Acknowledgement:
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Disclaimer:
This publication covers the period from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the possibility of errors or omissions cannot be excluded.

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This interactive document has been optimised for use on computers and tablets in portrait orientation. To return to the table of contents at anytime please tap or click on the hand symbol (see right) located at the top of each page.
At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Seychelles registered impressive progress in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling the economy to rebound strongly from the severe contraction in 2020. This enabled early recovery of the tourism sector and progress in the restoration of the macroeconomic stability accompanied by the commitment from the new Government to implement a structural reform agenda.

During the first week of January 2021, the first cases of COVID-19 cases in the community surged by more than 36%, with the first fatality recorded on 3rd January. In response to the resurgence, Seychelles began its vaccination campaign on the 10th of January. By the end of January 2021, nearly 30,000 individuals (~30% of the population) had received at least one dose of vaccine and as of 31 December 2021, 78,263 persons had been fully vaccinated, representing nearly 80 percent of the total population.

In parallel to the vaccination campaign, the Government also indicated their ambitions to open the country for tourism and to rescind the social welfare measures in place by April 2021, to boost economic recovery. By March 2021, the country had fully opened for tourism but by May 2021, despite the high rate of vaccinations, a surge of infections prompted the authorities to impose new sanitary restrictions and extend school closures again. Tourism remained open, except for visitors from South-East Asia, and later restrictions on Southern Africa. Consequently, the pandemic resurgence worsened the country’s debt to a GDP ratio estimated at 81.2 by the end of 2021, undoing a decade of fiscal discipline and macroeconomic reforms. Furthermore, the overall impact on supply chains resulted in vulnerable households struggling to meet the cost of living.

Amidst these challenges, the Government has set out an ambitious agenda to steer the economy towards a sustainable path of recovery.
by implementing several interventions. Critical to this agenda is a comprehensive public sector reform aimed at enhancing the efficiency of public institutions and reducing resource wastage. There is also commitment to promote the private sector as part of the economic diversification agenda. Achieving these aims requires strengthening platforms for engagement, and articulation of priority areas that can leverage private capital of public-private partnerships. The Government is also advancing a digitalization agenda aimed at establishing efficiency in the public and private sector to reduce the cost of doing business.

Alongside the objective to deliver on economic recovery is growing discourse on the climate related vulnerabilities of Seychelles as a Small Island Developing State that could impede progress across various sectors. As Seychelles prepared for COP26, the President of the Republic of Seychelles, Mr. Wavel Ramkalawan, voiced his concern, requesting that partners move to action on the promises made under the Paris Agreement.

The United Nations Development Programme, while constrained in its capacity to engage in programming under challenging working conditions, invested in supporting the economic recovery agenda in Seychelles. We aimed to diversify our portfolio beyond climate mitigation and adaptation to include public sector transformation for digitalisation and strengthening private sector engagement. We remain committed to continued collaboration with the Government of Seychelles to support development programming.
Overview

Seychelles:
- Total land area: **455 km²**
- Number of islands: **155**

**Population**
- **≈100K**

**Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ):**
- **1.3M km²**

**World UNESCO Sites**
- Aldabra Atoll
- Vallee Atoll
- Vallee De Mai

**Economic Freedom Index**: 61.1
- Overall score: **61.1** (-5.2 compared to 2020)
- Global Rank: **79th** (down 19 places from 2020)
- Regional Rank: **5th** (down 1 place from 2020)

**GDP growth**: 2020: **-10%**
- 2021: **+6.1%**

**Ibrahim Index of African Governance³**

- Overall Governance score: **72.4/100**
- Ranking: **3rd**

**Category scores:**
- Participation, Rights and Inclusion: **75.3/100**
- Foundations for Economic Opportunity: **66.1/100**
- Security and Rule of Law: **72.4/100**
- Human Development: **75.2/100**

