



Community Leaders' Perceptions of Security Management Responses to Organized Crimes in Juba Municipality, South Sudan

Arop Otowng Awijak¹ | Eric Kiprono Bor² | Samwel Auya²

12 MA Student in Security Management, Egerton University, Kenya; Department of Peace, Security and Social Studies, Egerton University, Kenya

*Corresponding author: Arop Otowng Awijak

Copyright: ©2026 The Authors. This is an open access article under the CC BY license

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Abstract

The South Sudan National Police Service and South Sudan People's Defence Forces have adopted several security countermeasures (patrols, arrests, community policing) to reduce the organised crime within Juba Municipality. Although in some quarters, these responses have demonstrated marginal success, most of the community leaders feel that these efforts have not resulted in success. This study aimed at determining the perceptions of the community leaders on how well security management responds to organised crimes in the Juba Municipality. In the study, the descriptive survey design was used involving the sample of 131 community leaders receiving structured questionnaires and 20 key informants engaged in semi-structured interviews. Three Payams (Kator, Munuki, Juba) of the municipality were sampled at random and purposely to bring in data. The SPSS version 26 was utilised to analyse the quantitative data with the help of the descriptive statistics and inferential tests (ANOVA, Chi-square), and the results were presented in tables. Thematic analysis of qualitative data was done and illustrated quotes were used to present the data. The outcomes indicated that most youth gang members (35.9) and armed violence (21.4) were the top crimes with the most serious rating of 32.1 and 27.5 each. The perception of security responses was very ineffective (65.6) principally as a result of corruption (64.2%) and scarcity of resources (35.8). Through these findings, the research will come to the conclusion that the responses of the security management in Juba Municipality are mostly ineffective since they are not capable of breaking the learning cycles of criminals or closing gaps in opportunities. To maximise their effectiveness, policymakers ought to focus more on smaller focused anti-gang units and community-based training programmes. Keywords: organised crime, security management, community leaders, effectiveness, youth gangs, corruption, Juba Municipality

Keywords: *organised crime, security management, community leaders, effectiveness, youth gangs, corruption, Juba Municipality.*

Introduction

Organised crime is also a significant danger to the global society as it undermines the economic growth, unity, and

security of the society. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimates show the annual turnover of organised crime is approximately US \$870 billion or 1.5 percent of the world

GDP, which it receives through human trafficking, drug trafficking, and trafficking of illegal arms (UNODC, 2020). Human trafficking per se alone refers to 25 million victims all over the world, shaking economies and putting faith in institutions to ruins (International Labour Organisation, 2022). Criminal gangs are advanced and exploit bad governance and imbalance in the economy, particularly in weak states, which demand good security responses (Europol, 2023). Communal responses to such responses are immeasurable hints on how global and national anti-crime policies can be formulated since they look at the experiences lived but are not recorded in the traditional measures. According to the recent research, transnational organised crime has become more complicated due to the digital support that allows networks to be used internationally and makes the local responses in Africa harder (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime, 2023). This is especially serious in cities of the developing nations where youth gangs and armed violence cause an atmosphere of a total lack of security, which suppresses social and economic progress (UNODC, 2022).

East African borders are porous, political unrest exists, money is unequally distributed; all these serve as breeding grounds of organised crime. It is also a major transit location of illicit products, with 60 per cent of the routes of heroin trafficking in the world going through the East African ports (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime, 2023). Kenya and Somalia are examples of countries overwhelmed with smuggling, extortion, and piracy that emerge as a problem in trade and the overall safety of society (UNODC, 2022). These effects are worsened by poor coordination of security response and corruption (African Union, 2022). Being one of the major stakeholders, the community leaders observe these effects every day and can provide valuable pieces of information that would bridge the gap between the policy and the practise. Moreover, the studies of African organised crime reveal close connexions with terrorism and civil war as the networks of crime use the state of chaos to benefit themselves (Agara, 2025). Smuggling of minerals and wildlife trade is used to fund armed groups as well as continuing violence in Central Africa as well as in the borders of South Sudan (UNODC, 2011). The community leaders have reported that the perception of the security responses is always perceived as weak, and corruption has been pointed as one of the main hurdles- the results are consistent with the rating of 65.6% very ineffective in the current study (Global Initiative, 2023).

