

Strategic Plan

Seychelles Legal Information Institute



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Objective of the Consultancy

The objective of this consultancy is for CTF Consultancy to support the Seychelles Legal Information Institute (SeyLII) in developing a three-year strategic plan for the organisation. It was agreed that this would be achieved by:

- 1) Reviewing any relevant existing internal literature that may assist the Consultant in understanding the current vision, mission and/or strategic objectives of SeyLII;
- 2) Individually consulting up to six key stakeholders within SeyLII's team, to gather and analyse their perspectives on the vision, mission and their desired strategic objectives for SeyLII moving forward;
- 3) Organising and facilitating one consultation meeting and/or presentation for SeyLII's Management Team, to present key findings from the consultation exercise, gather feedback and produce and present the final strategic plan, and
- 4) Composing an end-of-consultancy report that compiles the outcomes from all of the above consultation exercises, to produce SeyLII's three-year strategic plan.

Key Deliverables

CTF Consultancy agreed to produce the following deliverables as part of this body of work:

1. One-to-one consultations with SeyLII's Team (up to 6 consultations in total);
2. One consultation meeting and/or presentation for SeyLII's Management Team, to present key findings from the consultation exercise, gather feedback and produce/present the final strategic plan;
3. One end-of-consultancy report, inclusive of SeyLII's three-year strategic plan (2023 – 2025);
4. One presentation of the proposed three-year strategic plan to SeyLII's Management Team and other key stakeholders, and proposed ways forward.

Methodology

From July to August 2022, the Consultant conducted six one-to-one consultations with SeyLII's Management Team – as per the agreed scope of work - to determine their perspectives on the

association's *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)*.

Interviews were conducted with: *Justice Mathilda Twomey, Judge Melchior Vidot, Master Natasha Burian, Magistrate Emily Gonthier, Honourable Bernard Georges and Mrs. Joelle Coetsee.*

Upon completing this *SWOT* Analysis, the Consultant's line of questioning focused specifically on: 1) SeyLII's ideal scope of activities over the period 2023 to 2025; 2) proposed future staffing and resource considerations, to deliver these activities; 3) proposed future funding and membership considerations, and 4) considerations on the Board's current *modus operandi*, and recommendations for future ways of working.

Four interviews were conducted in-person and two interviews were conducted virtually. During the months of September and October 2022, the Consultant worked on compiling all findings and recommendations, to produce the final version of this report.

SeyLII's Mission and Vision

Interviewees generally agreed that SeyLII's mission (*'to offer the legal community and the public free, reliable and unrestricted online access to essential Seychelles legal resources'*) remained valuable. They felt that SeyLII was largely reliable as a free resource to work from, and that there was a need in Seychelles for a platform of this nature, to perform the unique function of being a one-stop-shop for all country-specific judgements, legislation and articles, for lawyers, judges and the general public alike. One interviewee also cited the important contribution that SeyLII provided to local academic discourse, as an accessible and valuable repository of free information for University students.

Interviewees generally agreed that SeyLII's vision (*'to be the primary legal resource institution in Seychelles providing free access to Law'*) was still applicable. Whilst both the Office of the Attorney General - and the National Assembly of Seychelles – also strive to have full, free and up-to-date databases of legislation on their respective platforms, SeyLII also provides access to judgements and articles (although interviewees admitted that the latter feature has much scope for development). This - in addition to SeyLII's mandate to remain independent of Government institutions – differentiates the platform from others in the country.

Updates to statutes and judgements are required to be provided in real-time, in order to maintain the platform's relevance and standing as the online legal information repository of choice. Interviewees recognised that – whilst older cases in particular were not always available on SeyLII – the platform was generally good at ensuring that up-to-date judgements were uploaded. At present, this is heavily reliant on a good working relationship with the Judiciary, whose Legal Researchers are currently responsible for uploading judgements to the platform. However, interviewees acknowledged that SeyLII's lack of internal capacity to keep abreast of amendments to the law impacted its ability to

provide up-to-date legislation on the platform. This could be improved with stronger collaboration and information-sharing between the Office of the Attorney General and the National Assembly of Seychelles, with SeyLII; however, more work would need to be undertaken with each stakeholder – particularly with the Office of the Attorney General - to attain this outcome. Whilst it was widely acknowledged that having amended and up-to-date statute and case law must remain one of SeyLII's primary objectives, it was also acknowledged that the association needed to work towards building the internal staffing and resource capacity required, to meet this objective.