1 Source: https://www.heritage.org/index/country/mauritius

World UNESCO Sites
- Aldabra Atoll
- Vallee Atoll
- Vallee De Mai
Blue carbon ecosystem protection targets - seagrass and mangrove ecosystems protected: by 2025...  ...by 2030

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction by 2030: 26.4%

Gender Equality:

- Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament: 22.9% - 77.1%
- Proportion of women in managerial positions: 47.7% - 52.3%
- Proportion of women in managerial positions: 47.7% - 52.3%
- Adolescent birth rate per 1,000 women aged 15-19 years: 68.3
- Literacy rate, age 15+: 95.9% - 96.4%

Corruption Perception Index:

Overall score: 70
Global Rank: 23/180

E-Government Development Index (EGDI):
Overall score: 0.69
Global Rank: 76th
Regional Rank: 2nd

2021-2030 Environmental Commitments – updated NDC targets

Overview
1.0 Key Results/Highlights

2021 was a year that tested the national health systems and the efficacy of vaccines, and impacted business continuity in the Seychelles. There was also need to support economic recovery despite continued disruptions caused by COVID-19 and its variants. The UNDP played a key supporting role working with the Government of Seychelles to address priorities and to amplify advocacy around SIDS vulnerabilities caused by climate change and the unprecedented external shocks brought about by the pandemic.

The Government, elected in October 2020, began extensive restructuring of public institutions. These changes made it imperative for the UNDP to remain agile and engage at the highest level to strengthen continued partnership and buy-in for existing programmatic interventions.

Despite disruptions and challenges brought on by COVID-19, the UNDP over-saw the successful completion of several projects and supported the Government in raising its ambitions to tackle climate change at

Above: As part of Ecosystem Based Adaptation to Climate change in Seychelles, two new wetlands were reprofiled in the Baie Lazare watershed.
COP26 through the Climate Promise Initiative. As countries prepared for climate change negotiations in Glasgow, the Seychelles continued to prioritize adaptation and mitigation techniques towards securing resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems through a mix of hard-engineering solutions and nature-based solutions. Building on the 30 percent designation of the Seychelles Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) as Marine Protected Areas, interventions on Coral Reef restoration began in designated marine parks.

The Country Office initiated high level engagements to expand its programme beyond the environment portfolio to facilitate the country’s socio-economic transformation agenda and set the stage for the new Country Programme Document (CPD) 2024 – 2028 cycle. The UNDP started the implementation of a digitalization project with the aim to achieve two main results in line with the UNDP Digital Strategy. First, e-procurement systems will be established to ease government processes and enhance transparency. Second, the UNDP began work towards supporting business continuity in ministries and departments to enable the public sector to continue providing public services in times of crises.

The preparation of a discussion paper on strategies for private sector engagement followed a widely consultative process that involved Government and private sector. Based on the recommendations of this highly acclaimed paper, a partnership has been established to develop an SDG Investor Map for Seychelles in order to attract private sector in priority areas of government.

In addition, the Tax Inspectors Without Borders initiative was launched with the aim to enhance domestic resource mobilization efforts in the country and thereby reduce the debt burden by increasing domestic tax recovery.
Towards Agenda 2030
The UNDP Seychelles Office also continued its programmatic delivery on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with emphasis on SDG 13 - Climate Action, SDG 14 - Life below Water and SDG 15 – Life on Land. The implementation of programmes also integrated gender analysis and dynamics, ensuring equal participation and benefit for men and women.

The update and mainstreaming of gender in the NDCs, along with the development of the Citizens Charter for Climate Action, promotes the mainstreaming of additional SDGs such as SDG 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production; SDG 5 - Gender Equality; and SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy. The NDC reviewed various sectors and their impacts, and identified partnerships, aligned with SDG17 – Partnerships for the Goals.
The UNDP also launched its Accelerator Lab in April 2021 and recently recruited UN Community volunteers to undertake a mapping exercise and bring together innovators and their grassroots innovations from within the community. They will also help identify potential areas for integrated policy and programme support for the coming year.

