



THINK TANK

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 Background

Seychelles has undoubtedly been impacted negatively by the COVID-19 pandemic. Its impacts have spilt over in all sectors of the economy with arguably worse effects on the Tourism sector- the country's primary source of income contributing in excess of 60% GDP.

Moreover, the negative impacts to our tourism sector has had a domino effect on other sectors of the economy such as fisheries, agriculture, transportation and construction as the demand for these products and services have drastically declined due to their direct reliance on tourism. This significant drop in demand (market size) coupled with a 30% increase in exchange rate has caused a substantial rise in cost of operations and an increase in prices of goods and services. Thus, the fact that in this moment of uncertainty many banks are unwilling to finance new projects means that whilst owners are thinking of alternative ways, the capital to finance those alternative ways might not be available.

2.0 Seychelles' Context

Given the pandemic outbreak in Seychelles, "business as usual" is no longer a concept that businesspersons can embrace. The current situation is affecting the market demand for their products and services and this means that certain inputs in their businesses will be left unused. Thus, businesses will have to restructure their business model as well as, introducing new processes and products on the market to ensure business continuity.

As such, a 'Think Tank' initiative was drawn together by the Government of Seychelles and the Private Sector, following the creation of the COVID-19 Tripartite, to assist in mapping out the challenges and opportunities faced by the local businesses through combined efforts: in an attempt to increase productivity and chances of success during these difficult times.

It is uncertain as to when normal business operations will resume hence, bringing forward innovative and realistic advice and solutions, other than those that are primarily focused on fiscal and monetary policies, will help businesses cope with the new pandemic-related challenges.

3.0 An MSME Think Tank

3.1 Objectives

The main objectives of the Think Tank are to:

- Be a source of new ideas;
- Offer "special" business advice to businesses facing multiple difficulties;
- Use 'outside-the-box' thinking to effectively come up with solutions to resolve current problems;
- Advise businesses on how they can diversify into other sectors to make their businesses less vulnerable to negative demand shock; and
- Suggest amendments to current and propose new policies to which reflects the current situation.

It is important to note that the Think Tank will:

- Not provide funding for the ideas submitted to the applicant;
- Only provide advice and propose solutions and then leave it up to the business owner to implement and ensure success; and
- Not be held responsible if the idea/solution does not reach the level of success as predicted.

3.2 The proposed Think Tank Composition

The Think Tank Committee will be made up of the following representatives:

- The Department of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development (DOIED);
- The Seychelles Investment Board (SIB);
- Enterprise Seychelles Agency (ESA);
- Seychelles Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI);
- National Institute for Science, Technology and Innovation (NISTI); and
- 2 Private Sector representatives (one with experience in the Tourism Sector).

The Think Tank Secretariat shall consist of three representatives from DOIED :

1. Ms. Virginie Hoareau (Cooperation Officer);
2. Ms. Fadette Khan (Principal Policy Analyst); and
3. Ms. Stephanie Larue (Principal Policy Analyst).

The duties of the Secretariat include:

1. Receiving emails from concerned Business persons;
2. Providing the committee members with submissions (as seen in table 1 below);
3. Collecting solutions via email from the committee members;
4. Emailing the solutions to the Business persons; and
5. Maintaining a database on information being shared from the businessperson as well as the committee members.

Members of the Committee shall serve their position for a duration of one year. Subsequently, the term may be renewed.

4.0 Committee's non-disclosure agreement

Upon agreeing to be part of the committee, all committee members shall sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), to reassure the applicant that their sensitive information is kept strictly confidential and/or to ensure that committee members does not disclose or use confidential information that they have received under the Think Tank mechanism.

See attached the template of the NDA at Annex 1.

5.0 Application procedure

Step 1: Submission of queries and/or innovative solutions

A business owner can access the Think Tank Portal to submit their query or innovative solution by completing the online form on: www.industry.gov.sc/think-tank.

The individual shall then receive an automated response confirming receipt of email, which is as follows:

**Thank you for contacting the Think Tank Team.
This serves as a confirmation receipt of your submission.**

If you are seeking a solution, please note that we will get back to you with a response within a maximum of 15 working days.