SeyLII's Strengths

- Interviewees cited SeyLII's comprehensive availability of case law and legislation as a major strength. In relation to updating and consolidating legislation specifically – whilst there remains considerable scope for improvement - SeyLII has generally done well in occupying a long-standing gap in this space. SeyLII's presence has helped to propel the importance of legislative updating in Seychelles; particularly in relation to the backlog in updating that existed between 1993 to 2014, when little to no legislative updating was being undertaken across the country. The launch of the e-Grey Book feature – a legislative pack found on SeyLII which compiles the most cited pieces of legislation in Seychelles – has largely been consolidated and uploaded, and is widely accessed from the platform by members of the legal profession. Both case and statute law – which were not easily accessible before – could now be accessed in a manner that was free, digitised and unrestricted, from an independent source;
- One interviewee spoke about the strong links that SeyLII has fostered over the years as part of AfricanLII – a collaborative group of organisations and individuals from across Africa, who convene a network of sixteen African Legal Information Institutes (including SeyLII) – that are dedicated to free access to law on the continent. SeyLII has benefitted – and continues to benefit from – the resources that AfricanLII has at its disposal, to support with the back-end operations of maintaining the online platform;
- Interviewees felt that SeyLII served as the main tool for a vast cross-section of society, in relation to accessing Seychelles-specific legal information from both Seychellois and non-Seychellois end-users – both within and outside the legal profession – alike;
- One interviewee cited the launch of SeyLII's new website as one particular strength. They felt that the platform was easy to navigate, and that the 'Search' function on the website made accessing judgements and statutes more accessible, in spite of some minor glitches. They also made reference to the inclusion of the 'Most Recent Judgements' section on the home page - as well as the case summaries provided – as particularly-welcomed features, and hoped that the latter feature would also one day extend to summaries of statute law. A different interviewee felt that the development of SeyLII's new website supported SeyLII with its mission

and vision; so long as judgements and statutes could be uploaded in a regular, accurate and timely manner. They felt that the general lack of textbooks and other resources specific to Seychelles Law – and the subsequent reliance on the case and statute laws in existence - placed greater emphasis on the role and importance of SeyLII; particularly for legal practitioners;

- An interviewee cited how Government entities have since followed suit in ensuring that there is greater transparency, ease-of-access and greater diligence relating to providing updated legislation and regulation in the country. They argued that SeyLII's formation – and continued presence – has contributed immensely towards revolutionising the way in which the Law has been made more accessible across Seychelles.

SeyLII's Weaknesses

- All interviewees cited SeyLII's lack of internal staffing capacity as a major weakness that prohibits the association from both: 1) delivering upon its current mandate to provide real-time updates of statutes and judgements; and 2) expanding upon its current size and scope. Given the lack of any permanent staffing for the association at present, most of SeyLII's current activities are driven by well-intentioned and passionate – albeit incredibly busy – volunteer Board members;
- There is a heavy reliance on the Judiciary of Seychelles' Legal Researchers to undertake uploads onto the platform. Some interviewees described the challenges that this can often present; some Legal Researchers, for example, may not have been employed by the Judiciary of Seychelles for a long period of time, and may lack the contextual and historical awareness required to effectively upload and link newer judgements to relevant older judgements. Another interviewee spoke of the numerous inconsistencies that exist in the way in which content has been uploaded – and the difficulty in following up and holding people accountable - based on the multitude of different Legal Researchers who have uploaded to the platform throughout the years. The process of uploading judgements and legislation to the platform was also described by some interviewees as 'exceptionally tedious and frustrating', 'time-consuming', 'soul-crushing' and 'painful and arduous'. This uploading task - which, as per the Consultant's understanding, does not strictly fall within the Job Description of Legal Researchers – has created some friction, with some Legal Researchers refusing to conduct uploads to the platform. The Consultant also learned that the workloads of Legal Researchers – who, according to some interviewees, are already understaffed and over-worked – does not permit them to maintain or prioritise uploading judgements in a manner that is commensurate to their other duties. This lack of capacity can cause a delay in uploading judgements to SeyLII – sometimes, in the past, for months on end – which exacerbates SeyLII's ability to provide real-time updates of statute and case law even further. In order to address this issue with a longer-term solution, it was widely agreed by most interviewees that SeyLII would need to work towards employing at least one employee – on either a part-time or full-time basis – to alleviate

Legal Researchers of this responsibility. Permanent staffing capacity for SeyLII would see a staff member taking responsibility for: real-time updates of statutes and judgements (as per the defined uploading criteria for SeyLII); undertaking edits of final uploaded documents where relevant; providing case summaries; relevant relationship-building with key stakeholders within the Judiciary, and finding and amending legislation with their most recent updates, among other defined responsibilities;