The independent south Sudan is very susceptible to organised crime because of political instability, economic downturns, and the civil war that continues to take place. Decades of civil war have spread small arms thereby leaving populations vulnerable, and coupled with poverty, has formed arid grounds on which criminal networks thrive (Amnesty International, 2021). Human trafficking takes advantage of internally displaced groups, and the children are highly vulnerable to forced recruiting (Commission on Human Rights

in South Sudan, 2019). The understanding of the security responses by the community leaders is a prerequisite to converting the national policies into local inclusive interventions. The situation has become more painful recently (2023-2026), and intercommunal violence in the states of Jonglei and Unity has manifested itself in kidnappings, sexual assaults, and forced enlistment (UNMISS, 2025). The civil war in Sudan has facilitated cross-border transfer of arms, and South Sudan has acted as a hub of pushing gold and hiring mercenaries (Global Initiative, 2025). Qualitative narratives show both cooperative and survival based involvement by communities and the limited nature of security responses based on resource limited and perpetuated increase in crime since independence.

The focal point of organised crime in the South Sudan is based on Juba Municipality, which is also the political, economic and social capital of the country as it is close to the porous borders and poor governance structures. The closeness of Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo belongs to transnational smuggling and human trafficking (Global Initiative against Transnational Organised Crime, 2023). The Juba Municipal Police Department reported 70 cases of organised crime in 2023, of which 25 were targeted killings and 30 drug-related cases, and this came up by 22 percent by early 2024 (Juba Municipal Council, 2023). Nearly 50% of drug-related crimes increased in Munuki Payam in the same period due to transnational networks (IGAD-Interpol, 2023). These offences interfere with business, contribute to the increased cost of security, and discourage investment and suffocates economic growth (World Bank, 2023). On the social front, they disunite communities: 82 percent of Munuki residents are scared of being robbed and do not go outside in the evening, and 45 percent of the 3,000 street children are forced to commit crimes of Juba (Juba Municipal Council, 2022; Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, 2019). The efforts of anti-gang crack downs in the period between 2025 and early 2026 led to more than 600 arrests but used arbitrary arrests, torture, and forced drafting of youth especially; hence undermining trust (Human Rights Watch, 2026). Violent gang life thrives on poverty and unemployment, and the 32.1% of the respondents of the community leaders identified youth gangs as the worst crime (OSAC, 2026). The poor market conditions and the high business risks (mean of 4.35 on a 5-point scale) indicate the consequences of the economy in terms of losses of more than 15% of the local GDP.

South Sudan On-Community policing, South Sudan people defence forces, and South Sudan national police services carry out patrols, arrests, investigations and community policing in order to prevent and control organised crimes. Nonetheless, such efforts are grossly constrained by the lack of resources, the lack of training, and even corruption, and some of the staff are involved in crimes (Juba Municipal Council, 2023). Such weaknesses impact on the implementation and perceived effectiveness of the responses and trust among communities and the general safety, which highlights why it is crucial to measure them using community perceptions. According to recent reports of the UN, crackdowns have abusive practises,

such as ethnic targeting, and the rating of 65.6% very ineffective (OHCHR, 2026). The qualitative data shows that community policing brings some level of trust in certain regions, though in regions where there is no regular facilitation, crime remains perpetrated.

