



RCSS STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2027

RED CROSS SOCIETY OF SEYCHELLES | JUNE 2023

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Humanity

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace among all peoples.

Impartiality

It makes no discrimination based on nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent case of distress.

Neutrality

In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary Service

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity

There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is world wide.

VALUES

People-centeredness: We build the capacity of people and communities to work in solidarity to find sustainable solutions for their most pressing needs and vulnerabilities.

Integrity: We work in accordance with our fundamental principles in a transparent and accountable manner.

Partnership: As members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and, guided by its statutes, we cooperate with governments, and with other organizations in line with the fundamental principles, without compromising our emblems and the independence, impartiality and neutrality that they represent.

Diversity: We respect the diversity of the communities we work with and of our volunteers, members and staff, based on non-discrimination and our principles of impartiality, unity and universality.

Leadership: We show leadership and strive for excellence in our work, drawing attention to the rights, needs and vulnerabilities of communities and the factors that underlie them.

Innovation: We draw inspiration from our shared history and tradition, but are equally committed to create sustainable solutions to problems that threaten human well – being and dignity in a changing world.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS.....	6
1. Introduction.....	7
2. Mandate and Vision	7
2.1 Mandate	7
2.2 Vision	8
3. Background.....	8
3.1 Brief overview – Republic of Seychelles	8
3.2 Natural disasters and events	9
3.3 Anthropical disasters and significant national events	9
4. Analysis of contextual factors relevant to RCSS.....	10
4.1 How RCSS is perceived.....	10
4.2 What the RCSS does well.....	11
4.3 Areas for improvement, potential pitfalls and possible solutions	11
4.4 Summary of the analysis	15
5. Strategic Objectives 2023-2027	16
5.1 Objective 1: Structural consolidation and re-organisation	16
5.1.1. Introduction of policies.....	16
5.1.2 Review and utilization of human resources.....	16
5.1.3 Review of financial management system	17
5.1.4 Review of organisational structure	17
5.2 Building strength through partnerships.....	17
5.2.1 Development of formal links through MOUs.....	17
5.2.2 Advocacy and PR campaign	18
5.3 Working with the community.....	18
5.3.1 Climate change mitigation and adaptation to climate-related vulnerabilities.....	18
5.3.2 Disaster risk management and risk profiling	19
5.3.3 Building individual and community preparedness	19
5.3.4 Health and safety.....	19
5.3.5 Psychosocial support	19
5.3.6 Water rescue	19
5.3.7 Shelter management	20

5.3.8 Road safety	20
5.4 Recruiting new volunteers and re-energising existing ones	20
5.5 Creating financial sustainability	21
5.5.1 Reach out to partners locally and internationally with project submissions.....	21
5.5.2 Identify new sources of funding and approach organizations capable of providing financial support.....	21
5.5.3 Identify RCSS current assets that could generate revenue	22
5.5.4 Review operations to make them more efficient	22

PREFACE

I am honoured to present to our stakeholders, the Red Cross Society of Seychelles' strategic plan 2023-27. The process of developing this new strategic plan involved a consultative approach with the objective of acquiring input from a wide spectrum of our society. I therefore salute the support from the volunteers and staff of RCSS, local and international partners, different government ministries and agencies and everyone who contributed in one way or another to the successful completion of the strategic plan.

The Red Cross Society of Seychelles derives its strength from the core mandate that drives the movement's vision and mission towards serving humanity through well-established fundamental principles. Building on this strong foundation the RCSS focuses its efforts to serve the most vulnerable in our country and beyond, with an emphasis on transparency, goodwill and accountability.

This strategic plan arises at a time when our country and the world emerge from a pandemic that has taught us many lessons and has obliged us to review the way we organise ourselves to deliver a service based on fulfilling our mandate, and develop our capacity to produce results that can be measured.

The new strategic approach focusses on how we maintain and strengthen our role as one of Seychelles' most trusted and reliable humanitarian organization. It relies on the five strategic objectives listed below, which will guide our local actions in responding to emerging needs within our society.

1. A well-structured and consolidated RCSS structure
2. Building strength through partnerships
3. Working with the community
4. Increasing volunteer recruitment and re-energising existing volunteers
5. Creating financial sustainability for the Red Cross Society of Seychelles

This strategic plan is more than just a document, it is a commitment to do better and to reach further through our humanitarian actions!

Kisnan Tamatave

President – Red Cross Society of Seychelles

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge the invaluable contributions made to the development of this Plan by

Members of the RCSS governance structure

RCSS Volunteers

RCSS staff

Local partners and national stakeholders,

Our heartfelt thanks go to each and every one of them.

Particular thanks go to the IFRC Indian Ocean Cluster Office for supporting and contributing to the development and completion of this Strategic Plan.

A complete list of direct contributors can be found in the separate Annexes.

