Annual Report

2020-2021

C4ADS

innovation for peace

Contents

About C4ADS

C4ADS is a non-profit digital-age think tank dedicated to providing data-driven analysis and evidence-based reporting on global conflict and transnational security issues. We were designed to remain agile in an environment where illicit actors are inter-connected, globalized, and deeply embedded within international systems of finance, commerce, and transportation. C4ADS specializes in using Publicly Available Information (PAI) and cutting-edge technologies to produce actionable analysis and inform a whole-of-society approach against illicit actors. We recognize that these illicit networks perpetrate the official corruption, transnational crime, and political violence at the root of conflict. Yielding a 4,932% return on donor investment, we engage with local and international audiences to fill a critical gap left by traditional public sector and profit-driven institutions to move beyond advocacy to action.

Our mission is to disrupt and dismantle global illicit networks by providing enforcement-grade analysis and innovative data solutions to our partners around the world. In doing so, we pursue three strategic pathways.

01 Reduce System Energy

Low-level criminals are routinely convicted while the kingpins and their enabling networks escape justice. C4ADS maps entire networks to strategically target the highest-value actors and temporarily reduce the energy of the system.

02 Reduce Vector Vulnerability

Illicit networks rely on legal systems of trade, transport, communication, and finance. C4ADS produces analysis that helps companies de-risk supply chains and strengthen compliance. By providing data and analysis to leaders across these sectors, we reduce the space for illicit networks to operate, and help these systems better protect themselves from exploitation.

03 Reshape the Ecosystem

The global threat posed by illicit networks requires an equally networked global response. By developing cutting-edge analytical solutions, fostering collaborations across the world, and providing training to our partners, we are reshaping how entire industries combat illicit actors. As a result, we empower the international community to more proactively confront and respond to illicit activity.

Our Technology Partners

Palantir   aws   WINDWARD°   planet.

ADS-B Exchange — World's largest co-op of unfiltered flight data   FIVECAST   spire | federal

Leadership Letter

The world has changed dramatically in the past year, creating critical implications for global security and prosperity, and the stability of some of the world's most vulnerable communities.

With the global economic crisis, the unprecedented interruptions to trade and transport, and the proliferation of digital communication, both licit and illicit actors have been forced to evolve.

The evolution of business to a truly digital landscape has created both new opportunities and risks. Illicit networks have also taken advantage of this volatile landscape to exploit licit systems of trade, transportation, communication, and finance. At C4ADS, we seek to inform and educate the international community on how to more effectively disrupt and dismantle these illicit networks that destabilize states, prevent development, and devastate the environment.

While the environment of the past year has tested C4ADS in unexpected ways, it ultimately confirmed the strength of our vision and mission. Our agility – symbolized by our motto "Innovation for Peace" - enabled us to push the boundaries of Publicly Available Information (PAI) farther than ever this year. We incorporated disruptive emerging technologies, sponsored strategic partnerships to turbocharge our impact, and redefined what it means to be a think tank in the digital age.

From conducting predictive mapping on trafficking routes, to training machine learning models to detect risky shipments for nuclear proliferation, we innovated new ways that PAI can solve emerging security challenges. We employed industry-leading technologies and developed custom analytical solutions and data platforms.

As the global community was forced to rethink collaboration, C4ADS was able to bridge the gap between states, corporations, and individuals to enable a coordinated response to illicit activity. By sharing software tools, data, and analysis, we helped our partners pursue new approaches to combatting the rapidly evolving illicit networks taking advantage of this unprecedented global disruption.

As we look ahead, we recognize that the disruptions we experienced in 2020 were not isolated events but signposts of a larger paradigm shift. In the coming year, philanthropic funding from supporters who believe in our mission and are passionate about making the world a more secure place will be essential. With the support of our donors, partners, and allies, we will be prepared to adapt as new threats arise.

We hope the information in this report inspires you to join us in taking action.

David Johnson
Executive Director

Varun Vira
Chief Operating Officer

By the Numbers

Our Team

36
analysts

17
languages spoken

50%
women in leadership

Our Reach

2,450 media mentions in 2020

Website visits from
211 jurisdictions

50% increase in Twitter followers

53 countries covered

Our Work

24
publications

4
data platforms launched

31
projects

620
products produced

Our Impact

51,000+
actors identified as linked to illicit activities

106+
enforcement actions supported

$418M
of illicit activity disrupted

4,932%
return on donor investment

Our Partner Network

In 2020, we prioritized expanding and deepening our partnerships across the sectors and geographies that are most vulnerable to exploitation by illicit networks. Through our data tools and platforms, we empowered digital coordination and data sharing during a time when many traditional forms of collaboration became impossible.
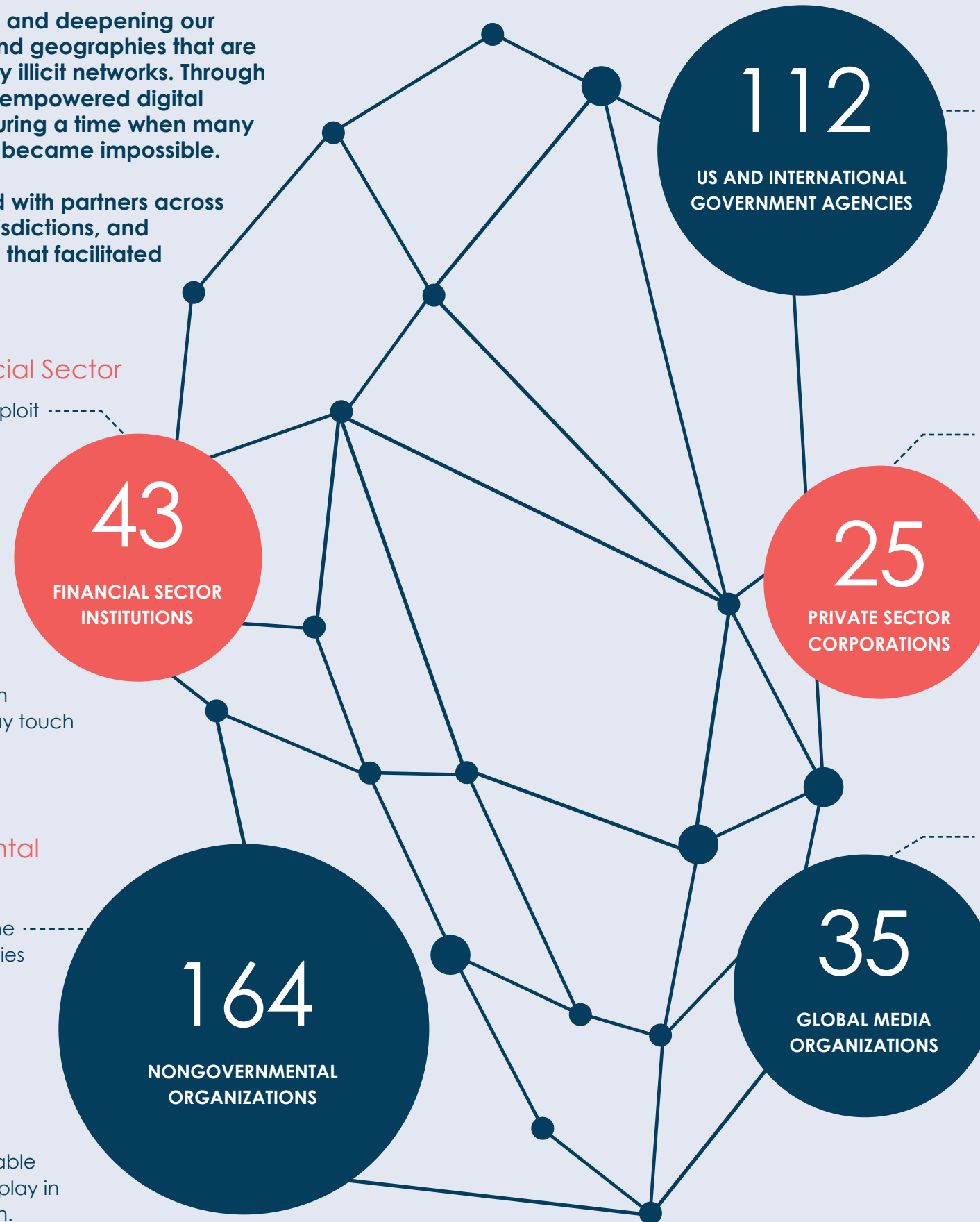
In the past year, we have worked with partners across 6 continents, covered over 53 jurisdictions, and provided 620 analytical products that facilitated impact and advocacy.

