

Illicit Drug Markets & Flows in the WIO Islands & Coastal States Region of Africa

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**GLOBAL
INITIATIVE**

AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL
ORGANIZED CRIME

Overview of WIO and Coastal States' Drug Markets & Flows

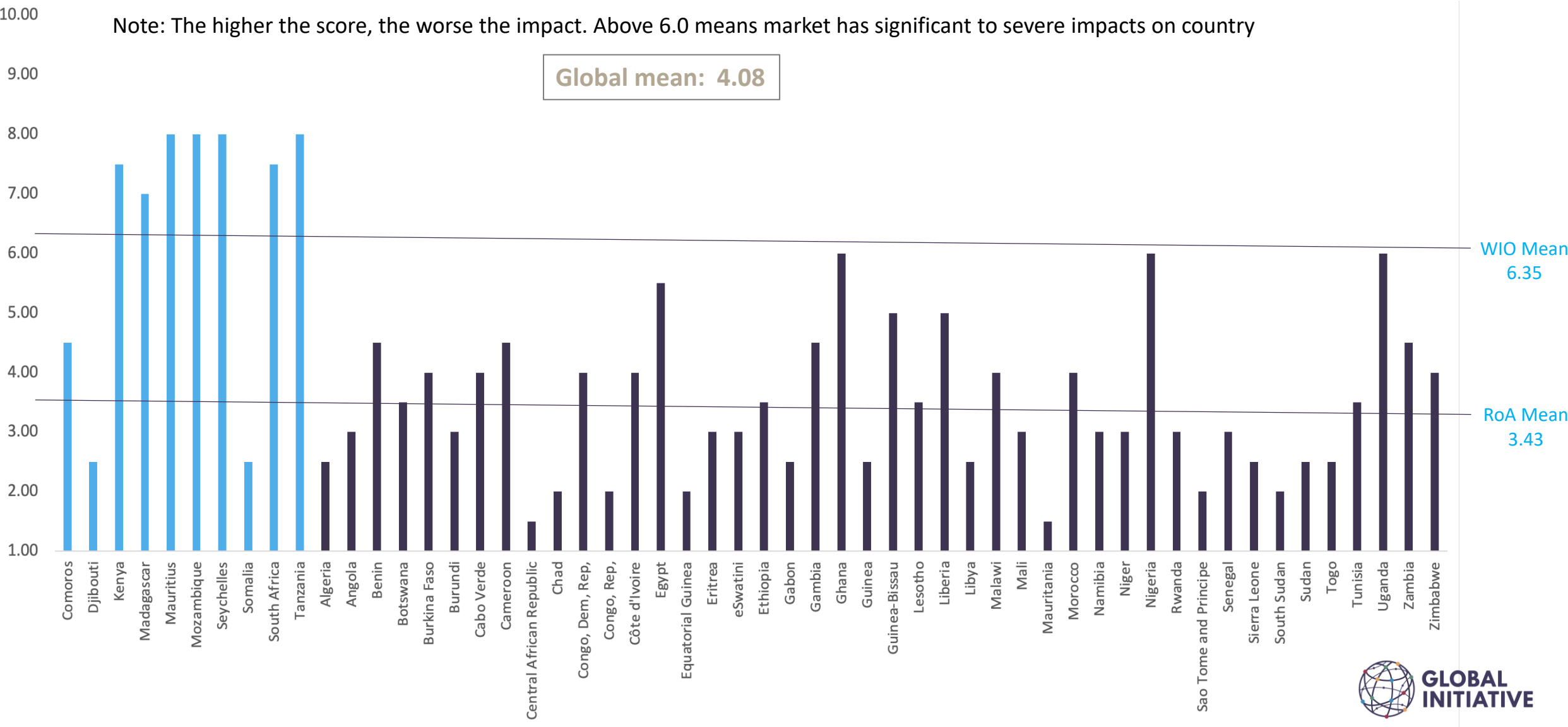
- Scores are based on Global Organized Crime Index (2023) results
- This is a GITOC-led analysis incorporating the work of 100s of experts, country-specific data collection, field work & peer review to determine country assessment scores
- Index results exist for 2019, 2021 & 2023
- The Index measures 15 criminal markets (incl. 4 drug markets: heroin, cocaine, cannabis, synthetics) across all 193 UN member states every two years
- The Index measures also the resilience of each country to combat these criminal markets
- Resilience is assessed across 12 categories



