

SEYCHELLES



KEY FACTS

POPULATION (2016 estimate):

94,600

AREA (UN 2006):

452 sq km

CAPITAL:

Victoria

CURRENCY:

Seychellois rupee (SCR)

HEAD OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT:

President Danny Faure

FORM OF GOVERNMENT:

democratic republic

PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM:

unicameral

STATE STRUCTURE:

unitary

LANGUAGES:

English and French (official); Seychellois Creole (recognised)

NATIONAL ELECTIONS:

Presidential – last:

2015, turnout: 90.1%; next: 2020

Parliamentary – last:

2016, turnout: 87.5%; next: 2021

WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT (2016):

21.2%

LOCAL ELECTIONS:

no elected local government in Seychelles

WOMEN COUNCILLORS:

na

LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE as percentage of total government expenditure 2013/14:

0.02%

SUMMARY

Seychelles is a republican democracy working towards elected local government after 22 years of appointed local administration. There is no constitutional provision or protection and the main legislative text is the Local Government Act 2015. The current appointed local administration has no powers to raise revenue and all funds are transferred from national government via the Ministry for Social Affairs, Community Development and Sports. Through the local administration and 25 appointed district community councils, the government facilitates community-based services and the intervention of various agencies operating in the districts.

1. NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Seychelles is a unitary republican democracy with bicameral parliament.^{38.1a} The president is the executive head of both the state and the government and is directly elected by universal suffrage for a five-year term. The president appoints a cabinet of ministers from among the citizens of Seychelles, with the approval of parliament. The unicameral parliament is known as the national assembly and currently has a membership of 35: 25 members elected using the first-past-the-post system, and up to ten additional members, allocated proportionately to all parties participating in the election, on the basis of one seat for each 10% of the vote won. All members of the national assembly, whether elected directly or indirectly, hold office for five years. Following the 2016 national election, 21.2% of elected representatives were women.^{38.1b}

2. LEGAL BASIS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

2.1 Constitutional provisions

Whilst there are no specific constitutional provisions^{38.2a} or protection for local government, there is provision for local administration under relevant legislation

2.2 Main legislative texts

The Local Government Act 2015^{38.2b} enables the creation of elected district councils to enable citizens

to participate in the governance and development of their local area. However, the Act has not yet come into effect and local government officers remain appointed. The previous legislation, the Local Government Act 1991, was suspended in 1993 when the new constitution was introduced and the national assembly voted to dissolve district councils. Currently, public service orders regulate the functions of state administrative officers posted to district administration roles. Financial management regulations govern non-administrative transactions.

2.3 Proposed legislative changes

No known proposed legislative changes.

2.4 National urban policy

There is no national urban policy but there are dynamic national policies^{38.2c} on housing and land allocation.

3. STRUCTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

3.1 Local government within the state

There is one level of local governance, the district community council, which runs each of the 25 constituencies/districts.

Table 38.1a Distribution of councils and population

| Municipality | District community councils | Population (2010 Census) | Population (2016 estimate) | % rural (2010) |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| Greater Victoria | 8 | 28,500 | na | na |
| North Mahé | 3 | 11,661 | na | na |
| West Mahé | 4 | 13,297 | na | na |
| South Mahé | 3 | 11,226 | na | na |
| East Mahé | 4 | 13,855 | na | na |
| Praslin | 2 | 8,603 | na | na |
| La Digue | 1 | 3,045 | na | na |
| Outer Islands (OIs) | - | 758 | na | na |
| TOTAL | 25 | 90,945 | 94,600 | 44.7 |

Source: MSACDS communication with CLGF and 2010 Census^{38.3a}



3.2 Ministerial oversight

The Community Development and Sports Department (CDSD) within the Ministry for Social Affairs, Community Development and Sports^{38,3b} (MSACDS) has responsibility for overseeing local governance in the 25 district community councils. The minister in charge of local government performs his or her functions under the direction of the president. The CDSD comprises a secretariat and three divisions: human resources and budget management, programmes development and special events, and community management. The principal secretary ensures the effective planning and implementation of all national government projects at the grassroots level and implements any other decisions of national government relating to the districts.

3.3 District community councils

District community councils were reintroduced in 1999. The Minister for Social Affairs, Community Development and Sports, being responsible for local governance, appoints the 12 members of each district community council for a two-year term. The councils, which meet every two months, are advisory and function under the aegis of the MSACDS. The appointed district administrator convenes and chairs meetings and supervises operations. The local member of the national assembly (MNA) sits on the council. The other council members represent sub-district areas. Local residents known for their interests, experience or contribution can also be appointed as members. Both sub-district representatives and MNAs bring forward the expressed wishes, aspirations and day-to-day concerns of the community. The other two district-based structures are the district social committee (DSC) and the district team (DT). Both are chaired by the district administrator and members meet on a monthly basis. The DSC is made up of community life programme representatives, who operate at the district level. The main aims of the DSC are to coordinate the planning and implementation of programmes, facilitate dialogue, optimise resources and ensure unity in local actions. The DT ensures the collaborative actions of all partners in undertaking community development work. The team is the custodian of the 'local common agenda'. Much is done to enhance partnerships with the private sector and non-governmental bodies.