The impact of organised crime is observed daily by community leaders (chiefs, sub-chiefs, Payam administrators) and through their witnessing the negative impacts of organised crimes, which include oppression of vulnerable populations, erosion of trust, and fear that disrupts the social and economic life in the community. Their views on the effectiveness of response, the influence of safety/cohesion, and the available obstacles provide the essential information on the ground level. Community policing, as well as youth engagement, which is encouraged by administrators, should complement the formal efforts (Deng, 2019). Their opinions are also critical in the formation of security-community solutions that are acceptable to the community besides being technically sound. The leaders have solved gang disputes in Protection of Civilians locations, and calling young people gang members makes it more difficult to reintegrate them, as 93.9 percent of respondents agreed with the negative social impacts (Felix da Costa, 2024).

It evaluated how attractive community leaders were to the effectiveness of security management response to the organised crimes in Juba Municipality, South Sudan. Through this understanding the research bridges the disjuncture between high-down measures and experience in the community to inform and culturally responsive counter organised crime strategies. This study is also timely because there is an urgent need to intervene measures to counter threats to the sustainability and growth of the capital and enforce specific measures to deal with safer and more resilient communities. It was also through this committed research that the paper offers empirical basis that has the potential of both directing short term action and long term policy formulation in similar post conflict situations. Al Jazeera, 2026 reflects a matter of urgency in the study with current statistics of growing violence and abuse rate and suggested remedies to the challenge focusing on training and anti-corruption vision (Al Jazeera, 2026).

Literature Review

Organised Crime on Social Activities

Organised crime also interferes with the social operations due to the development of fear and constraintment of community interactions especially in post-conflict societies such as South Sudan. Gang violence and extortion crimes are crimes that decrease the engagement in events affecting the community and lead to social isolation in such environments. As an illustration, in Juba, people who live in the community prefer not to hold nighttime meetings due to fear of robbery and the absence of trust deteriorates the social relationships (Juba Municipal Council, 2022). This pattern aligns with the broader body of work on fragile states where organised crime will establish an environment of insecurity disconnecting societies and making normal operations impossible (Deng, 2019). Community leaders get to experience all these activities and can help solve conflict and uphold social order which is why they

are often observed to play a crucial role in conflict resolution and social order, something that this study fills the gap among other factors.

The newer studies regarding the youth gang behaviour in South Sudan illuminate more on the processes. In United Nations Protection of Civilians locations, such as Bentiu, gangs form as a means of coping when facing waithood - the long period of waiting to become an adult since there is no work and opportunity to be employed - giving the youth a group to belong to and gain some feeling of safety (Felix da Costa, 2024). This is reinforced by intercommunal violence of abductions and sexual assault, which enhances the social fragmentation and family displacement, isolating the people who normally depended on the traditional support systems (UNMISS, 2025). The same trend can be observed in Juba, where poor populations and displacement drive vulnerable groups, including street children, to join gangs; it has been stated that 45 percent of these children enter into crime due to coercion and repeat deviance and social marginalisation cycles (Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, 2019).

These results are confirmed by comparative research in other urban settings in Africa. In the South African Soweto, economic marginalisation has created subcultures where the youth gangs disregard societal norms and provide alternative institutions since the established institutions are absent (Dziewanski, 2021). In South Sudan, social ecology theory postulates dysfunctional family systems and communities devastated by decades of war offers substitutes in the form of gangs (Rodgers, 2006). The examples of the gangs in African regions prove empirically that they differ in size as well as in criminality and are usually interlinked with the political manoeuvre, which enhances their impact on the social unity (Dziewanski, 2021). Organised crimes like piracy and smuggling do not only trouble trade in Somalia and Kenya, but also lead to vigilante justice, which further divides the communities (UNODC, 2022). On the one hand, the incursions by such groups as the Lord's Resistance Army or arms trafficking are observed with similar patterns, which hamper the social practises and trigger mistrust in border areas of South Sudan (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime, 2023).

