



Seychelles Tourism Human Resources Development Strategy

A Model for Africa's Tourism Workforce

69th CAF Thematic Conference • **Boosting Human Capital in Africa**

Presented by Seychelles | Ministry of Tourism and Culture

The Challenge

Why Seychelles needed a Tourism Human Resources Development Strategy

Skills Crisis

42.56%

of tourism workforce
are foreign workers

Tiny Labour Pool

Just above 100K

Seychellois nationals
to staff ALL sectors

Permit Bottleneck

2-5 months

to fill a single
vacancy via GOPs

Training Gap

<200

graduates/year from
the one Seychelles tourism academy

What is the THRDS?

Tourism Human Resources Development Strategy 2024–2027

A 3-year, evidence-based national strategy developed by the Government of Seychelles in partnership with UN Tourism

Built on:

- 65 industry survey responses
- 12-day in-country field mission
- Stakeholder workshops across Mahé, Praslin & La Digue
- Desk research & international benchmarking

01 Situation Analysis

Supply & demand audit; skills gaps across hospitality, marine tourism & support services

02 Vision & SWOT

HR challenges, strengths, weaknesses, threats, and the strategic vision

03 Strategic Recommendations

5 objectives, 15+ interventions, implementation plan 2026–2029 with results framework

Five Strategic Objectives

1

POLICY &
REGULATORY

Improve work permit
System

2

POLICY &
REGULATORY

Support
women in
tourism

3

TRAINING
SUPPLY

Improve quality
& quantity of
training

4

TRAINING
SUPPLY

Create career
awareness
among youth

5

PUBLIC
SECTOR

Strengthen
public sector
capacity

Obj 1

Improve work permit System

*GOP = Gainful
Occupation Permit*

COMPETITOR BENCHMARK

Maldives: 7 days | \$300/yr

Mauritius: 5 days | \$52/yr

Seychelles: 60–150 days | \$930/yr

1

Reduce Time

- Online GOP platform (< 10 days processing)
- proposed dedicated tourism-sector officers at dept responsible for Employment
- proposed Fast-track list of scarce occupations

2

Reduce Cost

- proposed Sliding fee scale by skill level
- proposed Lower fees for small operators (<24 rooms)
- proposed Tethering clause: min. 6-month tenure

3

Increase flexibility in
recruitment and career
progressions

- Operators should be able to recruit easier within their quota of certificate of entitlement
- consideration to allow promotions within GOPs
- Short-term business visas for specialists

Obj 2 | Supporting Women in Tourism

71%

of births in Seychelles
are out of wedlock
(Jan–Jun 2023)

Barriers to employment:

- X Shift & weekend work incompatible with childcare
- X Daycare only open Mon–Sat daytime
- X Labour law prohibits job-sharing
- X Risk of losing children to social services

THRDS Solutions

A

Proposed mandatory Childcare at Hotels

Revise accommodation policy to require large & medium hotels to provide on-site childcare during shifts, weekends & holidays.

B

Proposed flexible Employment Regulations

Amend labour law to allow job-sharing, shorter work weeks, and flexible arrangements for parents.

C

Best Practice Employer Guidelines

Tourism Dept to publish decent work guidelines including holiday clubs, transport, equal pay principles.

Obj 3 | Transforming Tourism Training

The challenge: Seychelles Tourism Academy (STA)

Outdated curriculum • Inadequate facilities • No mid-level diploma • No marine tourism training • Faculty experience gaps • <200 graduates/year

3a

Pre-Service Hospitality

- Revise all curricula via industry workshops
- Upgrade facilities to industry standard
- Add diploma level; add short courses
- Faculty: Professional Industry Placements
- Seek UN Tourism TedQual accreditation

3b

In-Service Hospitality

- Supervisory development (online + block release)
- Barista, mixologist, butler short courses
- Sustainability training (Sustainable Seychelles)
- Small accommodation management course
- Free training resources portal