4. ELECTIONS

4.1 Recent local elections, 4.2 Voting system and 4.3 Elected representatives

Local government is currently appointed, not elected.^{38,4}

4.4 Women's representation

No information is available.

5. SYSTEMS FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

5.1 Legal requirement

There is no legal requirement for community consultation.

5.2 Implementation

Although local government in Seychelles is appointed, it nevertheless brings together many groups, with some elements of democratic consultation and participation. There is an annual public meeting held in each district at which members of the community can ask questions or seek clarification on local issues.

5.3 ICT use in citizen engagement

No information is available.

6. ORGANISED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

6.1 National local government association

There is no local government association.

6.2 Other associations of local government

In 1994 the Association of the Districts of Victoria was set up. This is registered under the Registration of Associations Act 1959, as subsequently amended, and its chairperson was granted the status of mayor in 1997. Since 2003, the minister responsible for local government appoints the mayor with the cabinet's approval for five years (previously, on behalf of its districts and forming part of the association, the MNAs of Victoria elected the chairperson). Receiving financial aid from the government and other sources, the association assists local authorities in their socioeconomic, sports and cultural activities. The Mayor of Victoria represents the capital of Seychelles both nationally and internationally. Only legislators and representatives of the districts of Victoria are admitted to the association. The executive committee consists of the mayor, a secretary and a treasurer. The latter two are elected for one year at the association's annual general assembly. The mayor both chairs the association and is its executive head and spokesperson. A 12-member consultative body, whose members represent the various segments of the capital's society, is appointed by the mayor for five years to help him/her execute projects in Victoria.

7. INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

District administration offices operate with the close collaboration of national government officials and committees. An inter-agency consultative committee for services has also been established at the Community Development Secretariat and meets quarterly to address pertinent issues raised by all 25 districts.

8. MONITORING SYSTEMS

The internal auditor at the MSACDS and the auditor at the Ministry of Finance examine the accounts of each district administration. The auditor general, holder of a constitutional post, also checks the accounts. The ombudsman may intervene to investigate complaints relating to such transactions.

9. FINANCE, STAFFING AND RESOURCES

9.1 Local government expenditure

Budgets for local administrations are set by national government.

9.2 Locally raised revenue

No taxes are assigned to the local (district) administrations.

9.3 Transfers

Local government is entirely financed by national government. The MSACDS pays a sum in advance every quarter to each local administration. Once allocated, the districts exercise control over their allocated budget. Each district receives a yearly allocation of approximately SCR140,000 to meet basic operational expenses. Personal emoluments are not included. A total annual allocation of SCR1,200,000 is also allocated to the districts for undertaking small community projects (see Table 38.2a).

9.4 Loans

No information is available.

9.5 Local authority staff

District administrators are appointed by the Minister for Social Affairs, Community Development and Sports to lead local authorities on a two-year renewable contract, and are responsible to the principal secretary at the ministry. The district administrator recruits staff, subject to approval by the ministry; the typical structure is three officers and some general workers. The staff usually includes an office manager, office assistant, secretary, works supervisor, cleaner and field technician.

Table 38.2a Anse Royale District - 2015 transfers from national government

| Government transfers | SCR (000s) |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Operations and maintenance | 110 |
| Sports | 63 |
| Community life programmes | 25 |
| Community small projects | 1,200 |
| TOTAL | 1,398 |

Source: MSACDS communication with CLGF

**Table 38.2b Local government expenditure as a percentage of total government expenditure 2013/14**

| | 2013/14 actual SCRm |
|---|---------------------|
| Total government expenditure | 5,834.4 |
| Total local government expenditure | 1.4 |
| Local government expenditure as a percentage of total government expenditure | 0.02% |

Source: MSACDS communication with CLGF

Disciplinary power rests with the district administrator acting under delegated powers, in compliance with public service orders. National government pays officers' salaries and the wages of employees in the establishments run by the local administration.

10. DISTRIBUTION OF SERVICE DELIVERY RESPONSIBILITY

10.1 Overview of local government service delivery responsibility

Structures and mechanisms have been established to ensure enhanced service delivery at the local level. The local administration office is seen as the focal point through which service providers engage with the community. Through the local administration, the CDSD facilitates general leisure, recreational, health and social services and encourages active citizenship through various established programmes and clubs.