Thank you and kind regards, Think Tank Secretariat.

Disclaimer: Please be reminded that the Think Tank is not here to re-organise any business structure, as we are merely providing an alternative business idea to your business problem. Furthermore, the solutions suggested by the Think Tank does not guarantee the success of your business and you, as a business owner, may incur extra charges if you choose to change your licence, for example”.

Step 2: Submitting enquiries to committee

Once DOIED has received the emails, three representatives from the Department (i.e. Secretariat) shall insert all relevant information into a similar Database as shown below:

Table 1. Think Tank Submission

Date Email Received	1st October 2020
Reminder	Good Morning all committee members. Please note that that you have 5 days left to communicate a solution on Ocean’s One and Only Jewelry Boutique query. We shall compile all the answers and send it to you all before forwarding it to the business owners. Kind Regards.
Date for a Reply	22 nd October 2020
Name of Individuals/Businesses	Ocean’s One and Only Jewelry Boutique
Problems	How to attract more Seychellois to buy my locally made crafts.
Solutions	Can open a stall every weekend in a place which is frequented by individuals with all your raw materials and invite Seychellois to design their own bracelet and necklace for you to make for them on the spot using the available materials.
Business Activity	Handicraft

Step 3: Submission of Solutions from Committee members

After submitting the information to the Committee, the Committee Members will have to submit practical, sensible and an out-of-the box solution back to the Department within 15 working days. If the committee members require further information from the entrepreneur and/or businessperson submitting their challenges, they can do so via:

1. Email; and/or
2. Virtual interview; and/or
3. Conference Calls.

The Department shall then compile the solutions and suggestions received from a quorum of the committee members (5 members) and will forward it via email to the concerned Businessperson.

6.0 Further support to applicants

The Think Tank support will only be available via the Department of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development's portal. The Department recognises that not all MSME's adopts technology to run their business on a daily basis. Hence, the Enterprise Seychelles Agency (ESA) shall provide support to the MSME's by allowing business persons to book an appointment so that their officers can help them fill in the online form by submitting all the necessary information through the portal as well as, collect any other relevant documents that the Think Tank Committee might deem necessary in order to help them come up with a solution.

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ANNEX 1

CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

THIS CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT (the “Agreement” made this Day of (The “Effective Date”) by (party) being part of the MSME Think Tank Committee.

The party shall be part of the Committee to help provide business persons in Seychelles facing challenges brought on by the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) to their businesses, solutions and/or alternatives they can undertake to help sustain their businesses up until the economy starts recovering from the negative impact of the pandemic.

The parties agree to enter into a confidential relationship with respect to the disclosure and certain prosperity and confidential information (“Confidential Information”) obtained under the think tank initiative.

For the purpose of this Agreement, “Confidential Information” shall include but not limited to documents, records, information and data (whether verbal, electronic, or written), drawings, models, apparatus, sketches, designs, schedules, product plans, marketing plans, technical procedures, manufacturing processes, analyses, compilations, studies, software, prototypes, samples, formulas, methodologies, formulations, patent applications, know-how, experimental results, specifications and other business information relating to the recipients business. Confidential information may be provided in written, oral or electronic form.

The Receiving party and its representative agree to retain the confidential information of the Disclosing party in strict confidence, to protect the security, integrity, and confidentiality of such information and to not permit unauthorized access to or unauthorized use, disclosure, publication or dissemination of confidential information except in conformity of this agreement.

All Confidential Information delivered pursuant to this Agreement shall be and remain the property of the disclosing Party and any documents containing or reflecting the Confidential Information, and all copies thereof, shall be promptly destroyed at the disclosing Party’s option.

The Parties shall use the Confidential Information only for the Think Tank Initiative.

This Agreement and the Party’s duty to hold the businesses’ confidential Information in confidence shall remain in effect until the confidential information no longer qualifies as a trade secret.

The Failure to exercise any right provided in this agreement shall not be a waiver of prior or subsequent rights.

WITNESS PRESENT	PARTY
Name:	Name:
Title:	Title:
Organisation:	Organisation:
Date:	Date:
Signature:	Signature: