for smuggled drugs can be seen in the sheer diversity of mules and traffickers who have been arrested there, despite reportedly inadequate detection equipment and high levels of corruption (see table).

### Foreigners arrested in Entebbe Airport for trafficking heroin or cocaine<sup>176</sup>

2017		2018	
Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number
Ugandan	19	Ugandan	6
Rwandan	3	Rwandan	3
Nigerian	2	Nigerian	2
Norwegian	2	Norwegian	2
Netherland	2	Netherland	3
Italian	2	Italian	1
Brazilian	2	Brazilian	2
South African	2	South African	1
Romanian	2	Romanian	1
Tanzanian	1	Tanzanian	1
Sudanese	1	Sudanese	1
South Sudanese	1	South Sudanese	1
Danish	1	N.B Other countries with undisclosed number of citizens arrested are USA, Swedish and Togolese.	
Turkish	1		
Chanaian	1		
Eritrean	1		
German	1		
Burundian	1		
Serbian	1		
Portuguese	1		
Angolan	1		
Irish	1		

While Southern and West African syndicates play a prominent role in the transit drug trade, the geographic imprint of Entebbe's footprint is broad: In the months of April and May 2019 alone, men and women from Venezuela, Italy, Pakistan, Sweden, USA, Netherlands, Nigeria, Togo, Mali, Senegal South Africa were arrested by the anti-narcotics or airport police. Substantial information reveals steadily increasing trafficking of hard drugs – methamphetamine, heroin and cocaine in Uganda. In March 2019, the CID destroyed an accumulated stock of 600 kg of heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine seized in a period of three years (2018, 2017 and 2016).<sup>177</sup> Most of these drugs were seized at Entebbe (as well as some seizures at the border crossing discussed below).<sup>178</sup>

The largest seizure this year came through the arrest of a Dutch national in June, who was carrying over

US\$2million worth of heroin concealed in coffee packs.<sup>179</sup> Drugs have been found concealed in consumer goods in a large variety of ways: Bags (inner linings at the bottom or sides); in books (a hole is punched and drugs filled in the hole and sealed); photo frames; tea and coffee packs; women's bras; weaves for women; inner waistline of trousers; in the lining of a shirt turn-up or button hole line; laptops. These were all discovered from seizures at Entebbe airport.

Syndicates have also begun making greater use of small package deliveries from Uganda, using courier services at Entebbe. Since January 2019, six arrests have been made where airport staff attached to courier service companies colluded with traffickers to ensure safe deliveries of concealed drugs.<sup>180</sup> The ultimate destination of these drugs are mainly European and Asian markets. The Uganda CID believes that India may have become a worthwhile destination market for traffickers using Entebbe as a transit point,<sup>181</sup> though Indian flights may also be used in order to exchange packages in Dubai, as described above.

Although interviews with anti-narcotics CID officials suggested the air route into Uganda through Entebbe was diminishing, with overland entry routes now predominant, other evidence suggests that Entebbe continues to be a port of entry into the country, serving as a transit stop in air routes which originate in Mozambique. (Togo and Ghana in West Africa are other popular transit stops for this route, as well as Kenya and Ethiopia.) In a typical air trafficking transaction to Uganda, a courier from Maputo takes a flight to Addis Ababa and hands over parcels/baggage or items containing drugs to a waiting passenger ready to take a flight to Entebbe, from where he departs to another destination. In most cases the mules who exchange the packages in, for example, Addis Ababa, will not know each other but are connected by traffickers in Addis. Dubai is often used as a subsequent site of exchange or a destination, and couriers also name Abu Dhabi, Berlin, Amsterdam and London as final destinations for their role.<sup>182</sup> The expansion of air routes, such as through the growth of Ethiopian Airways, across the continent has greatly facilitated air trafficking of various commodities.

In the past, the couriers have often been Ugandan university students who are recruited in the nightclubs and bars of Kampala and Entebbe. The couriers are primarily women, who, in theory, attract less suspicion from law enforcement. Traffickers provide couriers with air tickets, and food and hotel allowances. Couriers

are paid between US\$500 and US\$3 000 for each trip, depending on the bargain between the trafficker and courier.<sup>183</sup>

### Recruitment of Ugandan Mules by foreign networks in Kampala and Entebbe

The case of two drug mules interviewed for this report illuminates the attractions and risks of acting as a courier. In 2018, Shaba, originally a Somali citizen, was recruited to deliver parcels (whose content was not disclosed to him) which was presented as a simple and lucrative task. A return ticket was bought for him, and he was given money for food, accommodation and an allowance totalling approximately US\$4 000. He delivered the parcel to a person waiting in a hotel (approximately 10 minutes' drive from the airport) and then returned.

Shaba's boss was a Ugandan based in South Africa, who entrusted him with similar tasks three more times in 2018. Shaba made two more trips in 2019, in January and March. Unfortunately, his luck ran out on a third trip in April 2019, when he was arrested in Dubai by law enforcement officers and deported back to Uganda. He was bailed out by employees of his boss. Shaba then became involved with a different group of drug dealers who were mostly involved in local retail markets. He became dependent on heroin and is now undergoing treatment in a rehabilitation centre in Kampala.<sup>184</sup>

Similarly, Mbabazi, a graduate in human resource management, met her recruiter, a member of a Nigerian syndicate, while working in a high-profile hotel in Entebbe. In September 2017, she and a friend were assigned to deliver parcels to Dubai, and they did so successfully, for a salary of US\$2 300 in total. In 2018, the same arrangement was struck but Mbabazi's friend was arrested in Entebbe before taking her flight. Mbabazi had missed the flight by chance — a family member passed away and she was in the countryside attending the funeral.

Recently, the CID suggested that this typology might be changing and that they noted the emergence of older European men, particularly Italians, as drug mules passing through East Africa.<sup>185</sup>

The businessmen in the transit drug trade in Kampala use their legitimate businesses, especially in real estate, as fronts. Genuine and criminal business ownership goes hand-in-hand with close connections to state officials — both bureaucrats and politicians whose influence

and authority can smooth over the legal difficulties of operating in both the licit and illicit economy, such as the recent arrest of foreign drug syndicates which also ran stores selling motorcycle spare parts, bicycle spare parts and cosmetics.<sup>186</sup> A high profile and politically well-connected individual whose wealth ranges from real estate to food processing and transportation is believed to use his hotels as conduit points for drug trafficking.<sup>187</sup> These businessmen are able to buy political protection.

Two separate members of the judiciary complained that corruption has had a direct impact on criminal prosecutions. Drug traffickers are able to 'influence court outcomes – and that is if the matter succeeds in getting to court. Sometimes files [before prosecution] disappear and you cannot do much.'<sup>188</sup> Another lawyer claimed that he had twice had dockets he was prosecuting disappear but did not pursue the matter out of fear of political backlash: 'When a file of a criminal disappears from the court registry and becomes untraceable, you need not to bother yourself with trying to track it down.'<sup>189</sup>

Operations are run from within provisional, rented accommodation. Traffickers rent accommodation in expensive hotels and at the same time rent multiple rooms in cheaper motels or residences. The different rooms serve different purposes such as transaction and storage.<sup>190</sup> The rationale is that it makes it difficult for police to detect, or in case of a raid, not all places of accommodation can be searched.<sup>191</sup>

Foreign networks are considered to be more organised than Ugandan networks, with clearer hierarchies. Their leadership often directs several smaller units, who may not know each other.<sup>192</sup> However, in general, the networks which are involved in drug transit routes through Uganda tend to be fluid. They often cohere only for one particular operation and will re-constellate with different partnerships for the next. Partnerships are often forged with casual acquaintances and are often one-off. Hierarchies in these small networks are fragmented, with low-level staff, like mules, being given assignments irregularly (though some mules do undertake the role repeatedly). The nature of the local market, which is small, and transit networks, which necessarily provide a brief service in a longer transport chain where profits are primarily accrued elsewhere, may mean there are many more openings for newcomers and opportunists.

Some networks also supply the small but, reportedly, growing local market. The customer base for this market can be roughly separated into elite and street

consumers. University students and the local elite are the primary customers for cocaine, heroin and marijuana, but street dealers also sell to a poor and marginalised customer base of children and young men, referred to as 'street kids'. Drugs like marijuana, opium, and 'jet fuel' (literally, black market aviation fuel) are primarily consumed by this section of the market.

The police in Kampala feel they lack adequate resources to respond to the problem of street sales of drugs. Though the police response is often punitive and aggressive operations, the police do not have other avenues to pursue when they confront 'street kids' and other drug users – there are no programmes for the treatment of drug dependence or other centres that they can divert people to.<sup>193</sup>

### Secondary towns are supplied via Kampala: Jinja and Mbale

Large secondary towns such as Jinja and Mbale also have small drug markets, which are supplied via Kampala. Wilson, a 37-year-old Ugandan, sold cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and occasionally marijuana and opium in Jinja's night clubs between 2013 and 2017, before moving to Mbale.<sup>194</sup> In Jinja, Wilson sold drugs to a circle of acquaintances (DJs, musicians and some businessmen). In Mbale, Wilson's three main sales points were a hotel in the Kisenyi area, Acacia mall in Bukoto and business premises at the Platinum building within the city centre, from where he purchased heroin from two Asian Ugandan businessmen who run a legitimate business in Mbale town.<sup>195</sup>

### Border Towns: Busia, Malaba, and Mutukula

The road network in East and Southern Africa, outside of South Africa, is poor but improving. With a poor road network, transport route options are relatively few if large trucks are being used, and so there are usually only a few official border crossings, which tend to be busy and lively. Border towns, then, are both potential interdiction points, and places where various routes coalesce, commodity flows converge, and goods are unloaded and dispatched to rural or urban markets. As such they play an interesting role in the region's black market economies.

At official border crossings, there are often large informal economies based around smuggling, primarily of licit goods such as electronics, food and other consumer goods, which heroin smuggling piggy-backs on, though



the networks involved in smuggling commodities versus smuggling highly illegal goods like drugs and weapons tend to be distinct.<sup>196</sup>

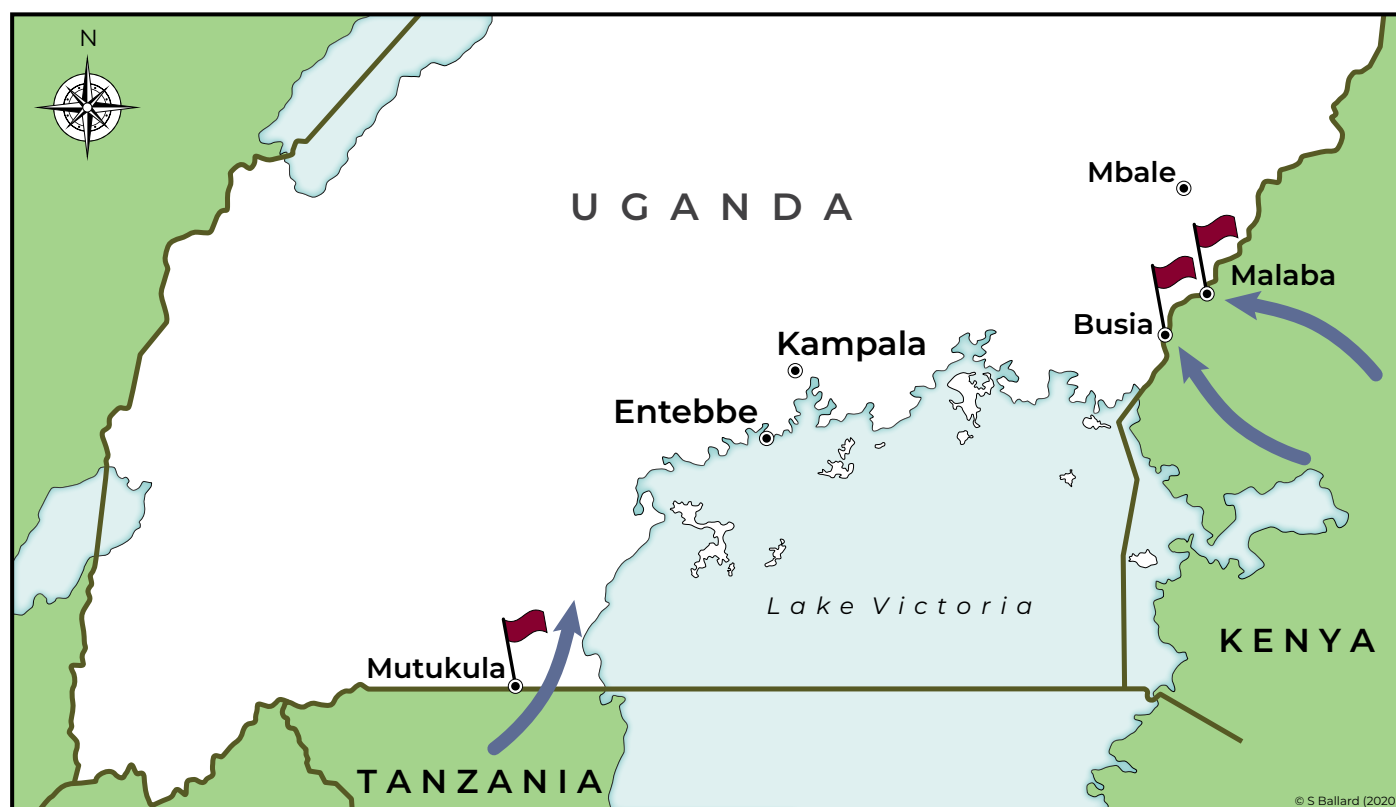
Aside from the official border crossing, the surrounding remote areas can also be used to smuggle goods, as they are hard to police. Borders in the region often cut across populated rural areas and cleave ethnic groups and as a function of this many ties – familial, economic, cultural – still span the frontier. The multiple personal, familial and community reasons for people to move unimpeded across these frontiers make it ‘very costly for states to thoroughly control such everyday cross-border interaction’.<sup>197</sup> Smugglers may also make use of these ‘soft’ border crossings to bypass the control of Customs and these areas do give them some flexibility. However insecurity, army patrols and difficult terrain in remote areas encourage smugglers to stick to the most frequented roads.

In Uganda, drugs are trafficked into the country from Somalia, Kenya and Tanzania by road through the border towns of Malaba, Busia, Mutukula and Katuna.<sup>198</sup> On the Kenya/Uganda border the crossings between the border straddling the towns of Busia and Malaba are

important for heroin travelling towards the interior from the Kenyan coast, and for drugs which are travelling from Entebbe/Kampala towards Nairobi.

Reinforcements in border control and stricter law enforcement mechanisms in countering drug trafficking in Kenya for the last two years have caused a change in the routes used by traffickers.<sup>199</sup> Most traffickers have resorted to smuggling drugs through Tanzania into Uganda through the Mutukula border crossing. Heroin, delivered by sea to the Kenyan, Tanzanian and Somali coastline, is transported by road to Tanzania and couriers dispatch it to Uganda by road (using buses, lorries, trucks and other vehicles) through the Mutukula border post into Uganda. Nevertheless, joint enforcement mechanisms between the Uganda revenue authority, the Uganda Peoples Defence Force and the police force have recently caused a reduction in the transportation of concealed drugs during daytime. Drug smugglers now resort to the late night and early morning hours, using taxi and truck operators between 10pm and 12am and early morning from 4am to 6am.<sup>200</sup> Enforcement is challenging for law enforcement stations in these towns – police at the border complain that they are under-resourced and often have to

**Figure 10:** Busia, Malaba and Mutukula are important border crossing points on Uganda's borders



borrow vehicles in order to follow up tips on incoming illegal shipments, and that their operations are often compromised by corrupt colleagues who leak information to criminal networks.<sup>201</sup>

Although taxi drivers regularly smuggle consumer goods, interviewees claim most are not comfortable with the risks of transporting drugs, and they are often unaware that drugs are concealed on board on their way to Kampala. A story shared by Ssekalega, a taxi operator and leader operating between Kampala and Mutukula, suggests the methods of concealment used in the day-to-day activities of smugglers at the border. As he drove back to Kampala in the late evening, three traders asked him to transport them as well as five cartons of baking flour. He charged them 60 000 shillings, a fee they quickly accepted. On the way one carton slipped off and fell, tearing in the process. This revealed hidden contents – packets of a substance that looked like salt. The traders made phone calls and before they reached Kampala there was a vehicle waiting by the road to transfer the goods. An argument broke out between the men and the driver of the vehicle over the torn carton. The men accused each other of cheating and made threats to kill each other, which convinced the taxi driver that the deal involved drugs.<sup>202</sup>

## Police at the border complain that they are under-resourced and often have to borrow vehicles in order to follow up tips on incoming illegal shipments

In addition to greater use of the Mutukula border point, interviewees also claim that Tanzanian law enforcement has begun to tighten up enforcement on this route, leading to another shift towards consolidation and re-shipment from Mozambique, using air routes to Entebbe,<sup>203</sup> discussed elsewhere in this report.

Our interviews have also found that border towns also often have small drug markets, which service populations on both sides of the border. Drug markets here build on forces of urbanisation – poverty, unemployment – but also the dynamics of being at a regional trade crossroads, and the income of traders and the educated class.

## Busia's smuggling history

Busia in particular is famous for its lively black-market activity. The journalist Isaac Otidi Amuke has described Busia's *magendo* (cross-border smuggling business) during a smuggling boom in the 1990s:

'The illegal border crossings, *panya* routes, were busy with all sorts of smugglers – some on foot, most on bicycles, and the bigger boys and girls in lorries, transporting anything and everything from everyday basics like bread, sugar and cooking oil, to heavier commodities like petrol and cement, all sourced from Kenya and being supplied to traders in Uganda.

Usually, there'd be policemen guarding these smuggling points, each of the border crossings simply referred to as a 'point' in local parlance. Every once in a while, when the smugglers had their goods lined up on the Kenyan side of the border – within reach of a 'point' and ready to cross into Uganda – an 'escort' would be dispatched to the border crossing ahead of their party to negotiate with the policemen about a love of money. The escort would pay a collective bribe to the police and agree with them a smuggling window, say 10 minutes, during which the border would be opened to the smugglers. The escort, usually on a bicycle to be discreet, would then rush back and inform his party of the smuggling window. The moment the escort signaled the smugglers to move, feet, bicycles and lorries would all rush through the border crossing and disappear into Uganda, as if it were a racing event.'

According to Amuke, in the 2000s the *magendo* waned as Uganda's economy improved and it was no longer so reliant on commodities smuggled from Kenya.

**Sofia's Nine Lives**, Isaac Otidi Amuke, 2016, adda. <https://www.addastories.org/sofias-nine-lives/>

In both Busia and Malaba, a small local trade is controlled by Somali and Nigerian syndicates, whose suppliers live in Kisumu in Kenya and travel to Busia by public bus carrying small quantities of drugs hidden amongst consumer goods, like tea, bread or boxes of condoms.<sup>204</sup> At the border, they use pedestrian pathways to cross over to Uganda since there are no serious checks done at that point.

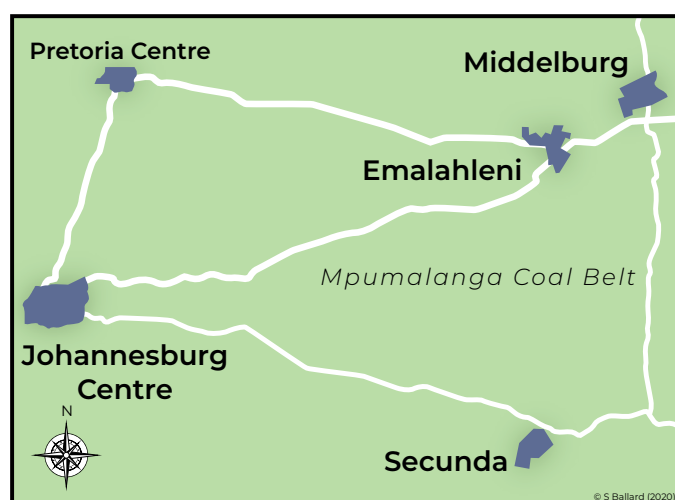
'Wanyama' is a dealer who sells in Busia and Malaba. Wanyama says that the drugs supplied from Kenya – including heroin, cocaine, 'jet fuel' – are mostly heavily adulterated, at least compared to the drugs he used to sell and consume in Mbale, a large commercial centre in

eastern Uganda, which in turn is supplied directly from Kampala.<sup>205</sup> Drugs in the Ugandan market tend to be sold at different price points, depending on their level of purity.<sup>206</sup> Wanyama's market is, as mentioned, small, but it is also diverse: his clients range from school students, street children, traders, to taxi and lorry operators.<sup>207</sup>

## The Mpumalanga Coal Belt

The findings of the GI's pricing survey for heroin have revealed that in many countries across Southern and East African 'there is nowhere that heroin is not available'.<sup>208</sup> While the supply to remote towns might be sporadic, expensive and adulterated (and therefore low quality) product, there are few places which have not been absorbed into the heroin market. There is, however, even less existing scholarship (let alone policy attention) to the drug markets of small towns than there is to the drug markets of the region's cities.

**Figure 11: Emalahleni, Middelburg and Secunda are on the Mpumalanga Coal Belt**



The industrial towns of the Mpumalanga highveld present an interesting case. It has been known for several years now, thanks to local press coverage and figures from the South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (SANCA), that Mpumalanga towns have a particularly acute heroin abuse problem. In our previous work, we had attributed this to the fact that the towns which are most badly affected lie on the N7 highway that travels from Mozambique to South Africa. eMalahleni is broadly considered to have the most acute heroin problem, but Middelburg and Secunda are also thought to be badly affected (all three were visited for this report).

Our previous report claimed, based on seizures and interviews in Mozambique, that the route that heroin shipments take into the country goes from Mozambique to the interior of South Africa via the N4 through Mpumalanga, and as result Mpumalanga had developed a heroin-using population. Data about drug use patterns in South Africa is extremely poor as there is no regular epidemiological study carried out by the state or another appropriate body. Most estimates of drug-use prevalence are extrapolated from studies which target small and limited populations, or which rely on data from the treatment centres that fall under SANCA's purview. The treatment centre data is especially problematic when it concerns heroin, as treatment is not free and access for the poorest is inherently limited – as heroin is predominately consumed in poor communities, treatment centre data may drastically underestimate the extent of the phenomenon. Nonetheless, SANCA figures since around 2012 have indicated that Mpumalanga has amongst the highest proportion of new admissions for heroin dependency treatment per capita in the country.

Our assumption was that heroin 'leaked' en route to these towns as drivers stopped on their journey to other destinations in South Africa. But our interviews for this story reveal a more complex process by which these towns – typically considered conservative, small and more resistant to the problems, like drug abuse, that plague big cities – have become hubs of heroin consumption. The process has seen the social problems of dysfunction in small urban centres, many of them exacerbated by both social conditions inherent in industrial work and in unemployment, meeting drug syndicates that are able to use the region's dense road network to supply these towns, using Johannesburg as a base to do so.

Evidence collected in South Africa for this report continues to affirm that the road route from Mozambique into South Africa remains the primary transit route for heroin shipments.<sup>209</sup> In 2019, the South African Police Service seized heroin shipments on this road worth R2,5million and R60million, respectively.<sup>210</sup> However, law enforcement claims that Mpumalanga is primarily a transit province, and that heroin shipments go straight to Johannesburg, and occasionally to Durban (though much of Durban's heroin also transits Johannesburg first). While there was a lab bust near Dullstroom several years ago,

where heroin might have been packaged, the networks which supply heroin to local markets are believed to base their operations in Johannesburg. Criminal syndicates running drugs in Mpumalanga are diverse – including foreigners and locals of different race groups – and none are considered to be particularly sophisticated.<sup>211</sup> The drugs seized in these towns are also both more expensive,<sup>212</sup> and more adulterated, than drugs seized in Johannesburg and other big cities, indicating that they have passed through more intermediaries.<sup>213</sup>

## Heroin is known as *nyaope* or *kataza* and is primarily consumed in a joint with marijuana in the poor townships of the highveld

As in the rest of South Africa, wealth is still stratified along racial lines according to privileges established during the apartheid period, so relatively affluent residents tend to be white or Indian. The towns are also still broadly spatially divided along lines of race, so that lower-middle-class, middle-class and wealthy housing is predominantly occupied by white, Indian and coloured residents in suburbs of towns, with working class and unemployed black Africans, South African and migrant, residing in peripheral townships.

Heroin is known as *nyaope* or *kataza* and is primarily consumed in a joint with marijuana in the poor townships of the highveld. There are, however, users injecting heroin who tend to be from relatively more affluent communities, though according to our interviews 'Affluent people (Indians and whites) are mostly taking meth, kat, and cocaine'.<sup>214</sup> People working in treatment as well as users noted some changes in patterns of use, and in the supply of heroin, in recent years. Poly-drug use is increasingly common, particular the mixing of meth and heroin – this accompanies reports that heroin users are now smoking *nyaope* mixes which 'create a sexual drive' (something heroin usually dampens).<sup>215</sup> Users say that in the past year the drugs they use have changed in appearance, create a stronger craving than they used to and 'burn the tongue'.<sup>216</sup>

While more in-depth research is needed on how drug markets in these towns have grown and spread, our interviews suggest that the success of the heroin trade on the highveld lies in the meeting of supply and demand particular to the Coal Belt's geographic position and dysfunctional social conditions.

Interviews suggest that the retail drug markets in these highveld towns have been developed by Nigerian syndicates who leverage the town's proximity to Johannesburg to buy from suppliers, also part of Nigerian syndicates, in Benoni. Law enforcement interviewees confirmed that Nigerian migrants 'club together' in not very sophisticated networks to 'buy in bulk' from Benoni-based suppliers.<sup>217</sup> Highveld drug users have visited labs run by Nigerian syndicates in Benoni, which are run out of converted houses and apartments.<sup>218</sup> In regard to heroin, these syndicates are reportedly supplied in turn by Tanzanian networks, acting as wholesalers for a variety of networks supplying street markets.<sup>219</sup>

Nigerian syndicates on the highveld sell a variety of drugs and target both the high-income and low-income segments of the market. They are also reported to be involved in running sex work businesses.<sup>220</sup> Labs and storage places will often be housed in wealthy areas, especially in gated communities, and deliveries to affluent clients are made by car. One formerly kat-dependent user in Secunda described these networks as being personally mediated, at once familiar but also secretive and potentially violent: 'Nigerians are loyal to their customers. They will really help when you need it, but they will also kill you if you steal or don't pay or snitch. Sometimes they provide drugs on credit, but it depends on the terms of your relationship. They deliver right to you, but they frequently change cars.'<sup>221</sup>

In addition to Nigerian syndicates, interviewees also mentioned South African networks, notably a dealer who had fled reprisals for a gang killing in Cape Town and set up shop in Middelburg, where he ran a profitable business for many years, before again having to relocate. Networks made up of Pakistani migrants were also said to sometimes sell heroin – which was better quality than the product sold by Nigerian networks – or to use it as payment for the tasks committed in pursuit of their primary criminal concern: stealing cars.<sup>222</sup>

Social conditions in Mpumalanga are characterised by an unusual mix of the effects of both mass industrial

employment and mass unemployment, high rates of migration (much, maybe most of it, from within South Africa),<sup>223</sup> and highly dysfunctional local governance. People who work with drug users in affluent communities also claim that the patterns of employment in industrial businesses – where 12-hour shifts are common – create patterns of recreation and exhaustion which contribute to drug use, and which disrupt childcare. ‘Secunda is a very industrialised town. It didn’t exist before the 1980s – it’s not a natural grouping. There are a high number of people working shifts in Secunda. A lot of children get left unattended when both people are working. And Sasol schedules set the schedules for the whole town – everyone either works for Sasol or works for a company which works for Sasol.’<sup>224</sup>

## The townships where heroin use is concentrated are often characterised by degraded urban environments, which add to residents’ social and economic marginalisation

The majority of heroin users, however, come from households where unemployment is common. Unemployment stands at 43%, which is higher than the rest of the country, despite the presence of a large number of industrial businesses, perhaps as a result of unsuccessful labour migration. The townships where heroin use is concentrated are often characterised by degraded urban environments, which add to residents’ social and economic marginalisation. Local people (who have grown up in the area) complain that they are unable to get work on the mines as they cannot pass medical tests for employment.

These conditions contribute to and are exacerbated by extremely weak urban management. Several Mpumalanga municipalities have repeatedly been put under administration by the provincial government, indicating that drastic intervention was deemed to be necessary to ensure they were able to continue providing minimum levels of service delivery and to prevent further financial mismanagement. In 2018, five municipalities were under administration, of

which four cover the Coal Belt area – eMalahleni, Govan Mbeki (which includes Secunda), Msukaligwa (which includes Ermelo), and Lekwa (which includes Standerton).<sup>225</sup> The opposition attributes the dire state of local government to corruption which took place under the administration of former premier of Mpumalanga and current Deputy President of South Africa, David Mabuza.<sup>226</sup>

There are also populations of homeless people in the towns of the highveld, many of whom are young men who are heroin users. One interviewee in Middelburg said: ‘We call them *nyaope* boys – they assist with parking and looking after cars, and some of them steal (mostly car robbery and pickpocketing).’<sup>227</sup> In Secunda, there is a group of several dozen homeless people who sleep outside the post office, which offers a more secure site than most.<sup>228</sup> As in Durban, homelessness has many causes, and rising rates in South Africa most likely owe much to difficult economic conditions over the past decade. However, once homeless, people appear to be much more susceptible to becoming dependent on heroin. Many users also recount stories of leaving home or being expelled from their family homes due to their drug use and the strategies they used to secure drugs, such as stealing.<sup>229</sup> The rise in dependent drug users also appears to have led to an increase in petty theft and begging, something which has in turn encouraged residents to avoid town centres, which were already declining due to a variety of factors.<sup>230</sup>

Apart from the visible homeless population, the use of heroin on the highveld is often hidden, as individual users and their families are embarrassed, stigmatised and criminalised, so try to conceal the issue. One religious leader told us: ‘People try to conceal this habit for as long as possible and their families are not open about the problems – I find out about it because the one person they will talk to is the minister.’<sup>231</sup>

Drug markets were also linked to police corruption in all of the towns where research was conducted. An interviewee in Secunda said: ‘Our impression is that there are some police who are paid to turn a blind eye. Then some users have told us they were arrested but police demanded money to release them and drove them to an ATM. These are opportunists who try to make money.’<sup>232</sup> In Middelburg, users claimed that the police confiscated their drugs and then sold them back to dealers.<sup>233</sup> In Evander (a town near to Secunda) there are rumours that someone in senior



leadership in the station is receiving money 'under the table' from the Nigerians.<sup>234</sup> In March 2019, a large group of residents from Embahlenhle (the same township which is close to Secunda) raided a house rented or owned by an alleged Nigerian drug syndicate where they found an enormous stash of various drugs as well as equipment to process and package drugs.<sup>235</sup> This then led to a confrontation with the local police station with accusations of corruption levelled at the police and vigilantism leveled at the group. This confrontation appears to have damaged police legitimacy considerably.

The history of the development of drug markets in border towns of Uganda and the Coal Belt towns of South Africa show how organically – and almost inevitably – heroin markets have spread from the coast to the heart of the interior. They have been pioneered by enterprising migrants, and the transporters making a living on narrow margins on long-distance routes. Once entrenched, local markets deepen the incentive to set up better supply lines to remote locations and require their own low-level police corruption.

It is vital to pay attention to places outside of major capitals. The World Bank points out that nearly three-fourths (72%) of Sub-Saharan Africa's urban population resides in urban areas outside the largest city of each country: 50% of the urban population of Sub-Saharan Africa live in cities and towns with fewer than 250 000 people, while small towns with fewer than 50 000 people account for 29%.<sup>236</sup>

So too, the illicit history of African urbanisation is as much a story of border towns, Coal Belt factory towns, and the capitals of landlocked countries, as it is about the historic coastal megacities

## Two shadow capitals

This report now turns to two case studies of the two 'shadow' capitals considered to be most important major hubs for the heroin trade: Johannesburg and Nairobi.

Johannesburg is not a South African capital, but it is the country's biggest urban centre, with the largest concentration of business headquarters and industrial logistics providers, the most important airports, the location of the largest media houses, and home to more of the country's rich and powerful people than anywhere else. Nairobi also combines these qualities

with its status as the seat of government. Because of this intertwining of business and political power, the story of their drug markets most closely track the story of the integration of drug transit routes with political finance and national politics. As such, we refer to these cities as 'shadow capitals': they perform 'capital city' functions for hidden and illicit trades, and host key role players as well as big consumer markets.

Johannesburg and Nairobi are also the powerhouses of their regions – the economic hubs of Southern and East Africa, respectively. Johannesburg frequently crops up in the research into other illicit trades as a place where key role players meet and negotiate deals – high-level suspects are often arrested on their way to or from Johannesburg from countries in the region. Nairobi, too, plays host to an array of foreign networks, and its airport looms large as a site of arrests and seizures of mules transporting various contraband.

These cities are able to perform this function because of their intertwining of illicit and licit trade, their strong connections to central political authority, and their ability to connect far flung locations in their regional economy with the global economy. Each of them has slightly different international connections – and scope for creating new connections – which determines how powerful an actor in transnational illicit trade they can become.

Both cities have important criminal network links to Dar es Salaam, and for the heroin economy, these three cities represent a triangle of power centres. Though Dar es Salaam may have given birth to the heroin economy, Nairobi and Johannesburg now play the role of southern and northern 'boardrooms' where different networks meet, negotiate, and entrench themselves through seeking high-level influence.

### Nairobi

Nairobi is both the country's political and its economic centre. Since Kenya's independence in 1963, when the city had a population of around 300 000 people, it has grown rapidly as migrants from rural Kenya, other urban centres and neighbouring countries have moved in. Now with a population of around 4.5 million, rapid urbanisation without a concomitant investment in housing and services means that 60-70% of its residents live in informal slum neighbourhoods where informal power-brokers control access to resources and violence is rife.<sup>237</sup> The city is also a major financial centre<sup>238</sup> and

logistics hub for industry, with both a stock exchange and an inland dry port, as well as other infrastructure for regional trade.

The heroin economy in Kenya has seen a number of important shifts in the last few years. These shifts have not fundamentally weakened the flow of drugs into and through the country – but they have triggered an important spatial shift: Mombasa has waned in importance to the drug trade, and Nairobi has centralised even more networks and routes through itself.

The heroin trade appeared along the Kenyan coast around the same time it became noticeable in Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam. Mombasa, Tanga, Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam are all connected by trade routes, tourism and fishing patterns, in a coastal and island system that does not always respect national borders. It is likely that the trade first arose in Zanzibar and spread quickly elsewhere – along the Kenyan coast, the kingpins in Pakistan found ready interlocutors in Asian-Kenyan families from communities which had long histories of cross-Indian Ocean trade. In Malindi and surrounding towns, there was also a growing presence of Italian fugitives, who may also have made use of these routes for contraband (Italian figures are also rumoured to be deeply involved in heroin in Zanzibar).

## The heroin trade appeared along the Kenyan coast around the same time it became noticeable in Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam

The Kenyan trade soon centred on Mombasa and its port, with the most prominent figures arising out of trading families in that city. They created a multigenerational empire which spanned different political administrations, during which time the heroin trade moved from being a tightly controlled bulk transit trade to developing large domestic markets along the coast, and some further inland. Over time, figures in Nairobi also began to get involved, and began to undermine coastal control by gaining influence over Nairobi's interior container port. The decline of the coast and the rise of Nairobi as a major hub appears to have

been cemented by the eventual arrest of second-generation kingpins, the Akasha brothers, in 2014.

Since the extradition of the Akashas, there have been few seizures at Mombasa's Moi International Airport or the port, but, drawing on media reports, there are seizures at Nairobi's airport roughly twice a month. The shift away from Mombasa can also be seen in the movement of other illicit commodities. From the start of the last elephant poaching crisis, Mombasa was the most commonly used port for ivory trafficking out of Africa, but there have been no seizures of ivory at, or originating from, Mombasa since December 2016.<sup>239</sup>

For heroin, this shift has been building for several years, based largely on the logistical benefits to being based close to financial and transport infrastructure, and political power – even the Akashas, though they lived in Mombasa, shifted the logistics hub of their operation to Nairobi after the creation of its inland port.<sup>240</sup> But since 2014, shifts related to enforcement have made Mombasa even less useful as a base for traffickers. This has displaced routes, and weakened certain networks, but also created space for new entrants and triggered the fragmentation of drug deliveries.

These enforcement measures have included both domestic and international intervention, though these are not easy to separate in practice, as close diplomatic ties between Kenya and the US mean that it gets a large amount of US financial and technical support for its security forces, which in turn shapes the priorities and approaches of the enforcement response to the drug trade. Direct international intervention comes in the form of US Drug Enforcement Administration activity, seen most visibly in the US extradition of the Akasha Brothers, which has most likely rattled other kingpins along the coast, especially as the Akashas have pleaded guilty and named accomplices and rivals. One Kenyan intelligence officer claimed: 'Criminals are moving away from Mombasa. I think there's fear that Americans agents are all over, targeting the Akasha allies.'<sup>241</sup> This heightened US focus on Mombasa has bolstered the impact of patrols and seizures by the CMF, which disrupted or detected big shipments which were intended for the Kenyan coast.

Kenya established a coast guard in November 2018, which has increased the number of maritime patrols aimed at controlling illicit trade.<sup>242</sup> Perhaps more important, the Kenyan government has responded to international pressure to improve the integrity of the

Mombasa Port, including through a clamp-down on the creation of Container Forwarding and Clearing (CFC) companies, which had been widely abused for the purposes of illicit trade.

In the 1990s and 2000s, weak regulation and enforcement meant the number of CFCs in Kenya mushroomed, to the great boon of illicit traders of all types. Key players in the heroin trade made use of CFCs to clear containers in Mombasa, or have them shipped, via Mombasa, to Nairobi's new inland container depot. In fact, of the 10 Kenyan businessmen and politicians who have been repeatedly accused of trafficking heroin, nine own, or once owned, import and export companies in Mombasa and Nairobi.<sup>243</sup> But from 2014, when the Kenyan government began to introduce tough conditions for the licensing of CFCs, growth in their numbers has stagnated and many existing CFCs have failed to be re-licensed.

This has shifted activity to the Tanzanian coast, which is longer, harder to police and not patrolled by a coast guard, or to Nairobi. Nairobi now receives much of its heroin shipments via Tanzania, after they have been transported inland from the coast. Syndicates traffic the heroin following similar routes to those used in the past by Tanzanian poaching syndicates, many of which cross over the border close to the coast, and also supply Mombasa's domestic market. Other routes go by road via Arusha up to Nairobi. This route appears to be controlled by Tanzanian networks.<sup>244</sup>

The shift to Nairobi appears to have increased the use of air-based smuggling methods. Air trafficking also allows connections to more far-flung destinations to be set up, something which Nairobi, which has a larger array of international connections, is better able to facilitate. Nairobi is also a manufacturing and packaging hub, which allows drugs to be hidden with popular export products such as tea, coffee, and handicrafts.

Within Nairobi, the geography of heroin storage, blending and packaging has likewise shifted from *godowns* in industrial areas to apartments in Nairobi's outskirts (including Buruburu, Kayole, Syokimau, Mlologo, and Parklands) and satellite towns (Ruiru, Juja, Kiambu and Thika). Buruburu, Kayole and Syokimau are residential neighbourhoods, notably close to Jomo Kenyatta International Airport.

Syndicates operating in these suburbs are primarily using drug mules travelling by air and land to move

the product in and out of Kenya.<sup>245</sup> However, they may also have a network of *kichuzi*, street dealers, who sell drugs for them in the slums. Nairobi itself allows even greater scope than the coast to expand local markets. Kenya's capital is already a site of significant hard drug consumption and the heroin trade in Nairobi slums is no longer uncommon: In May 2019, a 30-year-old man was arrested in Mathare with 100 sachets of heroin.<sup>246</sup>

## Johannesburg

The explosion of South Africa's heroin market is relatively recent, with major surges in use happening in around 2005, 2010 and 2015, but now that it has taken hold it commands a powerful grip on drug markets across the country. However, the heroin market in South Africa appears to have had its earliest origins in intertwined processes of illegal migration and dysfunctional urbanisation in the 1990s. In South Africa in the 90s the central business districts of the major urban centres were in varying stages of decay, due to a combination of factors including rapid rates of urbanisation as racist apartheid controls on human movement collapsed, and attendant capital flight to new, securitised business centres, parks and nodes. Tanzanian migrants were able to melt into the shanty towns that sprang up under freeway bridges, alongside railway lines and in vacant plots. *Maskanis* began to appear in South African cities and towns. In inner city Johannesburg, many abandoned and so-called 'hijacked' buildings housed significant numbers of young Tanzanian men who call these unofficial headquarters *mnyamandawo*.<sup>247</sup> One Tanzanian dealer who had lived through this period explained: 'Tanzanian guys lived in these buildings with guys from Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi, and the *marunda* (homeless people of South African descent). They smoked their *chakula* (heroin), and the other people living in those buildings started smoking too. That's how today's business started.'<sup>248</sup>

In Cape Town, *maskanis* sprang up under what was then called Boulevard East (now Nelson Mandela Boulevard). A notorious *maskani* in the Woodstock railway yard is frequently referred to as *Maskani* in local media articles and police/security community reports. In Durban in the late 90s, the railway yard alongside the port was the site of perhaps the biggest *maskani* of them all.<sup>249</sup> Port Elizabeth has no *maskanis* but in the 90s Tanzanian men started selling heroin in the dilapidated buildings off Donkin Street.<sup>250</sup> A big

*maskani* near the Richard's Bay taxi rank was cleared by police in 2013 but its successor can be found in an area of bush north-east of the town.<sup>251</sup> South Africa's *maskanis* have their unique dynamics but essentially mirror the *maskanis* of Dar es Salaam – spaces largely beyond public view where marijuana, heroin and other substances can be bought and used.

## The heroin market in South Africa appears to have had its earliest origins in intertwined processes of illegal migration and dysfunctional urbanisation in the 1990s

Over time, these *maskani* attracted local users and the attention of local drug dealing syndicates. Before the 1990s, the economic isolation of apartheid and the high degree of draconian control meant that there was very little supply of hard drugs, apart from quaaludes (in the form of mandrax – also known as buttons) which Asian networks were already supplying to Cape gangs in return for abalone. In the 1990s, drug markets all over the country grew and diversified as new networks and supply lines were set up – until now, the entry of heroin into drug markets at that time has gone largely unrecorded, perhaps as use was initially confined to irregular migrants living in abandoned spaces. In the early 2000s, both Tanzanian networks and the local actors they worked with or alongside worked to expand the market and secure stable supply, though there were also a few isolated local actors who had their own supply lines.

A wide range of sources consistently trace the origins of the heroin trade in predominantly South Africa (as opposed to migrant) neighbourhoods to around 2003 or 2005, but also say that the market expanded rapidly around 2010, mostly through greater activity from Tanzanian networks.<sup>252</sup> Law enforcement sources familiar with undercover operations dealing with narcotics syndicates believe there are 32 networks bringing heroin into South Africa. About 25 of these networks are Tanzanian, and many of the rest are Mozambican. While they claim that most of the Tanzanian networks are not highly structured, they have identified around

15 'kingpins' in their hierarchies, and at least six of these, if not more, have a base in Johannesburg.

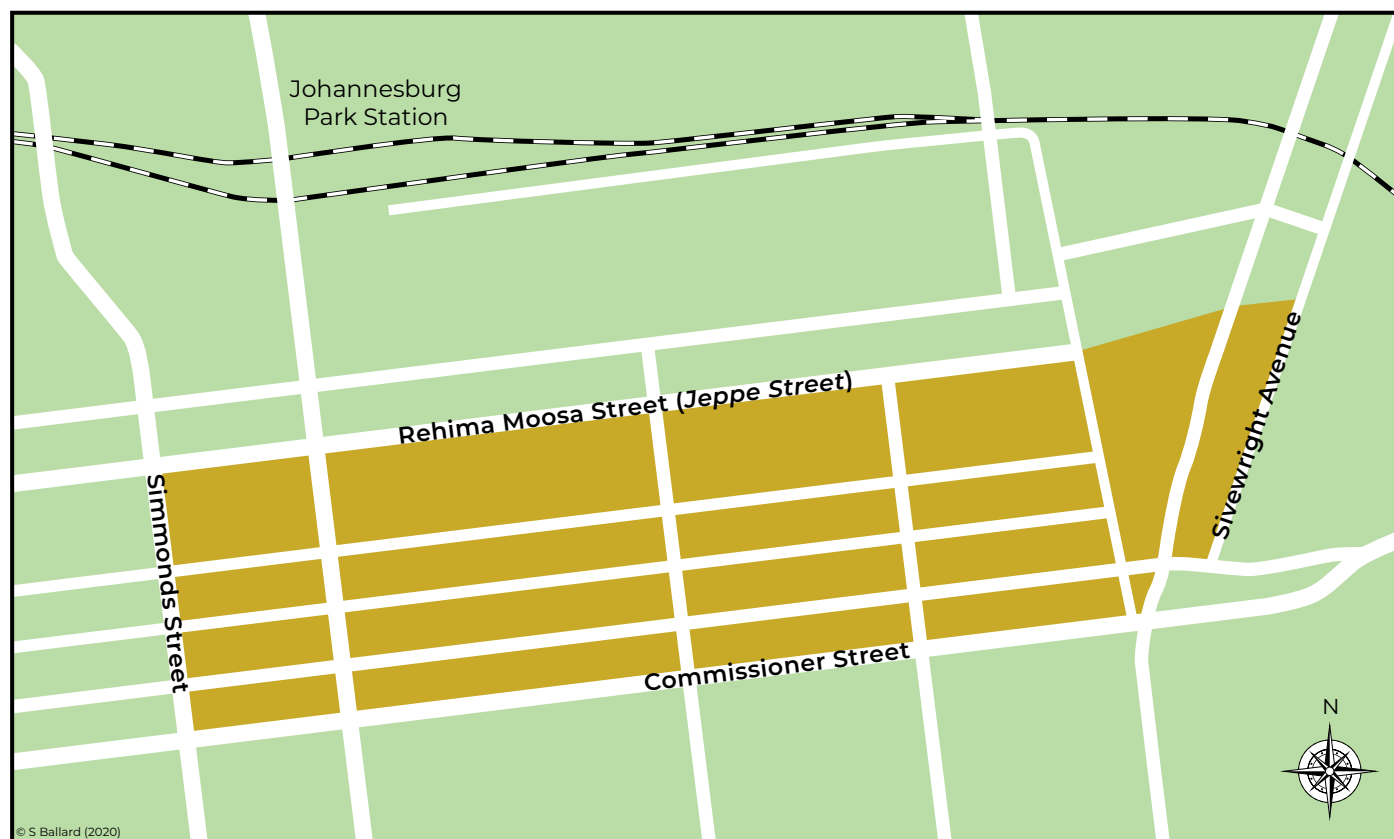
In the last two years, law enforcement actors considered the situation to have deteriorated further, based on the size of the shipments they are seizing. 'Before we would have considered five or 10 kg to be a big seizure. Last week we arrested one guy with 70 kg, and a few months ago another guy with 32 kg.'<sup>253</sup> The average purity of heroin seized from suppliers (e.g. those above street dealers and their immediate managers) is 50-60%, though samples of 90% purity have also been seized.<sup>254</sup>

Exit routes for heroin destined for the transit trade – e.g. entering more lucrative markets through Portugal, Belgium, or the Middle East – are poorly understood, though Cape Town and Coega are considered to be the most likely exit ports. (No heroin has been picked up leaving, or entering, through Durban Port). The domestic retail trade, however, may now rival the transit trade in volume. 'In the beginning [circa 2005-2010] 10-20% of total flow stayed in South Africa; now it is probably closer to 50%,' said one law enforcement source.<sup>255</sup>

Durban and Cape Town have their own interesting trajectories in this regard, but what is significant is how Johannesburg has become South Africa's logistical epicentre for the heroin trade, both domestic and transit, and how it now hosts perhaps the most lucrative market. Almost all heroin entering South Africa goes first to Johannesburg, where networks either divide or consolidate, repackage or ship on to exit points, often using the city's inland port, City Deep, or bussing shipments via the N1 to Cape Town. Johannesburg feeds Durban's market, as well as the towns on the highveld, which have developed significant nyaope smoking populations.

Today, the heroin scene in inner city Johannesburg is driven by Tanzanian actors. A significant number of Tanzanians, mostly adult males under the age of 40, live within a fairly small area of the city (see Map). The defining characteristics of the hijacked buildings, or *mnyamandawo*, where many stay include the absence of water reticulation and, often, electricity, as well as the sub-division of original rooms using materials such as plyboard. Rooms are rented out at between R700 and R1 500 (depending on size). Many *mnyamandawos* have become havens for heroin users and sellers. Virtually all heroin dealers in the inner city are Tanzanian, and many inner-city heroin users are Tanzanian, although not all *mnyamandawos* are drug

**Figure 12:** The area in inner-city Johannesburg where Tanzanian street-dealing networks operate



dens.<sup>256</sup> The *mnyamandawos* in which the dealers interviewed for this paper lived were all controlled by Zulu men belonging to a gang called Mau-Mau. According to one resident: 'The Zulu guys are the landlords and they don't fuck around. I've seen a guy beaten badly for being R200 short, and then they still made him pay the R200. They got guns. But if you pay, they don't hassle you at all, and they pay the police to ignore the building, both Jeppe police and John Vorster police, so we get the benefit of that.'

## Today, the heroin scene in inner city Johannesburg is driven by Tanzanian actors

Heroin is sold by small groups of Tanzanians – street dealers working for a boss, or bosses – and freelance individuals. Typically, the groups sell outdoors, occupying corners. The dealers tend to be young – Tanzanians in their late teens and early 20s. 'The bosses like to put boys on the street because the police don't like beating

and arresting boys, they just take our money and drugs,' says a 21-year-old Tanzanian dealer.<sup>257</sup>

Freelancers tend to sell from rooms within *mnyamandawos*, and users are generally free to use in these rooms, although Tanzanian dealers by and large allow smoking of heroin but not injecting. Both dealer groups and freelancers mainly sell heroin by the ¼ gram, most commonly called a 'section'. Processing of heroin is done manually by Tanzanians in rooms in *mnyamandawos*. The process involves heating tiles over cookers and crushing heroin on the heated tiles with the bottom of a glass bottle. The crushed powder is tied in quarter-grams in pieces of brown plastic from brown municipal refuse bags.<sup>258</sup>

Prior to the last outbreak of xenophobic violence in Johannesburg, our interviewees claimed that Tanzanian dealers were not territorial and street corner dealers can deal anywhere. Pressure came from police, rather than rival networks. However, after the violence, as the networks were put under more pressure, more received reports that some dealers had relied on particular police contacts to arrest the most successful street dealers in other syndicates.



Police confiscate drugs and money, and sometimes try to beat information out of dealers. Arrest is also used as a threat. According to dealers, none of this is done with the aim of dampening the trade, but rather as a form of extortion. Information is used to know whom to target for this extortion, rather than to build cases, and policemen can also be hired by dealers to harass their competitors.

One long-term dealer who has also sold heroin in Cape Town, Dar es Salaam and Durban, says he sells double in Johannesburg the amount of heroin he was ever able to sell in the other cities: 'I sell 10 grams a day easy, sitting in my room [in Johannesburg], while back in Cape Town I used to sell five grams a day and I used to have to hustle on the street, walking kilometres to get the boys their stuff.'

Both groups and freelancers mainly buy their heroin from Johannesburg-based agents of a handful of large-scale Tanzanian traffickers, known to include both politically connected individuals and self-made men. Dealers talk of 'six big fish' and say the major traffickers, who historically supplied the Johannesburg market from Tanga and Dar es Salaam, are currently supplying heroin that reaches the continent through Maputo in southern Mozambique, entering South Africa mainly through the Komatipoort border post. However, some syndicates buy directly from Asian ['Pakistani'] traffickers residing in Johannesburg. Some mid-level freelancers buy also directly from the Tanzanian-controlled Strela Market area in downtown Maputo, where the street price of a kilogram of heroin is US\$3 000.<sup>259</sup>

Inner city dealers say mid-level bosses tend to have stakes in inner city hair salons and cafés, and some remit money back to Dar es Salaam where their family members buy land with it or run small businesses on their behalf. For example, when one prominent Tanzanian dealer lost his livelihood, he was unable to remit money to his daughter, who was unable to continue her studies at the University of Tanzania. He ultimately flew back to Dar es Salaam to oversee the sale of a plot he owned and was able to pay his daughter's tuition fees with the proceeds of the sale.<sup>260</sup>

Dealers selling for bosses from their rooms also sell their own heroin, and often marijuana and crack-cocaine, known as *futa*, after the Zulu word *mafuta* – fat – a reference to the strength of the crack-cocaine high. Room-bound dealers can make R400 a night, working until 6am. On Sundays, the 'big fish' hand out

free sections to Johannesburg users, and drug sales on Sundays are lower than normal.

A major developing area of business for both groups and freelancers is the sale of tied heroin sections to South African suppliers to Johannesburg's satellite townships, including Soweto, Alexandra and Ivory Park. Heroin use in Johannesburg townships, where the substance is commonly known as *nyaope*, is on the rise.<sup>261</sup> Dealers identify these buyers as men living in hostels near Faraday. These relationships rely on trust and a reputation for enforcement. As one dealer explains: 'I am selling 300 sections at a time to a real bad boy Zulu who drives around with a 9mm [handgun]. He always brings back the money and that tells me that he appreciates the quality, and he appreciates the connection. He can take my stuff and disappear and there is nothing I can do, but word will get around and it will be hard for him to find another supplier.'<sup>262</sup>

## Inner city dealers say mid-level bosses tend to have stakes in inner city hair salons and cafés

The dealers know very little – or are willing to share little – about the 'six big fish' but they have seen prominent Tanzanian politicians on the inner city streets of Johannesburg, seemingly coming to check on business. The most that they share about other players is that they live in Sandton and Bedfordview – suburbs they are unable to locate on a map and which they have never visited. Police interviewees also report Bedfordview as a location where 'kingpins' of the heroin trade are based, and where asset seizures have or will occur. Both Sandton and Bedfordview are amongst the most expensive and exclusive neighbourhoods in Johannesburg. Sandton, in particular, is renowned across the continent as a meeting place for wealthy businessmen and provides many pretexts for businessmen and politicians to be seen in each other's company.

Our interviews in cities and towns across South Africa repeatedly trace the supply of heroin in those places back to Johannesburg, which emerges as a central consolidation point for heroin which has been shipped, usually via Mozambique, by car and truck into the country. This supply seems to be primarily controlled

by Tanzanians and Mozambicans. Sometimes it is again Tanzanian syndicates who transport heroin to other major cities, like Cape Town and Durban, where it is then sold to the gangs who control retail markets. Sometimes other syndicates, like Nigerian-run ones, buy in bulk in Johannesburg and then run decentralised supply routes to small towns, as in the Mpumalanga case described below. Heroin destined for transit to European countries also passes through Johannesburg, with at least one police interviewee indicating this was likely done through the rail transport of containers to the Coega port.

### Police abuse

Tales from dealers plying heroin sections on Johannesburg street corners paint a picture of a complex and corrupt relationship with local police stations and allege that torture at the hands of corrupt police is a common occurrence.

One Tanzanian dealer interviewed for this report arrived in Johannesburg in 2018 and started dealing heroin outdoors near the Johannesburg Central Police Station, formerly John Vorster Square.<sup>263</sup> In a period of two months he was twice pulled into unmarked police vehicles and asked to give the whereabouts of certain Tanzanian dealers. When he did not, a plastic bag was placed over his head, preventing him from breathing. The process – interrogation involving asphyxiation – was repeated several times, and on both occasions, he passed out for periods and felt he might die.

Another Tanzanian dealer based in inner city Johannesburg works for two Tanzanian bosses and sells from a 'corner' off Rahima Moosa Street. He says he is known to the local police, and most like him. 'They say "What you doing out here little boy?" and I say "I'm Burundi boy, no mummy no daddy," and they never arrest me. The police guys I know never take everything, because they want me here tomorrow. One guy told me he loves Tanzanian guys and he never arrests (them), because he makes R5 000 a day from us.'<sup>264</sup>

Johannesburg and Nairobi stand as, respectively, the southern and northern poles in an illicit economy that stretches between them. As economic and/or political capitals, they are magnets for wealth and power and criminals in these 'shadow capitals' have used the finance, logistical assets and proximity to politicians to gain dominance in illicit trades over early adopters in coastal cities like Mombasa and Durban.

## Conclusions and policy recommendations

Though the Southern Route has primarily been described as a transit route, local markets for heroin are larger and more important than official discourse – whether from governments or intergovernmental actors – acknowledges. This was the central insight that guided this report, and which we sought to explore. Repeated engagement in the 'places' implicated in the Southern Route showed that heroin and its use were tightly bound up with processes of urbanisation, migration, policing, urban development, and local governance. It was both a lens into crucial development dynamics, and a commodity with vital impacts of its own on local corruption, social cohesion, public health and violence.

Local markets for heroin are larger and more important than official discourse – whether from governments or intergovernmental actors

The case studies presented here provide rich detail on how drug markets grew and evolved in different places, how they operate now, and what the 'ecosystem' around them looks like. Our understanding of the historical trajectory of these markets is uneven, and the degree to which we could flesh out the relationship between governance, policing and drug markets differs. Some places benefit from richer contextual literature, provide a safer environment in which to ask these questions, or are home to a more vibrant academic, media or activist community, willing to share their experiences and information with others. Nonetheless, taken together, we believe the case studies provide an illuminating and multi-layered analysis, by being both sensitive to local context and suitable for comparison and generalisation.

Despite the many differences in their economies, political systems, histories and societies, there are six main themes that cut across the case studies presented in this report and also reflect the socio-economic trends outlined above:

## Case studies towns: characteristics related to transport infrastructure, local markets, and violence

Town or City	Typology	Local market	Transport infrastructure	Violence linked to competition in the drug trade
Angoche	bandari bubu	unclear	informal ports and unmonitored harbours	no
Bagamoyo	bandari bubu	yes	informal ports and unmonitored harbours	no
Busia	border town	yes	border crossing	unclear
Cape Town	violent port	yes	seaport; international airport; road and rail connections	Yes
Coega	entrepot port	unclear	sea port	no
Dar es Salaam	violent port	yes	seaport; international airport; road and rail connections	Yes
Durban	violent port	yes	seaport; international airport; road and rail connections	Yes
eMalahleni	interior town	yes	/	no
Entebbe	Interior hub	yes	international airport	no
Johannesburg	shadow capital	yes	international airport; dry port; road and rail connections	Yes
Kampala	Interior hub	yes	proximity to Entebbe; road connections	no
Malaba	border town	yes	border crossing	no
Middelburg	interior town	yes	/	no
Mombasa	violent port	yes	seaport; international airport; road and rail connections	Yes
Mutukula	border town	yes	border crossing	no
Nacala	entrepot port	unclear	deepwater port	no
Nairobi	shadow capital	yes	international airport; dry port; road and rail connections	unclear
Secunda	interior town	yes	/	no

### 1. Dysfunctional urban growth has generated criminal market formation across the region.

Without good urban government and adequate investment, urbanisation provides huge concentrations of people which provide the market for drugs, the spaces where criminal governance can prosper, and the surrounding grey or illicit economies which support the drug trade.

The expansion of the heroin market throws into relief the failures of formal urbanisation – it has flourished in the informal economy, particularly in informal waste and recycling economies, and in abandoned spaces, and amongst the unemployed, irregular migrants, and the homeless. On top of this, as explored in more detail below, criminal networks have often taken control of vital urban services, raising costs and obstructing efforts to regularise or upgrade these services, or they have bought their way into political office.

**Policy Recommendation:** Illicit markets need to be understood as important elements of urban development.

### 2. Local drug markets corrupt from the bottom up – and up and up.

The dynamic relationship between corruption and illicit flows should be obvious, but too often observers attribute causality in only one direction – that illicit flows become entrenched because governance is corrupt, not that illicit flows themselves generate or deepen corruption.

The case studies here repeatedly show how drug markets, because they are both illegal and cash based, are highly corrupting of the police. Drug users and small-time dealers become obvious and low-risk prey for police. Dealers at all levels also have an incentive to actively seek out police officers to corrupt.

As impunity reigns, profits come in, and some dealers grow bigger and bigger drug businesses. As their operations increase in scope, the protection they need from investigation and arrest grows too. Mostly, this leads to corruption spreading further up the police hierarchy. But it can also transfer to elected officials, especially where MPs are directly elected at the urban constituency level. Our research has also come across

several jurisdictions where political actors are linked to criminal actors as well as dirty money through their need to fund campaigns or patronage to secure their position. In at least two urban governments along the coast (Mombasa and Nacala), high office holders have been accused of funding their campaigns for political office through the proceeds of drug trafficking.

These links also become even more likely when the drug business merges with grey markets, which allow criminal entrepreneurs to have a licit face. Durban, through the merging of tow truck, taxi and drug syndicates, is most at risk of this situation developing, if it has not already done so.

**Policy recommendations:** Addressing criminal capture of the state at sub-national level requires many of the same interventions as those at national level: exposure of corruption, pressure on authorities to investigate allegations, and institutions that can secure accountability. There is, however, often less funding or attention given to sub-national corruption. One way to shift attention at this level may be to fund more investigative journalism focused on urban government, where civil society space allows this.

Reforming a corrupt police force requires more drastic measures, worthy of their own research enquiries. What is clear is that the systemically corrupting nature of drug markets on the police needs to be acknowledged and tackled.

### **3. These urban nodes have strong intra- and trans-national links with each other.**

In some cases, illicit flows spread between different cities in the region by migration – such as through the Tanzanian diaspora in Cape Town and Johannesburg, which later became the communities in which heroin dealing and use were incubated and spread to other groups. Criminal networks have also developed links between cities within countries and across regional borders through being displaced by law enforcement action, which is, for example, one factor driving the movement of serious Tanzanian dealers and gangsters to Maputo and Johannesburg. The development of transport infrastructure has also encouraged new links to form, such as the supply line from Burundi to Tanzania that appears to rely on Burundi's airport to import high quality product.

This has led to multiple and overlapping networks and routes across the region, as shown by South African case

studies where South African, Mozambican, Tanzanian, Nigerian dealer and supplier networks all play important roles, and by the evidence of multiple supply chains in Tanzania shown by the drug price survey data.

**Policy Recommendation:** The link between the formation of heroin-dealing criminal networks and migration has two dimensions: the recruitment of migrants both as heroin consumers and street dealers, and the displacement of serious criminal figures across the region by law enforcement. These require different types of interventions. The latter calls for greater intelligence sharing between law enforcement agencies across the region, in particular by pre-emptively warning countries in the region that an operation may displace criminal figures to their territories and providing profiles of the most significant figures.

The recruitment of migrants as heroin consumers and small-time dealers calls for development interventions. Policymakers need to be sensitive to the extent of the risk facing migrant communities which are forced into a marginal existence. Migrants are also often trapped in drug addiction and criminal networks through lack of trust of police and a lack of access to health services. Interventions to integrate migrant communities would diminish the hold of criminal networks.

### **4. The role of transport systems in illicit markets extends beyond transporting goods.**

Across the region, most commuters rely on private mass transit systems that often have their origins as illegal or unregulated industries, which states have struggled to formalise. They also provide an essential service which the state has failed to provide: commuter transport for workers. This gives them a high degree of leverage in engagements with government, compounding the difficulties with regulation. In several cities, these have served as a means to spread the heroin trade, either as drivers or as consumers who have developed dependence from heroin bought in one part of the city, which they then need to purchase closer to home. The vans themselves and the 'ranks' or 'terminals' where they collect passengers are ideal places to sell heroin and other drugs. Continued 'loose' regulation and cash-based payment systems makes them prime industries for money laundering and penetration by criminal syndicates. In several places, figures in the drug trade have assumed leadership positions in associations which represent vehicle owners and/or route controllers. This often increases the levels of violence and the stake for

competition, as networks compete for a package that includes drug turf, passenger vehicle routes and money laundering opportunities.

**Policy Recommendation:** There is an urgent need for mass transit systems to be de-criminalised. This objective goes hand in hand with development objectives to provide affordable and sustainable public transport systems.

## **5. The drug trade greatly increases the risk of urban violence.**

The larger urban nodes with most longstanding markets have all generated street-based retail markets, which over time, and with an influx of weapons, have generated battles for territory (or 'turf') and high levels of violence.

At the level of street retail, dealers often sell a suite of drugs that link several different transit and supply routes, bringing numerous international drug transit routes to bear on local explosions of violent competition. For example, in South Africa, Cape gangs tend to sell crystal meth, quaaludes, crack cocaine, and heroin, as well as other drugs. Yet heroin is largely supplied by Tanzanian networks, cocaine by Nigerian ones, and crystal meth is produced in the country, with precursors sourced through Asian networks along with quaaludes. Cape Town currently has a murder rate that puts it into the top 10 most violent cities in the world, with gang dynamics that rival those of Latin America: this is intimately related to the drug market.<sup>265</sup>

Mombasa, too, is undergoing a concerted and aggressive police crackdown in response to spiralling violence linked to gangs. Some of these gangs are formed of (mostly) unemployed and uneducated youth, driven by economic motivations; others are intimately linked to political figures who use gang violence as a campaign tactic. But sometimes separate and sometimes cutting across these categories, there are gangs protecting drug traffickers, and gangs which fight each other for territorial control for local drug dealers. In addition, members of all these gangs report using drugs in order to gather the courage to carry out attacks.

This violence triggers yet more violence in the fragile urban communities where they take place. In places where crime rates are high, people who use drugs are often made the scapegoats for violence and lynched, a phenomenon that is frequently observed in both South Africa and Kenya. Police officers also use drug use and criminal gangs as a pretext under which to carry out

extrajudicial killings, a common occurrence in Kenya.<sup>266</sup> Lastly, in these urban nodes, the illegal drug trade has also been used as a pretext for xenophobic looting and violence in South Africa, and the web of corrupt relationships between Tanzanian syndicates involved in the heroin trade, policemen providing paid protection to criminal syndicates, and armed South African syndicates, particularly those in the taxi industry, creates a volatile environment which has, and likely will again, erupt into violence.<sup>267</sup>

**Policy recommendation:** Violence prevention is a sensitive and complicated area for intervention but one where there is a growing body of evidence that feeds into holistic and long-term interventions, from early childhood development approaches to youth offender programmes. Policymakers should base interventions on a holistic picture of the drivers of violence that looks both at social drivers of crime and illicit market dynamics, such as the supply of illegal firearms, and the role of the drug trade in fueling violence.

## **6. City level responses to the drug trade are important.**

The picture this research builds of urban governance, however, is not uniformly negative. Just as an urban population creates consumer markets and labour pools for criminal networks, it also increases the likelihood of collective action and decreases the cost of providing services. In both Southern and East Africa, there are cities where proactive and progressive responses to the drug trade have been launched. Primarily, this has begun through the identification of its public health consequences. Along the coast, there are long-standing centres of good practice in regard to drug use, such as in Mombasa, Bagamoyo and Zanzibar, where state-run centres offer a suite of services to heroin users according to a harm reduction model. In South Africa – a laggard in this respect – the first green shoots of pro-active and progressive urban responses have come through the cities of Durban and Tshwane, acting ahead of, and even at odds with, national action on heroin, and usually through a health-based, harm-reduction framework, in cooperation with universities and civil society groups.

**Policy recommendation:** Drug-user networks and other organisations advocating for effective and progressive responses to the drug trade deserve greater funding and attention. Health-based and harm reduction approaches may provide an effective platform for a broader conversation about addressing both the causes and the consequences of the heroin trade.



The work of documenting the black and grey markets of cities and towns in this region is ongoing. In particular, there is no reason to think the drug markets that currently exist are going to disappear as these cities develop, or that new ones will not form.

The drug policy approaches which have been applied in most parts of the world, which emphasise heavy handed enforcement and prohibition, have so far not succeeded in diminishing drug markets in the slightest. Both cocaine and heroin are enjoying record high levels of production, and if anything, successful route disruption has helped to globalise their reach by shifting trafficking routes to new countries. The history of the development of heroin markets across Southern and East African urban nodes is a perfect example of this.

It is likely that drug trafficking, drug use and the response to these phenomena will be an increasingly prominent feature of urban politics and development. Urbanisation, governance and violence are often analysed separately, but the heroin economy is a crucial component in shaping each trend and cuts across and connects them.

Understanding the drug trade in this region means understanding a key development phenomenon, and yet the trade and its employees and users are too often invisible. Across the region heroin is a poor man's drug and is hidden not just by the criminality of the trade, but by the marginalisation and discrimination against the communities where it flourishes. This analytical work strives to illuminate these spaces and bring them into the centre of policy debates.

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  - 55 Tanzanian president tells security forces to target drug traffickers, *Reuters*, 6 February 2017, [www.reuters.com/article/us-tanzania-drugs/tanzanian-president-tells-security-forces-to-target-drug-traffickers-idUSKBN15L1QU](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-tanzania-drugs/tanzanian-president-tells-security-forces-to-target-drug-traffickers-idUSKBN15L1QU).
  - 56 This information has come from drug users and heroin dealers living in the slums and Magomeni in Dar es Salaam in periodic conversations, 2017- 2019.
  - 57 Jason Eligh. 2020. The Diffusion of Heroin in Eastern & Southern Africa: Price, Distribution & Marketplace Characteristics. Global Initiative against Transnational Crime. *Forthcoming*.
  - 58 This was the testimony of Vicky Goswami, their long-term accomplice, who claimed they spent US\$4million on bribes in Kenya, though it is not clear over what time period. US court jails Kenyan drug lord Baktash Akasha for 25 years, *The Nation*, 16 August 2019, [www.nation.co.ke/news/US-court-jails-Baktash-Akasha-for-25-years/1056-5238434-x3qpx2/index.html](http://www.nation.co.ke/news/US-court-jails-Baktash-Akasha-for-25-years/1056-5238434-x3qpx2/index.html)
  - 59 Mohamed Ahmed, Police Unmask Top Suspects in Coast Drug Syndicate, *The Nation*. 18 August 2019.
  - 60 Personal correspondence – according to investigative journalist Lorenzo Bagnoli, Italian police investigators have linked a known Italian mafioso operating in Kenya to the port. There are established links between Italian individuals who live or have lived in Malindi, a town further up the coast, and various Italian mafias, as well as evidence that networks involved in cocaine, heroin and sex trafficking operated there. [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/05NAIROBI2619\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/05NAIROBI2619_a.html) and [www.theatlantic.com/](http://www.theatlantic.com/)

- international/archive/2012/07/kenyans-see-the-italian-mafias-hand-in-worsening-drug-trade/260508/.
- 61 P Gastrow, *Termites at Work: Transnational Organised Crime and State Erosion in Kenya*, International Peace Institute, 2011, [www.ipinst.org/images/pdfs/ipi\\_epub-kenya-toc.pdf](http://www.ipinst.org/images/pdfs/ipi_epub-kenya-toc.pdf).
  - 62 This is according to the National Crime Research Centre's drug trafficking and smuggling outlook. The top seven (out of 47), in descending order, are: Kilifi, Lamu, Busia, Nairobi, Garissa, Kwale and Mombasa. How does this report define and limit the definition of drug trafficking and smuggling? What data does it use? TK National Crime Research Centre is a State corporation charged with researching the causes of crime and recommending preventive measures. It does in-house research, and through collaboration with other agencies. Drug trafficking relates to the business of narcotics (growing, harvesting, peddling) while smuggling is the transborder movement of commodities whose taxes haven't been paid.
  - 63 *Rapid Situation Assessment of Drugs and Substance Abuse in Kenya*, NACADA: Nairobi, 2017.
  - 64 Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM): An Investigation into Factors Contributing to Drug and Substance Abuse Among the Youth in Lamu County, Kenya, May 2017. The drugs with higher prevalence of use are alcohol, tobacco, and cannabis.
  - 65 Interview with a police officer, Mombasa, May 2019.
  - 66 Interview with a police officer, Mombasa, May 2019.
  - 67 In Kenya, the term 'drug baron' is used to denote individuals in the drug trade who supply territories or engage in the transit trade. This map shows the territories of the main figures identified as supplying Mombasa's drug market, and who may also engage in international trafficking.
  - 68 Interview with an investigative journalist, Mombasa, May 2019.
  - 69 Ruweida Bwanahamad, 34, was arrested in July 2019 in Mombasa with 533 grams of heroin. Her husband Ahmed said Bakari is serving a 24-year jail term in Mombasa. In August 2019, a female police officer, Hamdi Yusuf Maalim, and her fiancé were arrested in Mombasa with heroin.
  - 70 Trader Joyce Akinyi, Congolese man arrested over drug trafficking, *The Star*, 13 July 2019, [www.the-star.co.ke/news/httpswwwthe-starcokenews2019-07-13-trader-joyce-akinyi-congolese-man-arrested-over-drug-trafficking/](http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/httpswwwthe-starcokenews2019-07-13-trader-joyce-akinyi-congolese-man-arrested-over-drug-trafficking/).
  - 71 Eight Kenyans Among Suspected Drug Barons Arrested in Mombasa, *The Star*, Nairobi, 31 March 2017, [www.the-star.co.ke/news/2017-03-31-eight-kenyans-among-suspected-drug-barons-arrested-in-mombasa/](http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2017-03-31-eight-kenyans-among-suspected-drug-barons-arrested-in-mombasa/).
  - 72 The syndicate, which also deals in ivory, draws Tanzanians.
  - 73 State wants Drug Trafficking Couple to Give up Luxury Cars, Millions in Banks, *Nairobi News*, 18 February 2019, <https://nairobinews.nation.co.ke/news/state-wants-drug-trafficking-couple-to-give-up-luxury-cars-millions-in-banks>.
  - 74 Interview with an investigative reporter, Mombasa, May 2019.
  - 75 Interview with a Mombasa-based police officer, September 2019, by phone.
  - 76 Plot to Free Jailed Drug Baron Swaleh Ahmed Flops, *Daily Nation*, Nairobi, 11 March 2019, <https://mobile.nation.co.ke/counties/mombasa/Plot-free-jailed-drug-baron-Swaleh-Ahmed-flops/3112270-5019512-15fdneh/index.html>.
  - 77 Matiang'i Declares Total War on Kisauni gangs, *Daily Nation*, Nairobi, 7 January 2019, [www.nation.co.ke/news/Matiang-i-declares-total-war-on-Kisauni-gangs/1056-4925114-lwr105/index.html](http://www.nation.co.ke/news/Matiang-i-declares-total-war-on-Kisauni-gangs/1056-4925114-lwr105/index.html).
  - 78 Police Accused of Laxity as Gangs Unleash Terror on Locals, *Daily Nation*, Nairobi, 3 April 2018, [www.nation.co.ke/news/Police-accused-of-laxity-as-gangs-unleash-terror-on-locals-/1056-4369202-owpw7ez/index.html](http://www.nation.co.ke/news/Police-accused-of-laxity-as-gangs-unleash-terror-on-locals-/1056-4369202-owpw7ez/index.html).
  - 79 Lamu Police Seek Elders Intervention in War on Drugs, *The Star*, Nairobi, 2 May 2019, [www.the-star.co.ke/counties/coast/2019-05-02-lamu-police-seek-elders-intervention-in-war-on-drugs/](http://www.the-star.co.ke/counties/coast/2019-05-02-lamu-police-seek-elders-intervention-in-war-on-drugs/).
  - 80 Interview with a police officer, Mombasa, May 2019.
  - 81 Interview with a police officer, Mombasa, May 2019.
  - 82 Majengo and Kisauni : Mombasa's Terror Hubs, *The Star*, Nairobi, 5 Feb 2019, [www.the-star.co.ke/news/big-read/2019-02-05-majengo-and-kisauni-mombasas-terror-hubs/](http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/big-read/2019-02-05-majengo-and-kisauni-mombasas-terror-hubs/).
  - 83 Interviews conducted with gang members, Mombasa, November 2019.
  - 84 Interviews conducted with gang members, law enforcement and civil society, Mombasa, November 2019.
  - 85 See David Ochami. Saitoti names MPs linked to narcotics trade. *The Standard*. 23 December 2010, [www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000025330/saitoti-names-mps-linked-to-narcotics-trade](http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000025330/saitoti-names-mps-linked-to-narcotics-trade); and Faith Karanja, Sang wants Joho prosecuted over illicit drugs claims, *The Standard*. 1 March 2019, [www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001314911/sang-wants-joho-to-be-prosecuted-over-illicit-drugs-claims](http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001314911/sang-wants-joho-to-be-prosecuted-over-illicit-drugs-claims).
  - 86 State of Urban Safety in South African Cities Report 2018/19; hereinafter Safety Report; SA Cities Network, 11 April 2019, [www.saferspaces.org.za/uploads/files/Web\\_SACN\\_State\\_of\\_Urban\\_Safety\\_2018-19\\_%281204%29.pdf](http://www.saferspaces.org.za/uploads/files/Web_SACN_State_of_Urban_Safety_2018-19_%281204%29.pdf).
  - 87 Ibid; see also <https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/cape-town-has-sas-highest-murder-rate-21018353>.
  - 88 Per 100 000 general population. Data extracted from the Safety Report, 58-74.
  - 89 Ibid, 12.
  - 90 Caryn Dolley, Ex-cop in guns-to-gangs case should be charged with murder – lawyer, *News24*, 8 July 2018, [www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/ex-cop-in-guns-to-gangs-case-should-be-charged-with-murder-lawyer-20180608](http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/ex-cop-in-guns-to-gangs-case-should-be-charged-with-murder-lawyer-20180608).
  - 91 Ibid.
  - 92 Interview with former user 'AK', Cape Town, May 2019, by phone.
  - 93 Interview with dealer, 'BH', Cape Town, May 2019.
  - 94 In 2015, a well-known Cape gangster made an attempt to win the market in the town. He opened the Rainbow Tavern on Essex Street off Albert Road, at the corner of Old Church Street, which Tanzanians used to refer to as The Seaman Club, a reference to its popularity with would-be Tanzanian stowaways living along the edge of the port. Selling heroin bought from a Tanga syndicate,



- he sold sections of heroin for R20, when the price was R30 everywhere else, and he also picked up customers by offering them a safe place to use. But this was an exception and it did not last – Rainbow Tavern lost its liquor license and closed down. Interview with a heroin dealer, Cape Town, May 2019
- 95 Telephonic interview, Cape Town, June 2019, by phone.
  - 96 Or 'Vlei', or 'Vygieskraal', although 'Vlei' may also be a smaller area of Vygieskraal.
  - 97 The Number itself appears to have a complex attitude towards heroin use, and reportedly forbids members from selling or taking it in prison. Interview with General in the 27s Prison Gang, May 2019, Cape Town.
  - 98 interview with Tanzanian dealer, 'KM', Cape Town, June 2019.
  - 99 interview with Tanzanian dealer, 'KM', Cape Town, June 2019.
  - 100 Interview with General in the 27s Prison Gang, Cape Town, May 2019.
  - 101 Interview with police constable working in a major gang-controlled suburb of Cape Town, 3 April 2019, Cape Town.
  - 102 Interviews with dealers 'AB', 'SB', 'BH', 'NA', 'DP', Cape Town, 2012–2015.
  - 103 Interview with dealer, 'BH', Cape Town, May 2019.
  - 104 Interview with Lynsay Connolly, community activist who mediates between gang members and is employed by the Cape Town court system to provide support to offenders, Cape Town, April 2019.
  - 105 Interview with Lynsay Connolly, community activist who mediates between gang members and is employed by the Cape Town court system to provide support to offenders, Cape Town, April 2019.
  - 106 Interview with Tanzanian dealer, 'NA', Cape Town, May 2019.
  - 107 Verified by GI researchers.
  - 108 Interview with dealer, 'BH', Cape Town, May 2019.
  - 109 Interview with dealer, 'BH', Cape Town, May 2019.
  - 110 Location of Maskanis gathering from several interviewees, all of whom were Tanzanian dealers working in Cape Town, May 2019.
  - 111 Violent struggles do occur, however. On 6 June 2019, two Tanzanian dealers were shot and killed in Blikkiesdorp, formerly Symphony Way Temporary Relocation Area, including an established Tanzanian dealer called Toddy Ndenge. Tanzanian dealers interviewed about this gave differing accounts, some of them attributing the murder to turf battles while others said it was unrelated to the drug trade.
  - 112 Interview with dealer, 'AB', Johannesburg, June 2019.
  - 113 In mid-2017 a Tanzanian dealer was stabbed by a Nigerian dealer, leading to preparations for attacks on Nigerian syndicates by dozens of Tanzanians armed with pangas, and counter-preparations by Nigerians. This extremely volatile situation was defused when a senior policeman based in Cape Town Central Police Station called leaders of the two groups for a discussion and brokered a settlement whereby the leaders of the Nigerian group agreed to pay the costs (approximately R25 000) of repatriating the slain Tanzanian's remains, and to pull Nigerian dealers off the Grand Parade. Witnessed by GI researcher, with corroborating information from interview with Tanzanian dealer, 'BH', Cape Town, 2017.
  - 114 This statement was also made in respect to Nigerian syndicates: 'They are importers and exporters but they will never control the drug trade.' Interview with police constable working in a major gang-controlled suburb of Cape Town, April 2019.
  - 115 A mid-level dealer based in Walmer Estate, 'YV', was gang-raped in his own apartment in 2015 by members of a Tanzanian syndicate based in Delft, after buying five kilograms of heroin off a Tanzanian man who had stolen the heroin from a Tanzanian syndicate. YV's role as the buyer had been discovered after he had raised the money to buy the heroin from Somali lenders on the Grand Parade. 'In Tanzania, it is better to be known as a killer than a gay. If you're raped and you don't tell anyone, people on the streets will think it is because you are secretly gay. It's crazy, but that's how people think.' Interview with dealer, 'SK', Cape Town, 2015.
  - 116 The criminal strategy Mwiba Mwitw became known for was called '10-in 10-out' – 10 members would guard two ends of a street, five on each end, while 10 more went into every house on the street, holding the occupants up with pangas while snatching all valuables. Interviews with dealer, 'SK', Cape Town, 2012–2015.
  - 117 Observation of Sean Christie, who witnesses events around murder committed by Mwiba Mwitw members.
  - 118 Matthew Wilhelm-Solomon is a University of the Witwatersrand anthropology researcher and lecturer who conducted interviews during visits made over a period of years to Cape York.
  - 119 In this gruesome incident her body had been thrown down the building's elevator shaft by the seven Mwiba Mwitw who had raped and killed her. Interview with academic, Matthew Wilhelm-Solomon, Johannesburg, May 2019.
  - 120 Interview with dealer, 'AB', Johannesburg, May 2019.
  - 121 Interview with dealer, 'MU', Johannesburg, June 2019.
  - 122 Marijuana is considered to be the most widely used drug, and mandrax, meth, cocaine and crack cocaine make up the bulk of the rest of the market, with rising prescription drug use also reported. In interviews in South Africa, a distinction is usually made between alcohol and marijuana, and other drugs, which are colloquially labelled 'hard'. While marijuana used to be policed on a similar basis to other illegal drugs, it now has a more differentiated legal regime, with personal use in private having been made legal, but bulk possession and sale still illegal.
  - 123 Interview with a high-ranking law enforcement officer in a narcotics-focused unit, Durban, April 2019.
  - 124 Budgie was a small player who eventually left the scene and we were not able to ascertain his identity.
  - 125 Interview with Sam Pillay, head of Chatsworth Anti-Drug Association, May 2019, Durban. The Chatsworth Anti-Drug Association was set up in 2005 and Pillay and his team have monitored and advocated around the heroin market since then. Other sources confirm this timeline: 'Heroin started becoming a problem 20 years ago in Chatsworth



- originally it was thought to be an Indian problem.’ Interview with a law enforcement officer in a narcotics-focused unit, Durban, 10 April 2019.
- 126** Interview with a law enforcement officer in a narcotics-focused unit, Durban, 10 April 2019. Essa was assassinated in a drive-by shooting in 2006.
- 127** Interview with multiple law enforcement officers who have been involved in numerous narcotics operations and busts, Durban, April and May 2019.
- 128** Accused in R50m Durban drug laboratory bust get bail, *The Citizen*, 4 April 2019, <https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/courts/2114876/accused-in-r50m-durban-drug-laboratory-bust-get-bail/>.
- 129** Interview with a law enforcement officer in a narcotics-focused unit, Durban, 10 April 2019.
- 130** This decline in price is even more significant when one considers there has been an average historic Consumer Price Inflation of 5.50% between 2005 and 2018 – figures taken from [www.inflation.eu/inflation-rates/south-africa/historic-inflation/cpi-inflation-south-africa.aspx](http://www.inflation.eu/inflation-rates/south-africa/historic-inflation/cpi-inflation-south-africa.aspx).
- 131** From Jason Eligh. *The Diffusion of Heroin in Eastern & Southern Africa: Price, Distribution & Marketplace Characteristics*. Forthcoming from the Global Initiative against Transnational Crime, 2020, forthcoming.
- 132** Law enforcement sources claim one dealer who made his career in Chatsworth – but now operates at a city-wide (or even bigger) area and runs several legitimate businesses – is able to source product directly from Pakistan.
- 133** Interview with community activist working on drug and crime issues in Phoenix, Durban, May 2019.
- 134** Interview with Cathy Murugan, nun and social worker working with homeless people who use drugs in the inner city, Durban, April 2019; Interview with Ruth Birtwhistle, a nurse working with homeless people who use drugs in the inner city, Durban, April 2019.
- 135** Interview with Monique Marks, an academic involved in research and advocacy with people who use drugs, Durban, April 2019.
- 136** Interview with Ruth Birtwhistle, a nurse working with homeless people who use drugs in the inner city, Durban, April 2019.
- 137** Interview with Ruth Birtwhistle, a nurse working with homeless people who use drugs in the inner city, Durban, April 2019.
- 138** Interview with community activist working on drug and crime issues in Phoenix, Durban, May 2019.
- 139** Moodley claims to run a thriving poultry business, which is where his nickname is supposedly derived from. But Phoenix residents also talk about ‘The Barnyard’ to denote the area around his property where users congregate, smoke drugs and sleep in the open. ‘Barnyard’ connotes animalist conditions in which these destitute people squat.
- 140** Drug theft behind killing by pitbulls, *The Post*, 19 May 2017, [www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/drug-theft-behind-killings-by-pit-bulls-9227467](http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/drug-theft-behind-killings-by-pit-bulls-9227467).
- 141** These claims were published by *The Post*, a local newspaper, following an interview with Moodley after residents had petrol-bombed his house. See Barnyard ‘drug den’ is torched, *The Post*, 21 June 2017. In 2016, it was reported that Moodley had 10 previous convictions for drug dealing, and that raids had found hauls of heroin, cocaine, mandrax, and cannabis at his property. See State gets Durban drug dealer’s cash stash, *News24*, 9 September 2016, [www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/state-gets-durban-drug-dealers-cash-stash-20160929](http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/state-gets-durban-drug-dealers-cash-stash-20160929).
- 142** Drug theft behind killing by pitbulls, 19 May 2017, *The Post* [www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/drug-theft-behind-killings-by-pit-bulls-9227467](http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/drug-theft-behind-killings-by-pit-bulls-9227467).
- 143** Interview with community activist working on drug and crime issues in Phoenix, May 2019, Durban.
- 144** I am not a drug lord, says Teddy Mafia, *The Post*, 11 January 2019, [www.iol.co.za/thepost/i-am-not-a-drug-lord-says-teddy-mafia-18776155](http://www.iol.co.za/thepost/i-am-not-a-drug-lord-says-teddy-mafia-18776155).
- 145** Interview with Sam Pillay, head of Chatsworth Anti-Drug Association, Durban, May 2019.
- 146** Interview with Metro Police officer deployed in Chatsworth, Durban, May 2019.
- 147** Interview with community activist working on drug and crime issues in Phoenix, Durban, May 2019.
- 148** Interview with community activist working on drug and crime issues in Phoenix, Durban, May 2019.
- 149** Interview with private security company owner, Durban, May 2019; Interview with community activist working on drug and crime issues in Phoenix, Durban, May 2019; Interview with Sam Pillay, head of Chatsworth Anti-Drug Association, Durban, May 2019; Interview with Ruth Birtwhistle, a nurse working with homeless people who use drugs in the inner city, Durban, April 2019.
- 150** Interview with high-ranking investigative police officer stationed in Phoenix, Durban, May 2019.
- 151** Interview with law enforcement officer working on narcotics investigations, Durban, May 2019; Interview with high-ranking investigative police officer stationed in Phoenix, Durban, May 2019.
- 152** Interview with law enforcement officer working on narcotics investigations, Durban, May 2019.
- 153** Interview with Metro Police officer deployed in Chatsworth, Durban, May 2019.
- 154** Interview with police officer stationed in Chatsworth, Durban, May 2019; Interview with community activist working on drug and crime issues in Phoenix, Durban, May 2019.
- 155** Interview with law enforcement officer working on narcotics investigations, Durban, May 2019.
- 156** Interview with Sam Pillay, head of Chatsworth Anti-Drug Association, Durban, May 2019.
- 157** Interview with a law enforcement officer in a narcotics-focused unit, Durban, April 2019; Interview with law enforcement officer working on narcotics investigations, Durban, May 2019; Interview with former TDK member and associate of two truck company owners, Durban, May 2019. See also. Accused in R50m Durban drug laboratory bust get bail, *The Citizen*, 9 April 2019, <https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/courts/2114876/accused-in-r50m-durban-drug-laboratory-bust-get-bail/>.

- 158 Chants, dancing and gun salutes at alleged drug lord's funeral, *The Times*, 10 June 2019, [www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2019-06-10-watch-chants-dancing-and-gun-salutes-at-alleged-drug-lords-funeral/](http://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2019-06-10-watch-chants-dancing-and-gun-salutes-at-alleged-drug-lords-funeral/).
- 159 During a raid at Kevin's home police recovered two pistols, a shotgun, 64 live rounds of ammunition, 1 836 heroin caps, 138 heroin straws, 80 large crack cocaine pieces, 30 mandrax tablets, three bags of cocaine, ecstasy and dagga. A sum of R97 000, suspected to be the proceeds from drugs, was also confiscated. [www.iol.co.za/dailynews/news/kwazulu-natal/cheezy-brother-of-slain-gang-boss-now-leader-of-phoenix-bloods-25798913](http://www.iol.co.za/dailynews/news/kwazulu-natal/cheezy-brother-of-slain-gang-boss-now-leader-of-phoenix-bloods-25798913).
- 160 Shem Oirere, Nacala port to be expanded to cater for coal exports, *Dredging and Port Constructions*, 5 November 2018, <https://dredgingandports.com/news/2018/nacala-port-to-be-expanded-to-cater-for-coal-exports/>.
- 161 Nacala is currently on one of two corridors that Vale uses to export coal from the Moatize mines – though Vale is hoping to decrease reliance on the other, Beira.
- 162 Centro Integridade Publica. Isenções aduaneiras do partido Frelimo, 2014, [https://cipmoz.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/304\\_CIP\\_A\\_Transpare%CC%82ncia\\_n%C2%BA05\\_2014.pdf](https://cipmoz.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/304_CIP_A_Transpare%CC%82ncia_n%C2%BA05_2014.pdf).
- 163 Interview with former employees of syndicates based in Nacala, April 2019.
- 164 Interview with security consultant based in Mozambique, Maputo, February 2019.
- 165 Interview with security consultant based in Mozambique, Maputo, February 2019.
- 166 Centro Integridade Publica. Isenções aduaneiras do partido Frelimo. 2014. [https://cipmoz.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/304\\_CIP\\_A\\_Transpare%CC%82ncia\\_n%C2%BA05\\_2014.pdf](https://cipmoz.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/304_CIP_A_Transpare%CC%82ncia_n%C2%BA05_2014.pdf).
- 167 How Vale is regaining control of the port of Nacala, Indian Ocean Newsletter, *African Intelligence*, 12 October 2018, [www.africaintelligence.com/ion/business-circles/2018/10/12/how-vale-is-regaining-control-of-the-port-of-nacala,108327845-art](http://www.africaintelligence.com/ion/business-circles/2018/10/12/how-vale-is-regaining-control-of-the-port-of-nacala,108327845-art).
- 168 Mitsui to inject fresh impetus into Nacala corridor? Indian Ocean Newsletter, *African Intelligence*, 1 November 2019, <https://www.africaintelligence.com/ion/business-circles/2019/11/01/mitsui-to-inject-fresh-impetus-into-nacala-corridor,108379843-art>.
- 169 Technology (NII technology) refers to technical equipment and machines such as X-ray or gamma-ray imaging type equipment that allows the inspection of cargo without the need to open the means of transport and unload the cargo.
- 170 Interviews with two former and current employees of Rassul, April 2019.
- 171 Interview with an official at the Nampula Provincial Department of Finance, April 2019.
- 172 The finance minister, his son and the Mozambican refinery, *Mail and Guardian*, 5 Oct 2018, <https://mg.co.za/article/2018-10-05-00-finance-minister-nene-his-son-and-the-mozambican-refinery>.
- 173 Interview with law enforcement official involved in high-level counter-narcotics operations, Johannesburg, April 2019.
- 174 See Jason Eligh. 2020. The Diffusion of Heroin in Eastern & Southern Africa: Price, Distribution & Marketplace Characteristics. Global Initiative against Transnational Crime. *Forthcoming*
- 175 Interview with Tanzanian dealer based in Johannesburg and Tswane who travels to Swaziland and Maputo, Johannesburg, May 2019.
- 176 In Kenya, the term 'drug baron' is used to denote individuals in the drug trade who supply territories or engage in the transit trade. This map shows the territories of the main figures identified as supplying Mombasa's drug market, and who may also engage in international trafficking.
- 177 Joseph Kato, Ugandans Top Drug Smugglers – Interpol, *The Daily Monitor*, 27 April 2018, [www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Ugandans-top-drug-smugglers---Interpol-/688334-4532392-1x34bd/index.html](http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Ugandans-top-drug-smugglers---Interpol-/688334-4532392-1x34bd/index.html). A similar destruction of heroin totaling 159.6 kg was done in 2015.
- 178 This year, there have been subsequent seizures although the quantities of heroin and cocaine found were not large. In the month of May 2019 five different seizures were made and approximately 35 kg of heroin and 3.5 kg of cocaine were found. Interview with UPF official in Kampala on 24 May 2019.
- 179 Andrew Bagala and Paul Adude, Dutch National Arrested at Entebbe Airport with Shs. 7.5 Heroin, *The Daily Monitor*, 13 June 2019, [www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Dutch-national-arrested-Entebbe-Airport-with-Shs7-5b-heroin/688334-5156324-148o8s9z/index.html](http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Dutch-national-arrested-Entebbe-Airport-with-Shs7-5b-heroin/688334-5156324-148o8s9z/index.html).
- 180 Interview with a law enforcement officer, Entebbe, May 2019.
- 181 Interview with two senior officials in Anti-Narcotics CID, Kampala, 16 December 2019.
- 182 GI researcher's conclusion based on interviews with couriers and officials from the Narcotics Department of the Ugandan police force.
- 183 Interview with 'Shaba', Entebbe, May 2019. Interview with 'Mbabazi', Kampala, May 2019.
- 184 Interview with a businessperson, Kampala, May 2019.
- 185 Interview with two senior officials in Anti-Narcotics CID, Kampala, 16 December 2019.
- 186 Interview with law enforcement officer, Kampala, May 2019.
- 187 Interview with law enforcement officer, Kampala, May 2019.
- 188 Interview with a lawyer, Kampala, May 2019.
- 189 Interview with legal officer, Kampala, May 2019.
- 190 Interview with law enforcement officer, Kampala, May 2019. Interview with a retired law enforcement officer, Kampala, May 2019.
- 191 Interview with a lawyer, Kampala, May 2019.
- 192 Field notes, Kampala, Mbale and Busia from 1–25 May 2019.
- 193 Interview with staff of a civil society organisation, Mbale, May 2019.
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- 261** TK.
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Issue 04 | June 2018

POLICY BRIEF

## Tackling heroin trafficking on the East African coast

Simone Hayson, Peter Gastrow and Mark Shaw

### Summary

In recent years, the volume of heroin shipped from Afghanistan along a network of maritime routes in East and Southern Africa appears to have increased considerably. An integrated regional criminal market has developed, shaped and shaped by political developments. Africa is now experiencing the sharpest increase in heroin use worldwide, and a spectrum of criminal networks and political elites in East and Southern Africa are substantially enmeshed in the trade. New policy approaches are urgently needed.

### Key points

- Responses should address the challenge as a cross-border criminal system.
- Progressive action should be targeted in major drug hubs along the southern route, focusing on vulnerable areas and potential sources of regional instability, such as northern Mozambique.
- The relationship between politics, business and organised crime must be adequately researched and addressed.
- Vetted private sector actors should be engaged to prevent or reverse the criminalisation of key ports.
- Support must be increased for community-based initiatives that mitigate the effects of drug use.
- Programming interventions to reduce violence in the most vulnerable communities affected by the heroin trade in Southern and East Africa should be considered.

This brief focuses on:






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Issue 04 | June 2018

RESEARCH PAPER

## The heroin coast

### A political economy along the eastern African seaboard

Simone Hayson, Peter Gastrow and Mark Shaw

### Summary

In recent years, the volume of heroin shipped from Afghanistan along a network of maritime routes in East and southern Africa appears to have increased considerably. Most of this heroin is destined for Western markets, but there is a spin-off trade for local consumption. An integrated regional criminal market has developed, both shaped and shaped by political developments in the region. Africa is now experiencing the sharpest increase in heroin use worldwide and a spectrum of criminal networks and political elites in East and southern Africa are substantially enmeshed in the trade. This report focuses on the characteristics of the heroin trade in the region and how it has become embedded in the societies along this route. It also highlights the features of the criminal-governance systems that facilitate drug trafficking along this coastal route.

### Recommendations

- The East African heroin market forms an integrated regional criminal economy based on the transit of heroin from Afghanistan to the West.
- The transit economy relies on international ports and other infrastructure, and high levels of political protection.
- There is a rapidly growing consumer drug market in the region – one that is much larger than is commonly acknowledged.
- Despite some positive trends in drug users' ability to access health services in several locations in the region, there are nevertheless gaps in appropriate drug treatment interventions.

This paper focuses on:






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POLICY BRIEF

## The rise of counterfeit pharmaceuticals in Africa

Robin Cartwright and Ana Baric

### Summary

Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG 3) places significant emphasis on populations' health, and sub-target 3.8 specifies access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all. Yet remarkably missing from the discourse around achieving this goal is the need to address the growing phenomenon of counterfeit medicines, which disproportionately affects developing countries. Counterfeit medicines put people's lives at risk, finance criminal groups and cause profound public health challenges. The full scale of the challenge in Africa is not fully understood, but research suggests that the problem and its impact are severe. If the continent is to make headway in achieving SDG 3, the issue of counterfeit medicines must move higher up on policy agendas. Experience elsewhere suggests that there would be scope for significant positive results.

### Key points

- Addressing counterfeit medicines in Africa may help prevent widespread loss of life, including an estimated 64 000-158 000 avoidable deaths from malaria alone, as well as mitigating other public health and public safety risks.
- Much greater prioritisation of the issue by African states and continental or regional bodies is needed. The response should include a substantial overhaul of the analytical, legal, educational, regulatory and enforcement systems around medical supply chains. The legal and regulatory frameworks for combating medicine fraud will need strengthening.
- These responses would need to be coordinated within a global effort, including setting up a database of intelligence on counterfeits, and improved awareness-raising and training campaigns. National medicines regulation authorities should investigate mass serialisation forms of track-and-trace.

This brief focuses on:






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Issue 05 | June 2018

RESEARCH PAPER

## Analysing drug trafficking in East Africa

### A media-monitoring approach

Ciara Aucoin

### Summary

By analysing drug-related incidents reported in the media in three key East African nations over the past decade, this paper provides insights into drug trafficking in the region. This includes the different drug types in circulation across Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda; the quantities and trafficking methods used; as well as the origin, transit, and destination hubs. The report also suggests patterns in the actors involved, the nature of state responses and the reporting styles of the African and foreign press. The potential for improved sourcing using this methodology, and for greater public awareness of drug trafficking-related harms, lies in the development of stronger and more capable journalism in the region.

### Key points

- East Africa plays an increasing role in the continent's illicit drug trade, particularly as a corridor for flows of heroin and cocaine.
- Media monitoring is an innovative way of gathering data to help illustrate trends in transnational organised crime, including drug trafficking trends.
- Findings show interesting patterns in reporting on major harmful drugs in the region, and the many challenges faced by journalists in investigating and publishing drug trafficking stories.
- The paper calls for greater press freedom and increased training and financial support for investigative journalism in East Africa, and across the continent more generally.

This paper focuses on:





## About the author

Simone Haysom is a Senior Analyst at GI TOC. She has previously worked as a researcher at the Overseas Development Institute in London and spent several years as a consultant on issues to do with forced displacement, urban development, organised crime and policing.

## About ENACT

ENACT builds knowledge and skills to enhance Africa's response to transnational organised crime. ENACT analyses how organised crime affects stability, governance, the rule of law and development in Africa, and works to mitigate its impact.

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