- According to some interviewees, the current uploading process to SeyLII has considerable scope for user error. This may have been exacerbated over the past couple of years, due in part to the lack of follow-up during the transition between Chief Justices. The process is heavily reliant on all Judiciary stakeholders involved ensuring that all uploading processes have been correctly followed. These processes can include: 1) ensuring that judges produce their judgements using a particular template, for ease of uploading to the platform; 2) ensuring that Court Reporters correctly issue a media-neutral citation number to a judgement, and that this is written on the finalised physical copy, and 3) ensuring that the final Word version of the judgement – and final physical judgement – have had no further alterations, before being scanned and saved on the Judiciary’s shared drive. At present, a Legal Researcher would then be tasked with accessing the shared drive to read every uploaded judgement, in order to determine whether it: 1) is publishable, and 2) requires any further editing, before uploading this version to SeyLII. The Consultant was also informed that some judges may make changes to the physical copy of a judgement upon signing the document, without updating the Word version of the document, which is ultimately copied, pasted and uploaded to SeyLII by the Legal Researchers. The Consultant also learned of one instance where some judges write their own judgements, but then fail to upload these to the shared drive. These judgements may not necessarily then be allocated a media-neutral citation number, and may not be accounted for as a missing judgement. These examples clearly highlight the huge potential for human error within the current uploading process, where several moving parts within the Judiciary are required to upload judgements and legislation to SeyLII. SeyLII is heavily reliant on the Judiciary of Seychelles taking ownership of its level of proactivity towards keeping the platform current, which is a significant factor that is beyond the association’s level of control;
- One interviewee highlighted that the ideal situation would be for the relevant Department within the Judiciary to be in a position to send every judgement directly to SeyLII, or for SeyLII to at least have direct access to a database of non-finalised shared judgements. At present, SeyLII can only access these through the Legal Researchers. SeyLII is completely reliant on the Chief Justice allocating Legal Researchers with the time to upload judgements to the platform. Where there has been a backlog in uploading cases, it has partly been because Legal Researchers have been too busy, and have not had the time to upload. In the past, this dynamic would also depend heavily on how prepared the Senior Legal Researcher would be to direct Legal Researchers’ hours towards performing uploads to the platform. At present, there are

risks relating to the uniformity of the process, as well as in the capacity of the Judiciary to upload cases to SeyLII;

- In SeyLII's decade of operations, the association has never undertaken a comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation exercise, to assess the platform's scope and impact. Undertaking such an exercise could assist the association considerably with its efforts relating to fundraising, grant-writing, and Public Relations and Communications, moving forward;
- Some interviewees acknowledged that SeyLII would benefit from additional support with its Public Relations and Communications efforts. This support would extend to Marketing and Branding, developing a Communications Strategy, and – longer-term – social media content management across its various platforms.

SeyLII's Opportunities

- One interviewee remarked that SeyLII has not managed to completely consolidate legislation in recent years. Although the Office of the Attorney General undertook a major consolidation of legislation – which was completed in 2017 - many of the chapters were completely re-numbered, and the consolidation only went so far as legislation dating back to 2010, meaning that some of the legislation that was published was already wildly out of date. In order for SeyLII to completely consolidate all legislation, it would need to sift through all 75,000 pages of the current consolidation, then continue from 2010 onwards. This body of work – although essential – would be significant in size and scope. It would require strategic and dedicated input, as well as scrupulous and intricate reading. One interviewee mentioned that SeyLII has been working with key partners, who have committed to supporting with consistently undertaking regular updates. Seeking the funding to undertake this exercise presents a fantastic opportunity for SeyLII to significantly contribute towards ensuring that consolidated legislation is accurate, up-to-date and reliable; however, pursuing this body of work – and approaching potential local partners to collaborate on this - may need to be tactfully and delicately handled, given the silo approach that has been undertaken by the Office of the Attorney General regarding a similar body of work in the past;
- With the imminent introduction of a Seychelles Law degree at the University of Seychelles, there are ample opportunities for the development of secondary information from the legal profession. This could facilitate a growth of academic legal discourse in Seychelles, and further accelerate SeyLII's position as the go-to repository for comprehensive and up-to-date legal information in the country for students undertaking this course. In addition to SeyLII's core function of providing free access to the law for members of the public, there is also an opportunity for SeyLII to curate paid-for, course-specific content – in the form of digitised textbooks, providing access to older scanned documents, and/or providing access to judgements that may not currently be publishable (among other additional services) – as part

of this drive for essential Seychelles Law-specific secondary information. Whilst SeyLII's core function of providing free access to the law must not be compromised, these additional services could be made available for a small membership fee, to help sustain the association's operations. One interviewee observed, however, that providing these services would be contingent on SeyLII's future manpower and resource capacity, to be sufficiently equipped to manage these additional resources accordingly. Another interviewee emphasised the importance of SeyLII designing and delivering a viable product, should it choose to offer additional paid-for services;