WIO STATES' HEROIN MARKET RANKING (2023)

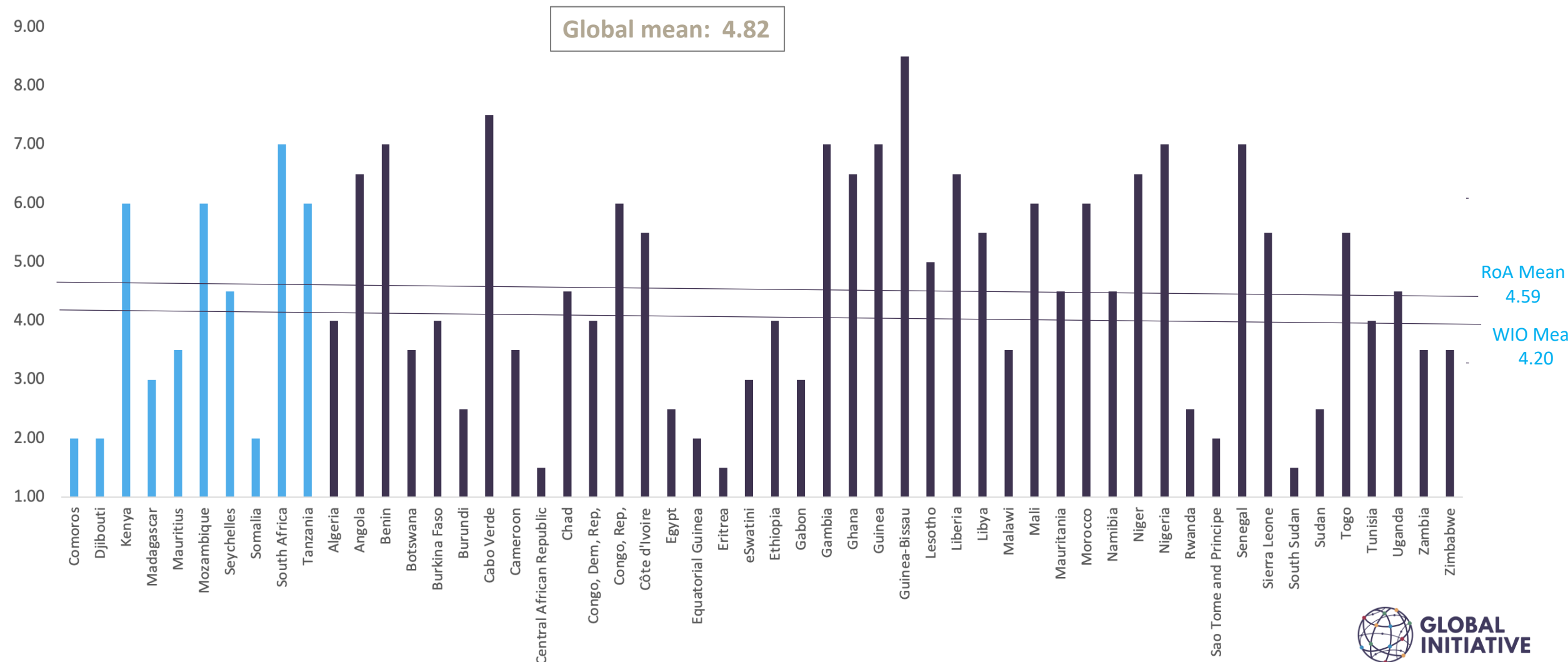
Note: The higher the score, the worse the impact. Above 6.0 means market has significant to severe impacts on country

