



ACCESS TO INFORMATION ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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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 1982. 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 support and interventions for the protection and safety of children in Seychelles. The team is made up of dedicated professionals with years of experience in child related 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 strategic goals are to:

1. Ensure that every child is safe and protected (in line with UNESCO Agenda 2030)
2. Provide diverse, quality and innovative services
3. Celebrate the achievements and talents of our children
4. Give children a voice
5. Create a happy and safe children care home
6. Improve the performance management system

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

ANNUAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS

SR No	ATI ACT REQUIREMENTS	No
1)	The total number of ATI requests for access received;	0
2)	<u>TYPE OF INFORMATION</u>	
	The number of requests for personal information	0
	The number of request for public domain information	0
	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;	0
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 (<i>EXEMPTIONS</i>) was relied on to refuse access in full;	0
	The number of times each provision of Part III (<i>EXEMPTIONS</i>) was relied on to refuse access in part;	0

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

	<p>I. 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;</p> <p>The NCC has maintained its standards and procedures with regards to the storage and management of information. All sections are kept to their respective procedures to ensure proper records and management of information as prescribed in the act. As of the year 2022 the NCC will embark on a new project of digitalization which will eventually reduce the number of hard copy documents. This will therefore facilitate the access to information even more making the process easier and faster.</p> <p>Despite not having received any public request during the year 2021, the procedures and systems remain in place and the organization remains prepared for any unexpected requests.</p> <p>As for proactive disclosure, the NCC is pleased to inform the commission that its website was finally set up during the first quarter of 2021. As stated in the previous report for 2020, the website was a major challenge especially in achieving proactive disclosure. The website is up and running and being frequently monitored by the Information officer. The website meets the requirement of the act in terms of general content such as mission statement, vision, contact details and a section dedicated towards access to information. Other information requested from the proactive disclosure clause will be published on the site in due time following the information officer's action plan.</p> <p>Proactive disclosure was also achieved through the continuous sharing of leaflets to different partners, newspaper articles to a certain extent and adverts on the media made by the advocacy and communication section of the NCC.</p> <p>Finally the NCC re introduced the publication of its annual report, featuring its activities as well statistics for the year 2020 and 2021 respectively. These reports will also eventually be published on the website.</p>
	<p>II. Particulars of any penalties imposed against any person under this Act; YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> (If yes, list down)</p>
	<p>III. Particulars of any disciplinary action taken against any person under this Act; YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> (If yes, list down)</p>

CHALLENGES

No main challenges regarding access to information have been encountered during 2021. However, there have been one or two occasions when lawyers and their clients have requested information about their cases from the caseworker directly rather than approaching NCC through the access to information procedure.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

To conclude, as the information officer of the NCC, I feel that there has been a remarkable improvement with regards to proactive disclosure and this will continue during 2022. The lack of requests made may be a sign that proactive disclosure through the website is effective. Nevertheless as the information officer it will be my duty to evaluate this hypothesis.

Based on these reporting figures I maintain my position that the Public needs 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 to access their information at the fastest possible time without having to go through the process of request transfer which can be quite time consuming .

The NCC looks forward to working in close partnership with the commission during the year 2022 so as to ensure the implementation of this act and to uphold the right to know of every Seychellois Citizen.