- One interviewee suggested other potential paid-for additional services that could be offered by SeyLII as part of an optional membership model, in order for the association to financially sustain its operations beyond donations and grants. Ideas for such additional services included: 1) providing an up-to-date directory of registered lawyers in Seychelles; 2) disseminating quarterly newsletters to members, and 3) providing case summaries and reviews of recent judgements, among other potential services. The interviewee felt that legal practitioners in particular - who rely heavily on the platform to support their work – would be likely to contribute a membership fee for these additional services. Core functions – such as access to judgements, articles and updated legislation – would remain free;
- Law students undertaking the Seychelles Law degree would also have the potential to contribute academic journal articles, which could be published on SeyLII. In the past, SeyLII coordinated an essay-writing competition, where the best research papers submitted by Law students were then published onto the platform. With the introduction of a Seychelles Law-specific degree, encouraging these students to contribute to the platform could provide a pipeline of content from emerging talent within the legal profession, which could help to reignite this currently-under-utilised function on SeyLII;
- One interviewee felt that improving upon the reliability of content currently on SeyLII provides a key opportunity for the platform. A particular focus on the submission of articles and learned pieces by lawyers and judges would be beneficial; however, this would require the desire, time and appetite from a passionate person to follow up accordingly. According to this interviewee, there is a culture within the profession of 'not being bothered' to submit articles and learned pieces, given the shortage of lawyers within the profession, and their general lack of capacity. One interviewee suggested that - given SeyLII may not have the internal infrastructure at present to conduct peer-reviewed articles - members of SeyLII's Management Team could initiate this process on a rota basis, by producing short (i.e., 500 words or less) 'placeholder' contributions. These contributions could take the form of either case summaries, key issues within the legal profession, or 'law-explainer' pieces, which would then have the scope to be developed into fully-fledged articles at a later date. It was suggested by one interviewee that the pursuit of articles and learned pieces would ideally be driven by a more experienced legal practitioner; perhaps one who is approaching the end of their practice, and who has more time

on their hands. Articles and learned pieces could also provide the opportunity for exposure for emerging talent within the legal profession. Given the fast pace at which the Law moves in Seychelles, the contribution of articles – which could be vetted and approved by SeyLII’s Board - would add value to the work of lawyers in the country. One interviewee observed, however, that it would be important for SeyLII to define how the Intellectual Property of these contributed articles would be managed, in order to encourage and entice prospective contributors to publish on the platform;

- Another suggestion made by one interviewee was that SeyLII could work with partners, to video-record interventions made by prominent members within the legal profession at conferences, seminars and round-table discussions. These videos could then be uploaded to SeyLII directly, or to one of its current (or future) social media channels (e.g., a SeyLII YouTube account), for learning and posterity. The interviewee highlighted that members of Seychelles’ legal community are regularly invited to speak at national or international conferences, and that their interventions are not necessarily being captured. The interviewee also mentioned that some prominent legal practitioners in Seychelles even produce articles – with significant international exposure - but that these are not necessarily being published on the SeyLII platform at present, which would seem like a missed opportunity;
- Some interviewees felt that there were opportunities for SeyLII to deepen its relationships with other Legal Information Institutes across the region, as part of a more formal knowledge exchange across the AfricanLII network. They felt that SeyLII could tap into the expertise and experience of more developed Legal Information Institutes, and partner to organise conferences, fora and seminars at a national level. This would serve as a method of generating content, facilitating networking opportunities and providing continued legal education for lawyers in the country, whilst also bridging the gap between the Seychelles legal community and other legal communities within the region;
- Some interviewees spoke of the prospect of SeyLII embracing the role of technology in the future, to further support the platform in realising its mission and vision. One interviewee spoke about the various developments being made in the space of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and the role that AI could potentially play in supporting SeyLII with some of its current challenges around the accurate and reliable uploading of case and statute law. In addition to this, the potential development of an application, for example, could be enticing for prospective international funders, who might see Seychelles as a perfect small-population jurisdiction to pilot technological innovations. One interviewee cited the example of ‘*Constitutional Compass*’ – a project undertaken in South Africa – which is a mobile-based application that could be accessed by parliamentarians at any time. This application – which is available in three languages - provides the wording of legislation, as well as links to related case laws, acts and parliamentary standing orders. The interviewee felt that there was scope for the application developer to work with SeyLII to develop something similar for a local context (in English and

Seychellois Creole), and that initial interest to support with this has already been expressed by a partner. These potential opportunities, however, would be funding-dependent, and would most likely need to be outsourced to key technology partners, given SeyLII's lack of capacity to undertake this work themselves;

- Some interviewees felt that there was an opportunity for SeyLII to undertake a formal exercise, to evaluate the impact of its services during the decade of the platform's existence. This body of work could include an analysis of user statistics, as well as qualitative metrics, to support the association with its branding and messaging, as well as inform the platform's future strategic direction in terms of activities and areas of focus. This body of work could also assist the association with its fundraising and ongoing Public Relations and Communications efforts, moving forward.

SeyLII's Threats

- Several interviewees cited funding as an ongoing threat to SeyLII. SeyLII's ability to keep funding – in order to ensure that the platform remains relevant in terms of real-time access to the Law – is critical. Without the funding to complete this key task – and to meet the future needs of consolidating all case and statute laws in Seychelles – SeyLII would run the risk of failing to meet its mission and vision. Another interviewee spoke of the prospect of SeyLII losing its unique selling point to potential competitors. If other platforms are also working to make the same resources accessible in Seychelles, this might impact the association's positioning in the market place, and impede SeyLII's ability to secure funds;
- One interviewee spoke of the 'power of personality' within the legal profession in Seychelles, and how this could pose a threat to SeyLII, moving forward. If SeyLII were to lose the co-operation of key partners – particularly within the Judiciary of Seychelles – this would significantly cripple the association's ability to deliver upon its mandate. Under the current model, SeyLII is completely reliant on the Judiciary taking ownership of its level of proactivity towards the platform. As hypothetical examples, were the Chief Justice – or Legal Researchers – to take antagonistic approaches towards SeyLII, SeyLII would not have access to the country's laws. Likewise, if key members were to leave SeyLII – or were key allies to leave their respective role(s) within the Judiciary – SeyLII's position could be precarious. Most interviewees generally agreed that – whilst the Judiciary of Seychelles would remain the paramount partner in SeyLII performing its functions – SeyLII would need to gradually reduce its current heavy reliance on the institution's personnel and infrastructure, whilst ensuring that relationships with key personnel within the Judiciary are well-managed. Interviewees accepted that SeyLII would always be reliant on the co-operation of the Chief Justice, judges and key personnel within the Secretariat, in order to continue to have access to the law. With SeyLII's own permanent staffing, however, this person would take responsibility for operational tasks that are currently sitting with Legal Researchers. A permanent staff member would also be responsible for taking

the time to foster strong relationships with key gatekeepers within the Judiciary, to provide the information required for SeyLII to fulfill its mandate;

- One interviewee spoke of the need for SeyLII to maintain its ability to stay independent and protocol-driven - as prescribed by the principles outlined in the Free Access to Law Movement - and to resist pressures from the Judiciary of Seychelles to act otherwise. One example was cited to the Consultant, where the Judiciary of Seychelles expressed their desire to have the final say on what was uploaded to SeyLII by way of judgements. This particular example highlights the tension that can come with the issue of control and ownership of judgements from the courts, which – if acted upon – could seriously undermine SeyLII’s independence and integrity. While SeyLII will always require the Judiciary’s co-operation in accurately and honestly sharing the judgements that are being issued in court, it is SeyLII that would need to ensure that it makes the final determination as to what gets uploaded, as an independent entity. Issues such as these, however, can be avoided, when there is healthy co-operation and dialogue between the relevant partners. SeyLII’s current Management Team – which comprises of several Judicial Officers – should assist in facilitating dialogue in the appropriate fora; such as judges’ meetings.

Comments on SeyLII’s Board

- The majority of interviewees felt that the Board worked well in its current form. Some remarked that – so long as SeyLII has a committed and driven Chair, and is well supported by equally-passionate members who are willing to give back and commit the time – there is no need to consider increasing the size of the Board. One interviewee expressed that SeyLII’s Board should remain small and nimble, whilst another interviewee lauded the injection of ‘new blood’ to the Board’s current composition, which complements the experience of older and longer-serving Board members. One interviewee felt that SeyLII might benefit from additional Board members; however, they also acknowledged that – were SeyLII to recruit a permanent staff member - this person could take on some of the more administrative tasks that are currently being undertaken by Board members. This, in turn, would permit the Board to remain its current size, and shift its focus more towards SeyLII’s strategic direction;
- Several interviewees supported the idea of recruiting co-opted members to SeyLII’s Board; so long as these members could add value with their specific areas of expertise, and could meaningfully contribute by way of time and capacity. Two interviewees felt that recruiting co-opted members that deal with specific aspects of the Law that are currently underrepresented in the courtroom – such as from the field of Financial Services – might help to plug gaps that may exist in terms of laws and regulations pertaining to that particular sector. One specific example provided was seeking co-opted membership from legal representatives from regulatory bodies within Seychelles - such as the Financial Services Authority (FSA) – to support with subject-

specific knowledge. Another interviewee felt that co-opted members could be brought in for specific SeyLII projects, based on their area of expertise.

