



# **ACCESS TO INFORMATION ANNUAL REPORT 2020**

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## INTRODUCTION

The NCC was established in 1980 governed by the NCC Act which was a product of the Children's Act. Throughout the years, the act went through various changes which eventually redefined the organization's roles and functions. The NCC is currently committed to promote professional and effective interventions for the protection and safety of children in Seychelles. The team is made up of dedicated professionals with years of experience in child protection issues. The organization aims to represent the voice of the child in decision making at national level. The organization's priority is to empower children and parents overcome barriers that are preventing them from getting the most out of life. As from 2018 it was also given the responsibility to oversee the running of the Presidents Village. As of October 2018 just as with every public body, the NCC had to adhere to the new Access to Information Act and Mr. Reuben Lavigne was appointed as the Information Officer.

In accordance with section 54 of the Access to Information Act 2018, the National Council for Children wishes to fulfil its obligation by presenting to the Information Commission its report related to the activities taken place under the provisions of the act.

## MISSION VISION AND MANDATE OF THE ORGANISATION

**Our Vision** is to ensure all the children of Seychelles are given the best start in life to be safe, healthy, happy and resilient and have access to a good education.

**Our Mission is** to put children at the heart of what we do

**Our Core Values** are integrity, respect, responsibility, servant leadership and bringing our best to anything that we do

**Our Aim is** to consistently deliver services and projects with care and compassion to strengthen children and their families through a positive working relationship.

**Our Standards** is to have mechanisms in place that will ensure consistency in our practice and achieve good outcomes for children and their families.

### **NCC's priorities are**

To ensure that children's views and ideas for a clean, safe and healthy environment, a good quality of life and education are heard.

To give children the opportunity and a platform for sharing their feelings and thoughts on safeguarding and child protection as well as develop a better understanding of how and where to seek help and support.

To ensure the rights of the child, as laid down in the UN Conventions of the Rights of the Child, are taken into account in political debates and decision making and taking

### **Functions of NCC as per the National Council Act**

NCC is governed by the **National Council Children's Act** (revised 1991 and amended on 12 October 1999). Its **core functions** amended in 1999 and listed in **Chapter 137** are to:

- **Advocate** and **protect** the interests of children
- **Promote** the well- being of children and families
- **Collaborate** with and support providers of care and assistance to children in need
- **Advise and support** agencies that administer and provide facilities for the welfare of children
- **Collaborate** with other persons and public and private organisations, both nationally and internationally, in furtherance of the welfare of children
- **Initiate reforms** in legislation, policies and practices pertaining to children
- **Advise the Government** on all matters relating to children and families
- **Raise greater awareness** on issues relating to children
- **Promote and provide training** for all persons involved with children on a professional basis
- Work for the **prevention of all forms of child abuse**
- **Promote and develop treatment programmes** for children and families
- **Undertake** such other activities in relation to the care and well-being of children as may be provided by any written law
- **Carry out research** and other activities in furtherance of the aforementioned functions
- **Promote** the implementation of the **United Nations Convention Rights of the Child** and
- **Raise funds** in Seychelles or elsewhere to enable it to carry out the aforementioned functions

In order to effectively deliver the expectations of the functions listed in the Children Act, NCC has focused on four key areas of work:

1. **Advocacy**
2. **Training**
3. **Therapeutic Interventions**
4. **President's Village as a Residential Children Care Home**

## ANNUAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS

SR No	ATI ACT REQUIREMENTS	No
1)	The total number of ATI requests for access received;	4
2)	<b><u>TYPE OF INFORMATION</u></b>	
	The number of requests for personal information	0
	The number of request for public domain information	4
	The number of request for third party information	0
	The number of request for commercial and confidential Information	0
	The number of request for law enforcement information	0
	The number of request for privileged documents	0
	The number of request for protection of life and safety of an individual information	0
	The number of request for National Security and defence	0
	The number of request for International relations	0
	The number of request for Economic interest of the state	0
	The number of request for Academic or professional examination and recruitment process information	0
	The number of request for proposal submitted to Cabinet	0
3)	The number of requests for access granted in full;	1
4)	The number of requests for access refuse in full;	0
	The number of requests for access refuse in part;	0
5)	The number of times each provision of Part III ( <b><i>EXEMPTIONS</i></b> ) was relied on to refuse access in full;	0
	The number of times each provision of Part III ( <b><i>EXEMPTIONS</i></b> ) was relied on to refuse access in part;	0

<b>6)</b>	The number of cases in which the periods stipulated in section 11 were extended in terms of section 12;	<b>0</b>
<b>7)</b>	The number of review applications lodged with the head of the information holder;	<b>0</b>
<b>8)</b>	The number of reviews lodged on the ground that a request for access was regarded as having been refused in terms of section 14;	<b>0</b>
<b>9)</b>	The number of cases in which, as a result of a review, access was given to information;	<b>0</b>
<b>10)</b>	The number of request transferred to another Public Body	<b>3</b>
<b>11)</b>	The number of request abandoned after request	<b>0</b>
<b>12)</b>	The number of request but no records exist	<b>0</b>

<p><b>I.</b></p>	<p><b>A description of the steps or efforts taken by the head of the body to encourage all officers of that body to comply with the provisions of this Act;</b></p> <p>The NCC was previously following a quality management system (ISO 9001- 2008). Which ensured that all procedures including records management are kept up to standard. Even if the organization did not continue on that particular system in 2020 most of its policies were still being practiced. With the arrival of the new CEO and Minister all sections of the organization were urged to improve on their information management procedures and to be evidence based so as to measure impact. Indirectly these two aspects made it easy for the organization to remain up to date with the requests of the act.</p> <p>Further to that, the new CEO was briefed with the whole process during a one to one meeting with the Information Officer. The list of information for proactive disclosure was explored and agreed upon. Following this, the receptionist and other frontline staff were briefed on the difference between ATI' requests and normal day to day information requests which had recently been an area of confusion.</p>
<p><b>II.</b></p>	<p>Particulars of any penalties imposed against any person under this Act;  <b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>NO</b> <input type="checkbox"/> (If yes, list down)</p>
<p><b>III.</b></p>	<p>Particulars of any disciplinary action taken against any person under this Act;  <b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>NO</b> <input type="checkbox"/> (If yes, list down)</p>

## **CHALLENGES**

The main challenge encountered in 2020 was related to the proactive disclosure requirements cited in sections 5 of the act. As the NCC was facing certain issues with an outdated website and its supplier, it was not possible to proactively disclose any information as obliged. An action plan was drafted by the Information Officer. However, none of the aims were achieved. Nevertheless, since the start of 2021, remarkable progress has been made and the website is expected to be up and running by the end of April. This will enable the process to finally take place. Despite the delays, there were regular discussions between the information officer and the head of advocacy to advice on the types of information to be published on the website in conformity with the act

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

Based on these on the reporting figures it can be concluded that the Public is yet to be informed and educated on this Act and its process. The commission will need to continue their education programs in all areas of society. This may increase the number of requests received annually. On the other hand, other agencies including the NCC will need to increase their visibility through continuous proactive disclosure. With this, the Public may have a clear idea which entity holds the particular information being requested. This will enable the requestor access their information at the fastest possible time without having to go through the process of request transfer which can be quite time consuming .

As an Information officer I look forward to future training and refresher courses especially after missing the main one conducted in October 2020 for personal reasons.

The NCC looks forward to working in close partnership with the commission during the year 2021 so as to ensure the implementation of this act and to uphold the right to know of every Seychellois Citizen.