The UNDP Country Office in Seychelles also partnered with the Government to attract private capital to investment in areas with high acceleration potential for the SDGs, through the SDG Investor Map. This engagement will be completed in the first half of 2022.

**UNDP’s signature solutions**

In advancing its programmatic support to the Government of Seychelles, the UNDP continued to leverage Signature Solutions 4 on nature-based solutions for development, while also reinforcing the solution 6 on Women’s empowerment and gender equality.

The focus on nature-based solutions for development was instrumental in guiding innovative approaches for coral restoration and ecosystem restoration. The UNDP supported the development of a project to explore the Blue Economy as the main pillar for economic growth and diversification strategy using nature-based approaches.

Solution 6 enabled the Country Office to support the Government in mainstreaming gender in development policies and in ensuring enhanced participation of women in areas such as the NDCs, the Blue Economy, alternative livelihoods and nature-based approaches.
3.0 The Country Programme Results
In preparation for COP26, the UNDP facilitated the Government of Seychelles to submit its updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to combat the impacts of climate change through coastal adaptation, and to build on the momentum as champions of the Blue Economy with an enormous potential towards climate action and economic recovery. At programme level, through the implementation of ecosystem-based adaptation and the building of coastal community resilience through hard engineering, the UNDP has also continued to bring innovative adaptation approaches to support the community.

Investment in coral restoration in the national marine parks has also been sustained. In addition, support was provided to develop a project to prioritize the Blue Economy as a pillar for economic recovery, while the farming community was supported to address issues of drought and food security by utilising an integrated whole-island approach building on lessons learned from nature-based solutions.
Besides the investments in the environment sector, the Country Office expanded its programming to include other socioeconomic development issues such as emerging priorities brought about by COVID-19. First, consultations with the private sector, Government ministries and departments were held to consider the role of the private sector in the diversification of the economy. The resulting discussion paper provided pertinent recommendations that informed the scope of UNDP engagement in 2022. Second, the UNDP supported efforts to expand fiscal space through domestic resource mobilization by launching the Tax Inspectors Without Borders (TIWB) initiative, aimed at recovering lost tax revenues from the private sector.

Government restructuring plans to move towards a cashless economy and to support the implementation of the national digital strategy has set the stage for a transition to e-governance systems and to business continuity schemes during crises.
3.1 Inclusive and sustainable solutions adopted towards energy efficiency

The UNDP Climate Promise Initiative worked with various stakeholders to articulate climate ambitions in both mitigation and adaptation. In addition to renewing commitments with the Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment, the UNDP also worked with the European Union, the World Bank, the University of Seychelles, SeyCCAT, and the Seychelles Energy Commission, amongst others. Discussions with various departments enabled the identification of emerging opportunities to support energy efficiency and the transition towards renewables in the long term. Furthermore, the UNDP also partnered with the Commonwealth and the Sustainable Energy for All initiative to host an investor roundtable discussion on unlocking clean and affordable electricity for all under COP26.

Through the Climate Investment Platform, the UNDP mobilized ~ USD 100,000 to support the Seychelles develop an enabling environment to mobilize climate financing under two projects. The first, PV democratization 2.0 project, is expected to commence in 2022. Its aim is to provide for affordable financial mechanisms to enable residential homeowners to invest in photovoltaic (PV) and switch to green energy. The second, aims to improve the quality of potable drinking water by upgrading groundwater treatment processes on La Digue island. Both projects will benefit from technical capacity assessments and from the identification of future funding sources.

3.2 NDC Review Process

The UNDP supported the Government of Seychelles to review and update of its NDCs ahead of COP26 through the establishment of a multi-sectoral and multi-agency platform consisting of the World Bank, the European Union and representatives from academia and public institutions.