ACRONYMS

DoE	Department of Environment (now Environment Department)
DRMD	Disaster and Risk Management Department
ICRC	International Council of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
MACCE	Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NS	National Society
NCDRM	National Committee for Disaster Risk Management
NIEMP	National Integrated Emergency Management Plan
PIROI	Plateforme d’Intervention Régionale de l’Océan Indien
PR	Public relations
PMER	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (abbreviated to M&E in the text)
RCSS	Red Cross Society of Seychelles
SFRSA	Seychelles Fire and Rescue Services Agency
SHTA	Seychelles Hospitality and Tourism Association
SNYC	Seychelles National Youth Council
TRNUC	Truth, Reconciliation and National Unity Commission

1. Introduction

The RCSS Strategic Plan 2023-2027 is built on the premise that it is fully ‘owned’ by the National Society (NS). Its major aim is to consolidate and expand the services the RCSS offers so that it remains an integral and valued part of the humanitarian services network in Seychelles. The plan positions the RCSS in a supportive role as a vital, albeit small, cog in the machinery that responds to existing, or anticipated disasters, at national level. It also presents the RCSS as a more autonomous contributor to help build resilience at community level, across the country and across sectors.

The preparation of the Plan involved consultations with members of RCSS governance, volunteers, management and staff, major national partners and stakeholders as well as a representative of the parent organisation of the National Society, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (see Annex 2 for a complete list of contributors). The Strategic Plan therefore incorporates the points of view of representatives of these key organisations.

The Plan targets the fulfilment of the organisation’s core objectives, to give service firstly on home soil but also to be available and to lend a hand to National Societies elsewhere should such support be needed. In addition, it intends to continue the work started through the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan – taking on board current needs in Seychelles.

The document, whenever possible, contains live links to documents and articles that have been used as references, allowing the reader to directly access more information.

2. Mandate and Vision

2.1 Mandate

The mandate of the Red Cross Society of Seychelles, as described in the 1991 Act, is “to prevent and alleviate suffering with complete impartiality, making no discrimination as to nationality, race, sex, religious beliefs, language, class or political opinions”.

The Act lists the clearly humanitarian objectives of the Society as follows:

- a) to contribute to the improvement of health and social welfare, the prevention of disease, the alleviation of human suffering and the promotion of respect for human beings;

- b) to organise emergency relief services for victims of disasters;
- c) in the event of an armed conflict, to assist the sick, wounded, civilians, prisoners of war and other victims of such conflict;
- d) to disseminate and implement the ideals and fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement as set out in the Preamble of the Statute of the Movement.

2.2 Vision

“RCSS works with partners and community members to build a stronger, more resilient and better prepared Seychellois society to respond effectively to crises and disasters.”

3. Background

3.1 Brief overview – Republic of Seychelles

The Republic of Seychelles is composed of some 115 islands spread over approximately 1.4 million square kilometers of the Indian Ocean: the Mahe group, which includes 43 granitic, mountainous islands with narrow coastal areas, and the coralline group, numbering, 73 which tend to rise only slightly above sea-level.¹ Most of the islands are uninhabited and tend to lie outside the cyclonic belt although the coralline islands to the south are affected by cyclones. However, both of the island groups are very vulnerable to multiple effects of climate change.

Seychelles is a microstate with a population of about 100,000 people, including migrant workers who represent an estimated 18% to 20% of this total number.² The large majority of the country’s inhabitants live on the three main granitic islands, close to the island of Mahe where the capital, Victoria, is located. According to official statistics, in 2021, Mahe had a population of 88,000 while Praslin had 9,400 inhabitants and La Digue about 3,000 inhabitants. Travel links by sea and by air³ between the islands are well established, and communication and public media networks reach all corners of the 3 main inhabited islands.

¹ <https://www.nbs.gov.sc/downloads/seychelles-in-figures-2022-edition/viewdocument>

² Seychelles in Figures 2022 at [viewdocument \(nbs.gov.sc\)](https://www.nbs.gov.sc/viewdocument) page 3

³ Several daily connections for both modes of transport as well as emergency helicopter/plane services.

3.2 Natural disasters and events⁴

In terms of natural disasters, records show that the Seychelles granitic islands are particularly affected by events that are linked to storms, heavy rainfall, and unusually high tides – the impact being particularly strong if the last two occur at the same time. Such events have at times caused loss of life⁵. The topography of the granitic islands means that heavy downpours, even when they do not last long, can cause flooding of roads and housing areas as well as mudslides that destroy vegetation and damage houses. These heavy rains can also turn normally tranquil rivers into raging torrents that overflow their banks and cause havoc in communities nearby.

Moreover, since roads and tourism facilities are frequently found on the narrow flat coastal areas of the granitic islands, unusually high tides tend to affect infrastructure and property, with the situation having worsened over recent years⁶. It is believed that this deterioration is due to climate change.

The coralline islands and the coastal areas of the granitic islands are also threatened by sea-level rise and a UN report on climate change states that up to 70% of the Seychelles available land mass would be submerged if sea level were to rise by one meter.⁷

In the last two years, there have also been several large fires⁸ in Mahe's main dumping site which is adjacent to the industrial area of Providence. One of these fires was serious enough to cause the closure of schools and businesses on a significant stretch of the east coast of Mahe for a few days.