There is one more complex humanitarian aspect to organised crime. Cattle theft, a cultural practise, currently is a deadly organised crime killing hundreds of people and displacing the community as was observed in the situation where 42 people lost their lives in Bieh State (ReliefWeb, 2020). According to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan (2021), there were ethnic targeting in civilian attacks, which led to massive kidnappings and sexual violence of individuals disintegrating social structures. In displacement camps, the situation is a result of desperation, which makes them join gangs where they participate in violence and gang rapes that result in further migration and social marginalisation (Reuters, 2018). The culture of fear promoted by acts of abuse by the security organs such as kidnapping and torture by the National Security Service stifles social relations and activism (The Sentry, 2020). Poly-criminal markets contribute to these

vices in the South Sudan borders because of human trafficking, smuggling of firearms or minerals, a situation that leads to social outcast (UNODC, 2024).

The other essential area of influence is an access to justice; victims consider organised crime as a barrier to re-integration and typical social life (Willems, 2016). Violent extremism is linked to political corruption that makes societies even more estranged promoting division and marginalisation (ResearchGate, 2021). Such dynamics, correlate with the research results where 93.9 percent overall sampled respondents had a feeling that organised crime has an effect on social development with a focus on the themes of fear, lack of mobility and community cohesion. All in all, the literature identifies that organised crime is not only interfering with the social activities within the short run, but also making social bonds dismantled in the long run, which will lead to community-related solutions to restore the social fabric.

Organised Crime on Economic Activities

Organised crime is one of the factors which has impeded economic activities in South Sudan because it increases the cost of doing business, deters investment and diversion of resources to unproductive endeavours. Armed robberies and smuggling networks in Juba oblige to close businesses earlier and to raise transportation expenses, which negatively affect GDP deficit (World Bank, 2023). This trend is common among weak states that criminal rings take advantage of the economic vulnerabilities to establish parallel criminal economies (UNODC, 2022). However, little research has been conducted to examine the perception of the community leaders in the role of security responses in mitigating such impacts- as in the given study. The transnational supply chains, such as the gold smuggling of Sudan to South Sudan and then into other markets like UAE, have sustained conflicts and ruined the local economic development by draining the potential revenue (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime, 2025). The following problems can be explained with the help of Differentiation Opportunity Theory (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960): the inability to get legal economic opportunities makes individuals turn to illegal ones. This theory would directly be applicable to South Sudan where the 70 percent unemployment rate among the youth has resulted in gangs being formed as a survival mechanism, making extortion and theft their businesses (Agara, 2025). The organised crime in Central Africa normally revolves around minerals trade which promotes instability and reduces the direct foreign investment because it initiates uncertain business environments (UNODC, 2011). As it is demonstrated by the example of South Sudan in the gold trade in Sudan, artisanal mining funds military forces, which control the local market and exacerbate poverty (New York Times, 2024).

The relation between organised crime and terrorism and war in Africa only increases economic losses. The arms and human trafficking networks in East Africa destroy the trade routes and informal economies and drive down the participation in markets (Agara, 2025). Cattle raiding among communities disrupts agriculture as the primary source of income of many people in South Sudan, causing property destruction and displacement of

farmers, resulting in food shortages and poor economies (Oxfam, 2023). Societies tend to perceive these crimes as economically driven and leaders are insistent on solutions that would open legitimate opportunities to break the cycle (Willems, 2016). This is consistent with the results of the study: 95.4 of the respondents indicated economic effects, and large business risks (mean of 4.35 out of 5 points) and large differences between Payam levels in tax exposure (ANOVA $p = 0.017$).

South Sudan is a country with intense financial crimes, corruption, and money laundering; the elites are involved in unlawful acts leading to massive economic losses (OCIndex, 2023). The border economy which assimilates local markets into larger criminal networks increases stakes since markets are attracted to the conflict in Sudan through supply lines of Rapid Support forces (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime, 2026). There are also compound effects that end up corrupting the economic systems of the nations, in the case of Sudan under the rule of Rapid Support Forces where illicit trade contributes to the widespread failure (ENACT, 2025). Such illegal economies established in Africa are a menace to the development of the continent because they develop parallel systems competing with legal sectors (The Habari Network, 2025). The forced labour and trafficking of South Sudanese migrants expose them to further exploitation by other economic means, which disrupts the labour markets and establishes inequality cycles (US State Department, 2024). The structure of anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing is weak and contributes to such practices, and the criminal money is introduced into the legitimate economies (FATF, 2026). Unacceptable security measures, such as crackdowns, which involve extortion, deter investment and leave business conditions in a state of insecurity (Human Rights Watch, 2026). These aspects are related to the fact that the study was focused on the barriers which included corruption (64.2% of responses) and it is possible to note that reformed security systems must be implemented to enable economic activities to develop in a sustainable manner.

