Seychelles

Responding institution:
Seychelles National Library

This is the Seychelles' second response to the World Report, with the first being in 2005. The report concerns 5 public library service points (1 main library, 3 branch libraries and 1 regional reading and information centre) and 40 research libraries (including 33 school libraries, 7 government-funded research libraries and no university libraries).

In September 2005, Internet penetration for Seychelles was estimated at 23.5% (*CIA World Factbook,* 2007 edition). It is estimated that 81-100% of the public and government-funded research libraries offer Internet access to their users. All 10 secondary schools provide access to the Internet, while work is being undertaken to install Internet connection in all 23 primary schools.

Access is not free of charge in public libraries only. (In 2005 it was reported that access in research libraries was free of charge, but that users from public libraries needed to pay a fee.) The state and other library authorities have in some instances made extra funding available for Internet access during the last two years.

According to the respondent, there is average coverage of both local content and local languages on the Internet. The 2007 *CIA World Factbook* estimates the literacy rate at 91.8%.

The library community is to a certain degree in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals. The protection of children and the safeguarding of

public morality are offered as reasons. Filtering software is quite widespread in the country's libraries.

Libraries in the Seychelles are not troubled by anti-terror legislation. According to the respondent, there have been no incidents of violation of intellectual freedom. Several have, however, been noted by third-party sources. No sources have been suggested by the respondent to provide more insight into the status of intellectual freedom in the Seychelles.

Public libraries have been involved in programmes promoting HIV/Aids awareness, but not in programmes to provide HIV/Aids information to members of the community who cannot read. They have also not been involved in special programmes to promote women's literacy or women's access to information.

The library community has not adopted a code of ethics. No answers have been provided to the questions on the adoption of the IFLA Internet Manifesto and the IFLA Glasgow Declaration.

User privacy and anti-terror legislation

Anti-terror legislation in the form of the Prevention of Terrorism Act was passed in the Seychelles in June 2004. The respondent is of the opinion that if such legislation were to be adopted, users might feel that their privacy is being impacted if authorities have access to their records. While user records will provide the libraries with an indication of users' needs for information, some users will feel that this affects their freedom of expression.

Reported incidents/violations of intellectual freedom in the past two years

According to the respondent there have been no incidents of reported violation of intellectual freedom. The government controls much of the media, and operates radio and TV stations as well as a daily newspaper. Freedom of speech in the Seychelles has improved since one-party rule was abolished in 1993, and private or pro-opposition publications have been robust in their reporting despite tough libel laws (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1070461.stm).

Nevertheless, a number of concerns have been noted by third-party sources, for example the decision of a Seychelles court to sentence the privately owned weekly *Regar* to pay an exorbitant fine, thereby forcing one of the only two opposition newspapers to suspend publication (http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/78841), as well as an arson attack on the *Regar* (http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/71079/) and the banning of a radio station (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5403626.stm).

HIV/Aids awareness

Libraries in the Seychelles have been involved in programmes promoting HIV/Aids awareness. They offer books, exhibitions and organised talks on the subject. In addition to national library programme mentioned above, other activities are organised by the Ministry of Health.

Women and freedom of access to information

Libraries do not offer special programmes to promote women's literacy or women's access to information; such programmes focus on education for all social groups. As there are no gender issues in the Seychelles, there is no need for specific initiatives to promote women's access to information.

IFLA Internet Manifesto

Similar to the 2005 response, the question on the adoption of the IFLA Internet Manifesto has not been answered.

IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom

Similar to the 2005 response, the question on the adoption of the IFLA Glasgow Declaration has not been answered.
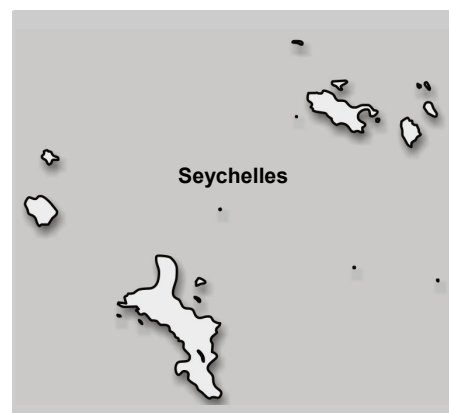
Ethics

As there is no active library association in the Seychelles, it is not possible to consider the adoption of a code of ethics. (In 2005, the question was not answered.)

Main indicators

Country name:	Seychelles
Population:	81 895 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	Creole 91.8%, English 4.9% (official), other 3.1%, unspecified 0.2% (2002 census)
Literacy:	91.8%
Literacy reported by respondent:	No data provided

Population figures, language and literacy are from the
CIA World Factbook, 2007 edition
(https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html).

Seychelles

Libraries and Internet access

Seychelles contributed to the World Report series in 2005. The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2005 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondent's estimates, where possible.

Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	1 public library, 3 branch libraries and 1 regional reading and information centre (2005: 1 main library and 3 branches)
Estimated number of school libraries:	33
Estimated number of university libraries:	0
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	7
Source of these numbers:	First-hand knowledge – the country is very small and public libraries are part of the National Library

Internet access

Population online**:	20 000 Internet users as of Sept. 2005 (23.5%) (2005: 14.4%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100% (2005: 81-100%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	No data provided
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Average
To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:	Average
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	Yes to a certain degree – to protect children and safeguard public morality (2005: N/A)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	No data provided (2005: Yes, to a certain degree, to protect children and safeguard public morality)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	No (2005: Yes, in research libraries only)
Has the state or other library authorities made any extra funding available for Internet access in the library system of your country in the last two years:	Yes, in some cases (2005: N/A)

* Public library service points, including branch libraries.
** Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats (www.internetworldstats.com).
*** Local content is defined as content that originates in the country.