Sharing Data with the Financial Sector

Illicit actors frequently infiltrate and exploit the global financial system - but open data can provide a window into their activities. In 2020, C4ADS provided several financial sector institutions access to Seamless Horizons, our internally developed database containing more than one billion official records, documents, and analytical products. These resources allow financial regulators and compliance officers to gain visibility on how the activities of illicit networks may touch their systems.

Empowering Nongovernmental Organizations

The advent of "Big Data" and machine learning has provided new opportunities to map, track, and expose the illicit actors engaged in nuclear procurement. In 2020, C4ADS worked with the Nuclear Threat Initiative on a pilot project showing how publicly available trade data can be used to trace illicit procurement networks. This collaboration demonstrated the valuable role non-governmental organizations play in supporting global counterproliferation.

112
US AND INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

43
FINANCIAL SECTOR INSTITUTIONS

25
PRIVATE SECTOR CORPORATIONS

164
NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

35
GLOBAL MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS

Connecting International Governments

Oceans are among the world's least governed spaces, presenting challenges for coastal states seeking to gather data and prevent malign activities at sea, including Illegal, Unregulated, and Unreported (IUU) fishing; modern slavery; and transnational trafficking. In 2020, C4ADS' IUU fishing team worked with coastal state governments around the world to improve visibility into illegal activity committed off shore and more effectively counter threats within their maritime domain.

Engaging the Private Sector

Complex, transnational supply chains are incredibly challenging for downstream companies to monitor. Illicit networks take advantage of this lack of transparency to move products derived from forced labor and environmentally destructive practices into global consumer markets. To overcome this challenge in the minerals industry, C4ADS worked with companies across the minerals sector to develop a due diligence platform that helps companies detect high-risk activity in their supply chains. By increasing the transparency of these systems of trade, C4ADS is empowering the private sector to fight back against illicit actors.

Supporting Investigative Journalism

Rampant global corruption, organized crime, and conflict demonstrate the increasing need for investigative journalists to inform and protect the public. C4ADS is working with a network of investigative journalists across the African continent to increase their investigative capabilities by providing them with digital tools, concrete training, and analytical support to expose some of the most pernicious illicit activities in the world.

Data & Technology

C4ADS' Data and Technology team provides technical solutions to everyday analytical problems. The backbone of C4ADS, our Data and Technology team is the powerhouse behind our mission to push the boundaries of PAI.

171
support requests from analytical projects

130M
new records collected

4
data platforms launched

C4ADS' cornerstone analytical dashboard, Seamless Horizons, brings the power of PAI directly to our analysts with a fully integrated and searchable database of official records and other documentation from over 165 jurisdictions and 15 languages. Backed by Amazon Web Services, Seamless Horizons serves as our central repository for terabytes of high advantage judicial, corporate, maritime, aviation, and trade data. By integrating digital, scanned, and handwritten documentation into a single search feature, Seamless Horizons has greatly expedited the process of discovery and lead generation for both our analysts and our partners.

In 2020, we expanded Seamless Horizons coverage by accessing and integrating records from nearly 50 new jurisdictions. We have added tools such as Bulk Entity Screening and an External API Search to enhance the platform and expedite the process from discovery to ingest. We also expanded exclusive Seamless Horizons access to over 30 partner organizations for use in their active investigations.

1.3B
high-advantage records

343+
unique sources

30
partner organizations onboarded

"You guys are building consumer-grade technology in a space that is used to something from the 1990's."

-Former product manager at Google

Publicly launched in December 2020, ConflictID is an interactive database that collects, classifies, and analyzes images of weapons from the ongoing conflict in South Sudan. With over 1,000 images from social media, news reports, and expert contributions, ConflictID enables arms researchers, peacekeepers, and investigators to visualize, filter, and analyze weapons systems imagery. ConflictID presents a new way to understand the foreign arms that have fueled conflict in South Sudan - demonstrating the value of PAI in weapons monitoring.