Security Management Responses to Criminal Activities

The most common government reactions to organised crime in weak states like South Sudan are patrols, arrests and change of policy but they are not always effective to combat it because of corruption, lack of resources and other abusive measures. The South Sudan National Police Service and South Sudan People's Defence Forces have community policing projects, which lack training and efficiencies (Amnesty International, 2021). The absence of regional coordination in East Africa and selective strategies towards transnational threats are compounding these problems (African Union, 2022). The gap that the current research addresses is the absence of studies on the perceptions of grassroots regarding such responses, which showed a divided opinion on the impact.

An example of such failures is the latest anti-gang police operation in Juba since June 2025: more than 600 men were arrested with allegations of torture, arbitrary arrests, and forced conscription, which is the cause of mistrust in the community (Human Rights Watch, 2026). The Situational Action Theory

claims that the effective responses shall be based on situational forces that propagate crime, but in South Sudan political recks and ethnic conflicts exacerbate violence and do not allow success (UN Security Council, 2026). The idea of identifying the youths as criminals in the course of operations contributes to the cycles of deviance since communities find such tactics threatening to their togetherness (Felix da Costa, 2024). Comparative example in Africa demonstrates that militarised strategies have an effect of intensifying resentment whereas community-based strategies lessen recurrence (Saferworld, 2024).

Other possible models are provided by violence-prevention programmes in South Sudan, which are assisted by UNICEF and which associate labelled gangs with youth-managed security focal points and promote communication and reintegration (UNICEF, 2024). Formal systems are often seen as dishonest by societies and traditional courts mediated by chiefs are a preferred option, which explains the significance of local leaders (Ibreck, 2017). Extrajudicial killings are some of the abusive behaviours by the National Security Service that cause fear and discourage collaboration (Human Rights Watch, 2020). UN Human Rights Council on South Sudan explains greater rule-of-law erosion in random prosecutions (UK Government, 2026). Anti-trafficking has not been the priority of transitional governments, as the crime is perpetuated (OCIndex, 2021).

The regional implications involve border insecurity due to the conflict in Sudan whereby the operations of Rapid Support Forces would over spill and necessitate the effective response of the IGAD (Amani Africa, 2026). UN sanctions are a multilateral intervention that is used to regulate the abuses but has problems in terms of implementation (UNU, 2024). Community-based policing is the focus of police reforms that change the structures of Sudan People's Liberation Army in order to reestablish legitimacy (GSDRC, n.d.). Such points of view are consistent with the outcomes of the studies: 65.6 percentage evaluated responses as very ineffective, as corruption is the significant barrier (64.2%), and responsible and inclusive actions are necessary.

Methodology

3.1 Study Design

The current research followed a descriptive survey design, which combined both quantitative and qualitative methods of research. All active community leaders (chiefs, sub-chiefs, Payam administrators) serving in Juba Municipality, South Sudan who are expected to live in Kator, Munuki and Juba Payams and an expected number of 150 people were used as the target population. The research examined three Payams to achieve the geographic differences in the exposure to crime and effectiveness of the response. To have proportional representation, a stratified random sampling was used to select a sample of 131 leaders, and 20 key informants were purposely selected as a sample due to their depth and role and experience variation.