Global mean: 4.08



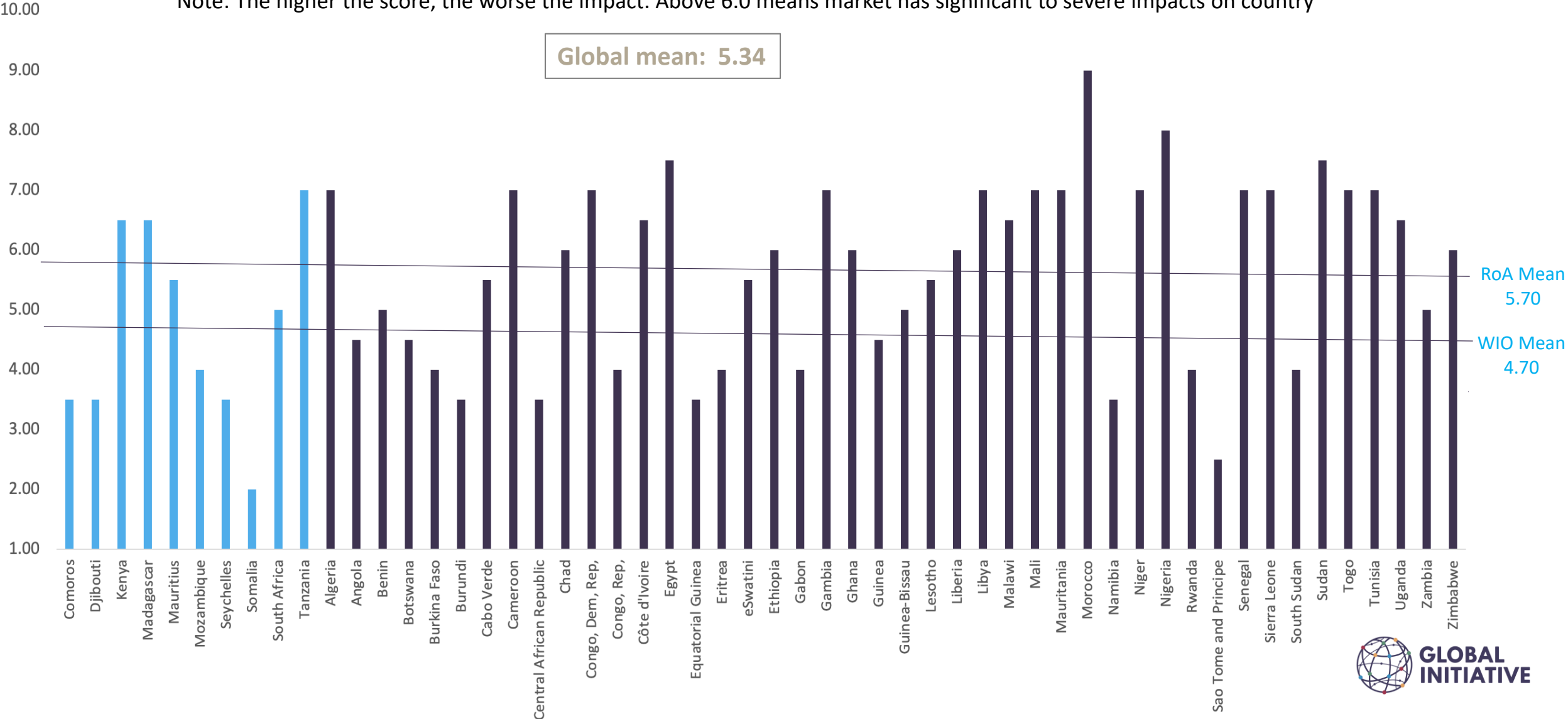
WIO STATES' COCAINE MARKET RANKING (2023)

Note: The higher the score, the worse the impact. Above 6.0 means market has significant to severe impacts on country