3c

Marine Tourism

- Establish a Sailing Academy or a marine tourism centre of excellence
- Courses: skippers, deckhands, stewaresses
- Short hospitality courses for charter crew

3d

Technical Support

- 1-year Building Maintenance Certificate (SIT)
- Security officer tourism-specific training
- Sponsor childminder training (IECD)

3e

Training Forum

- Convene all training providers: STA, SMA, UniSey, SIT, MoE
- Coordinate curriculum, resources, partnerships

Obj 4 & 5 | Youth & Public Sector

Obj 4

Tourism as a Career Choice

- Introduce IGCSE Travel & Tourism in secondary schools
- Tourism clubs in primary AND secondary schools
- Career pack: videos, lesson plans, role models
- Annual Tourism Careers Fair on Mahé & Praslin
- Infuse tourism content into primary curricula
- Industry 'experience days' for children of hotel staff
- Social media campaign promoting tourism careers

Obj 5

Strengthen Public Sector Capacity

Tourism Dept:

Appoint dedicated Training Coordinator; CPD for all staff; study tours to leading hotel schools

Employment Dept:

Strengthen the capacity of GOP processing and job placement officers through greater understanding of the tourism industry's workforce needs.

Immigration:

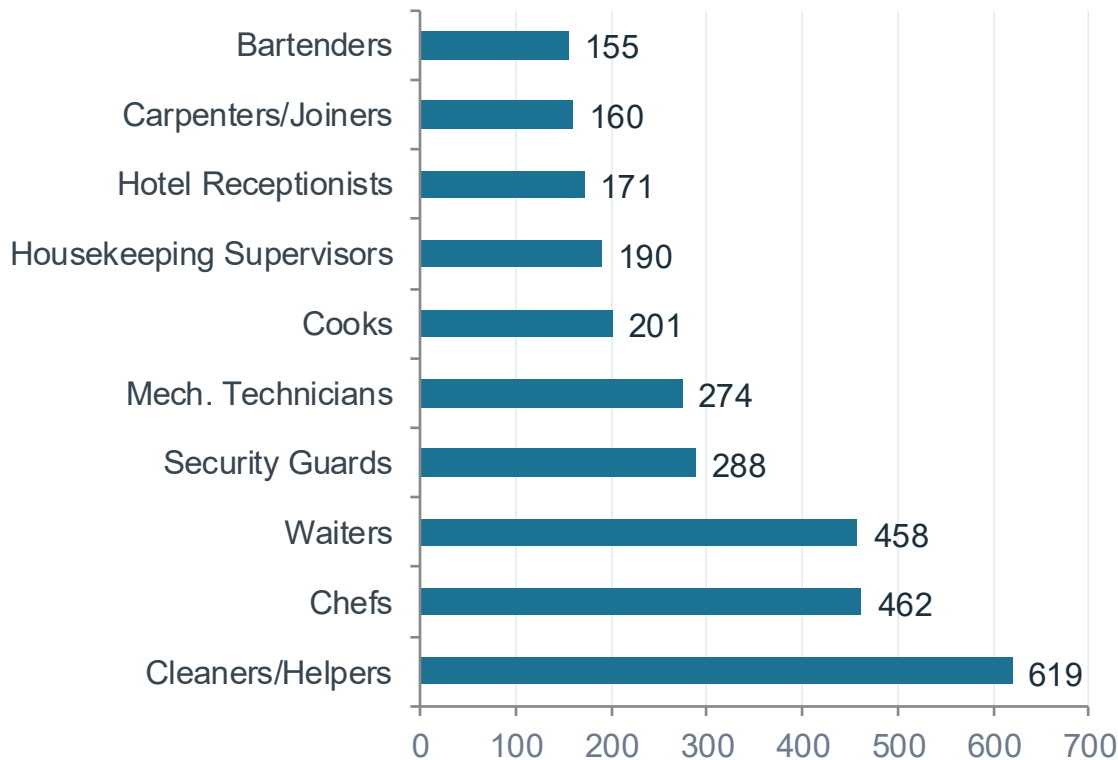
Strengthen the capacity of permit processing officials through enhanced understanding of the tourism sector's workforce needs to support timely and informed decision-making.