The Country Office also provided the recommendations for the MRV framework. The UNDP liaised with the Seychelles Energy Commission to review emerging priorities and ensure that the legal environment would enable Seychelles to achieve the mitigation targets outlined in the NDCs. Furthermore, the NDCs identified new and emerging sectors for
adaptation and mitigation actions for which support towards developing sector action plans has been envisaged for the coming year. The NDC document was submitted to UNFCCC and was widely disseminated ahead of COP26 through social media platforms.
3.3 Ecosystem-based approaches

3.3.1 Scaled up Climate change adaptation and mitigation actions across sectors

The UNDP has been a key partner in advancing nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches, and applying lessons learned to a whole-island ridge to reef approach. The Seychelles continued to deliver on its climate action initiatives largely through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) methods and hard engineering to build community resilience.

An Integrated Shoreline Management Plan for Anse Royale aimed at sustainable planning and development is underway. Ahead of COP26, Seychelles also successfully piloted several soft and hard engineering adaptation techniques to mitigate coastal flooding, saltwater contamination, drought and coastal erosion on Mahé, Praslin and La Digue islands. The Protected Area Finance project resulted in the Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority applying digital solutions in the form of e-ticketing and online payment platforms to enhance retention of revenues, and improve accountability and transparency by adopting paperless alternatives for ticketing.

The Ridge to Reef project supported legislative and policy reviews of various environmental laws including a review of the Agro-forestry policy for the management of invasive species and reducing the risk of forest degradation. The project is building on lessons learned and making sure that the necessary legal and enabling frameworks are in place to ensure the sustainable use and exploitation of natural resources through an extensive review of the legislation.

In its final year of implementation, the EbA project made further strides in the restoration of degraded wetlands at North East Point. The project completed additional water retention areas in the farming community of Val D’Endorre to ensure resilience against floods and drought during seasonal changes. In addition, the rehabilitation of watersheds in Baie Lazare and North East Point have greatly improved the water storage capacity and increased community resilience to climate-induced risks.

Through the Coral Restoration project, coral resilience and propagation of fragments in ocean nurseries started, and the global momentum and importance of reef restoration to mitigate and adapt to climate change
has been highlighted. The rehabilitation of marine ecosystems provides alternative livelihoods opportunities in a climate changing future through sustainable, innovative and natural solutions.
3.3.2 Increasing women’s access to alternative livelihood opportunities in flood-prone communities

Women are well represented in consultative workshops and meetings relating to environment, climate action and conservation. The Ridge to Reef and Coral Restoration projects have GEN Markers and increasingly report on gender engagement. Both projects have increasingly focused on capacity building and training of communities, and will support nature-based solutions and alternate livelihoods for women.

Under the EbA Project, women continue to play a leading role in the management of watershed committees, with 4 out of 5 committees having women as chairpersons.

The Ridge to Reef project and the Coral Reef Restoration project also have a strong gender reporting focus. As noted under the Ridge to Reef project, an increasing number of women are engaged in services related to habitat mapping, conducting surveys, and monitoring biodiversity sites. It is also to be noted that 67 percent of the Project team within the Ridge to Reef project are women; and for coral restoration, more women are being trained in restoration techniques and nearly 50 percent of the teams involved in research and restoration are female.
3.4 Coral Restoration

The Project Management Team of the ‘Restoring Marine Ecosystem Services by Rehabilitating Coral Reefs to meet a Changing Climate Future’ project conducted site visits at coral restoration sites and nurseries in 2021. Coral restoration works are being carried out by three local activity partners: the Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority, Nature Seychelles and the Marine Conservation Society of Seychelles.

Around 5000 coral nubbins have been planted at two nursery sites near Cousin Island, 3 nursery sites set up around Curieuse Island while 3 other nursery sites - with 9 nursery plants - are monitored in the Sainte Anne Marine Park, which includes Moyenne and Cerf Island.
3.5 Enabling public institutions to develop, monitor and evaluate policies programmes and legislation relevant to poverty reduction.

The UNDP remains a committed development partner and is well positioned to support national priorities towards sustainable and inclusive growth and addressing vulnerabilities. The Country Office funded and prepared a discussion paper on empowering the private sector to drive diversification and economic recovery in a post pandemic scenario, exploring forward and backward linkages of sectors that would provide meaningful employment and build resilience to external shocks.