Projects focusing on mitigation strategies have been implemented by the Department of Environment (DOE) of the current Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment (MACCE), in particular the Ecosystem-based Adaptation project 2014-2022 which 'sought to reduce the vulnerability of the Seychelles to climate change, focusing on two key issues – water scarcity and flooding'.⁹

3.3 Anthropical¹⁰ disasters and significant national events

The independent Republic of Seychelles itself has not had war or civil strife in its territory, although it did go through a decades-long period of authoritarian rule that affected numerous

⁴ Seychelles National Disaster Risk Management Policy at [REPORTS – Disaster Risk Management Division \(drmd.sc\)](https://reports-drmd.sc)

⁵ Seychelles NIEMP Report at [REPORTS – Disaster Risk Management Division \(drmd.sc\)](https://reports-drmd.sc)

⁶ As for footnote 5.

⁷ [An uncertain future for Seychelles? Study shows sea levels are at their highest in the past 6,000 years - Seychelles News Agency](https://seychellesnewsagency.com/news/an-uncertain-future-for-seychelles-study-shows-sea-levels-are-at-their-highest-in-the-past-6000-years/)

⁸ Described as 'rather alarming' and as "affecting the country because of the toxic fumes" on SBC TV programme Topik Konversasyon of 24th April 2023.

⁹ See <https://www.adaptation-undp.org/projects/af-seychelles>

¹⁰ Connected to human beings. [Anthropic Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/anthropical)

families and individuals within the Seychellois population in ways that were sometimes obvious, as with ‘enforced disappearances’, but also in many cases, in ways that were hidden and not readily discernible. While the long-term effects of that period of history cannot be fully assessed, it is clear that the nation will live with the resulting consequences for a while. A Truth, Reconciliation and National Unity Commission (TRNUC) was set up in 2018 to hear cases of human rights violations that occurred during that period of time. The Commission submitted its final report at the end of March 2023, after hearing 1,100 complainants, witnesses and suspects, and rendering decisions in 373 cases.¹¹ The mandate of the TRNUC has come to an end, but the issues and events that came to light through its work have had a profound impact on social consciousness in the country.

For the last few decades, the most easily identified social ill in Seychelles has been substance abuse which include over-consumption of alcohol and use of illegal drugs – issues that had already been identified as a significant problem in a paper dated 2003.¹² The National Drug Observatory of the Ministry of Health recently reported that between 5 and 6 percent of the population is addicted to heroin. There are also some statistics about the use of other illegal drugs such as cocaine, methamphetamines and other less well-known substances. Steps to curb the entry of drugs into the country have increased substantially in the last couple of years but the impact of these efforts is not quite fully felt within local communities yet. Moreover, while the percentage of admissions related to alcohol in medical wards was not high (5% for males and 1.8% for females), alcohol related admissions in the psychiatric ward represented nearly 46% of the total.¹³

Crime rates in Seychelles are decreasing overall, nonetheless from reports on the media there seems to have been an increase in criminal violence – manifested in severe abuse of children, domestic violence, assaults with white weapons and murders as well as an increase in criminal activity that targets tourists.

4. Analysis of contextual factors relevant to RCSS

4.1 How RCSS is perceived

Overall, stakeholders and partners in Seychelles respect and appreciate the RCSS and the support it provides to local first responders, in cases of disaster and in other emergency situations. Stakeholders feel that the work that the RCSS does is worthwhile and needed although a few respondents in that category also pointed out that the ‘status’ of the organisation seems to have been declining over the last few years. This loss of status was usually mentioned as part of a general comment but in a few instances this remark was tied to comments about the organisation

¹¹ See [TRNUC Reports 2023 | The National Assembly of Seychelles](#)

¹² Maiche, H. 2003. *Seychelles’ Social Fabric: In Need of Strengthening*.

¹³ Ministry of Health. 2022. *Provisional Baseline Report of the National Drug Observatory*

being sometimes short of supplies, or funds, or that it was no longer offering as many programmes as it did in the past. Some despondency could be detected among this group in that quite a few comments were made about how the organisation was no longer treated with the same high regard as in the past, and that ‘it was not getting the same recognition it used to get’.

Despite the above comments, it is clear that those connected to the NS, or employed by it, fully believe in what it stands for and are committed to what the organisation does.

4.2 What the RCSS does well

The RCSS is not constrained by cumbersome bureaucratic rules. It is able to set its own operational rules and as a result is able to make quick decisions based on assessments of the reality on the ground. A more important, and appreciated characteristic, is its ability to take action and respond quickly. Stakeholders in Seychelles referred to this trait as one of the RCSS’ greatest assets; most first responders in the country are part of the public sector and are bound by certain rules and regulations that may in some cases slow down their response.¹⁴ Therefore, two features of RCSS functioning that are identified as very positive are: i) fast response time and ii) the capacity to make appropriate and skilled assessments of existing needs in crisis situations.

Another ‘intangible’ asset of the RCSS is the recognition by stakeholders that the organisation is well equipped to respond to humanitarian needs, for example by being active in a range of areas that respond to its core mandate including ‘training for child minders, First Aid training, mobilising donors for blood donations’. Some also acknowledged the contribution that RCSS makes at another level, stating that it has an “important role to play in society as it teaches values of integration, against segregation and biases”. This is a clear indication that the competence of the RCSS and its ability to deliver on its mandate are generally known, acknowledged and appreciated.