Sanctions Explorer aggregates current and historical information on sanctioned entities from the three major sanctioning authorities (OFAC, EU, and UN) into a unified and easily searchable database. The site is fully automated — scanning and ingesting new sanctions listings within 24 hours of the posting — providing a one stop sanctions research solution for government officials, compliance professionals, journalists, and civil society.
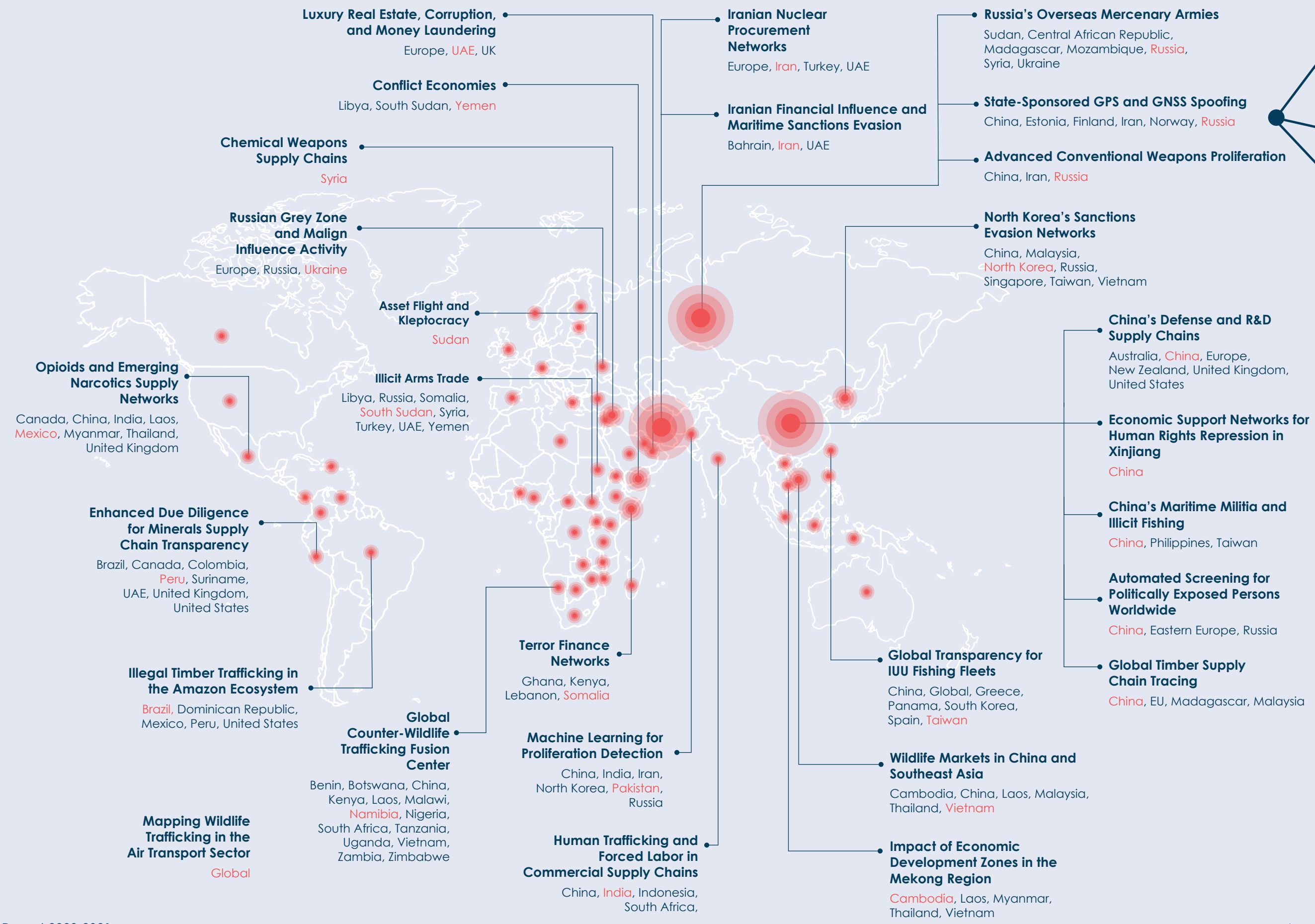
Upcoming Launch

Icarus Flights is a premier flight data analytics platform, designed by C4ADS to bring transparency to the aviation sector. Icarus Flights enables users to monitor conflict zones, discover surveillance flights, analyze high interest aircraft, query global aircraft ownership data, and discover uncensored flight movements. Icarus Flights empowers investigators to bring their analysis to the next level.

Check out icarus.flights to learn more.

"Icarus fills a major gap in flight information and aircraft ownership resources"

-Feedback from attendees at the 2020 Amnesty International Crimes Conference

Our Work

Luxury Real Estate, Corruption, and Money Laundering

Europe, UAE, UK

Conflict Economies

Libya, South Sudan, Yemen

Chemical Weapons Supply Chains

Syria

Russian Grey Zone and Malign Influence Activity

Europe, Russia, Ukraine

Asset Flight and Kleptocracy

Sudan

Illicit Arms Trade

Libya, Russia, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Turkey, UAE, Yemen

Opioids and Emerging Narcotics Supply Networks

Canada, China, India, Laos, Mexico, Myanmar, Thailand, United Kingdom

Enhanced Due Diligence for Minerals Supply Chain Transparency

Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Peru, Suriname, UAE, United Kingdom, United States

Illegal Timber Trafficking in the Amazon Ecosystem

Brazil, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Peru, United States

Mapping Wildlife Trafficking in the Air Transport Sector

Global

Global Counter-Wildlife Trafficking Fusion Center

Benin, Botswana, China, Kenya, Laos, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Terror Finance Networks

Ghana, Kenya, Lebanon, Somalia

Machine Learning for Proliferation Detection

China, India, Iran, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia

Human Trafficking and Forced Labor in Commercial Supply Chains

China, India, Indonesia, South Africa,

Iranian Nuclear Procurement Networks

Europe, Iran, Turkey, UAE

Iranian Financial Influence and Maritime Sanctions Evasion

Bahrain, Iran, UAE

Russia's Overseas Mercenary Armies

Sudan, Central African Republic, Madagascar, Mozambique, Russia, Syria, Ukraine

State-Sponsored GPS and GNSS Spoofing

China, Estonia, Finland, Iran, Norway, Russia

Advanced Conventional Weapons Proliferation

China, Iran, Russia

North Korea's Sanctions Evasion Networks

China, Malaysia, North Korea, Russia, Singapore, Taiwan, Vietnam

China's Defense and R&D Supply Chains

Australia, China, Europe, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States

Economic Support Networks for Human Rights Repression in Xinjiang

China

China's Maritime Militia and Illicit Fishing

China, Philippines, Taiwan

Automated Screening for Politically Exposed Persons Worldwide

China, Eastern Europe, Russia

Global Timber Supply Chain Tracing

China, EU, Madagascar, Malaysia

Global Transparency for IUU Fishing Fleets

China, Global, Greece, Panama, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan

Wildlife Markets in China and Southeast Asia

Cambodia, China, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam

Impact of Economic Development Zones in the Mekong Region

Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam

C4ADS
innovation for peace

Programs

Conflict Finance and Irregular Threats

The Conflict Finance and Irregular Threats Program seeks to reduce the human cost of conflict and the risks to international security posed by civil war, insurgency, terrorism, and grey zone conflict. We identify and expose the financial drivers of conflict, shedding light on the networks that profit from violence. Our analysis drives efforts to disrupt these networks and hold them accountable.