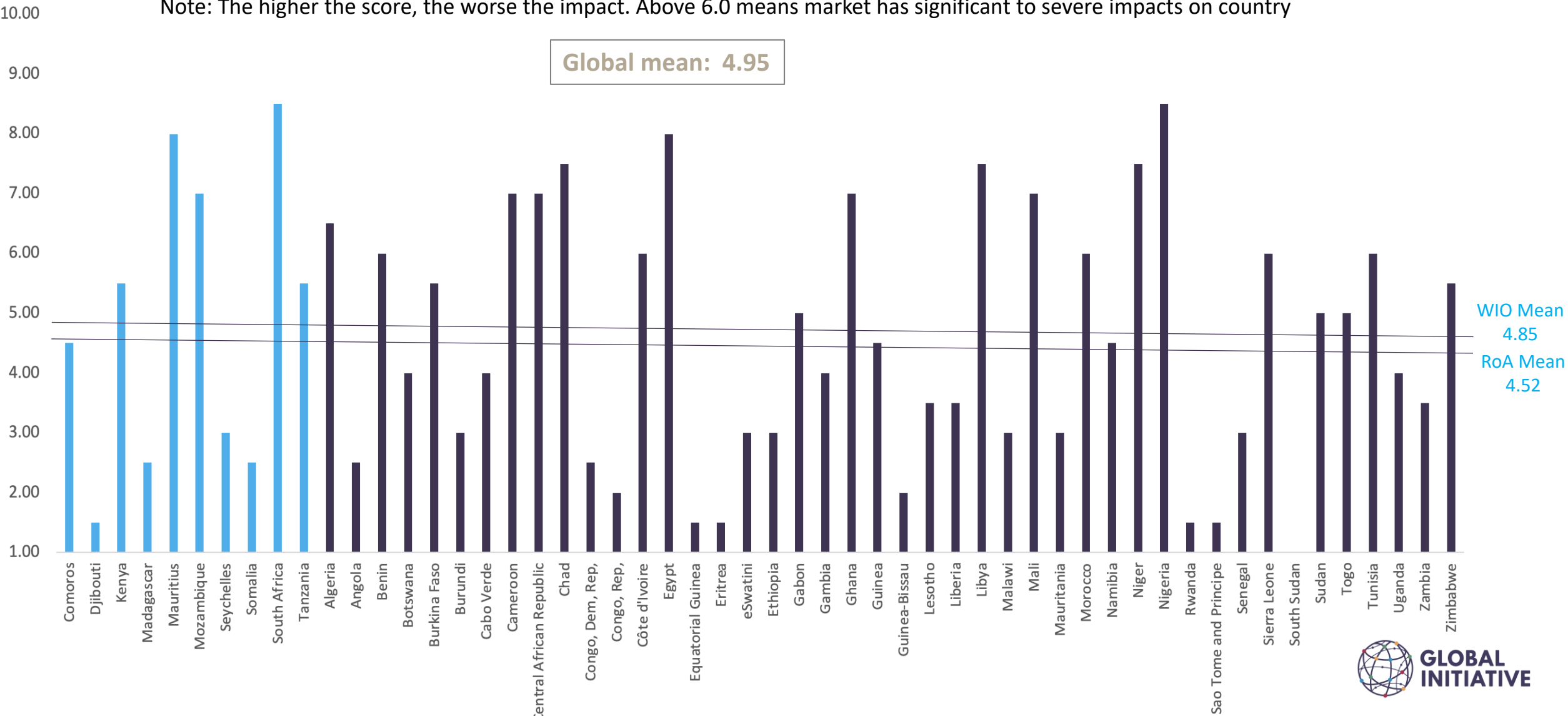
WIO STATES' CANNABIS MARKET RANKING (2023)

Note: The higher the score, the worse the impact. Above 6.0 means market has significant to severe impacts on country



WIO STATES' SYNTHETICS MARKET RANKING (2023)

Note: The higher the score, the worse the impact. Above 6.0 means market has significant to severe impacts on country



