

**Government Defence  
Integrity Index**

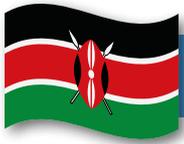


**COUNTRY  
BRIEF**

**KENYA**

**2025**





# KENYA

Kenya remains one of East Africa’s more stable democracies,<sup>1</sup> though its political environment has come under increasing strain following widespread protests in 2023–2024 over proposed tax reforms and rising cost-of-living pressures. The government’s security response, including the deployment of police and military units, attracted criticism from civil society and human-rights organisations and contributed to growing public mistrust in state institutions ahead of the 2027 general elections.<sup>2</sup> Regionally, Kenya is a key security actor in the Horn of Africa, contributing troops to the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) and engaging in counter-terrorism, maritime security, and mediation efforts through the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). However, the ongoing ATMIS drawdown has heightened volatility along the Kenya–Somalia border, where Al-Shabaab attacks have resurged in northern counties, underscoring persistent cross-border security risks.<sup>3</sup> Domestically, Kenya faces tightening fiscal conditions, driven by high public debt, reduced fiscal space, and inflationary pressures that have intensified social discontent. The government has expanded digital procurement reforms and committed to greater budget transparency, but these gains have not translated into stronger operational effectiveness or robust oversight in the defence sector.<sup>4</sup>

These political, security, and fiscal pressures shape defence governance outcomes in practice. As reflected in the Government Defence Integrity Index (GDI), Kenya records low performance in operations and procurement, where limited transparency and uneven laws implementation aggravate corruption risks. Kenya’s defence sector shows strong enforcement in personnel management, with clear sanctions for misconduct and established rules on bribery and facilitation payments. However, the military’s code of conduct remains insufficiently developed, and corruption risks are not systematically addressed in operational planning. Procurement vulnerabilities also persist, marked by inconsistent application of regulations and limited transparency around major purchases and contract awards.

Member of Open Government Partnership	Yes
UN Convention Against Corruption	Ratified in 2003
Arms Trade Treaty	Not yet joined the ATT

## EAST AFRICA

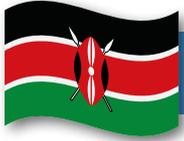
East Africa’s security environment is shaped by overlapping conflicts, violent extremism, organised crime, and structural fragilities that cut across borders. Weak state presence in peripheral regions, porous borders, and the circulation of small arms continue to enable armed groups and criminal networks to operate across the region. Climate stress, food insecurity, and demographic pressures intensify competition over land and resources, fuelling intercommunal violence and displacement. While primarily active in Somalia, al-Shabaab remains the most significant transnational threat in the region, attacking neighbouring countries, particularly Kenya and Uganda, targeting civilians, security forces, and critical economic infrastructure.

Security dynamics vary across countries. South Sudan continues to face instability driven by communal violence and the fragile implementation of peace agreements, resulting in persistent humanitarian crises. While the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is not part of East Africa, the conflict in its eastern provinces pose a significant external risk, with spillover effects through cross-border armed activity, displacement, and regional security involvement. Burundi experiences ongoing political repression, and violence from activities of armed groups and criminal networks linked to regional trafficking routes. Madagascar struggles with banditry, cattle rustling, and illicit natural resource exploitation, especially in remote areas with limited state control.

These overlapping threats have strained defence forces across East Africa. Weak coordination, uneven capacity, and governance shortcomings within defence institutions have limited the effectiveness of security responses. Across East Africa, defence sectors remain characterised by limited financial transparency, weak civilian oversight, opaque procurement processes and limited competition. Defence forces are thus often unaccountable to the public increasing corruption risks and abuses of power.



1 BTI Transformation Index, Kenya Country Report 2024.  
 2 Human Rights Watch, “Kenya: End Abusive Policing of Protests,” May 31, 2023.  
 3 Henok Getachew, “The Post-African Union Transition Mission in Somalia and its Regional Security Implications,” SFS Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, July 30, 2024.  
 4 World Bank Group, “Despite Improvements, Kenya’s Fiscal Path is Fragile Amid High Debt Vulnerabilities and Weak Revenue Growth,” May 27, 2025.



# KENYA

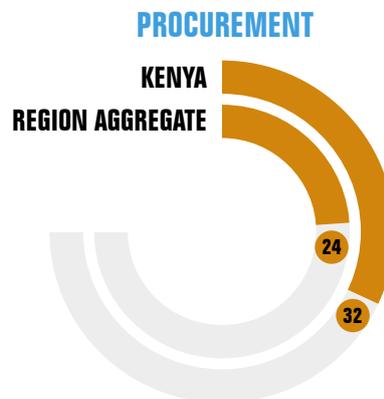
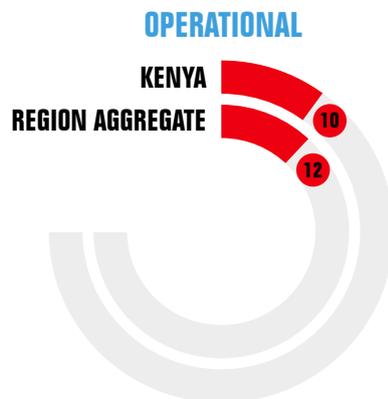
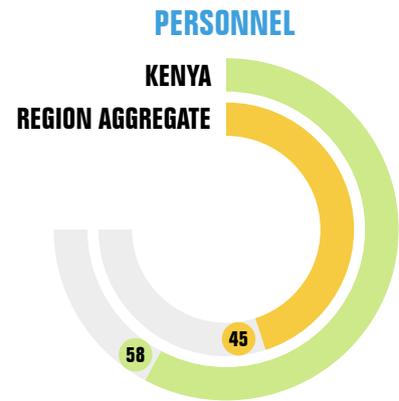
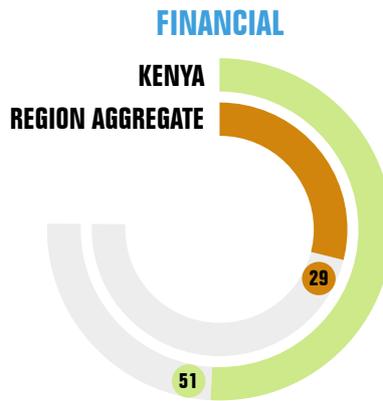
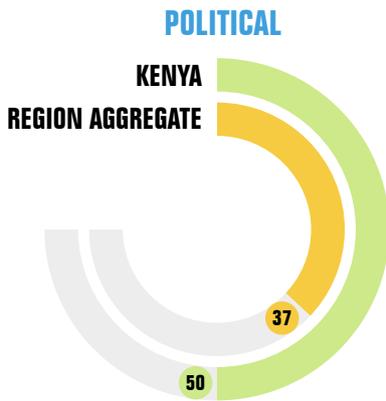
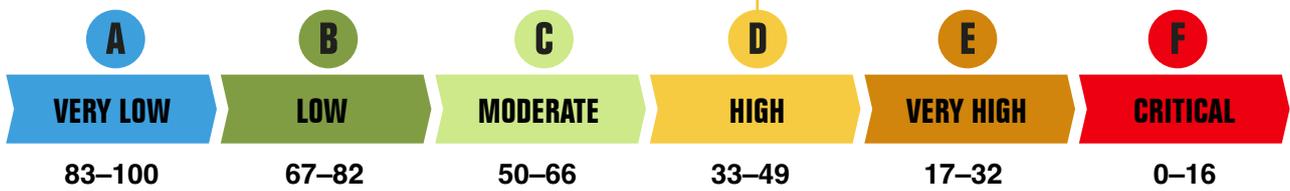
## RISK COMPARISON

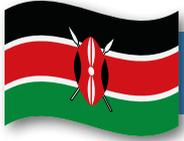
The Government Defence Integrity Index (GDI) assesses five key risk areas: political, financial, personnel, operational, and procurement. This section compares Kenya's performance in each area with the regional average (Sub-Saharan Africa).

**HIGH RISK**

**D**

**40**





## PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT

Legislative oversight of budget (Open Budget Survey, 2023)	47/100
Military expenditure as a share of government spending (SIPRI, 2024)	4.43%
Committee members with defence expertise (%)	Data is not publicly available.
# of meetings/year	Data is not publicly available.
Last review of defence policy/strategy	2017

Parliamentary oversight of Kenya’s defence sector operates in a context of strong executive control over security information. This was evident in 2022–2023, when the Defence Cabinet Secretary declined to provide Parliament with a detailed breakdown of the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) expenditure during budget deliberations, underscoring the limits of legislative access.<sup>5</sup>

Kenya’s Parliament holds extensive formal powers to scrutinise defence policy, budgets, and procurement. Major arms decisions pass through the national budget process, and the Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations regularly reviews defence legislation, cooperation agreements, and supplementary budgets, including pressing for accountability during deliberations on the Kenya–UK Defence Cooperation Agreement.<sup>6</sup> Parliament also benefits from an active Office of the Auditor General (OAG), whose reports are publicly available and provide an external check on the Ministry of Defence (MoD), with internal audit functions staffed by qualified personnel. However, these strengths are constrained by persistent structural limitations. The MoD frequently withholds information on national-security grounds, restricting access to detailed expenditure data.<sup>7</sup> <sup>8</sup> Limited defence expertise within parliamentary committees and the reactive nature of oversight further reduce Parliament’s capacity to interrogate procurement or operational decisions.<sup>9</sup> Although internal audit posts exist, the OAG has repeatedly flagged failures to address audit recommendations and cases of irregular procurement.<sup>10</sup> These findings highlight gaps between formal structures and their implementation, contributing to moderate corruption risks in parliamentary oversight of Kenya’s defence sector.

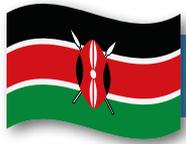
## FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY

Defence-related access to information response rates	1) % granted full or partial access: Data is not publicly available.
	2) # subject to backlog: Data is not publicly available.
Defence-related complaints to ombudsman/commissioner #	Data is not publicly available.
Does the commissioner have authority over the MoD?	Data is not publicly available.
Audit reports on defence (2020-2025) #	None
Open Budget Index (IBP,2023 )	55/100
World Press Freedom Index (RSF, 2025)	117th out of 180.

Kenya faces moderate corruption risks in defence financial transparency characterised by extensive national-security exemptions and limited disclosure. Classified spending is presented as single-line budget items with no public breakdown, and the Ministry of Defence frequently withholds detailed expenditure information from Parliament and the public.<sup>11</sup> Access-to-information laws exist, but defence-related requests are routinely denied, and classification rules restrict visibility across most spending categories.<sup>12</sup> Annual expenditure summaries lack detailed explanations or variance analysis, reducing their utility for independent oversight.

At the same time, Kenya has a relatively strong legal framework for budget transparency. The Treasury publishes a programme-based budget, defence allocations are presented across key programmes, and overall budget openness has improved. Off-budget spending is rare and beneficial ownership rules and active audit scrutiny by the Office of the Auditor General provide additional safeguards. For example, in the financial year ending June 2022, the Office of the Auditor General flagged the Ministry of Defence for entering into contracts exceeding approved budget allocations.<sup>13</sup> However, persistent disclosure gaps and heavy reliance on classification limit the practical impact of these mechanisms, leaving defence financial transparency only partially realised.

5 Edwin Obuya, “CS Duale Declines to Reveal How KDF Spent Ksh.135B, Cites ‘National Security’,” Citizen Digital, March 19, 2024.  
6 Komu, Nicholas and Mercy Mwendu, “The Intrigues behind Kenya-Britain Military Deal,” Nation, July 22, 2022.  
7 Edwin Obuya, “CS Duale declines to reveal how KDF spent Ksh.135B, Cites ‘National Security’,” Citizen Digital, March 19, 2024.  
8 Nyamori Moses, “Defense Ministry blocked auditors from scrutinizing questionable contracts,” The Standard Newspaper, September 19, 2020.  
9 Allan Kisia, “Defense Ministry Faces Scrutiny for Unbudgeted Sh1.4bn Expenditure,” The Star, August 23, 2023.  
10 Office of the Auditor General, Report of the Auditor-General on Kenyan Space Agency for the year ended 30 June 2022.  
11 Interview with Snr. Staff of Parliament, July 23, 2024. Government Defence Integrity Index.  
12 Edward Lander and Iain Overton, “The fog of secrecy: how the Ministry of Defence’s transparency failings undermine accountability,” Action on Armed Violence, July 30, 2025.  
13 Office of the Auditor-General, Annual Report and Financial Statements, Ministry of Defence, June 2022.



## PERSONNEL ETHICS FRAMEWORK

Whistleblowing legislation	No
# defence-sector whistleblower cases	None
# Code of conduct violations	Military: Data is not publicly available. Civilian: Data is not publicly available
Financial disclosure system	# submitted: None. # of violations: None.

Kenya’s defence ethics framework relies on formal military justice processes. Sanctions are applied in practice, as evidenced by the January 2023 court-martial sentencing Major Ibrahim Juma Wasike to more than five years’ imprisonment for recruitment-related bribery.<sup>14</sup> However, concerns persist that political influence and limited transparency may undermine the consistency and impartiality of accountability.<sup>15</sup>

Kenya has formal mechanisms to manage misconduct in the defence sector, including procedures to investigate bribery, cooperation with the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, and internal boards overseeing appointments and promotions. Civilian staff are subject to ethical obligations under the Public Officer Ethics Act, and both military and civilian personnel receive some anti-corruption and integrity training. However, bribery investigations and disciplinary processes do not always operate free from political influence, and the absence of a dedicated whistleblower protection law leaves personnel vulnerable when reporting wrongdoing.<sup>16</sup> Staffing data remain incomplete, and a 2021 United Nations (UN) audit identified unauthorised payments to “ghost soldiers” in Somalia deployments, highlighting weaknesses in payroll controls.<sup>17</sup> Limited external scrutiny of appointments and the lack of a public, defence-specific Code of Conduct further weaken accountability, leaving moderate corruption risks in this area.

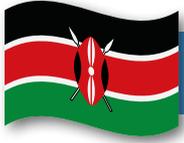
## OPERATIONS

Total armed forces personnel (World Bank, 2020)	24,000
Troops deployed on operations #	474 (as of 31 October 2025): 383 in DRC (MONUSCO).

Kenya remains an active contributor to international and regional missions. According to the Ministry of Defence’s 2022/23 Annual Report, Kenya deployed military observers, staff officers, and trainers to missions in Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Lebanon, Ethiopia, Yemen, Uganda, Djibouti, and the Central African Republic, and approved deployments to the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF) in the DRC.<sup>18 19</sup> Within this operational footprint, gaps remain in how corruption risks are identified, addressed, and monitored during deployments, contributing to critical operational corruption risks.

Although the Defence White Paper acknowledges corruption as a national security threat, it offers no guidance on addressing it within operations, and there is no evidence that corruption is considered in forward planning.<sup>20</sup> Anti-corruption training remains limited, with no indication that corruption risk assessments, or operational contracting risks are systematically built into pre-deployment preparation.<sup>21</sup> There are no personnel specifically tasked with monitoring corruption in the field, and mission-specific reporting on operational risks or misconduct is absent.<sup>22</sup> These gaps are intensified by the absence of a legal framework for private military contractors, leaving this area largely unregulated, while reliance on general UN peace-support guidelines provides only minimal safeguards.

14 Ministry of Defence, “KDF officer sentenced for recruitment malpractices,” January 20, 2023.  
 15 Kuwali, Dan, “Oversight and Accountability to Improve Security Sector Governance in Africa,” Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2023.  
 16 Witness Protection Agency, Ushahidi Bila Hofu, April 2, 2024.  
 17 Dan Ojuma, “UN Cuts KDF Budget After Audit Revealed ‘Ghost Soldiers’ Receiving Pay,” March 10, 2021.  
 18 Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Defence Annual Performance Report FY2022-2023.  
 19 National Assembly, “Report on a Request by the National Executive to Deploy the Kenya Defence Forces to the East African Community Regional Force-Democratic of Congo (EACRF-DRC),” November 9, 2022.  
 20 Ministry of Defence, “Defence White Paper,” May 2017.  
 21 Interview with RTD Maj of Kenya Airforce, July 23, 2024, Nairobi. Government Defence Integrity Index.  
 22 Ministry of Defence, “Peace Support Operations Policy.”



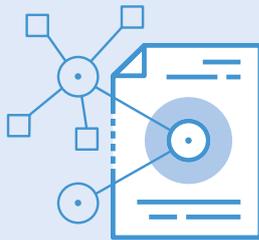
## DEFENCE PROCUREMENT

Military expenditure (US\$ mil) (SIPRI, 2024)	\$1231.3
Open competition in defence procurement (%)	Data is not publicly available.
Main defence exports – to SIPRI, 2020-24	N/A
Main defence imports – from SIPRI, 2020-24	Italy (59%); United States (21%); Turkiye (16%); Germany (3.9%); UAE (1.2%)

Audit findings point to persistent procurement irregularities within the MoD and KDF. In 2022, the Auditor-General flagged poor documentation, weak supplier selection, and inadequate oversight of routine supply contracts, while a 2025 audit identified stalled military infrastructure projects worth about KSh 3.16 billion with payments made despite little or no delivery.<sup>23 24</sup> These cases illustrate a persistent gap between Kenya’s robust procurement laws and their application in the defence sector.

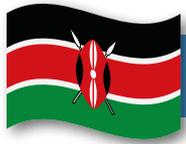
Kenya has a formal and comprehensive procurement framework under the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act (2015). Oversight bodies, including the OAG, the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority, and the Public Procurement Administrative Review Board, provide multiple avenues for scrutiny. Some MoD tenders are advertised openly, and complaints can be escalated

through review mechanisms.<sup>25</sup> However, defence procurement remains opaque in practice: the MoD does not publish its procurement plans, does not distinguish between classified and non-classified items in the budget, and key parts of the procurement cycle are not publicly disclosed. Special audits have revealed irregularities, including the use of non-prequalified suppliers, unjustified restricted tendering, direct procurement without justification, missing documentation, and payments for goods not delivered.<sup>26</sup> The OAG has identified unbudgeted expenditures and violations of procurement rules, even though internal controls appear adequate in formal assessments.<sup>27</sup> Long-term procurement planning is limited, and forward visibility for suppliers or the public is minimal. These combined weaknesses underscore high corruption risks within Kenya’s defence procurement system.



GDI data collection for **Kenya** was conducted from May 2024 to August 2025.

23 Moses Odhiambo, "Audit: Major Irregularities in KDF Food Purchases," The Star, February 2, 2022.  
 24 Richard Kamau, "KSH 3.16B Lost? No Value for Money in Stalled Military Projects, Audit Reveals," March 18, 2025.  
 25 Ministry of Defence, "Tenders. Auction Notice".  
 26 Moses Odhiambo, "Audit: Major Irregularities in KDF Food Purchases," The Star, February 2, 2022.  
 27 Allan Kisia, "Defense Ministry Faces Scrutiny for Unbudgeted Sh1.4bn Expenditure," The Star, August 23, 2023.

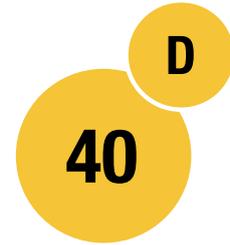


# KENYA 2025 GDI SCORECARD

	Grade	Score
<b>POLITICAL RISK</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>50</b>
Q1 Legislative Scrutiny	C	58
Q2 Defence Committee	B	67
Q3 Defence Policy Debate	E	31
Q4 CSO Engagement	D	42
Q5 Conventions: UNCAC / OECD	B	75
Q6 Public Debate	C	50
Q7 Anticorruption Policy	C	63
Q8 Compliance and Ethics Units	D	33
Q9 Public Trust in Institutions	NS	
Q10 Risk Assessments	F	0
Q11 Acquisition Planning	D	42
Q12 Budget Transparency & Detail	B	75
Q13 Budget Scrutiny	C	50
Q14 Budget Availability	C	50
Q15 Defence Income	B	67
Q16 Internal Audit	C	58
Q17 External Audit	C	50
Q18 Natural Resources	C	55
Q19 Organised Crime Links	C	63
Q20 Organised Crime Policing	B	75
Q21 Intelligence Services Oversight	B	75
Q22 Intelligence Services Recruitment	B	75
Q23 Export Controls (ATT)	F	0
Q76 Lobbying	F	0
<b>FINANCIAL RISK</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>51</b>
Q24 Asset Disposal Controls	C	58
Q25 Asset Disposal Scrutiny	C	58
Q26 Secret Spending	F	0
Q27 Legislative Access to Information	F	0
Q28 Secret Program Auditing	E	25
Q29 Off-budget Spending	C	58
Q30 Access to Information	E	25
Q31 Beneficial Ownership	A	100
Q32 Military-Owned Business Scrutiny	A	100
Q33 Unauthorised Private Enterprise	A	100
Q77 Defence Spending	E	31
<b>PERSONNEL RISK</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>58</b>
Q34 Public Commitment to Integrity	C	50
Q35 Disciplinary Measures for Personnel	A	88
Q36 Whistleblowing	E	25
Q37 High-risk Positions	A	92
Q38 Numbers of Personnel	D	33
Q39 Pay Rates and Allowances	E	25
Q40 Payment System	D	42
Q41 Objective Appointments	B	75
Q42 Objective Promotions	B	75
Q43 Bribery to Avoid Conscription	NA	
Q44 Bribery for Preferred Postings	A	92
Q45 Chains of Command and Payment	A	100
Q46 Military Code of Conduct	F	0
Q47 Civilian Code of Conduct	C	63
Q48 Anticorruption Training	D	42
Q49 Corruption Prosecutions	C	58
Q50 Facilitation Payments	B	75

**OVERALL  
COUNTRY  
SCORE**

**HIGH  
RISK**



## RISK GRADE

<b>A</b>	<b>83–100</b>	<b>VERY LOW RISK</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>67–82</b>	<b>LOW RISK</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>50–66</b>	<b>MODERATE RISK</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>33–49</b>	<b>HIGH RISK</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>17–32</b>	<b>VERY HIGH RISK</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>0–16</b>	<b>CRITICAL RISK</b>

	Grade	Score
<b>OPERATIONAL RISK</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>10</b>
Q51 Military Doctrine	F	0
Q52 Operational Training	E	25
Q53 Forward Planning	F	13
Q54 Corruption Monitoring in Operations	F	0
Q55 Controls in Contracting	F	13
Q56 Private Military Contractors	NS	

<b>PROCUREMENT RISK</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>32</b>
Q57 Procurement Legislation	D	38
Q58 Procurement Cycle	E	25
Q59 Procurement Oversight Mechanisms	D	42
Q60 Potential Purchases Disclosed	F	13
Q61 Actual Purchases Disclosed	D	38
Q62 Business Compliance Standards	C	50
Q63 Procurement Requirements	D	33
Q64 Competition in Procurement	D	38
Q65 Tender Board Controls	D	44
Q66 Anti-Collusion Controls	B	67
Q67 Contract Award / Delivery	D	38
Q68 Complaint Mechanisms	B	67
Q69 Supplier Sanctions	C	58
Q70 Offset Contracts	F	0
Q71 Offset Contract Monitoring	F	0
Q72 Offset Competition	F	0
Q73 Agents and Intermediaries	NEI	
Q74 Financing Packages	F	0
Q75 Political Pressure in Acquisitions	NS	

## KEY

- NEI** Not enough information to score indicator
- NS** Indicator is not scored for any country
- NA** Not applicable

# GDI

## Government Defence Integrity Index



[ti-defence.org/gdi](https://ti-defence.org/gdi)  
[GDI@transparency.org](mailto:GDI@transparency.org)

Transparency International UK  
Registered charity number 1112842  
Company number 2903386

Transparency International Defence and Security (TI-DS) is a global thematic network initiative of Transparency International. It is an independent entity and does not represent any national TI Chapters. TI-DS is solely responsible for the 2025 iteration of the Government Defence Integrity Index (GDI) and all associated products, including the GDI Country Briefs.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for their generous financial support of the production of the Government Defence Integrity Index. Thanks are also extended to the many country assessors and peer reviewers who contributed the underlying data for this index.

**Series editor:** Michael Ofori-Mensah, *Head of Research*

**Author:** Irasema Guzmán, *Research Officer*

**Project Manager:** Patrick Kwasi Brobbey, *Research Manager*

**Design:** Colin Foo



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the  
Netherlands