Our work directly supports government and non-profit partners involved in accountability, peacekeeping, conflict mediation and resolution, and post-conflict transition. Our current priority regions include North, East, and Central Africa; Eastern Europe; and the Middle East.

"I haven't seen anything this comprehensive in the last two years of looking at conflict in Yemen"

- Foreign government partner

9 international enforcement actions supported

5 international court cases supported with evidence

$200M in stolen assets identified

477 Yemeni fuel shipments analyzed

Project Highlight

Automating Bulk Screening Tools for Conflict Actors

Data on the actors driving conflict is hard to come by - these networks do not always appear on sanctions lists, and information is often scattered across languages and jurisdictions. It can take weeks for an analyst to collect names and information on high-risk entities, making it impossible to effectively monitor and combat the activities of warlords, grey zone actors, and insurgents.

In 2020, we confronted this challenge. Focusing at first on Libya, South Sudan, and Russia, we leveraged a Natural Language Processing tool to parse through hundreds of pages of UN Panel of Experts reports, national dialogue conference reports, and other documents relating to potentially risky actors. This produced consolidated screening lists for entities that have allegedly contributed to prolonged conflicts and undermined the rule of law. We queried these lists against our internally-developed data lake, Seamless Horizons, to identify associated companies, properties, or other assets.

Using this methodology we identified international companies owned by officers in South Sudan's repressive National Security Service and exposed the activities of executive personnel from Russian private military contractors. This approach enables our partners to hold these individuals accountable. By scaling this model, we will be able to more proactively detect individuals engaged in conflict finance, arms trafficking, terror finance, and violations of humanitarian law.
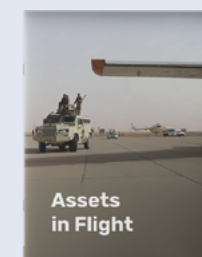
Publication Highlights

Black Earth:
Our investigation into the commercial networks profiting from the war in Ukraine reveals how this conflict reaches beyond national boundaries. From neighboring Russia and South Ossetia, to North Korea and Western Europe, these networks ultimately contribute to the perpetuation of Europe's deadliest ongoing conflict.

Assets in Flight:
Our four-part investigation into aerial supply operations in Libya exposed the logistical architecture that has funneled weapons, resources, and personnel in and out of Libya, highlighting connections to Eastern Europe, Turkey, and the UAE. In the final investigation of this series, we ussed Russian trade and customs data to identify the aerial delivery of bank notes to Khalifa Haftar's Libyan National Army in Eastern Libya.

Programs

Environmental Crimes

The Environmental Crimes Program combats global wildlife trafficking by combining Publicly Available Information with data from on-the-ground partners. Our analysis provides enforcement-level insight into the operations of transcontinental wildlife trafficking networks and reveals global trends in the illicit wildlife trade. Ultimately, we seek to build global coordination by sharing our analysis across our network of 120 partners in the conservation, law enforcement, financial, policy, and regulatory communities.

In addition to providing compelling analytical products and trends insight, C4ADS empowers on-the-ground partners to more effectively identify and combat wildlife trafficking. We provide tailored training on how to manage and utilize data to investigate and dismantle wildlife trafficking networks, and help facilitate coordination between regional authorities.

5,500 seizures collected

14 publications

35 jurisdictions linked to wildlife trafficking investigations

644 wildlife traffickers identified

"Your analysis provided unique insight not only into changing trends, but also our jurisdiction's significance within the region for trafficking instances. This information is allowing us to think more strategically about the wildlife trafficking landscape and better target efforts to achieve success."

- Conservation partner

Project Highlight

Applying Seizure Data for Proactive Targeting

Scales
Whole
Unknown
Border Crossing

The C4ADS Wildlife Seizure Database records nearly 5,000 wildlife seizures dating back to 2012. Updated daily from queries across 15 languages, this database retains up to 90 data fields on any given seizure, from date and product weight, to geo-coordinates of the seizure location and names of companies and individuals implicated. Our seizure databases allow us to stay ahead of changing trends and key hotspots, providing partners and law enforcement data-backed insights for strategic decision-making and mapping the wildlife trafficking ecosystem.

In 2020, C4ADS combined our Wildlife Seizure Database with data from on-the-ground partners across several sub-Saharan African countries to create a robust regional database. From this database, we produced geo-spatial visualizations which revealed the roads and border crossings likely used by traffickers to move illicit products. This analysis enables our partners to proactively manage resources and understand the latest threats to local wildlife populations.
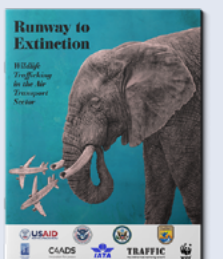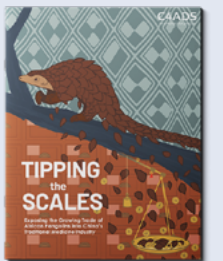
Publication Highlights

Tipping the Scales
Our supply-chain analysis of pangolin scale trafficking between Africa and China demonstrates the significance and logistical structures of the growing illegal pangolin trade. From co-opting bushmeat supply chains in the DRC, to maritime shipments into Vietnam, scales are making their way into an opaque Chinese consumer market where a legal pangolin scale market masks the illicit trade.

Animal Smuggling in Air Transport and Preventing Zoonotic Spillover
Our ROUTES Partnership report on wildlife smuggling through the air transit sector focuses on how illicit wildlife cargo circumvents the legal regulatory system, creating conditions that could result in the future spread of zoonotic disease.

Runway to Extinction
A comprehensive analysis on wildlife trafficking through the air transit sector, this report highlights how wildlife traffickers respond to the increased risk of detection by changing trafficking routes, while maintaining previously identified obfuscation and transport methods.

Programs

Counterproliferation

The Counterproliferation Program exposes state-sponsored and financial networks which facilitate illicit procurement, technology transfer, espionage, and intellectual property theft in pursuit of nuclear and ballistic missile programs. By investigating noncompliance with multilateral nonproliferation regimes like export control agreements and sanctions programs, we seek to expose methods used by sub-state networks to subvert international norms and regulations.