MEASURING THE CAPACITY TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY

Political Leadership &
Governance

Judicial System &
Detention

Econ. Regulatory
Capacity

Gov't Transparency &
Accountability

Law
Enforcement

Victim & Witness
Support

International
Cooperation

Territorial
Integrity

Prevention

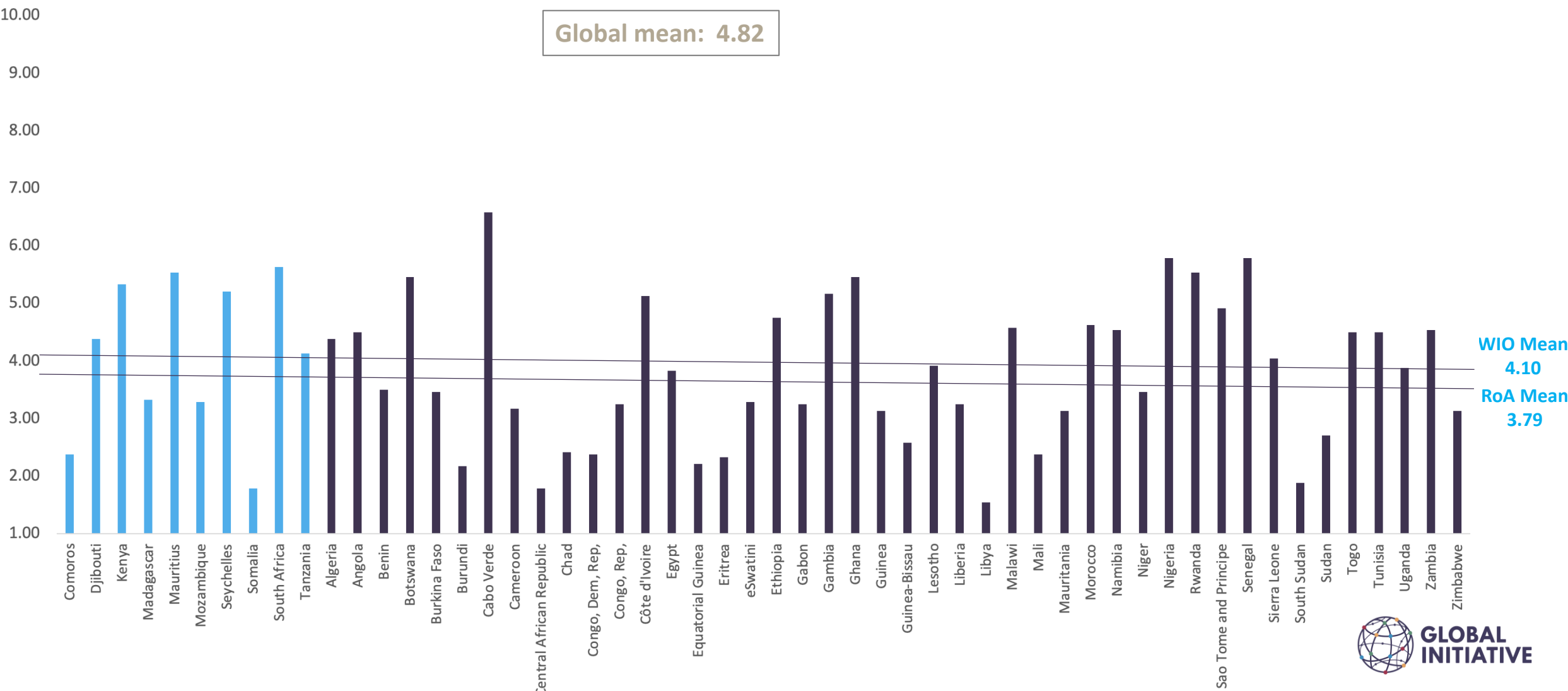
National Policies &
Laws

Anti-Money
Laundering

Non-State
Actors

WIO STATES' RESILIENCE ASSESSMENT RANKING (2023)

Note: The higher the score, the stronger the resilience. Above 6.0 means country has 'sufficient' to 'highly effective' resilience capacity



Illicit Drug Flows To & Through the Region

WE KNOW HOW THESE DRUGS MOVE BY SEA

Cargo delivery – point-to-point: The simplest of delivery methods this involves the movement of illicit drugs in high volume, often of a tonne or more, from a point of shipping origin to a pre-determined destination. Often by private craft, or dhow.

Ship-to-ship transfer: As the name implies, this delivery method involves the transfer of a drug load from one marine vessel to another. This is normally done at sea in international waters.

Ship-to-shore transfer: Also done in international waters, this technique involves moving a drug load from a larger mothership to a smaller, faster vessel for immediate transfer to a shoreline location. Very common along the ESA coastline.

Drop-off/ GPS bundling: This technique involves the discharge of bundles of drugs into the sea by the crew of a mothership. These bundles are wrapped in watertight packaging and dropped at pre-arranged positions. The locations are offshore but within range of smaller go-fast boats that are tasked with locating and retrieving the bundles, then delivering them to shore.

Container concealment: By far the most common method of moving large volumes of illicit drugs is through international shipping containers, also known as 'sea cans'.



The 'Southern Route'



The 'Lusophone Route'



The 'Asian Route'