Comments on Future Funding Streams and the Prospect of Developing a Membership Model

- Several interviewees felt that SeyLII should look to develop formal partnerships with key Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies – as well as regulatory bodies – to support them with their legislative and regulatory efforts, in the form of signing Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs). Potential partnerships suggested included the likes of: the Financial Services Authority, the Central Bank of Seychelles, the Seychelles Revenue Commission, the Financial Intelligence Unit, the Ministry of Finance, the University of Seychelles, the Ministry of Land and Housing, the Department of Employment, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Attorney General, among others. Some interviewees felt that some of these entities – who have supported SeyLII with funding in the past – could be re-approached, to explore the prospect of potential new partnerships. A couple of interviewees touted the possibility of receiving funding from Government in the future; however, this would need to be debated further internally, so as to better understand how this could be achieved, without compromising SeyLII’s independence;
- Interviewees spoke of the need for SeyLII to research the multitude of international donors that could potentially fund specific bodies of work. Specific examples cited included: funding through the various International Law Library networks, which could be explored further through the current Librarian at the Judiciary; Small Island Developing States (SIDS)-specific funding, both within and outside of Seychelles (e.g., the Open Society Foundation, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, universities, etc...), and diplomatic missions that have specific programmes on bolstering the Rule of Law around the world. One interviewee also spoke about sector-specific opportunities – both nationally and internationally – that could serve as sources of funding to SeyLII, such as the Blue Economy sector, as well as the Financial Services sector. Both sectors – which are relatively new and emerging within Seychelles’ context - present unique opportunities and threats to the country. Ongoing education and awareness-raising relating to updates in legislation specific to these sectors, may be a crucial service required, where there is currently a national gap. This could provide a unique and timely opportunity for SeyLII, to occupy this void;
- Some interviewees felt that SeyLII’s primary source of fundraising should remain through donations, and that the association should ramp up its efforts to develop a pool of corporate partners, to sponsor the funds required to drive forward the association’s operations. One interviewee expressed that fundraising through private sector companies – as well as through local and international donors - would always provide the best way to raise funds for associations. Another interviewee argued that SeyLII was widely recognised – particularly

among younger lawyers who understood the value of the platform, and whom have grown up with SeyLII as a presence in their day-to-day practice – and that SeyLII could capitalise on this momentum, through proactively approaching law firms to request monthly sponsorships and/or in-kind support. There was general agreement that one potential ‘low-hanging fruit’ idea would be to organise a Gala dinner – with prospective and current corporate partners invited – to support with fundraising efforts. One interviewee felt that corporate sponsorships in the region of SCR 30k a month could also potentially fund a full-time staff member, who would be tasked with maintaining the platform, fostering relationships with key partners, and developing bids for additional sources of funding;

- Whilst some interviewees felt that SeyLII should pursue a more aggressive advertising campaign to better extoll the virtues of the platform to the wider public, potential donors and end-users, other interviewees also emphasised the importance of SeyLII remaining mindful of the optics of seeking funding from some corporate sponsors, and the ethical implications that this may carry. Members who are Judicial Officers, for example, may not wish to be perceived to be compromised by donations from particular parties (or particular high reputational-risk sectors), given the sensitive nature of their roles. Two interviewees felt that SeyLII would benefit from developing a set of ethical guidelines for fundraising efforts, to better define criteria as to which entities can or cannot donate to the association (particularly in cases that may give rise to potential conflicts of interest);
- As elaborated upon in the ‘*Opportunities*’ section of this strategic plan, all interviewees recognised the crucial importance of SeyLII’s commitment to the ‘Free Access to Law Movement’ – and recognised that certain core functions (such as: unrestricted, reliable and up-to-date access to judgements, legislation and articles) should remain free to the platform’s end-users. One interviewee was against the idea of SeyLII adopting any kind of paid membership model, citing that this would go against the principle of the very Movement that SeyLII had subscribed to. This was supported by another interviewee, who argued that it would be challenging to charge members, given SeyLII’s mandate is to provide free access to law. It was clear, however, that some interviewees felt that SeyLII needed to be more forward-thinking in becoming financially self-sufficient, and less reliant on grants, sponsorships and donations. They felt that this would be particularly pertinent, should SeyLII wish to develop a more permanent staffing presence, along with the various running costs that would accompany this (i.e., equipment; high-speed Internet; a potential office space; etc....). These interviewees felt that developing a membership model to complement SeyLII’s more traditional forms of fundraising – in which end-users could opt to pay for specific value-adding services – could provide SeyLII with the added financial security required to cover the running costs needed to sustain and grow the association’s scope and impact. Longer-term, adopting this hybrid approach to generating funds – in order to better sustain activities – could also provide a buffer to the association from the potential volatilities that relying on donations and sponsorships can bring, and the subsequent impact that this could then have

on an association's day-to-day operations. One interviewee, however, noted that SeyLII should be mindful of its status as an association, and the legal limitations that it would therefore have in being seen to generate revenue – which could be misconstrued as profit - to sustain its operations.