Our analysis focuses on China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and other countries of strategic interest to the public and policymakers in the US and allied nations. Our analytical products and tech solutions directly support our domestic and international government, regulatory, and civil society partners.

7 arrests or extraditions supported

16 entity list additions supported

65 sanctions supported

2,300+ vessels monitored

3.2M records on Chinese and Iranian defense systems collected

This work "has enormous deterrent value. We are working to build a safer world by making it nearly impossible for a proliferator to escape detection."

- Ernest Moniz, former U.S. Secretary of Energy

Project Highlight

Integrating Disparate Data to Map Chinese State Influence

China's party-state system poses systemic national security risks to the United States and its allies around the world. Under Xi Jinping, the Chinese Communist Party has asserted control over industry, universities, and civil society organizations in ways that are still poorly understood. As a result, policymakers focusing on China have had limited success addressing issues ranging from illicit acquisition of sensitive technologies and intellectual property theft, to political influence and espionage.

In 2020, C4ADS launched a new initiative to provide our partners with the data required to address these challenges. We focused on collecting, integrating, and analyzing publicly available datasets from China and surrounding countries that help identify and expose individual or corporate relationships to industry, academia and civil society in China. In the project's beta phase, we collected more than 10 million investment, corporate, trade, and judicial records related to China's defense-industrial base, to map relationships at a granular level. Ultimately, this information will empower the private sector and government to more proactively respond to emerging threats from China's unique party-state approach to economic statecraft.

Publication Highlights
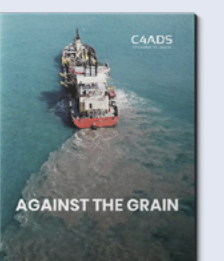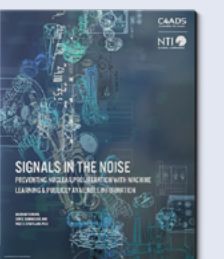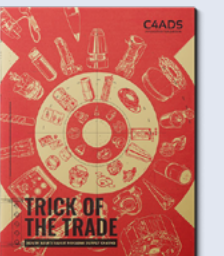
Trick of the Trade
Our proof-of-concept report on leveraging PAI to detect procurement of nuclear technology mapped the international supply chains behind nuclear procurement in Pakistan and India. We isolated entities that presented the most risk for illicit dual-use trade and demonstrated that PAI and activity-based analysis can help the private sector, government, and international organizations better detect and mitigate nuclear threats.

Signals in the Noise
Our latest report on applying machine learning models for nuclear trade detection demonstrated that these models can save hundreds of analyst hours and identify twice as many potentially high-risk entities as manual efforts. As a result of the methodologies highlighted in this report, 10 entities have been added to a U.S. government export control list.

Against the Grain
Our investigation into sand dredging in North Korea revealed how the North Korean regime is able to evade sanctions through trading sand with China. We used satellite imagery to map a fleet of North Korean vessels engaged in illicit sand dredging near Haeju Bay, which contributed to both a New York Times investigation and a UN Panel of Experts report.

Programs

Organized Crime and Grand Corruption

The Organized Crime and Grand Corruption Program focuses on exposing the networks at the heart of state corruption and organized crime. Our work provides tactical information to the government and financial sector on how these networks move beyond national borders, weaken societies, and undermine human rights.

Our current projects include mapping forced labor activity in Asia; exposing Russian organized crime; and investigating asset flight and sanctions evasion in Latin America. In 2020 we also launched an initative to provide training and support for investigative journalists in Africa who are on the front lines exposing organized crime and corruption in their respective countries.

114 partner organizations supported

924 Venezuelan vessel paths analyzed for sanctions evasion

6 training sessions on human trafficking investigations provided

19 cases of forced labor investigated, impacting 13,451 victims

"Your work to help expose some of the worst hotspots and actors in this industry is bringing some much-needed transparency and helping to decrease what has long been a climate of impunity for perpetrators. Thank you."

- Anti human trafficking partner

Project Highlight

Deconstructing Trade Data to Identify Illicit Transfers

In 2020, C4ADS conducted a proof-of-concept study using PAI and large-scale trade data to map convergence of Russian technology procurement, weapons trafficking, and organized crime networks.

Using Palantir software, we analyzed more than 65 million customs records, accounting files, and corporate registry profiles from jurisdictions of interest to construct an entity-level picture of bilateral trade between Russia and EU jurisdictions. By digging deeper into anomalous transactions, we profiled several potentially risky networks. One network we identified operating in Russia and the EU and was involved in trade mis-invoicing and the procurement of dual-use technology on behalf of the Russian military. We learned that this network was already partially sanctioned by the US Department of Treasury, revealing the potential of this methodology produced a replicable way to use big data to expose the illicit networks and individuals behind high risk tech procurement.

Moving forward, we will scale this methodology and apply it to new countries of interest where grand corruption aligns with traditional national security threats.
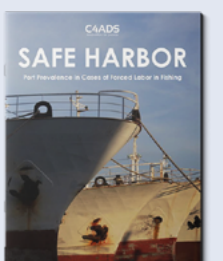
Publication Highlights

Staying Afloat
Our report on maritime shipping activity in Venezuelan waters reveals how Venezuela is able to move its oil to market, using a sanctioned, state-owned oil company, Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A. (PDVSA). C4ADS collaborated with IBI Consultants to examine this maritime shipping activity following the US Department of Treasury's sanctions on PDVSA in January 2019.

Safe Harbor
Our report investigating forced labor at sea explores 160 port calls from 59 cases of forced labor in the C4ADS Forced Labor Database. Through this analysis, we found that Taiwan, Singapore, China, and South Africa were the most common port states visited by fishing vessels using forced labor. We reveal how these port states, and stakeholders around the world, have the opportunity to maximize anti-trafficking resources by identifying and disrupting forced labor and its supporting mechanisms at key ports.

Programs

Natural Resources

The Natural Resources Program focuses on increasing transparency, traceability, and accountability within the supply chains that launder illegal and illicitly-sourced natural resource and pharmaceutical products into consumer markets. Our work directly supports the government and private sector by improving due diligence capacity and helping to identify high-risk suppliers, shipments, and products.

Our current projects focus on the trades of illegal and high-risk timber, fish, and minerals, as well as the pharmaceutical supply chains fueling the opioid crisis. Our work exposes loopholes in existing regulations, identifies specific instances of illegal activity for enforcement intervention, and provides leading industry solutions for enhanced transparency and traceability.