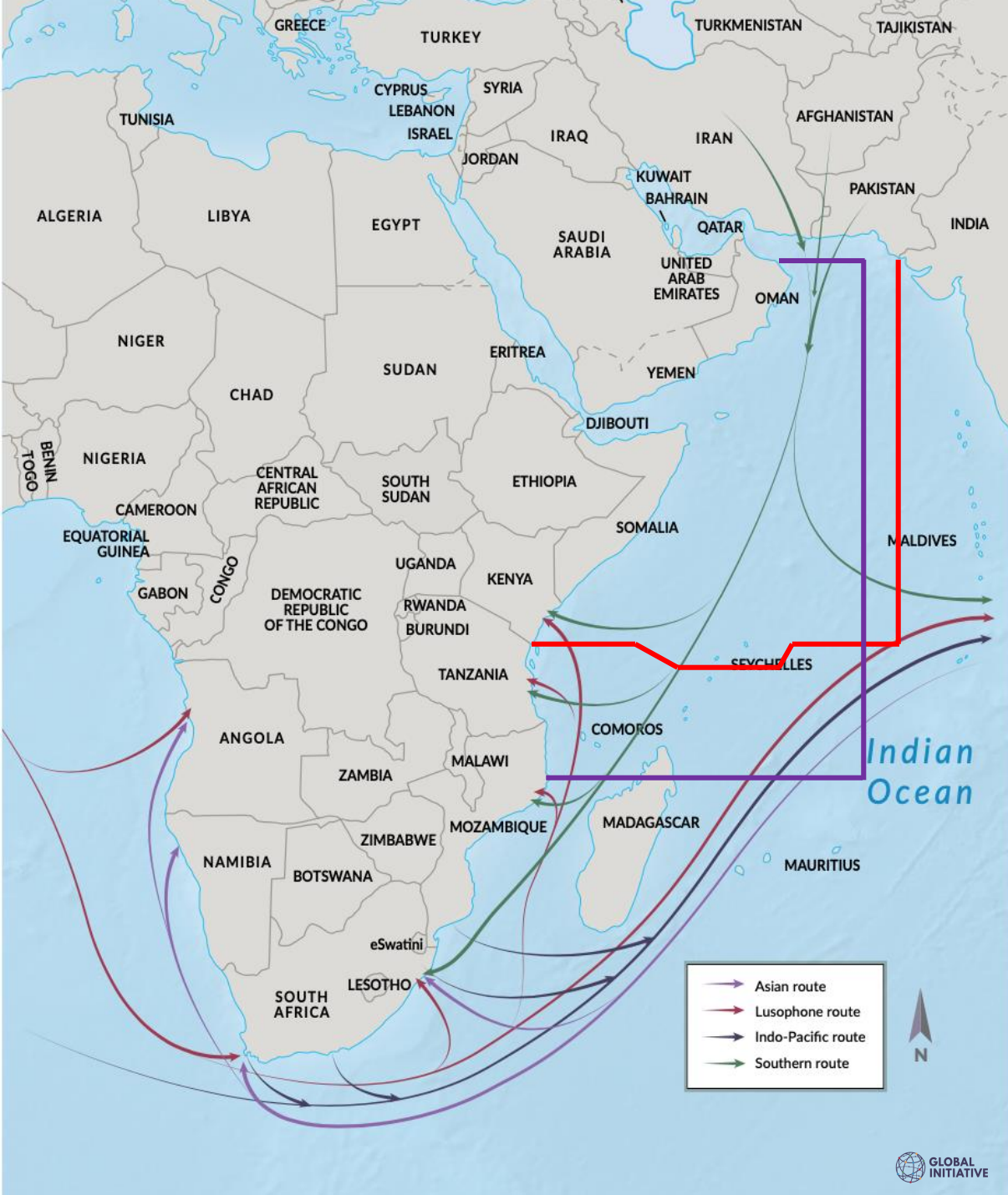


The 'Indo-Pacific Route'

Every year, **750 million containers** are shipped around the globe, but only between 2-5% of these are inspected.

The busiest ports in Africa can accommodate up to **2.6 million** twenty-foot container equivalent units (TEU) annually (= roughly 7120 containers per day), with plans in place to expand these capacities.

More than 140 000 vessels fitted with and tracked by an Automatic Identification System (AIS) cross the Western Indian Ocean every year, together **with 1000s more** smaller vessels that are not required to carry this equipment.



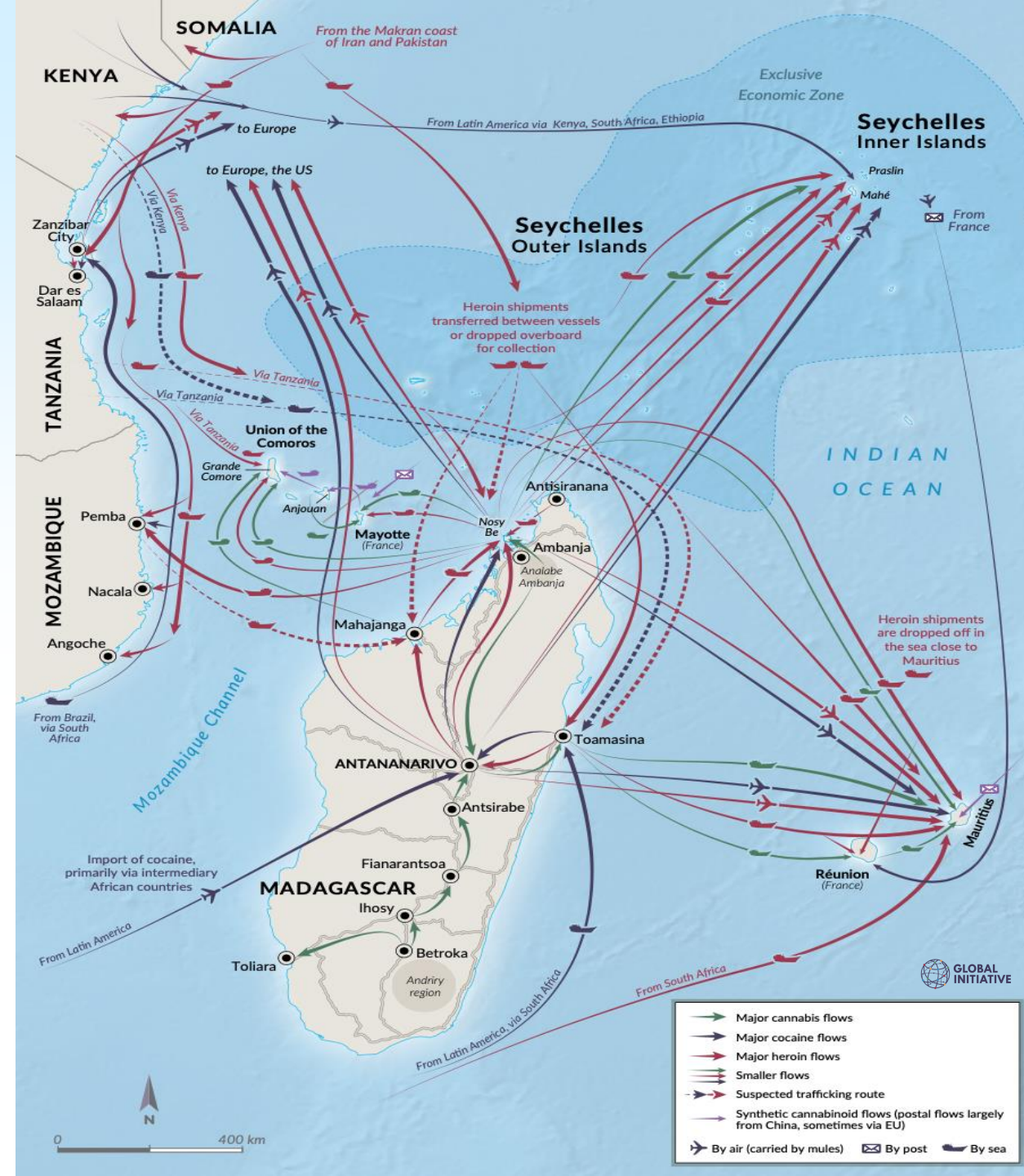
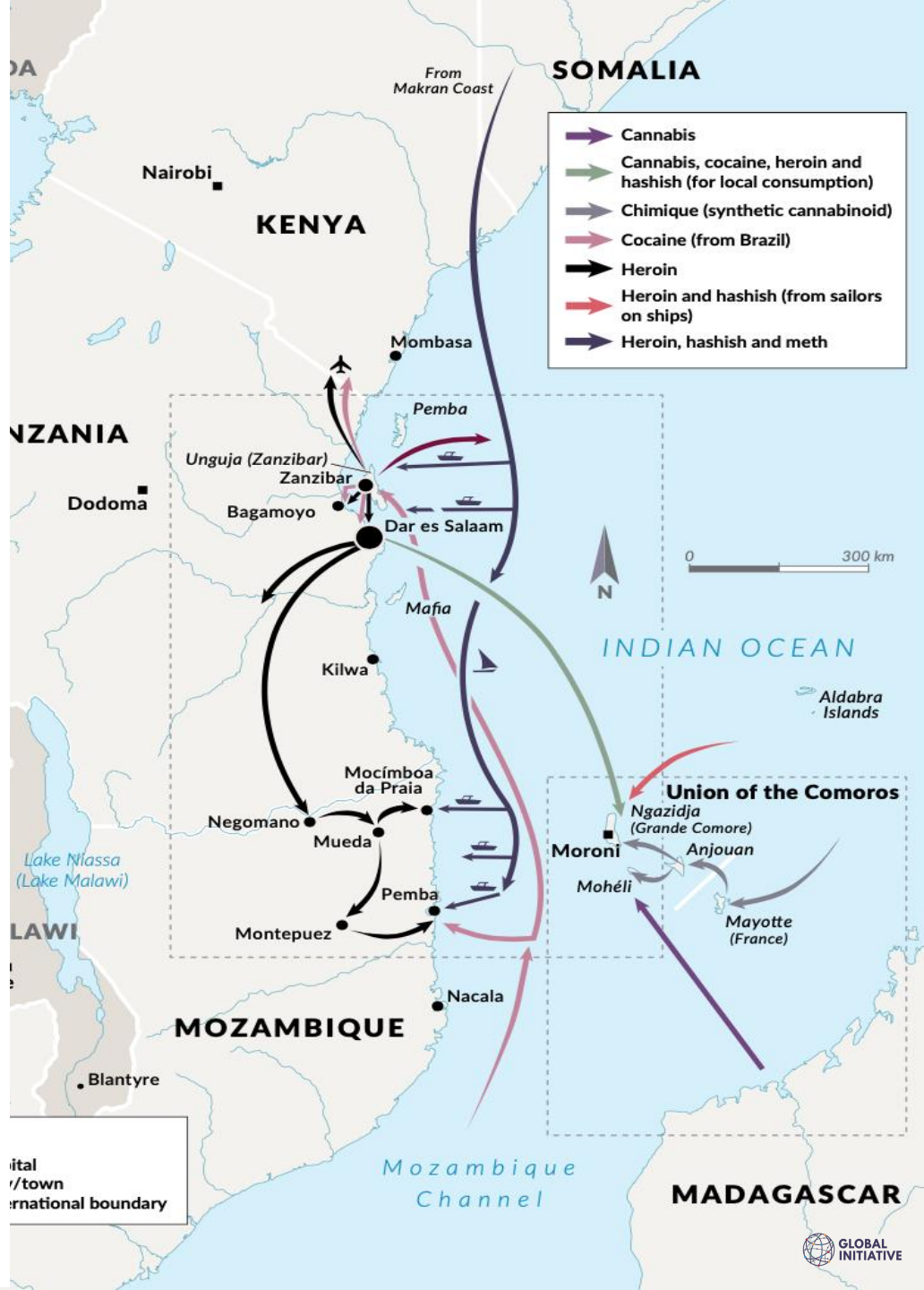
Limitations to Maritime Interdiction