Comments on Developing a Staffing Model for SeyLII

- All interviewees were unanimous in identifying that seeking permanent staffing was the major priority for SeyLII, moving forward. Ideally, this person would serve as the dedicated key point of liaison between SeyLII and the Judiciary. They would communicate with the relevant department within the Judiciary on a regular basis, to request finalised Word and scanned versions of judgements. This would then permit SeyLII to have its own database of judgements, which could then be sifted through, edited and published (as per SeyLII's criteria) directly to the platform, without the involvement of Legal Researchers. This person would also be responsible for the day-to-day management of SeyLII, as well as the on-the-ground implementation of SeyLII's strategic plan. They would work towards ensuring that laws are kept up-to-date, they would lead on redactions and all uploads, they would provide case summaries, and they would foster and maintain good working relationships with key stakeholders, to better facilitate SeyLII's work;
- It was felt by most interviewees that this person would require additional administrative support; either in the form of a part-time staff member, in the form of interns, or both. A supporting staff member could assist with the mundane tasks of data input and scans, as well as assist with preparing content for social media and SeyLII's potential members, moving forward. They could also support with uploading, sourcing and managing materials for articles. An internship model could assist with continuity and help to future-proof these roles. Interns who have gone through the 'SeyLII system' could potentially be approached for future work, in case a permanent staff member decides to leave. They could be brought in to undertake the more menial tasks when the workload is particularly intense (e.g., scanning of old judgements), to assist with any potential backlog;
- According to interviewees, the ideal senior staff member would be very literate, with a keen eye for detail. They would be comfortable undertaking mundane tasks, and would need to be able to spot difficulties, be proactive enough to build relationships with the courts, be brave, display a wide range of competencies and interpersonal skills across a range of areas, and be able to manage an array of internal and external stakeholders; including donors. Most interviewees felt that this senior staff member would require a sharp legal mind, who would either be a lawyer or a Law student. One interviewee, however, felt that training in Law was not essential, but that background knowledge would be important. This interviewee suggested that it might be necessary to recruit two people for this purpose - possibly a slightly older person and a slightly younger person working

together - with complementary skill-sets. While the ideal scenario might see SeyLII recruiting a full-time employee and a part-time employee, this would be dependent on the association's ability to fund these roles. SeyLII could work towards phasing in this model over a two-to-three-year period; starting instead with a part-time senior employee who could support and guide the Legal Researchers with uploads in the first instance;

- Interviewees agreed that an additional priority for SeyLII would be secure the funding to support permanent staff with the infrastructure, equipment and resources required, to effectively undertake their roles. Some interviewees mentioned the need for an office space, a very good internet connection, high-performing computer equipment, and a scanner – with good software – to scan older documents. Another interviewee, however, thought that SeyLII should look to explore alongside the Judiciary whether space could be found to accommodate a SeyLII administrator within their premises. They felt that this would save on potential running costs, such as office rental. Other additional resources – such as petty cash to incentivize interns to support with uploads (e.g., refreshments for mass upload sessions) should also be factored into fundraising efforts, according to this interviewee;
- Two interviewees cited the importance of SeyLII requiring Public Relations and Communications support – potentially on a timebound consultancy basis – to support with Marketing for the association. Interviewees felt that the general public was not aware of the relevance and importance of SeyLII, and that specialist support in this regard would assist the association with developing a series of key messages, to assist with their branding across television, radio, the printed press and social media. Longer-term, one interviewee mentioned the prospect of SeyLII recruiting someone with broad copywriting and Marketing skills, to manage Public Relations and Communications on behalf of the association. Until then, however, this person could work with the Board to devise key messages – and a Communications Strategy – which could then be actioned and implemented between Board members who are particularly adept at social media.

Proposed 3-Year Strategic Plan

The following 3-year strategic plan provides a recommendation of priorities and activities, based on the findings that have emerged from the Consultant's interviews. These priorities and activities are mapped against a conservative timeline, and may be achieved by SeyLII's Board sooner than anticipated in the proposed plan:

2023: Fundraising and Marketing

- **Devise a fundraising strategy:** Given that SeyLII's Board have clearly identified fundraising for permanent staffing as a priority, the Consultant would recommend that the association develops a clear fundraising strategy to achieve this. This process would include:
 - 1) Mapping potential corporate sponsors, national donors and international donors;
 - 2) Developing a sponsorship package to entice prospective funders to support the association,
 - 3) Clearly outlining to prospective funders: a) the need for SeyLII's work; b) SeyLII's impact; c) SeyLII's planned future activities, and d) what SeyLII would require from prospective funders, to achieve its outcomes,
 - 4) Costing a proposed staffing model for 2023 and 2024, and setting appropriate fundraising targets accordingly, and
 - 5) Developing a series of key messages, to communicate SeyLII's objectives nationally and internationally.
- **PR and Communications/Monitoring and Evaluation support:** SeyLII may wish to consider commissioning a body of work to support the association with developing key messaging and branding materials to support with its Marketing efforts. This could also include the creation of a Communications Strategy, as well as a Monitoring and Evaluation component, to gather key metrics and testimonials from end-users, to support in communicating SeyLII's impact to prospective donors, key stakeholder partners and members of the general public. SeyLII could then begin to implement the outputs outlined in the Communications Strategy, to provide a regular flow of media content in the public domain. This may need to be actioned internally by Board members, until SeyLII has the resource in place to bring someone in to support with social media management on an ongoing basis.
- **Develop Job Descriptions for staff member(s):** Based on the findings outlined in the 'Staffing' section of this strategic plan, SeyLII's Board may wish to develop Job Descriptions for the ideal candidates they wish to employ on behalf of the association.
- **Fundraise for permanent staffing:** This should be an ongoing series of activities that are based on the fundraising strategy devised towards the beginning of the year.