The UNDP also initiated discussions with various government departments to further elaborate on policy measures for meaningful development of the private sector and embed digital solutions as a means towards inclusive development, poverty reduction and overall resilience of the economy. The Ministry of Investment, Entrepreneurship and Industry welcomed the support of UNDP in creating the SDG Investor Map and diversification investment opportunities to assist with long term recovery.
The contribution of the UNDP team, including the Senior Economist, was vital to drive the socio-economic impact assessment of COVID-19 in the Seychelles, and to explore the emergence of the private sector as a major driver of the country’s economic recovery. This work assisted in identifying gaps and new opportunities, and to enhance the performance of national actors in supporting inclusive growth, reducing inequalities, and alleviating poverty.

Above:
A series of diplomatic visits was carried out in December 2021 by the UNDP team in Seychelles, including a courtesy call on the President of the Republic of Seychelles, Wavel Ramkalawan.
3.6 Private Sector Development

Within the context of expanding support to private sector development, the UNDP undertook extensive online consultations with actors in the public and private sector on mechanisms for empowering the private sector to diversify the economy of Seychelles. This engagement attracted the participation of more than 5 Ministers and several CEOs of public and private institutions, including major banks. The deliberations have shaped UNDP’s workstream for 2022, which includes supporting the preparation of the country’s SDG investor map to attract private capital.

3.7 Improving public services and other government functions through digitalization

The UNDP supported the Ministry of Finance, Trade and Economic Planning and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Tourism to achieve business continuity through digital solutions. It provided equipment to facilitate remote working and digital archiving, and launched the tender to conduct a feasibility analysis for the establishment of e-procurement systems. Through these strategic initiatives, the UNDP was able to support the business continuity of key ministries and further explored the priorities of Government in transitioning towards a e-government.
3.0 The Country Programme Results

Improving public services and other government functions through digitalization
4.0 Partnerships
As there was extensive government restructuring in 2021, engagement at the highest level was imperative. The UNDP Country Office renewed its commitment to the Government through a multidisciplinary mission and built on partnerships to enhance capacities and coordination towards recovery. Continued engagement with the Government in a changing national context has been key to ensure that the momentum is maintained and key outputs are achieved. In 2021, the UNDP in Seychelles built on the prior engagement with the Ministry of Finance, Trade and Investment and reinforced the partnership by ensuring programmatic interventions were in line with national priorities.

Under the various projects, new partnerships were built especially with agencies such as Land Transport, Health, Private landowners, Environment, District Administrators, Farmers, Schools and others to ensure necessary buy-in to achieve the benefits for the community as a whole.

The UNDP also established strong partnerships with the private sector during extensive consultations on empowering the private sector to diversify the Seychelles economy.
This network will be leveraged during the preparation of the SDG Investor Map in 2022.
Networking with the European Union (EU), the World Bank, the Adaptation Fund (AF), ADB and other bilateral donors and national agencies has improved the understanding of partners working in the climate action space. The UNDP worked with the World Bank and the EU under the Climate Promise Initiative to support the update and revision of Seychelles Nationally Determined Contributions for COP26.

Through the Regional Coral Reef Restoration Project, the UNDP has strengthened its partnership with the Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority (SPGA), Nature Seychelles and the Marine Conservation Society of Seychelles (MCSS), the leading environmental agencies in the country. Through this project, the UNDP extends collaboration between Seychelles and Mauritius at both private and public levels.

The UNDP partnered with the private sector and engaged with high level officials from the Ministry of Finance, Trade and Economic Planning, the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Investment and
others on potential opportunities to aid in economic recovery and diversification. The work done by the UNDP Country Office on the Socioeconomic Impact Assessment was used as a reference document by the African Development Bank to inform their projections for economic recovery in Seychelles.

In December, the UNDP organized high level meetings with various ministries to showcase its portfolio of activities demonstrating its value addition to the country’s development space and identify new opportunities for collaboration.

**List of partners:**

1. Government of Seychelles
2. European Union (EU)
3. Global Environment Facility (GEF)
4. GEF Small Grants Programme
5. World Bank
6. UNFCCC
7. The German Cooperation
8. Qatar Fund for Development
9. University of Seychelles
10. Seychelles Energy Commission
11. SeyCCAT
12. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry
13. Seychelles Parks and Garden Authority (SPGA)
14. Nature Seychelles
15. Marine Conservation Society of Seychelles (MCSS)
16. The Agricultural Producers Association of Seychelles
17. The Association of Fish Processors and Exporters
18. The Fishing Boat Owners Association
19. The Seychelles Bankers Association
20. ABSA Bank
21. Bank Al Salam
22. Bank Al Habib
23. Bank of Baroda
24. Bank of Ceylon
25. Mauritius Commercial Bank (MCB)
5.0 Programme Delivery and Resource Mobilization
5.0 Programme Delivery and Resource Mobilization
The resources allocated to achieve intended outputs are largely from vertical funds and focus primarily on climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation and protected areas management. These resources enable the Government to pioneer and champion these issues on a global platform, strengthening the position of Seychelles as an environmental leader and giving credence to its commitment towards environmental protection, biodiversity conservation and climate action.

In 2021, the UNDP Country Office mobilized an additional USD 500,000 under the COVID 2.0 facility to support economic recovery through digitalization in the country. This has enabled the UNDP to strengthen its positioning with the newly elected Government as a key development partner who provides support in emerging priority areas looking beyond the environment and climate change.

The UNDP was also able to secure USD 12,000 to conduct a research paper on engaging and empowering the private sector in Seychelles.
to support economic diversification and recovery. This was impactful as it enabled UNDP to broaden its partnership base with the private sector and several ministries.

Furthermore, a Regional Project on Chemicals and Waste, with an allocation of USD 2.5M, has been approved by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and will be ready for implementation in 2022.
6.0 Operations

COVID-19 disrupted business continuity in 2020 and well into 2021. The initial half of the year was met with restrictions of movement and limitations on in-person meetings and workshops due to high rates of community infection. Thus, in 2021, the UNDP continued to engage with a wide range of stakeholders online.

The Country Office continued to pursue efficiency and acceleration of programme delivery through the use of global and regional Long Term Agreements (LTAs) to procure time-sensitive services such as HACT financial audits, micro and macro assessments and spot checks. The Country Office also used rosters to enable fast-tracking of international consultants procurement, which enabled accelerated delivery and project implementation.
In 2021, the UNDP continued to use e-solutions such as DocuSign by default, which ensured business continuity and saw a reduction in time and cost previously required for paper-based business transactions. With continued restrictions of movement in 2021, the UNDP provided for teleworking, allowing staff to effectively work from home, support programme implementation, and successfully deliver the development results.

The UNDP has provided guidance and support to the Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment Programme Coordination Unit, liaised with different stakeholders in conducting site visits, and engaged with Government at critical junctures to ensure that project implementation was not disrupted. This contributed to the overall national vision of the country towards reducing climate risks.
Communication was enhanced and greatly improved the visibility of the UNDP especially on social media platforms with the support of the Communications team. The multi-country office produced its Annual Report for both Mauritius and Seychelles, and the Private Sector Policy paper was also published and widely disseminated to national stakeholders. Blog posts and improvements on the country office website continued in 2021.

In December 2021, the UNDP Resident Representative, along with a multidisciplinary team and the Communications team from Mauritius, conducted a 2-week mission to Seychelles and met with government counterparts including the H.E. the President of the Republic of Seychelles. The visit was widely covered in the national media and provided greater accountability for and visibility to UNDP programming support in the country.
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**Project Key:**
- IAS = Invasive Alien Species
- GCF = Green Climate Fund
- PPG = Project Preparation Grant
- JMA = Joint Management Area
- SGP = Small Grants Programme