■ EUNAVFOR mandate AOO

■ JTF150 mandate AOO

- Volume of maritime traffic
- Singular focus on 'Southern Route' traffic
- Unflagged vessels & challenge of prosecution – 'catch & release'
- Flagged vessels subject to flag nation jurisdiction & politics - excluded
- Pursuit & territorial waters – 12 nm
- National coastal defense deficiencies

Secondary & Tertiary Drug Flow Routes in the WIO Coastal Region



Some Challenges to Improving Regional Response to Markets & Flows

SOME REGIONAL CHALLENGES TO CONSIDER

- Often surveillance & intelligences systems focus on gathering information using what they know, or feel most comfortable doing – comfort zone bias
- Often employ a heavy reliance on the use of drug seizures (& arrests or convictions) to drive supply-side analysis of drug markets - have more value as measures of LE performance than they do of markets or their flow dynamics
- In places where public health influences are stronger, may have PWID pop. size estimates, care & treatment data, or other project or programme 'user' or 'reached' numbers as drug market metrics - But PWID \neq PWUD, quality control challenges, sample biases
- National capacities in the region to monitor, detect, seize, correctly identify, and disrupt specific illicit drug flows is significantly challenged by geography, finances, human resources, technical insufficiencies & corruption

SOME REGIONAL CHALLENGES TO CONSIDER ctd.

- Most WIO coastal region countries have no idea of the breadth of substances being used in their drug markets, particularly in relation to synthetics & adulteration
- Most WIO coastal region countries have historically relied on international orgs to fund/assist/ do their drug-related surveillance in one way or another – GF, PEPFAR, WB, Clinton AIDS – though somewhat changing under AU PAENDU programme
- Increasing challenge of body concealment & postal/ courier services in regional micro-trafficking flows
- Weakly-monitored Mozambique Channel traffic accommodates east-west/ south-north regional drug flows

THANK YOU!

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