



THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF SEYCHELLES

MEDIA YOUTH SPORTS AND CULTURE COMMITTEE

REPORT ON THE

VISIT TO THE SEYCHELLES NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL, FEBRUARY 2023

Seventh Assembly

The Chairperson of the Media, Youth, Sports and Culture Committee submits, on behalf of the Committee its Report on its visit to the Seychelles National Youth Council, February 2023:

Hon. Wavel Woodcock
Chairperson



Other Members:

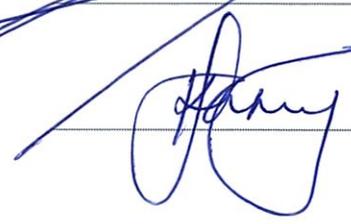
Hon. Philip Arissol
Vice-Chairperson



Hon. Naddy Zialor
Member



Hon. Kelly Samynadin
Member



Hon. Paul Ernesta
Member



Hon. Flory Larue
Member



Hon. Conrad Gabriel
Member



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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

The Media, Youth, Sports, and Culture Committee (MYSCC), is a Select Sessional Committee, the powers of which are set out in the *National Assembly Standing Orders, 2020*, specifically, Orders 90-91. The committee is tasked with oversight of the departments of Media, Youth, Sports, and Culture. In the fulfilment of its tasks, the MYSCC, conducts visits to the departments of Media, Youth, Sports and Culture, seeking clarifications and making reports and recommendations to the House.

The Committee conducted a visit to the Seychelles National Youth Council (SNYC) on Thursday 2nd of February 2023. Committee members present were Hon. Wavel Woodcock Chairperson of the Committee, Hon. Philip Arissol Vice Chairperson of the Committee, Hon. Flory Larue, Hon. Kelly Samynadin and Hon. Naddy Zialor. A meeting was held prior to the visit with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mr. Albert Duncan, the Director of the Youth Empowerment and Wellbeing section Mr Marcus Mederic, the Director of the Youth Engagement section Mr. Simon Barra, the Program Coordinator for the Youth Leadership section Ms. Josette Cadence, and Public Relations, Information and Communications Officer, Ms. Marie May Larue. A range of topics were discussed during this meeting, including programs currently available, the modernisation of the SNYC, and the location of SNYC offices on the islands of Praslin and La Digue. The meeting was followed by a tour of the SNYC offices.

As an entity directly involved with the Youth, the Committee considered this activity to be of the utmost significance. This document is a report of the committee's findings from the meeting and visit. Chapter One provides a brief overview of the SNYC and a section detailing the Committee's aims for this activity. Chapter Two consists of the various points of discussion raised during the meeting, and Chapter Three consists of the Committee's findings during the visit.

1.1. The Seychelles National Youth Council

The SNYC was officially launched in 1998. According to the Seychelles National Youth Council Act 1998¹, the functions of the SNYC are as follows:

- To assist in the formulation and revision of national youth policies
- To foster among the Seychellois youth a spirit of national consciousness, a sense of unity and discipline, respect, understanding, co-operation and harmony through youth work;
- To plan and conduct programmes of activities that would contribute to the moral, cultural, educational, economic, artistic and physical advancement of the Seychellois youth;
- To uphold and strengthen the voluntary and democratic principles in the youth movements;
- To liaise with national youth organisations of other countries;
- To promote international understanding and co-operation;

¹ The Seychelles National Youth Council Act, pg. 3

- To provide a medium for a regular dialogue between the youth and Government on matters pertaining to youth.

The SNYC currently run a variety of programs for the youth and have a workforce of 44 staff members.

1.2.Aims of The Visit

As the committee representing the interests of the youth, the SNYC was considered an important entity for the committee to visit and meet with, as they play a crucial role in the development of the youth in Seychelles. The MYSCC wished to achieve several aims from the visit and meeting:

- 1) To gain more information about the SNYC Offices
- 2) To gain updates and more information on the SNYC's Youth Programs
- 3) To better understand the SNYC's plans
- 4) To gain more information on youth workers' roles and responsibilities

CHAPTER TWO

MEETING WITH THE SEYCHELLES NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL



This Chapter will provide details of the various points of discussion and concerns raised during the Committee's meeting with the CEO of the SNYC and other members of staff.

Points of Discussion

2.1. Location of the SNYC Offices of Praslin and La Digue

The Chairperson alluded to the Committee's prior visit of the SNYC offices of Praslin in 2020 and the concerns raised during that visit. The Committee was informed that the way forward concerning these offices are changes in locations which would involve the determining deadlines for a move and drafting a plan for the relocations for both offices on Praslin and La Digue. The Committee were informed that one of the major constraints affecting the relocation of the SNYC La Digue offices is identifying a suitable location which will accommodate the SNYC's needs. Another factor the SNYC is considering is the needs of the youth and ensuring that the space for the offices is aligned to the needs of the present-day youth.

Pertinent Questions and Recommendations

Hon. Larue enquired about whether there were discussions with the *Ministry of Local Government and Community Affairs* to enable the SNYC to solve the issues of location on La Digue through

the use of the Community centre. The Committee were informed that this was an unexplored course of action, but one which the SNYC will consider as a solution.

