

Enabling Social Innovation in Seychelles

Country Snapshot

Social innovation: "the processes and outcomes of developing novel approaches to address societal challenges facing people and planet." ¹

This snapshot represents a descriptive, non-exhaustive overview of key highlights from Seychelles' social innovation ecosystem.

✓ Direct focus on social innovation 🔗 Connected but indirect focus on social innovation ✗ No focus on social innovation

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Official Definition of Social Innovation 🔗



No formal legal definition of "social innovation" has been identified in Seychelles' primary law. As a high-income small island developing state (SIDS), Seychelles' social innovation priorities are shaped by ocean governance, climate resilience, tourism diversification and social equity. ^{2 3}

Government Body for Social Innovation ✓



- Ministry of Investment, Entrepreneurship and Industry: Leads private sector development, enterprise support and investment promotion. ⁴
- Seychelles Enterprise: The national enterprise development agency providing business support, training and market access for small enterprises and entrepreneurs. ⁴
- Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change: Governs the Blue Economy framework; leads ocean-based social innovation through sustainable fisheries, blue finance and climate adaptation. ⁵
- Ministry of Social Affairs and Community Development: Oversees social protection, community development and welfare programmes. ⁴
- Seychelles Fishing Authority (SFA): Manages sustainable fisheries, a core livelihood and social innovation vector in Seychelles' blue economy. ⁵

Government Strategy for Social Innovation ✓



- National Development Strategy (NDS) 2019–2023 and successor: Sets macroeconomic, social and environmental development priorities. ²
- Blue Economy Roadmap and National Blue Economy Policy: Positions Seychelles as a global leader in sustainable ocean-based development. ⁵
- Seychelles' SIDS Frameworks: SAMOA Pathway and SIDS4 priorities shape adaptation, resilience and inclusive innovation agendas. ³
- National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) and NDC: Climate adaptation and mitigation framework integrating community-based resilience and social innovation. ⁵

Policies, Laws & Regulations ✓ 🔗



- Fishing Act (revised): Governs sustainable fisheries, a critical sector for livelihood and blue economy social innovation. ⁵
- Environment Protection Act: Governs environmental and social management compliance for innovation projects. ⁵
- EU-Seychelles Fisheries Partnership Agreement and SWIOFISH Programme: International frameworks supporting blue economy social innovation and sustainable fisheries management. ⁵

Official Statistics

75th/139 GII 2025 — Seychelles re-entered the GII in 2025 for the first time since 2015, ranking directly in the top 80 of 139 economies; noted as "particularly noteworthy" by analysts.²

3rd Seychelles ranks 3rd in Sub-Saharan Africa in the GII 2025, after Mauritius (2nd) and South Africa (61st).²

High income Seychelles is classified as a high-income economy (World Bank), the only SIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa with this classification.²

Note: Seychelles was not included in the GII 2024 due to insufficient data coverage at that time.²

Government Programs

- Seychelles Sovereign Blue Bond (2018): Seychelles issued the world's first sovereign blue bond (USD 15 million), channelling capital into sustainable marine fisheries and marine conservation — a pioneering global model.⁵
- SWIOFISH Programme (World Bank): Supports community-based fisheries innovation and livelihoods across the South West Indian Ocean region.⁵
- EU-Seychelles Multiannual Indicative Programme: Supports climate resilience, blue economy and governance innovation.³

ECOSYSTEM

Stakeholders

- Seychelles Enterprise: National MSME and entrepreneur support body; provides training, mentoring and market access.⁴
- University of Seychelles (UniSey): Provides tertiary education and applied research, increasingly focused on marine science and blue economy.⁷
- Seychelles Fishing Authority (SFA): Drives sustainable fisheries innovation and community livelihood programmes.⁵
- Sustainability for Seychelles (S4S): CSO promoting environmental sustainability and social innovation in conservation and tourism.⁸
- UNDP Seychelles (joint office with Mauritius): Supports innovation for socioeconomic transformation and environmental sustainability.⁶
- Commonwealth Blue Charter and IOC (Indian Ocean Commission): Regional bodies facilitating ocean governance and blue economy innovation partnerships.⁵



Support Initiatives

Key support modalities include blue economy innovation finance (World Bank SWIOFISH, EU Multiannual Programme, blue bonds), UNDP-supported social and environmental innovation, Seychelles Enterprise SME support, and university-based applied research.^{5 6}

Collaboration

Collaboration is structured through the UN Mauritius and Seychelles Country Programme, EU partnerships, the Indian Ocean Commission and Commonwealth Blue Charter networks. UNDP's joint Mauritius-Seychelles office facilitates regional innovation collaboration.^{3 6}

FINANCE

Financing Schemes

- Sovereign Blue Bond (2018): USD 15 million — globally pioneering instrument; proceeds finance sustainable fisheries management and marine conservation. ⁵
- World Bank SWIOFISH Programme: Regional fisheries and blue economy support. ⁵
- EU Multiannual Indicative Programme: Governance, climate and blue economy financing. ³
- UNDP joint programme finance: Social protection, environment and innovation support. ⁶

Seychelles' high-income status provides domestic fiscal space for innovation investment but limits eligibility for some concessional international financing. ²

Financing Inclusivity

Financing targets small island communities, fishermen and coastal communities through blue economy programmes. UNDP and EU programmes prioritise gender equality and youth inclusion. ^{3 6}

SOCIETY

Public Awareness of Social Innovation

Environmental consciousness is high, given the existential stakes of climate change and ocean degradation for an island nation. The concept of "sustainable development" and "blue economy innovation" are better understood than "social innovation" as a formal term. ^{5 8}

Research

Research is primarily marine science and blue economy focused, led by UniSey and international partners. Seychelles' re-entry into the GII 2025 at 75th reflects improving research infrastructure and data systems. ^{7 9}

Education & Human Capital

Seychelles has high educational attainment relative to other Sub-Saharan African economies. UniSey provides tertiary education with a growing focus on marine science, tourism and digital skills. The GII 2025 re-entry at 75th reflects a relatively strong human capital and institutional base. ^{4 2}

Entrepreneurship

75th
h / **139** countries

Enabling conditions
for business

GII 2025 — Seychelles' first GII ranking since 2015; 3rd in Sub-Saharan Africa; noted for strong Institutions and Business Sophistication pillars. ²

Global Innovation Index 2025

75th
d / **139** countries

Innovation capacity



Social & Environmental Consciousness



Solidarity

The Blue Economy Roadmap, sovereign blue bond, NDC and Paris Agreement commitments reflect Seychelles' leadership in ocean-focused social and environmental innovation.⁵



Participation



population

Volunteering

Seychelles-specific data not reported in the 2024 index.¹⁰

CAF World Giving Index
2024



th / 180 countries

Sustainability

Seychelles-specific EPI ranking not publicly available at time of publication.¹¹

Environmental
Performance Index
(EPI) 2024