75% of the ownership of the global reefer fleet mapped

20 government agencies briefed on resource supply chain vulnerabilities

2 companies updated minerals sourcing

1st ever extension of a US timber import ban supported

200 synthetic drug vendors identified

"You just convinced me to stop purchasing from that seafood supplier"

– Procurement Director at a Commercial Food Distributor

Project Highlight

Supporting Due Diligence in Commercial Supply Chains

To support enhanced due diligence and transparency within minerals supply chains, C4ADS developed the Minerals Grievance Platform (MGP). The MGP provides detailed analysis on alleged illegal activity associated with minerals supply chains in an effort to help refiners, smelters, and downstream companies make responsible sourcing decisions.

In one case, C4ADS followed up on an investigative lead regarding a Peruvian law enforcement operation targeting illegal gold mining by the Topos del Frio mafia. We used trade data to confirm that illegally extracted gold controlled by the mafia was exported to several companies, including an Indian refiner, Augmont Enterprises Pvt. Ltd. This information was disseminated to Augmont through the MGP's review and mitigation process. In October 2020, Augmont published a press release confirming the high-risk trade relationship we identified, and highlighted the actions they took to prevent similar purchases of high-risk gold in the future. This investigation not only reveals how PAI can support due diligence, but also demonstrates how private sector collaboration can improve supply chain compliance and ethical sourcing of minerals and other natural resources.

Publication Highlights
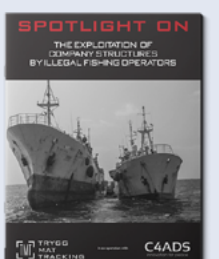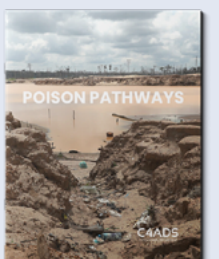
Lethal Exchange
Our first report on the illicit synthetic drug trade reveals the supply chains that fuel the ongoing opioid epidemic in the United States. We discuss how the fentanyl networks funneling product through these supply chains are among the world's first digital native drug networks, enabling direct-to-consumer delivery of the world's most deadly substances.
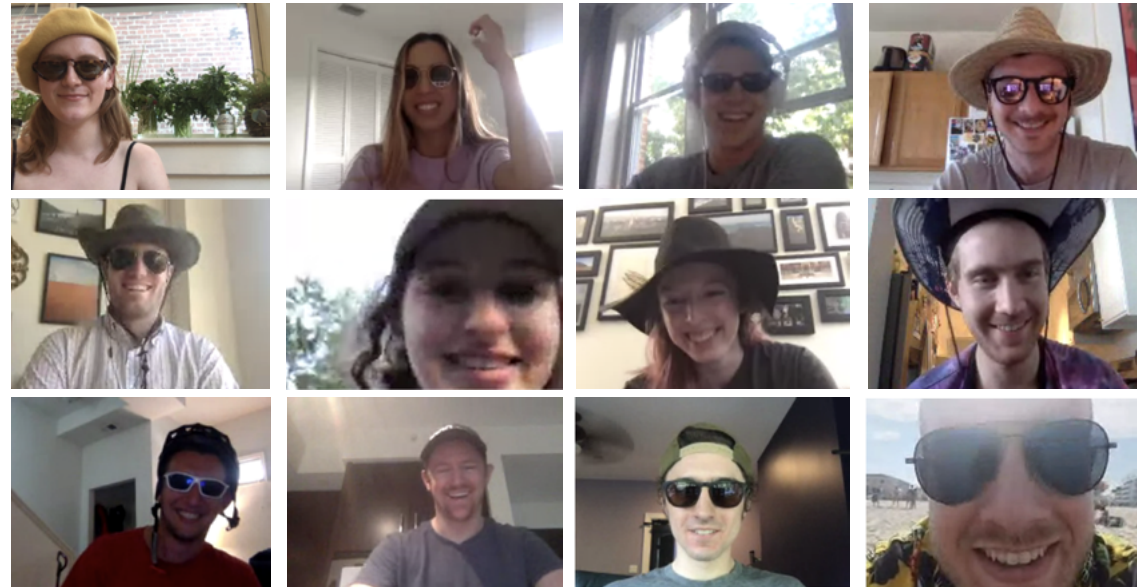
Poison Pathways
Our investigation into the use of mercury in illegal gold mining shows how illicit actors may be abusing Peru's attempts to regulate the deadly chemical, which has poisoned tens of thousands of people and created a public health and environmental crisis. We found that individuals with mercury access had long histories of connections to illegal mining and often wield considerable power in local politics. Our findings call into question the seriousness of Peru's commitments to limit the use of mercury in illegal mining.

Spotlight on Transparency
Our joint publication with Trygg Mat Tracking (TMT) exposes the risks associated with the complex ownership structures frequently used by fishing companies to obfuscate illegal operations and hide ultimate beneficial ownership. The detailed brief shines a light on the operational practices, legal loopholes and enforcement gaps that are exploited by fishing operators to access resources, ports, markets, and to evade sanctions.

Our Culture

We take immense pride in our culture.

As working from home became the new normal, we met the challenges this posed to our culture head on. We shifted to a fully remote way of working in a matter of days, and used the tools we had in place, along with a few new ones, to ensure our team was set up for success. From weekly surveys and regular one-on-one meetings, to virtual coffee chats and Slack channels dedicated to our houseplants, cooking, and pets, our culture continued to lead the way.

Throughout 2020, we added multiple new positions, hiring and onboarding our newest team members remotely.

100%

At the end of 2020 when we asked our team if they were proud to work at our organization, 100% anonymously answered "Yes."

In 2020, we published our Ethics Statement to share our values with our community. These values guide our team as we interact with each other, our community, and our work:

Act
be proactive

Excel
be the best you can be

Collaborate
help each other succeed

Care
do what is right

Sustain
be authentic

WE PRIORITIZE DIVERSITY

50% and 43% are women

of our leadership   of total employees

OUR ENTRY LEVEL SALARY IS

15% higher than comparable nonprofits

WE ENCOURAGE OUR ANALYSTS TO LEARN ABOUT THEIR PASSIONS BY PROVIDING A

$4,500 annual education stipend

WE OFFER COMPETITIVE BENEFITS INCLUDING

401(k) match, free health insurance, unlimited PTO

OUR PROUDEST PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT C4ADS

" Watching the people who I've trained grow into better analysts than I am.

Briefing at an interagency meeting that had everyone relevant to the problem set in the same room. Seeing how many people were interested in our work was really validating and I think it really made a difference.

WHY WE LOVE OUR COLLEAGUES

" The most talented, creative, innovative, kind, funny, and interesting people you could hope to work with.

I am constantly amazed by my colleagues and feel super lucky to be able to learn from and work with everybody.

- Anonymous C4ADS employee feedback

Internships

Our internship program is at the heart of our people-first culture.

In 2020, the C4ADS Internship evolved to fit the changing office environment. As we shifted our DC-based internship program to be fully remote, we prioritized maintaining the same level of training, mentorship, and inclusion that our in-office interns enjoyed. By expanding our online training materials, implementing dedicated communication channels, and creating opportunities for our remote interns to get to know our team virtually, our remote internship program has flourished.

Throughout 2020, we managed interns living everywhere from DC to Hawaii and are excited at the prospect of continuing remote internships in the future to enable candidates outside the DC area to participate. We remain committed to providing competitive stipends to our interns, and have increased our stipend to $7,200 per semester, starting in the summer of 2021.

45% of hires in last 5 years were former interns

1.5% acceptance rate

100% said they would recommend a C4ADS internship

6 Coordinated across 6 times zones for our 2020 internship program

95% of intern time is spent developing and using analytical skills

Testimonials from our interns

NOA TANN
Analyst Intern, Fall 2020

"The most unique thing about my internship with C4ADS was the sense that I was making a real impact. By being a part of research, analysis, and writing projects with tangible outcomes, such as targeting a transnational criminal network or changing global regulations, I truly felt that my contributions at C4ADS were meaningful and effective.

I learned to be honest and realistic about what I could accomplish in a certain amount of time, set boundaries when I needed them, and ask for help without shame or guilt. These lessons will be relevant to any job, and I am so grateful to C4ADS, my supervisors, and my team for helping me learn and grow."

NICOLE COOK
Analyst Intern, Fall 2019

"As an intern at C4ADS, I felt like a valued and trusted member of the team, rather than a disposable hand delegated to relatively mindless busy work. While interning at C4ADS, I had the opportunity to contribute to an ongoing US investigation into an international drug trafficking network. Not only was the dossier I wrote disseminated to our partners, but I also briefed relevant law enforcement officers on the Chinese corporate network I uncovered. This level of "real-world" experience feels unique to the C4ADS internship."

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors provides essential guidance and oversight to C4ADS in support of our mission. Our Board of Directors is committed to the long-term sustainment of C4ADS, our mission, and our culture. Their leadership ensures that we remain mission focused. Under their oversight, C4ADS is professionally, ethically, and transparently governed.

The Board of Directors is comprised of eleven voting members and a non-voting Executive Director who is responsible to them for the strategic direction, leadership, and daily management of C4ADS. These Board members selflessly donate their time, money, advice, and connections to support "Innovation for Peace".

RICHARD WIRT, PHD
Chairman of the Board
Dr. Richard Wirt is an Intel Senior Fellow, former Vice President and General Manager of Intel Corporation's Software and Solutions Group, and former Chief Technology Officer for In-Q-Tel.

HON. APRIL FOLEY
Member of the Board
April H. Foley is a former US Ambassador to Hungary and former First Vice President of the Export Import Bank of the United States. She served as an executive for PepsiCo for 17 years.

JOHN PEARCE
Member of the Board
John Pearce is VP of Cyber Operations at SOC, LLC with over 30 years of experience within the defense and intelligence communities.

NEWTON HOWARD, PHD
Member of the Board
Dr. Newton Howard was the founder and first chairman of C4ADS and is currently CEO of Ni2o, a leader in the field of brain-computer interface. He is director of the Computational Neurosciences Lab at Oxford, the Synthetic Intelligence Lab at MIT, and a professor at Georgetown University.

LTG DAVID FRIDOVICH
Member of the Board
Lieutenant General David P. Fridovich is a former Deputy Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command and senior Green Beret with more than 37 years of service in the U.S. Army.

SERGEY KANAREYKIN
Member of the Board
Sergey Kanareykin is an entrepreneur and technologist, and the former Chief Technical Officer of C4ADS. Sergey has over 15 years of experience in software development, early stage technology investments, and startup management.

JOHN CALLERY, SSA
Member of the Board
John Callery is a Special Agent in Charge (SES) with the US Department of Justice with over 30 years of law enforcement field experience.

HON. SUE KELLY
Member of the Board
Sue Kelly is a former member of Congress, who represented the 19th District of New York from 1995 to 2006, serving on Financial Services, Small Business, Transportation and Infrastructure committees.

New Board Members

JOE D'CRUZ is the Founder and Managing Director of Catalyze Dallas, a business incubator that helps companies unleash the potential of their investments in innovation. A committed and ethical leader, with a strong background in technology and business management, Joe will be instrumental in growing C4ADS' influence and further work.

ARCHIE RAVISHANKAR is the Founder and CEO of Cogni, a cutting-edge digital banking platform. As a young entrepreneur and leader in digital banking, Archie brings a dynamic approach to problem solving and deep understanding of how illicit actors exploit licit vectors. He will be valuable as C4ADS works to expand support to an evolving financial sector.

Departing Board Members

CHRIS KAMMERMAN served on the C4ADS Board of Directors for 10 years. During his tenure, he served on the governance committee and advised on technology integration. His energy, commitment, experience, and connection to emerging technology in the defense sector provided unique opportunities for C4ADS.
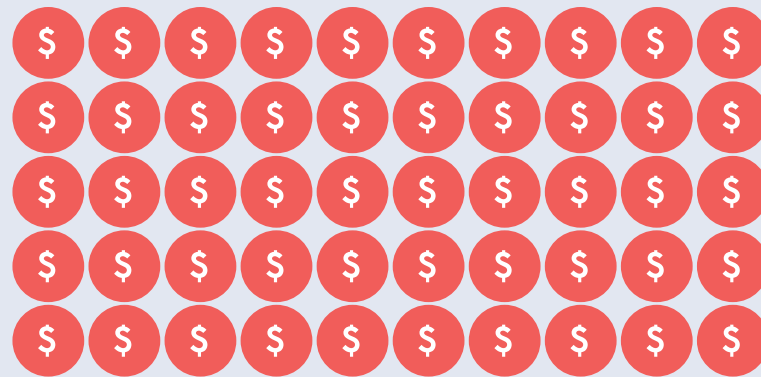
STEVE HOMOKI served on the C4ADS Board of Directors for 11 years. During his tenure, he served on the governance committee. His leadership, support, and entrepreneurial background were essential to instituting effective business management during a time of rapid change at C4ADS.

Financials

In 2020 C4ADS continued to achieve revenue growth despite global financial uncertainty.

We are proud of a

4,932%

return on donor investment.

Revenue by Year

$12M
$10M
$8M
$6M
$4M
$2M
$0M

$1,020,000 — 2014
$1,790,000 — 2015
$2,337,510 — 2016
$3,860,580 — 2017
$5,783,336 — 2018
$7,828,099 — 2019
$8,474,924 — 2020
$11,900,853 — 2021 (PROJECTED)

7

Consecutive years of revenue growth

For every $1 of donor funds invested, nearly $50 of illicit activity was disrupted.

Revenue by Program

Natural Resources **15%**

Counterproliferation **27%**

Organized Crime and Grand Corruption **17%**
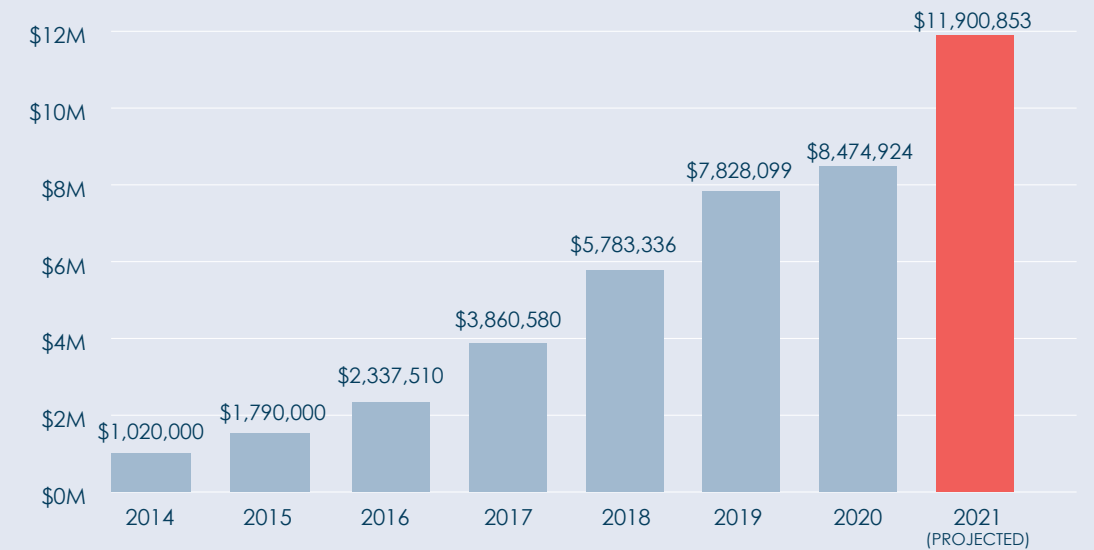
Environmental Crimes **22%**

Conflict Finance and Irregular Threats **19%**

We prioritize financial transparency and accountability. We received a Guidestar Platinum rating for 3 consecutive years.
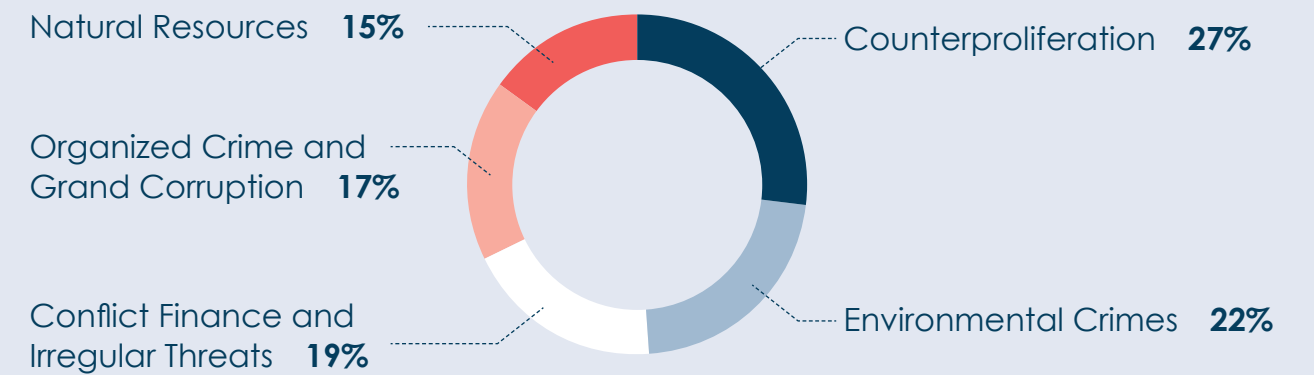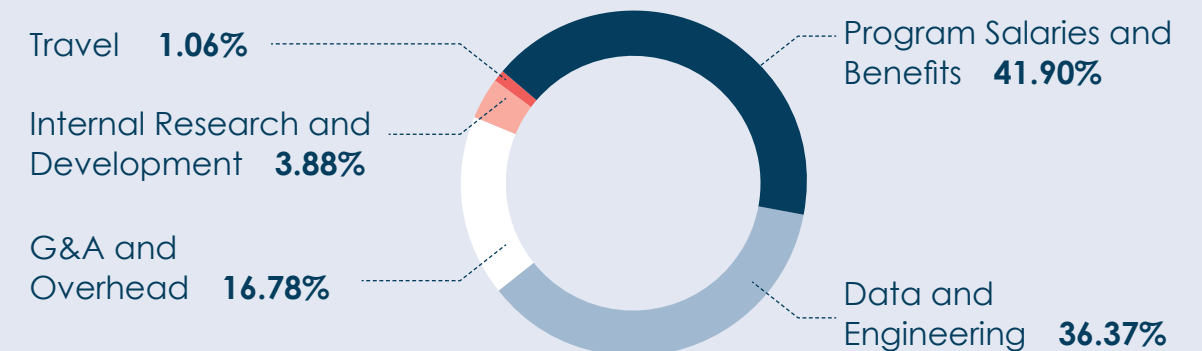
GUIDESTAR PLATINUM TRANSPARENCY 2021

Expenditure Breakdown

Travel **1.06%**

Program Salaries and Benefits **41.90%**

Internal Research and Development **3.88%**

G&A and Overhead **16.78%**

Data and Engineering **36.37%**

C4ADS

innovation for peace

C4ADS is a digital-age think tank dedicated to providing data-driven analysis and evidence-based reporting on global conflict and transnational security issues.

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