

Seychelles

Seychelles will undertake its 1st Voluntary National Review in July 2020. With a focus this year on development accelerators and transformative action, it is a key moment to consider activities and tools which can unlock progress, for all, across the board.

Access to information – understood as the physical possibility and right for all to seek and find information, and the skills to use it – can make just such a contribution. This access can help at all levels. It supports individuals to take better decisions about how to farm, where to look for work or how to look after their own and their families' health. It gives governments the possibility to define better policies. It allows researchers to understand the world around us, establish new insights and innovate. Libraries are a key part of the infrastructure for ensuring that this is the case.

But where does Seychelles stand today as concerns its libraries and access to information? This data sheet provides background based on data from the Development and Access to Information report produced by IFLA in partnership with the Technology and Social Change Group at the University of Washington, as well as IFLA's own Library Map of the World.

KEY CONCLUSIONS

- *Seychelles has a strong public library field, in particular as regards staffing, offering the country a helpful infrastructure for achieving a variety of development goals. The academic library field is less strong compared to global averages, indicating an area for potential future investment.*
- *Seychelles scores well on a number of indicators under the development and access to information framework, notably household internet and computer access, literacy, and political rights and civil liberties. However, the proportion of the population using the internet remains low, potentially explained by a relatively high poverty rate and lower scores on skills (even though these are above regional averages). There is potential, therefore, to work through libraries to help users get online, gain skills and identify opportunities.*

LIBRARIES IN SEYCHELLES

Library data for Seychelles is focused on the country's public library network. With five libraries, the country has 5.17 public libraries per 100 000 people, only a little lower than the global average, and five times higher than the average for Sub-Saharan Africa region.

Furthermore, with 30 public and community library workers, Seychelles has a rate of over 31 per 100 000 people, the country has over three times the global average, and more than 18 times the average for Sub-Saharan Africa. Each library in Seychelles serves an average of 92km², compared to a global average of 254km² (although of course this only relates to land area). All of Seychelles' public libraries offer internet access, compared to a global average of just under 2/3. This means that Seychelles already has a strong infrastructure, in the form of its libraries, for supporting development in communities.

With one academic library, Seychelles performs around the global average for numbers per 100 000 people, although with only two staff (and so 2.1 academic library workers per 100 000), the country is some way below the global average of 10.5. Given the role of academic libraries in supporting students and researchers, this may be an area for further investment.

DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN SEYCHELLES

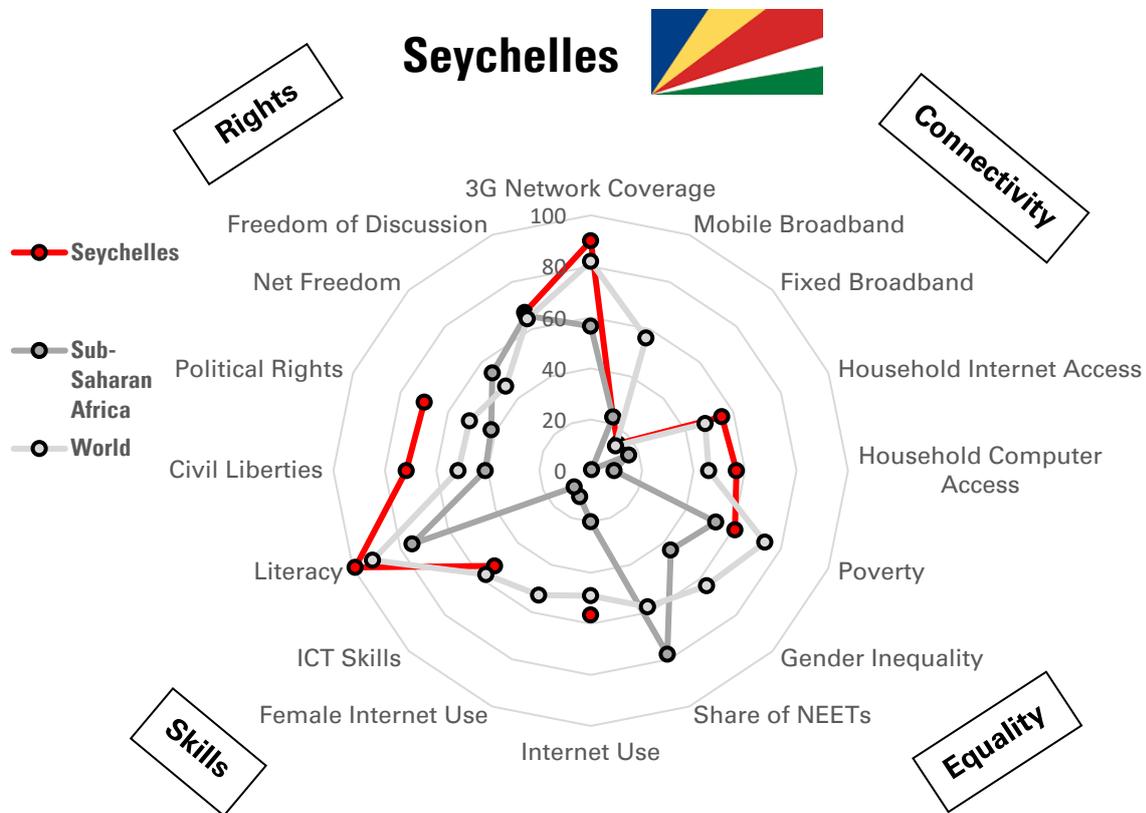
The Development and Access to Information report draws on a range of indicators highlighting where countries stand on four key pillars of access to information: connectivity, equality, skills and rights. For meaningful access to information to be a reality for all, performance needs to be strong across all of these categories.