10.2 ICT use in service delivery

The Seychelles' e-government project, which began in the late 1990s, has laid a solid foundation for the country's future e-government initiatives. Under the direction of the Information Communications Technology (ICT) department, the project has three targets: the expansion of the electronic

government network (EGN) for use in internal government communications; the computerisation of core government services; and the provision of online services to the public. All 25 district administration offices are connected to the EGN system, enabling a range of government organisations to deliver services at district level. Similarly, all district administrators have an official government email address via which they can communicate electronically.

10.3 The role of local government in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Government in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, has convened stakeholders from across various levels and sectors for a national dialogue on integrating SDGs into national plans and budgets^{38,10}.

REFERENCES AND USEFUL WEBSITES

- 38.1a. Seychelles government portal www.egov.sc
- 38.1b. Women in national parliaments. Inter-Parliamentary Union <http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>
- 38.2a. Constitution of the Seychelles www.ecs.sc/pages/legislations/constitution.aspx
- 38.2b. Local Government Act 2015 www.seyllii.org/sc/sc/legislation/Act%20of%202015%281%29_optimized.pdf
- 38.2c. Policy on land allocation and housing www.luh.gov.sc/default.aspx?Pagelid=34
- 38.3a. 2010 Population and Housing Census National Statistics Bureau www.nsb.gov.sc/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Population_and_Housing_Census_2010_Report.pdf
- 38.3b. Local government department www.localgovernment.gov.sc
- 38.4. National Election Commission www.ecs.sc
- 38.5. No reference for this section
- 38.6. No reference for this section
- 38.7. No reference for this section
- 38.8. No reference for this section
- 38.9. Based on figure provided in the profile by the MSACD for one council (Table 2a) and the executive summary of the national government budget 2013/14 www.statehouse.gov.sc/uploads/downloads/filepath_28.pdf
- 38.10. Stakeholders to convene for national dialogue on SDGs www.finance.gov.sc/press-releases/71/Stakeholders-to-convene-for-national-dialogue-on-integrating-SDGs-into-national-plans-and-budgets-in-Seychelles
- 38.11a. UN statistics surface area <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2006/Table03.pdf>
- 38.11b. Commonwealth Local Government knowledge hub www.clgf.org.uk/resource-centre/knowledge-hub
- 38.11c. UNDP HDR Seychelles country profile <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/SCY>



Annex 38a Summary of service provision in different spheres of government in Seychelles

| Services | Delivering authority | | Remarks |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| | National government | District community councils | |
| GENERAL ADMINISTRATION | | | |
| Police | ■ | | |
| Fire protection | ■ | | |
| Civil protection | ■ | | |
| Criminal justice | ■ | | |
| Civil status register | ■ | | |
| Statistical office | ■ | | |
| Electoral register | ■ | | |
| EDUCATION | | | |
| Pre-school (kindergarten and nursery) | | | |
| Primary | ■ | ■ | |
| Secondary | ■ | ■ | |
| Vocational and technical | ■ | | |
| Higher education | ■ | | |
| Adult education | ■ | | |
| SOCIAL WELFARE | | | |
| Family welfare services | ■ | ■ | |
| Welfare homes | ■ | ■ | |
| Social security | ■ | | |
| PUBLIC HEALTH | | | |
| Primary care | ■ | | |
| Hospitals | ■ | | |
| Health protection | ■ | | |
| HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING | | | |
| Housing | ■ | | |
| Town planning | ■ | ■ | |
| Regional planning | ■ | | |
| TRANSPORT | | | |
| Roads | ■ | ■ | |
| Transport | ■ | | |
| Urban roads | ■ | | |
| Urban rail | ■ | | |
| Ports | ■ | | |
| Airports | ■ | | |
| ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC SANITATION | | | |
| Water and sanitation | ■ | | |
| Refuse collection and disposal | ■ | | |
| Cemeteries and crematoria | ■ | | |
| Slaughterhouses | | | |
| Environmental protection | ■ | | |
| Consumer protection | ■ | | |
| CULTURE, LEISURE AND SPORTS | | | |
| Theatres and concerts | | ■ | |
| Museums and libraries | ■ | ■ | |
| Parks and open spaces | ■ | ■ | |
| Sports and leisure facilities | ■ | ■ | |
| Religious facilities | | | |
| UTILITIES | | | |
| Gas services | ■ | | |
| District heating | ■ | | |
| Water supply | ■ | | |
| Electricity | ■ | | |
| ECONOMIC | | | |
| Agriculture, forests and fisheries | ■ | | |
| Local economic development/promotion | ■ | | |
| Trade and industry | ■ | | |
| Tourism | ■ | | |

■ sole responsibility service ■ joint responsibility service ■ discretionary service