A further significant advantage for the NS is that it owns a building from which to operate and which includes offices, a warehouse, a well-equipped training room, among other facilities. It also has its own ambulance.

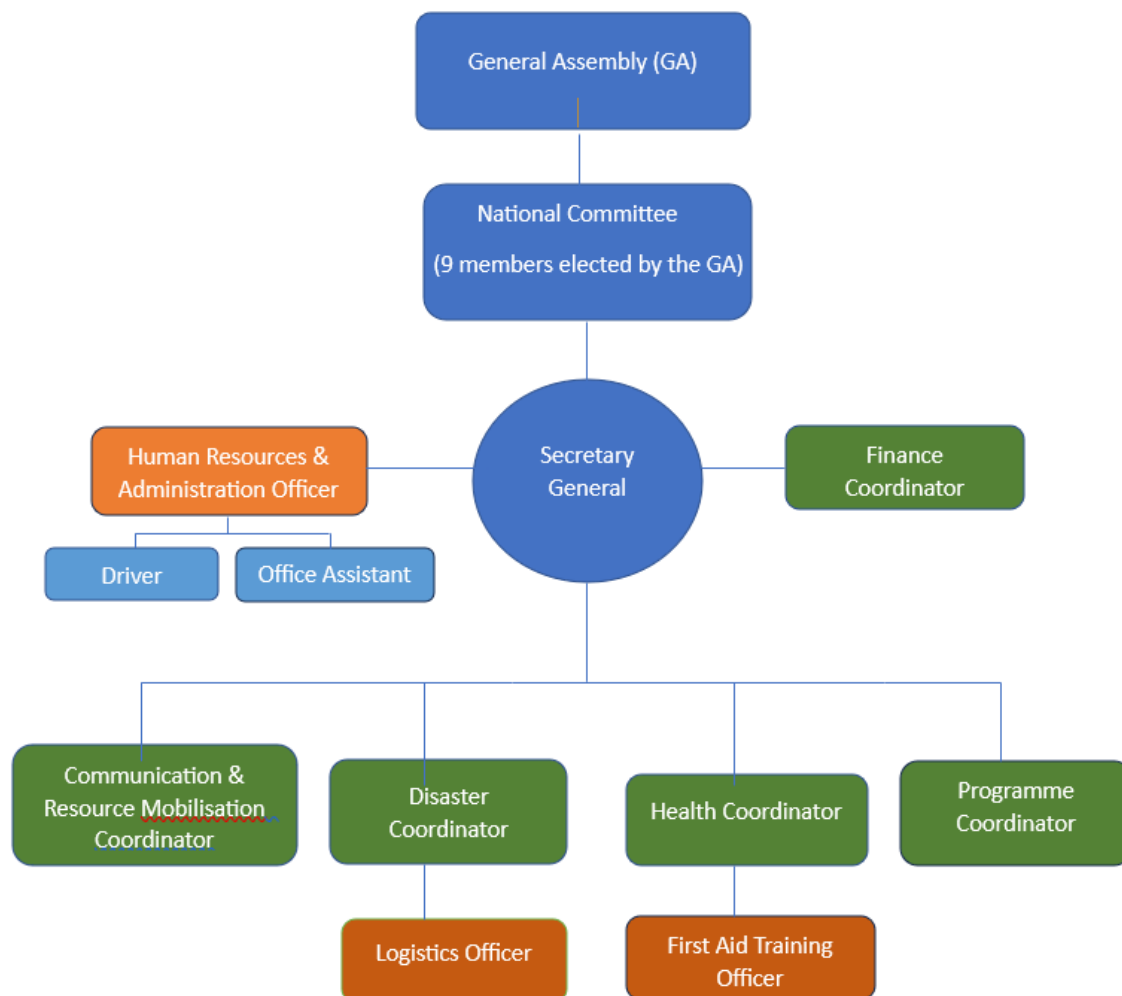
4.3 Areas for improvement, potential pitfalls and possible solutions

4.3.1 The organisation

The NS currently employs 7 individuals as shown in Chart 1 which also illustrates how the organisation functions.

¹⁴ An illustration that was used by a representative of government during the data collection phase of this exercise described the situation of a family in dire need of basic essentials after an event that destroyed their home and belongings. The government organisation that provides help in such cases needs to follow a set of procedures that can take a few days and up to 2 weeks. The RCSS (to which this organisation refers needy individuals at such times) can provide support instantly (on the same day/within hours), after having assessed the situation.

Chart 1: Current organisational chart of the RCSS (does not include links with external bodies)



The current structure of the RCSS head office has few layers and six of the staff members report directly to the Secretary General. An organisation with such a structure usually has little ‘bureaucracy’ or ‘red tape’, it is therefore flexible and can move rapidly as noted in 4.2 above. This has functioned well so far but there could be circumstances where this type of structure and the potential lack of formal record-keeping could create problems, for example when it comes to following instructions received, or to goods and supplies being stored, accessed and used by the NS. Insufficient operational rules that are clear, and enforced, can make it difficult to have accurate records as well as up-to-date information on how the organisation is using its financial resources¹⁵ including its equipment or the man-hours it has available. It also makes it more

¹⁵ This comment refers to what is needed for managerial/operational decision-making. In terms of accountability, it should be pointed out that the financial transactions of the RCSS are regularly audited.

difficult to formally monitor and assess the performance of workers or the efficiency of the organisation.

In terms of remuneration, the salary level of RCSS employees is considered to be quite low, but it is reported that some work has already started to develop a new salary scale. This is a desirable and appropriate move although it would benefit RCSS most if it could be done as part of a general re-structuring rather than on a piece-meal basis. One of the steps that could accompany such a re-structuring would be an assessment of training needs in order to build capacity of current employees who may need to improve their performance and delivery.

Another step would be to review recruitment. Job descriptions already exist but they could be reviewed so that the focus is on the 'fit' between the person being recruited and the needs of the RCSS/RCSS team. This would of course include assessments of experience and academic achievements as is usually the case, but also practical exercises that would make it possible to pick up on personality traits and skills that cannot be readily seen during a short interview. (And if funds become available, psychometric testing could be done).

The possibility of having 3 branches of the RCSS in Seychelles, as was the case in the past, was raised during the exercise. The reasons as to why the practice was discontinued were explained by members of the governance of the RCSS. These reasons referred essentially to a lack of human resources to ensure that these offices were managed efficiently.

Based on i) the small size of the populations of Praslin and La Digue (see section 3.1 above); ii) the difficulty that the RCSS is facing in recruiting new volunteers, and maintaining the involvement of current volunteers, and iii) its own need to consolidate the existing office, it is reasonable to say that adding two local branches at this point cannot be justified. The ease and frequency of movement between the islands (an average of 12 daily return flights of 20 minutes duration each way¹⁶, and sea ferry crossings of 1 hour duration a few times a day), in addition to the seamless communications networks that exist, mean that one main office serving all three islands can be effective.¹⁷

4.3.2 The People

As mentioned above, the RCSS' ability to respond quickly to requests for help and support is due in part to the fact that the line of authority is short, that all report to one person, and that team members work in close collaboration with each other. As mentioned earlier, this has positive sides but it can also create a corporate culture where staff tend to see themselves merely as people who carry out instructions received and it could, in the long term, prevent them from taking responsibility for making things happen. Another side effect is that this will effectively

¹⁶ [Domestic Flight Schedule | Air Seychelles](#)

¹⁷ It needs to be remembered that the RCSS has links with first responders such as the Disaster and Risk Management Department which itself works closely with the Defence Forces, the Seychelles Coast Guard, the SFRSA, etc. which operate their own means of transportation and which can quickly move between the islands in cases of emergency.

‘push’ all supervisory and managerial decision-making tasks to the head of the NS whether they relate to technical tasks, relationship tasks or conceptual tasks.

The work context within which the RCSS staff operate is changing and demands that now arise will require more specialized skills and knowledge. It would be useful at this point to intensify capacity building/training for staff.

A new and innovative approach in the recruitment of volunteers is also needed since on-the-field operations of the RCSS relies on their contribution. The suggestion was made that it might be worthwhile to target young people for recruitment as this might help give them a purpose that could help them to steer clear of destructive habits. Another aspect of the new approach would be to identify ways to re-energize existing volunteers. Some committees made up of volunteers which are meant to support the management and some operational functions of RCSS are not really functional and there is no leverage or inducement mechanisms in place to ensure that they play the role for which they were set up.

4.3.3 Programmes and capability

Existing programmes are well regarded and respected but with time needs evolve. There are already calls for the RCSS to work with the Ministry of Health in the area of palliative care, or to increase the offer of First Aid training to government bodies, as well as a number of other emerging areas of need in Seychelles, especially in regard to climate change. RCSS also used to offer some programmes which were discontinued and which may need to be re-instated, such as the water rescue programme. There has been an increase in the number of deaths caused by drowning in recent years and this programme is seen as something needed that no one else offers in a comprehensive way at this point.

There are requests for a range of programmes but in the words of a contributor: “the RCSS has accomplished a lot in terms of programmes but it now needs to define where it's role starts and where it ends”.

4.3.4 Links with local partners and stakeholders

The relationship with major national partners and stakeholders is mutually beneficial and can be categorized as excellent in some cases and good in others. However, it must be pointed out that a few of RCSS’ closest partners and stakeholder organisations are under new management and they may need to be inducted as to the role that the RCSS can play and what it can offer as the local member of the global IFRC/ICRC Movement.

The term auxiliary is often used when describing the role of the Red Cross but the definition of that term may not be the same for everyone as shown in the comments: “Only when local capacity is reached will RCSS be called in” or “it is there for its capacities to be tapped into when and where needed...” or “RCSS is guided by the IFRC charter and unless Government asks for their support, they cannot step in...”

On the other hand, the IFRC Principles¹⁸ state that its principles (as found at the start of this document) “unite the components of the Movement – the ICRC, the National Societies [*including the RCSS*] and the International Federation – and enable them to provide effective, unbiased assistance to people in need. They are mandatory rules of conduct that the Movement’s components are required to follow at all times, and States must respect this necessity.”

The 1991 Act¹⁹ that set up the RCSS, does make mention of the Geneva Convention (signed by Seychelles in 1984 and domesticated through the Geneva Conventions Act (CAP 87), in force since 1986) but it does not specify the type of relationships that should exist between the RCSS and local stakeholders, nor does it make use of the word auxiliary. It simply states that the statutory body, apart for fulfilling its objectives of helping the community in various ways, is to “(a) maintain its autonomy; (b) act in accordance with the principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”.

This may seem insignificant but, in a partnership or ‘working relationship’, the manner in which each party defines the other usually determines the quality of the relationship that can exist. The development of memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between the RCSS and major national partners/stakeholders would certainly improve how they work together.

4.3.5 Financial Sustainability

The financial situation of the RCSS is rather precarious. The uncertainty regarding continuity of funding for staff positions seems to have created a certain amount of internal discouragement, and issues such as the organisation’s inability to pay bills, for example, may have added to this situation. The funds (SCR 1.5 m) the RCSS receives annually from the Seychelles Government is meant to be used for projects only. External funding, which is sometimes available, can be generous but it is time-bound and related to specific activities. The RCSS, if it is to function as it has functioned in the past (and on a continuous basis) needs to find ways to ensure it has the means to pay its staff, settle its bills, maintain the building and its equipment, and replenish its stock of required supplies on a regular basis. The organisation therefore needs to identify, and possibly create sources of regular and steady income. These possibilities are further described in Section 5.

4.4 Summary of the analysis

The difficulties the RCSS is facing at this point in time are more or less existential. As stated by one respondent, “RCSS is in transition...” – but to what? From information gathered during consultations, it is clear that members, stakeholders and staff want a national society that is well organised, well resourced, with clear structures and rules, offering a range of desired and relevant programmes. Moreover, it is expected that RCSS’ staff is fully capacitated to deliver on the

¹⁸ [Fundamental Principles | IFRC](#)

¹⁹ [LAWS OF SEYCHELLES \(redcrossseychelles.sc\)](#)

organisation's mandate. These are high expectations but with time and the right mix of strategies and actions, it is possible for the NS to build strength and to increase its capability in order to fulfil such expectations.

5. Strategic Objectives 2023-2027

The objectives described below arise from the assessment presented in the preceding paragraphs. They also form the basis for the Implementation Framework that accompanies this document.

5.1 Objective 1: Structural consolidation and re-organisation

5.1.1. Introduction of policies

The RCSS needs to retain the flexibility that allows it to respond appropriately and rapidly to situations that require its services, but it seems clear that the current situation also requires the introduction of essential functioning rules and regulations. Therefore, to facilitate good functioning and growth, the RCSS would do well to develop and introduce some basic policies. Secondly, based on the policies, draw up functioning guidelines that are neither complicated nor time-consuming and that can be followed 'on the go'. Guidelines should be drawn up for all aspects of what the RCSS does: responding to requests, use of facilities and equipment, purchase of goods and supplies, use of man-hours available in any day/week, recruitment of staff, sub-contracting of any services etc. The use of technology would help in putting in place a simple but efficient system.

For Monitoring and Evaluation (PMER) purposes, policies and guidelines should be written down, easy to understand and to apply, and available in electronic format. Moreover, all staff should receive detailed briefings on how to use them, at the time when they are launched.

5.1.2 Review and utilization of human resources

The current format of the RCSS structure, while functional, seems to place an inordinate amount of responsibility, decision-making duties and support functions on the shoulders of one individual. For the organisation to be able to do more and at an improved level, some re-structuring and re-allocation of duties to current staff and the potential recruitment of one or two new multi-skilled officers should be considered. In view of the fact that funds for emoluments are limited and are not guaranteed, it might also be necessary to consider alternative approaches for new staff/working contributors. This could include, for example, a) part-time workers whose contracts focus on tasks to be delivered, with an agreed minimum number of hours to be spent at the office, or b) ensuring that all projects submitted for funding include funds to cover fees for a project officer for the duration of the project, or c) allocating earnings from one of the revenue-generating activities (or a percentage of all income from RCSS activities) to emoluments.

5.1.3 Review of financial management system

The RCSS is regularly audited which indicates that its bookkeeping system is reliable. Nonetheless, it might be easier to manage its financial resources if the accounting system in place would make it possible to see, at a glance, what funds have come in and against what programme/item they are being deposited, as well as details of how funds are being spent. This would make it possible to prepare more detailed budgets for the RCSS as a whole, as well as gauge the financial needs for each relevant area of activity for the year. It would also help to generate accounting documents that would facilitate informed decision-making. The approach would not prohibit the possibility of virements from one item to another should this be required. Such a system does not need to be complicated; it only needs to be properly organised, and used on a consistent basis, so that it is kept updated at all times²⁰.

5.1.4 Review of organisational structure

The RCSS' organisational structure is already under review. From the assessment of the current situation, any change that will allow the head of the organisation to focus on a strong leadership role for the organisation (as opposed to being taken up by managerial duties or being regularly involved at implementation level in various aspects of RCSS activities) should considerably benefit the organisation.

It should be noted that some of the steps described in the preceding paragraphs are already being discussed internally and a few may even be at 'early' implementation stage. Should the RCSS be able to re-organise, put in place appropriate operational rules, and have a working M&E framework, its ability to function effectively would be greatly improved. Any public media campaigns that are then launched would project an image of a stronger, more capable RCSS.

5.2 Building strength through partnerships

The RCSS' links with major national partners and stakeholders, while good, may need to be given a general overhaul so that the partnerships are beneficial for both sides.

5.2.1 Development of formal links through MOUs

There seems to be a need, as a matter of priority, to clarify the role of the RCSS and to establish useful and mutually supportive relationships for the greater benefit of the community – the RCSS is, after all, meant to work with local partners.

Building and strengthening relationships locally would require reaching out to major partners and stakeholders to jointly establish MOUs which indicate clearly how they can work together. A number of local partners and stakeholder are already committed to continuing and possibly adding to the work that they do with the RCSS. A programme to establish these MOUs should be developed and implemented systematically using material prepared specifically for this purpose. There is no doubt that this will require time, effort, well-honed communication skills but

²⁰ There are simple, ready-made accounting packages available for sale online. Alternatively, a local accounting service could design and/or donate a custom-made Excel-based template that could be used by the RCSS.

especially persistence. Moreover, the presence of a liaison officer (part-time, or working from home to achieve specific targets) would be invaluable in getting the programme off the ground, and keeping it going until MOUs with most major partners have become a reality.

The RCSS is already part of the large IFRC global network and it is connected to it through the regional and sub-regional offices based in Nairobi and Madagascar. It also has links with the Reunion-based PIROI and has worked closely with this sister organisation. This may be an appropriate time to investigate how these connections can be tapped into for greater mutual benefits.

5.2.2 Advocacy and PR campaign

To increase public credibility while recruiting more volunteers, the RCSS could launch an advocacy and PR campaign that would include i) simple messaging and a positive and friendly tone to attract volunteers, local donors and the interest of individuals who could champion the cause of RCSS/be part of RCSS governance; ii) prepare and regularly share online material on lessons learnt e.g., compilation of 'stories', short reports and articles, and eventually case studies that can be used in training sessions for new volunteers. Finally, use the campaign as the vehicle to lobby and establish formal links with local partners through MOUs, as described in the above sub-section. Parts of this campaign can be updated for use on an annual basis or every two years – depending on what the annual PMER exercises show.

5.3 Working with the community

Partners, stakeholders and representatives of communities in Seychelles clearly believe that they can benefit from the work of the RCSS and its varied range of services but with its current capacity and level of resources (and until these have improved), it has to be strategic in deciding where to focus its attention and invest its resources. This will ensure its actions have maximum impact and reap the greatest level of benefit for all concerned. Of the number of programme areas put forward by contributors, some were new while others were the re-introduction of programmes RCSS has stopped offering.

It is important to remember that what is described below is not meant to be rushed into but rather to be taken on board gradually and selectively over the period of this strategic plan, as the RCSS becomes financially solid and staff capacity increases.

5.3.1 Climate change mitigation and adaptation to climate-related vulnerabilities

The development of any programme in this area should be done in close collaboration with the Department of Environment (DoE) and other relevant national bodies so that RCSS specific competencies can support and enhance work being done by these MDAs. In addition to 'on the ground' interventions, RCSS could, for example, tap into regional expertise to support the development of strategies that would be useful for Seychelles.

5.3.2 Disaster risk management and risk profiling

The RCSS is, by law²¹, a member on the National Committee for Disaster Risk Management, which operates under the Disaster Risk Management Department (DRMD). It is therefore ideally placed to contribute in national decision making and in programmes for disaster risk management. RCSS, at governance level, could generate ideas about how to improve these national services, put these ideas forward and offer help where they have access to such help, e.g., accessing external competence within the very large IFRC network for risk profiling exercises in Seychelles.

5.3.3 Building individual and community preparedness

These programmes are already in place. They might simply need to be updated so as to include strong elements on how to anticipate disasters. They could also target a wider audience for greater impact.

5.3.4 Health and safety

This category would include First Aid, blood donations, ambulance services and support during epidemics (as for COVID 19) as existing services, with the possibility of eventually adding new areas such as community health through a health in schools programme, healthy aging, palliative care and men's health.

Several of the above are the strong points of the RCSS in terms of existing competence and experience. These services could be re-packaged (making them available as a series/package deal or as a one-off) so that they are more marketable. They can then be offered to public sector organisations and to businesses in order to generate more revenue for the RCSS.

5.3.5 Psychosocial support

There is the possibility of offering psychosocial support sessions to a range of group categories. Other than victims of disasters and responders, and depending on the competence on the RCSS, the programme could be offered to groups of individuals that have gone through traumatic personal events, e.g., victims of systematic bullying at home, at school, at work and elsewhere (by linking up with Employment/Social Affairs), patients recovering from serious illness, such as a debilitating cardiovascular event or a car accident (by linking up with Ministry of Health), etc.

5.3.6 Water rescue

Review types of services that used to be available and identify those still in demand, e.g an updated water rescue programme that could be offered to district authorities (possibly working with the district brigades of the Ministry of Local Government and Community Affairs), and associations such as the Seychelles Hospitality and Tourism Association (SHTA).

²¹ [Act 15 Disaster Risk Management 2014 – Disaster Risk Management Division \(drmd.sc\)](#) See Item 10 of the Act.

5.3.7 Shelter management

There were specific requests regarding the revival of the shelter management programme and it might be useful for the RCSS to consider the inclusion of this programme when working on an MOU with the Ministry for Local Government and Community Affairs.

5.3.8 Road safety

The RCSS could add a needed dimension to the work already being done by relevant authorities in this area. A very valid suggestion from a volunteer was to negotiate with the Licensing Authority so that First Aid training and other aspects of road safety become integrated in the mandatory Learners' driving lessons (examined by the Police at theoretical and practical levels).

All of the above areas (as suggested by contributors) are important but it might be useful to start by focussing on areas that are already seen as priorities and which are already part of RCSS' portfolio of services.

5.4 Recruiting new volunteers and re-energising existing ones

The RCSS is regularly (every six weeks or so) on public media and on the whole the general public more or less knows what it does, so it can hardly be said that it lacks public visibility. This could be turned to greater advantage by including content that advocates for more individuals to join as volunteers; such messages could highlight personal satisfaction aspects and the benefits that one can derive from volunteering, so that the 'invitation' to join can be put across in subtle but appealing ways. As part of the advocacy and PR campaign described at 5.2.2 above, the RCSS could also reach out to well-known individuals and to former members of RCSS governance so that these individuals can continue to contribute to the work of the organisation and help to enhance its image.

The RCSS has clubs in schools and links with the Seychelles National Youth Council (SNYC) and it might be useful at this point to invest a little more effort to recruit younger adult volunteers between the ages of 18 and 30 – through the SNYC and in tertiary professional institutions through the Ministry of Education. Meetings with interested young people could be organised for them to have conversations with older volunteers (RCSS or other known NGOs) who, because of their own experience, could inspire such youths.

It was suggested by some stakeholders that volunteers should be grouped according to types of activity – as this would provide the specific benefit of being able to use their participation in RCSS activities to add to their CVs for possible career development; some of them could even be given certificates after completing a certain number of relevant interventions. Re-energizing existing volunteers could use similar techniques but with a somewhat different focus – maybe to remind them of why they first joined or possibly inviting them to suggest ways in which they can continue to contribute. For example, some who are office workers and whose schedules may prevent them from participating, may be able to offer remote office-based support, particularly since working remotely/from home was a very prevalent way of working during the successive COVID-19 lockdowns of 2020 and 2021.

Finally, in the MOUs that are signed, it might be possible to negotiate the possibility for RCSS volunteers within relevant organisations to be granted release from work when their services are needed for emergencies.

However, the RCSS should steer clear of financial rewards schemes of any sort for volunteers. Voluntary work usually refers to work that individuals do without remuneration, although such individuals' essential personal needs have to be met during the delivery of that work.

5.5 Creating financial sustainability

Consolidating the financial situation of the RCSS is essential to the continuation of its operations at the expected level and expanding their range of services to the community. Pre-requisites for long-term financial sustainability at the RCSS include knowing i) where income and revenue can come from, ii) how much income will potentially enter the NS' coffers, and iii) how the income will be spent. Solid financial projections will ensure that the RCSS is in a constant state of readiness to respond to crises and requests for humanitarian help within the local community or elsewhere as the need may be.

Several strategies for improving financial stability that can help to achieve the above are presented below. They will also appear in the results-orientated implementation framework.

5.5.1 Reach out to partners locally and internationally with project submissions

RCSS needs to make greater use of the support system that is available locally and internationally. In discussions leading to MOUs with local partner organizations, it would be useful to identify areas of pressing need. RCSS could then act as a facilitator for accessing technical assistance available within the larger network to which it belongs. Moreover, an increase in cooperative work with local partners could be used to make a case for an increase in the annual allowance of the RCSS as a statutory body.

5.5.2 Identify new sources of funding and approach organizations capable of providing financial support

There are private businesses locally that donate to organizations whose objective is to help and support the community. A yearly systematic campaign to collect funds could be set up to approach organisations that are cooperative and responsive when it comes to such work. Invitations to participate by donating ought to state clearly what will be done with the funds as well as what the benefits could be for the donor, e.g., visibility during the donation, use of name (as sponsor) during campaign or programme, or maybe a half-day training programme in an area that is useful for them, etc.

5.5.3 Identify RCSS current assets that could generate revenue

It is apparent that the RCSS is already thinking along those lines. Items that come to mind are rooms for meetings or training, use of equipment such as the ambulance, or the offer of training services. The latter, depending on the rate of capacity building and access to part-time trained volunteers could be an increase in the number of courses being offered or the introduction of new courses as already mentioned.

5.5.4 Review operations to make them more efficient

Having evidence that funds have been used appropriately and that there has been no fraud is commendable but for continued support, it is important to be able to also show to any donor that funds used have produced worthwhile results. However, when funds are being used essentially to keep an organization's administrative set-up (offices and staff) going, this does not usually fulfill the expectations or objectives of donors. Administrative expenses within any project should be commensurate with the results of the funded programme/activity. It is critical for the RCSS to be aware of these unspoken but very real expectations as it prepares itself, in every way possible, for the coming 5 years.