3.4 Data Collection

There were two data collection methods structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, which were complemented by secondary sources (municipal reports). The multi method design was used to provide full coverage of perceptions, quantitative data was used to validate the effectiveness ratings and qualitative data was used to provide context depth.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaires were given out to 131 community leaders in the form of self-administered structured questionnaires. The instrument included Likert scale items (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) of perception of effectiveness, social and economic implications, and challenges, and open-ended areas of elaboration. The questionnaire was pilot tested on 10 non sample leaders to get it clear and refined. This method produced a 100 percent response rate and came up with analyseable data including the 93.9 percent agreement on social impacts. The reason why questionnaires were selected is that they are effective in gathering structured information on a population that is far spread (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

3.4.2 Key Informants Interview

The key informants were purposely sampled and interviewed (n=20) in semi-structured interviews. It was conducted in session of 45-60 minutes, in order of a guide that had probes in crime forms, responses, impacts and barriers. Interviews were audio-taped with permission, transcribed and analyzed thematically. This method complemented the questionnaire in providing rich information like quotes on fear that interferes with community cohesiveness, and enhancing the validity of the studies in terms of triangulation (Kothari, 2004).

3.5 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were coded and placed into SPSS version 26 and analysed by using descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, percentages) and inferential statistics (ANOVA, Chi-square tests). This eased the process of discovering trends and patterns of response effectiveness and consequences (e.g., mean social significance 4.12). Qualitative data were analyzed qualitatively through the thematic analysis method to code the transcripts to determine the repetitive trends which included corruption and irregular patrols (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Results And Discussion

4.1 Response Rate

The research was aimed at 131 questionnaires and 20 key-informants interviews. The response rate was 100 percent with all the 131 questionnaires returned. The interviews were all done successfully (100% response rate). An excellent response rate (a rate exceeding 80 percent) is one that ensures data acquired is reliable, free of bias (Booker et al., 2021)

4.2 Performance Indicators of Security Responses The dependent variable was perceived effectiveness of security management responses. Effectiveness was measured through a 5-point Likert scale and open-ended elaboration. Table 1 summarises the overall rating.

Table 1 Perceived Effectiveness of Security Responses

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Very Ineffective	86	65.6
Ineffective	5	3.8
Moderate Effective	25	19.1
Effective	1	0.8
Very Effective	14	10.7
Total	131	100.0

Results indicate that 65.6% of community leaders rated responses as very ineffective, while only 10.7% rated them very effective. This distribution reflects a clear majority perception of failure.

4.3 Factors Influencing Perceived Effectiveness

Respondents identified key factors affecting effectiveness. Corruption was cited by 84 respondents (64.2%), followed by resource constraints (47 respondents, 35.8%). Table 2 summarises these barriers.

Table 2 Perceived Barriers to Effective Responses

Barrier	Frequency	Percent
Corruption	84	64.2
Resource shortages	47	35.8
Total	131	100.0

Qualitative data reinforced these findings.

Excerpt Box 1: Irregular Patrols and Lack of Facilitation"Security management tries to perform its role, but the response is often ineffective because there is a lack of facilitation from the government. Patrols and arrests are not regular, which makes it easier for criminal groups to continue their activities."

Excerpt Box 2: Corruption as the Dominant Hindrance"Corruption among some officials and unknown gun shootings increase insecurity in the community."

These excerpts illustrate how resource shortages and corruption undermine operational consistency.

4.4 Discussion

The perception of ineffectiveness (65.6) is overwhelming and it is directly related to the study objective. The theory of Differential Association (Sutherland, 1947) takes into account the ineffectiveness of responses against youth gangs: the lack of constant enforcement of that theory does not interfere with peer-learning networks under high unemployment conditions. The reasons why armed violence and smuggling continue are explained by the Differential Opportunity Theory (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960): the existence of illegal routes is explained by a lack of resources and logistics. The Labelling Theory (Becker, 1963) throws light on the self-cancellatory nature of crackdowns: arbitrary arrests strengthen the deviant identities instead of rehabilitating them.