2.2. Youth Service Bureaus and District Youth Committees

According to the SNYC, the Youth Service Bureaus (YSB), were being used for basic computer skills and there were efforts at revamping the YSBs by providing facilities for printing and meetings. The discussion over the YSBs included the possibility of using the bureaus to provide support for a more technology savvy generation and aligning the services offered to the needs of the current youth. The Committee were informed that the only YSBs which are operational are those of the inner islands.

The SNYC informed the MYSCC that the District Youth Committees (DYC) were shifted from the portfolio of the SNYC to the portfolio of the *Ministry of Local Government and Community Affairs*. As a result of this shift, the SNYC's role regarding the DYCs is to develop interest groups and clubs.

One of the main concerns raised, was the challenges regarding youth engagement in the DYCs. One factor affecting this lack of engagement is the shortage of facilitators available to engage with the youth at district level and create the DYCs.

Pertinent Questions and Recommendations

Hon. Woodcock enquired about the discrepancies and anomalies in the reports of the auditor general regarding expenses in the YSBs. The Committee were informed that such anomalies have been addressed.

Hon. Zialor highlighted the value of raising the awareness of the youth services in the district and the services of the SNYC to ensure that the youth are aware that they can access these services. Furthermore, Hon. Zialor recommended that stakeholders should be engaged at a national level for the progress of the DYC and the youth.

2.3. Youth Programs

The modernization of SNYC was discussed more in depth as Mr. Duncan discussed the current programs. Ms. Cadence informed the MYSCC of the current programs under the Youth Leadership section which include the *Seychelles National Youth Assembly (SNYA)*, the *Think Tank*, *Young Citizens*, and *Entrepreneurs*. The *Think Tank* provides young professionals with a platform to express their opinions about youth related issues.

Ms. Cadence explained the changes regarding the SNYA, which include changing the practice of selecting members of the youth assembly from schools instead having the youth elect members of the youth assembly. The Committee were provided with more details regarding the elections of the youth assembly, criteria for candidates (14-17 years of age and having parental consent), trainings which are being delivered and nomination procedures.

Mr. Mederic provided the MYSCC with details on the programs under the Youth Empowerment section. The 10 programs under this section include *Youth Tech* for example, which is meant to prepare youths to safely navigate the cyber space. *Pocket*, is another program created and is in

close collaboration with the Central Bank of Seychelles; this program enables the youth to manage their money giving them financial education.

The CEO highlighted the importance of aligning the needs of the youth to the services being offered by the SNYC and having the resources to combat the negative influences on the youth in society.

Pertinent Questions and Recommendations

Hon. Samynadin enquired about the sensitization which have been done to prepare candidates. Ms. Marie May Larue explained that there has been information on democracy and the elections for the Youth Assembly which has been disseminated. The MYSCC were also informed that after the nominations, there will be a session where the nominees will learn more about their roles.

Hon. Woodcock and Hon. Samynadin noted that the Assembly should be engaged for sensitizations for the candidates.

Hon. Larue enquired about whether the SNYC have considered carrying out an audit with the support of other entities, reviewing all the programs, participation, and effects of the programs. The CEO emphasised the importance for identifying the actual needs of the youth, the real issues that they are facing, and the value of strengthening relationships with different entities.

2.4. Training and Staff Capacity

The MYSCC were informed of the training needs of the SNYC as well as the fact that their scheme has been revised as they are now program officers rather than youth workers. There are training concerns as there is the issue of the staff needing training in line with the new function of the scheme.

Pertinent Questions and Recommendations

Hon. Woodcock recommended considering sending their employees for further training via the various scholarships that are available in order to build capacity.

2.5. Program Officers' Roles and Responsibilities

Regarding the roles of program officers in relation to the DYCs, the program officers work in collaboration with the District Administrators if they request any assistance. The program officers engage the youth in the districts through establishing interest clubs, ensuring that the clubs operate.

CHAPTER THREE FAMILIARIZATION VISIT

Following the meeting, the Committee visited the offices of the SNYC which occupy three floors of the *SACOS Tower* in Victoria. Discussions were raised on various points concerning the SNYC programs and challenges. This Chapter will provide an overview of the familiarization visit of the SNYC offices and the pertinent issues discussed during the MYSCC's interaction with other staff members.



The staff members raised concerns of inadequate support from districts as well as a lack of youth engagement. Another shortfall expressed by the program officers is their inability to connect with the youth and their inability to adequately assist the districts due to their being responsible for 7 districts, resulting in the program officers being overextended.

The entrepreneur section was among the offices visited, where the MYSCC learned more about financing opportunities for the youth through grants from the SNYC through which they may assist the young entrepreneur with such things as machinery for their project. In 2022, the SNYC assisted 12 youths out of 26 applications.



CONCLUSION

The visit and meeting to the SNYC informed the members of the MYSCC on the current services being offered to the youth and the different challenges that the Council is facing. The Chairperson emphasized the need for strengthened youth engagement and consideration over how to achieve a higher level of engagement. A deeper understanding of the program officers' roles and responsibilities was gained as well as the challenges they face in performing their duties. Significantly, the Hon. Members were able to attain a greater insight into the newly appointed CEO's plan of action for the SNYC.