Seychelles has a relatively good performance on **connectivity**, with higher 3G network coverage, household internet and household computer access than the averages both for the world, and for Sub-Saharan Africa. The number of mobile broadband connections, however, remains well below the global average, and internet use as a whole stands at just short of 60%, suggesting that despite good coverage, far from all citizens are able to take advantage of internet on the move.

Concerning **equality**, the only available statistic is for the share of the population below the national poverty line. This sits between the global and Sub-Saharan African averages, with clear scope for progress, given the risk of economic poverty and information poverty reinforcing each other.

On **skills**, Seychelles has a very high literacy rate, but falls below the global average on the skills pillar of the ICT development index (which is strongly based on secondary school completion). This indicates another area where progress could be made in order to give everyone the competence and confidence to use the internet. Concerning **rights**, Seychelles scores well on civil liberties and political rights, while its score for freedom of discussion is much closer to the global and regional average.

On the basis of the data, it appears that the most immediate challenges for Seychelles are to support greater access to the internet, in particular for those under the poverty line, and supporting the development of skills throughout the population.



How to read the graph: this graph displays a range of indicators used within the DA2I framework, adjusted to fit on a scale of 0-100, where 100 is the most positive outcome in terms of access to information.

TABLE OF DATA

See below for explanations. * = or latest available year. Regional averages are based on available data.

PILLAR	INDICATOR	SEYCHELLES	Year	SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA	Year	WORLD	Year
CONNECTIVITY	3G Network Coverage	90%	2016	56.54	2016	81.92%	2016
	Mobile Broadband (Subscriptions per 100 People)	22.64	2016	22.70	2016	56.22	2016
	Fixed Broadband (Subscriptions per 100 People)	14.89	2016	0.54	2016	13.71	2016
	Household Internet Access	55.17	2016	16.04	2016	48.16%	2016
	Household Computer Access	56.67	2016	9.11	2016	45.88%	2016
EQUALITY	Poverty (Share of pop'n below national poverty line)	60.7	2013	47.34	2015*	26.69%	2015*
	Gender Inequality (0 = More equal, 1 = Less equal)			0.56	2015	0.36*	2015*
	Share of NEETs			11.07	2015*	21.12%	2015*
	Internet Use	56.51	2016	20.00	2016*	49%	2016*
	Female Internet Use			11.07	2016*	52.79%	2016*
SKILLS	ICT Skills	52.8	2017	0.91	2017	5.76	2017
	Literacy	99.05	2015	75.09	2015	91.75	2015
RIGHTS	Civil Liberties (0 = least free, 60 = most free)	71.67	2018	24.59	2018	30.9	2018
	Political Rights (0 = least free, 40 = most free)	70	2018	16.73	2018	20.37	2018
	Net Freedom (0 = most free, 100 = least free)			45.95	2016	53.29	2016
	Freedom of Discussion	67.06	2016	0.66	2016	0.64	2016