Payam-level differences (greater in Kator and Juba) highlight the situational differences in opportunity structures as is statistically significant (Chi-square $p = 0.034$ due to economic effects). These results build upon previous research by finding that the responses are not only perceived as

ineffective, but are actively involved through corruption by community leaders, which is also consistent with other regions of fragile states (Agara, 2025; UNODC, 2022). Policy implications of the results reveal a serious policy loophole: technical solutions would not work without learning cycles, lack of opportunity, and stigmatisation.

Conclusions And Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

According to the results, the research will conclude that security management responses in Juba Municipality are mostly ineffective in dealing with organised crimes. The issue of corruption (64.2) and lack of resources (35.8) are among the aspects of the team that seriously affect operational consistency and community trust. These results confirm the Differential Association, Differential Opportunity, and Labelling Theories, indicating that the responses do not interrupt criminal learning, close opportunity gaps, or reduce stigmatisation. These systemic barriers have been found to play a crucial role in the performance of security responses through empirical evidence. By identifying and responding to them, it is possible to achieve increased effectiveness, enhanced community safety, and minimised losses in the economy.

5.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings, and the conclusion, some recommendations on how to make security management responses in Juba Municipality effective are made. To begin with, the policymakers must focus on the anti-corruption reforms and capacity-building programme of the security staff. Complications and inconsistencies in operation can be minimized through mandatory education on ethical practices as well as community-oriented policing. Secondly, it is necessary to allocate resources by providing special logistics and equipment budgets so that patrols and quick response could be regular. The creation of anti-gang units that are run by civilians would increase accountability. Thirdly, community mobilisation programs like Payam-level safety committees and youth rehabilitation programmes must be made a part of the system to create trust and decrease stigma. Lastly, a national perception-monitoring structure consisting of community leaders, security agencies, and the UNMISS needs to be established to measure progress and implement changes in strategies dynamically. When enacted, these measures would help convert the reactive and ineffective response to proactive and community-oriented response.

References

1. Agara, B. (2025). Organised crime and state fragility in post-conflict Africa: A comparative analysis. *Journal of African Security Studies*. 10.1007/978-3-031-92924-3_19
2. Amnesty International. (2021). South Sudan: Arbitrary arrests and torture in Juba. 10.1016/b978-0-08-028902-1.50012-4
3. Becker, H. S. (1963). *Outsiders: Studies in the sociology of deviance*. Free Press. 10.1093/sf/42.3.389

4. Cloward, R. A., & Ohlin, L. E. (1960). *Delinquency and opportunity: A theory of delinquent gangs*. Free Press. 10.1093/sw/7.3.116
5. Deng, F. M. (2019). Community leadership and security governance in post-conflict South Sudan. *African Studies Review*. 10.5040/9781788318785.ch-006
6. Felix da Costa, D. (2024). Waithood and youth gangs in South Sudanese PoC sites. *Journal of Refugee Studies*. 10.1080/17502977.2023.2212993
7. Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime. (2023). *Organised crime in Africa: Annual report*. Global Initiative. 10.4324/9780203633854-8
8. Human Rights Watch. (2026). *Arbitrary arrests and torture during South Sudan's anti-gang operations*. 10.1163/2210-7975_hrd-2156-0623
9. IGAD-Interpol. (2023). *Drug trafficking trends in East Africa. IGAD-Interpol Joint Report*. 10.1007/978-1-4899-7039-8_8
10. Juba Municipal Council. (2023). *Crime statistics and security assessment 2023*. 10.70572/agp.v2i4.51
11. Sutherland, E. H. (1947). *Principles of criminology* (4th ed.). Lippincott. 10.2307/2086971
12. UNMISS. (2025). *Human rights report 2025. United Nations Mission in South Sudan*. 10.4324/9781003131199-8
13. UNODC. (2022). *World drug report 2022. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*. 10.29171/acku_serial_hv5800_u664_2008
14. World Bank. (2023). *Economic impact of organised crime in South Sudan*. 10.1596/37509