Ministry of Education:

Ongoing training of hospitality & vocational teachers; provide tourism teaching materials

What the THRDS Directly Addresses

Top active expatriate occupations in Seychelles (Q2 2023 at time of survey) — all addressed by the THRDS



THRDS Response

- ✓ proposed Fast-track GOP processing for top occupations
- ✓ STA curriculum: cookery, F&B, housekeeping upgraded
- ✓ Sailing Academy: crew, stewards, hospitality
- ✓ Security officer tourism training course
- ✓ Building Maintenance Certificate (SIT)
- ✓ In-service training portal & short courses
- ✓ Sliding-scale GOPs to ease cost of low-level hires

How the THRDS Helps Seychelles

Short, medium and long-term impact across the economy

SHORT-TERM

Immediate Relief

- Faster GOP processing = vacancies filled in weeks not months
- Specialist visas for short-term experts
- Industry regains productivity and operational efficiency

MEDIUM-TERM

Competitive Tourism

- Reduced labour costs → affordable pricing
- Higher-quality graduates from improved tourism academy (STA)
- Marine tourism sector properly staffed

LONG-TERM

Sustainable Economy

- Seychellois own their tourism industry
- Youth choose hospitality as a career
- Women fully included in the workforce

ECONOMIC

Fiscal Impact

- More income tax from filled vacancies
- Corporate tax from healthier tourism businesses
- Lower hidden costs passed to tourists → more arrivals

Lessons for African Member States

The THRDS model is transferable — every challenge Seychelles faces is shared across African tourism destinations

01

Diagnose before you strategise

Use multi-method research: surveys + field missions + desk research. Evidence-based strategy design avoids wasted resources. Involve UN Tourism's technical assistance early.

02

Fix regulation before training

Training develops talent, but an enabling regulatory environment ensures that talent can be deployed where it is needed most. Both are essential for sustainable tourism growth.

03

Involve industry as co-owners

HR forums, hospitality associations, and skipper unions were integral to strategy design. Industry must feel ownership or implementation fails.

04

Include women deliberately

Women are a hidden workforce in tourism across Africa. Childcare, flexible hours and targeted policies unlock significant untapped labour.

05

Build youth pipeline from schools

Tourism ethos cannot be taught only at training institutions. It must start in primary school. Clubs, curricula, and career expos are low-cost, high-impact.

06

Monitor and adapt

Build a results framework with named indicators, responsibilities, and review cycles. A dynamic strategy that adjusts annually outperforms a static plan.

What Makes a THRDS Succeed?



Political Will

Ministries must commit at the highest level. The GOP reform requires Cabinet-level decision. Without it, strategies remain documents.



Fiscal Resources

Short-term budget allocation for infrastructure, training delivery and strategy management. Long-term ROI vastly exceeds investment.



Partnerships

'Skills for Tourism: Team Seychelles' — inter-ministerial cooperation, public-private partnerships, employer-training provider links.



Industry Ownership

Industry must co-design, co-fund and co-implement. Strategies imposed on industry rarely land. Consult, iterate, co-own.

The THRDS is only as powerful as the political will behind it.

A Call to Action for African Member States

- 1 Commission a Tourism Human Resources Assessment in your country — know your gaps before you plan.
- 2 Reform work permit systems for tourism — speed and cost are the most immediate levers for growth.
- 3 Invest in national tourism training institutions — audit, upgrade, and align curricula to industry need.
- 4 Mainstream women and youth — they are Africa's largest untapped tourism workforce.
- 5 Request UN Tourism technical assistance — the THRDS methodology is available to all member states.

"Tourism's golden goose must be protected, nurtured — and properly staffed."