

# THE IMPACT OF ORGANIZED CRIME AND CORRUPTION ON DEVELOPING AND TRANSITIONAL SOCIETIES

## LECTURE 6

DR. EVELYNE ASAALA

# Political and institutional impact

## **a. Erosion of Rule of Law**

- Organised crime and corruption compromise law enforcement, judicial independence, and public administration.
- Police, prosecutors, and judges may be bribed, threatened, or co-opted.

## **b. State Capture and Elite Impunity**

- Powerful criminal actors infiltrate or collude with political elites to control legislation, public procurement, and state resources.
- Public policy is shaped to serve criminal and private interests rather than the public good.

# Cont.

## c. Delegitimisation of Government

- When citizens perceive the state as complicit in corruption or crime, they lose faith in public institutions.
- This fosters civic disengagement, political apathy, and in some cases, support for extra-legal actors (e.g., militias, vigilante groups).

# Economic Impact

## **a. Distortion of Markets**

- Corruption undermines fair competition and deters foreign and domestic investment.
- Organised crime infiltrates legitimate sectors such as construction, real estate, banking, and trade.

## **b. Illicit Financial Flows**

- Proceeds from drug trafficking, smuggling, and bribery are laundered and hidden offshore, draining national wealth.

# Cont.

- The loss of revenue through tax evasion and money laundering reduces funds for public services.
- **c. Underdevelopment and Poverty**
- Resources meant for development (e.g., healthcare, education, infrastructure) are embezzled or misallocated.
- Poverty and inequality are exacerbated, creating conditions ripe for further criminal recruitment.

# Social impact

## **a. Normalisation of Criminality**

- When criminal enterprises provide jobs, services, and security, especially in marginalised areas, they gain social legitimacy.
- This erodes ethical norms and blurs the line between legality and illegality.

## **b. Violence and Insecurity**

- Organised crime fosters turf wars, extortion, assassinations, and armed conflict.

# Contd.

- In some areas, criminal gangs or drug cartels act as de facto governments, enforcing their own "laws".
- **c. Human Rights Violations**
- Corruption and criminal collusion lead to the persecution of journalists, whistleblowers, civil society actors, and opposition voices.
- Trafficking in persons, forced labour, and sexual exploitation thrive in lawless environments.

# Democratic and developmental consequences

## a. Weakening of Democratic Institutions

- Electoral fraud, vote-buying, and illicit campaign financing distort democratic processes.
- Political parties become conduits for organised interests rather than platforms for public service.

## b. Obstruction of Development Aid and Reform

- Donors and international institutions may withhold support due to persistent corruption.
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# Cont.

- Anti-corruption reforms are often superficial or sabotaged from within.

## **c. Brain Drain**

- Professionals, including lawyers, doctors, and academics, may emigrate due to insecurity, low trust, or lack of opportunity.
- This worsens institutional capacity and innovation deficits

# Regional and international consequences

- Organised crime networks transcend borders, turning fragile states into transit hubs for drugs, arms, or people.
- Corruption facilitates environmental crimes such as illegal logging, mining, and wildlife trafficking, which affect global ecosystems.
- Neighbouring states may experience spill-over effects, including refugee flows and cross-border criminal operations.

# Class discussion

- Which of these impacts is most prominent in Kenya and why?

*THE END*

*THANK YOU!*