- **Recruit senior staff member:** The recruitment of a senior staff member would follow a comprehensive national advertising campaign, to attract the ideal candidate. This staff member could be recruited on a part-time basis to start, with the view to securing the necessary funding to convert this into a full-time role by 2024. SeyLII may wish to factor in an induction and onboarding process for this staff member, and begin to think about the resources and equipment that this person would require, to effectively undertake their role.
- **Quality-assuring the timeliness and accuracy of uploads to SeyLII:** The priority for the newly-recruited staff member for 2023 would ideally be to establish good working relationships within the Judiciary, to ensure that laws and judgements are consolidated, accurate and reliable.

2024: Building Internal Capacity, Infrastructure and Quality Assurance

- **Recruit junior staff member:** The recruitment of a junior staff member would follow a comprehensive national advertising campaign, to attract the ideal candidate to complement the skills of a senior staff member. SeyLII may wish to factor in an induction and onboarding process for this staff member.
- **Sourcing an office:** As SeyLII's team expands, one priority would be for staff members to have their own office space, to effectively undertake their roles and responsibilities. SeyLII would need to budget effectively for running costs related to this, such as: office space rental, utilities, a good-quality Internet connection, reliable IT equipment, and office equipment and furniture, among other necessary items for staff members to effectively undertake their roles. This office could also serve as a regular base for all SeyLII-related activities, including Board meetings.
- **Transitioning uploads from the Judiciary to SeyLII:** With a full-time staff member in place, SeyLII may begin to consider transitioning over the responsibility of judgements and legislation uploads from Legal Researchers to the association itself. SeyLII staff may also have the capacity to produce case summaries - and begin to manage and upload article submissions - in a more consistent manner. These can be promoted by SeyLII's staff across social media, to support SeyLII's public education efforts on the benefits of the platform.
- **Developing project proposals:** SeyLII's senior staff member could begin to work closely with the Board, to identify funding opportunities that align with SeyLII's key strategic priorities of impact and growth. SeyLII's increased internal staffing capacity would mean that the association would be in a position to deliver larger-scale projects, alongside maintaining the quality, reliability and timeliness of uploads to the platform.

- **Handover of tasks from the Board to permanent staff:** Key administrative and operational tasks that are currently undertaken by members of SeyLII’s Board, could now be handed over to SeyLII’s staffing team, where appropriate. This would free up the Board to provide more strategic direction and oversight, and to focus more on fostering key strategic partnerships to bolster SeyLII’s standing, both nationally and internationally.

2025: Impact and Outreach

- **Expand upon PR and Communications efforts:** with established staffing in place, SeyLII could look to establish a more frequent pattern of Communications outputs, as per the Communications Strategy developed in 2023. This could either be through the existing staffing structure, or through recruiting a paid staff member/Consultant to support with PR and Communications.
- **Manage and maintain a complete and up-to-date database:** SeyLII’s staff would have developed an online repository with complete and up-to-date laws and judgements, as well as an ability to update them in real-time. SeyLII would also serve as a repository for learned journal articles (e.g., Bar notes and previous publications), with the Board potentially playing a role in reviewing articles, as and when they are submitted and considered for publication.
- **Development of an internship model:** This could take the form of an MoU with the University of Seychelles, to take on students from the Seychelles Law Programme during the holidays. Students would gain exposure into the mechanics involved in managing and maintaining a platform that they use regularly, and would gain first-hand experience of supporting with projects that sit under SeyLII’s body of activities. This would also provide SeyLII with a pool of interns who could potentially be called upon (e.g., for paid work, volunteering opportunities, etc...), as and when needed.
- **Engaging with the legal and non-legal community:** With strategic support from the Board, SeyLII’s staffing team could begin to implement a wider strategy to inform and educate the public on their legal rights. This could take the form of ongoing media engagement (e.g., working with television, radio and the printed press), Road Shows and Open Days. Depending upon the SeyLII Board’s decision on its strategic direction, SeyLII staff may play a role in developing and managing curated content, for members who opt to pay for SeyLII’s additional services.

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