EXPLANATION OF INDICATORS

3G Network Coverage: this provides a measure of whether one part of the basic infrastructure for connectivity exists, although in itself is not enough to guarantee access (users need a device and a relevant subscription to be able to get online). Source: ITU

Mobile Broadband (Mobile Broadband Subscriptions per 100 people): this provides an idea of how many people can use mobile internet, opening up many – if not all – of the possibilities that internet access brings. One person may have more than one subscription. Source: ITU

Fixed Broadband (Fixed Broadband Subscriptions per 100 people): this provides an idea of how widespread home or business internet access is. Fixed access is often associated with the possibility to connect computers to make more advanced uses of the internet. Source: ITU

Household Internet Access (Share of Households with Internet Access): access to the internet at home allows for access to information at any time without having to go outside, but may be controlled by some members of the family. Source: ITU

Household Computer Access (Share of Households with a Computer): this focuses on access to computers. This is crucial for people to be able to carry out more advanced activities on the internet that might be impossible on a phone, such as writing resumes or analysing data. Source: ITU

Poverty: this indicator measures the number of people living below the national poverty line, which varies from country to country. It is a measure of economic inequality in a country. The indicator is inversed in the chart (i.e. the share of people not under the poverty line). Source: World Bank

Gender Inequality: this is calculated using the Gender Inequality Index. This index uses a basket of indicators in different areas of social development including: reproductive health, proportion of women in parliament, relative shares of men and women with at least some secondary education, and labour market participation in order to provide a broad idea of the extent of gender inequality in a country. The indicator runs from 0 (most equal) to 1 (least equal) and is inversed and adapted in the chart above. Source: UNDP

Share of NEETS (People aged 15-24 Not in Education, Employment or Training): this measures the share of young people cut off from education or the job market. Being 'NEET' can bring long-term scarring effects, and so reducing numbers is a key priority. The indicator is inversed and adapted in the chart (i.e. the share of young people who are not NEET). Source: ILO.

Internet Use (Share of People Using the Internet): looking beyond household access data (which will be affected by the structure of households in general), this gives a figure for the number of people using the internet. Source: ITU

Female Internet Use: this measure, in conjunction with the share of the overall population using the internet, allows us to understand to what extent there is a gender digital divide. Source: ITU

ICT Skills: there are relatively few global metrics of ICT skills, with those that exist only focusing on certain regions. The Skills Sub-Index of the ICT Development Index created by the ITU aims to work in this direction using levels of secondary and tertiary education enrolment, plus mean years of schooling, as proxies. Source: ITU

Literacy: this measures literacy among 15-24 year olds – i.e. people who have finished formal education. While there are online resources available for people with low literacy, being able to read, type, and understand information remains a fundamental skill. Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Civil Liberties: this provides an indication of the degree to which citizens of a country enjoy fundamental civic rights, including freedom of expression and association, as well as the strength of the rule of law, based on expert judgements. Scores run from 0 (least free) to 60 (most free) and have been adapted to fit the graphic above. Source: Freedom House.

Political Rights: this provides a measure of the rights people have to participate in the political process, including fair and free elections, political pluralism, and the functioning of government in general. Scores run from 0 (least free) to 40 (most free) and have been adapted to fit the graphic above. Source: Freedom House.

Net Freedom: this metric assesses the level of restrictions on rights online by both public and private actors. It draws on assessments of obstacles to access (legal, economic and practical), limits on content, and violations of rights. Scores run from 100 (least free) to 0 (most free) and so are inverted in the graphic above. Source: Freedom House.

Freedom of Discussion: this indicator looks at whether people are able to hold private discussions without fear of repercussions either from the authorities or society in general due to cultural restrictions or norms. Scores run from 0 (least free) to 1 (most free), and so are adapted to fit into the graphic above. Source: V-Dem dataset codebook.