



UNITED NATIONS
BELIZE



2020

UNITED NATIONS BELIZE
Country Results Report

United Nations Belize Country Annual Results Report 2020

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Acronyms

BCO	Belize Crime Observatory
BCCAT	Belize COVID-19 Cash Transfer Program
BCP	Business Continuity Planning
BFLA	Belize Family Life Association
BIOFIN	Biodiversity Finance Initiative
BOS	Business Operation Strategy
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CIP	Country Implementation Plan
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CCD	Care for Child Development
COVID-19	Corona-virus Disease 2019
CPA	Country Poverty Assessment
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSME	CARICOM Single Market and Economy
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EPC	Energy Performance Contracts
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GSDS	Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy
HFLE	Health and Family Life Education
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IADB/IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
INFF	Integrated National Financing Framework
KHMH	Karl Heuser Memorial Hospital
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LEDS	Low Emission Development Strategy

LGBTQI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Inter-sex
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MISP	Minimum Initial Service Package
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
MSDF	Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
NCDs	Non-Communicable Diseases or Nationally Determined Contributions
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHRI	National Human Rights Institution
NSO	National Statistical Office
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OPDs	Organizations of Persons with Disabilities
PLHIV	Persons Living with HIV
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
RIA	Rapid Integrated Assessment
RCO	Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator
RCCE	Risk Communication & Community Engagement
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SERP	Socio-Economic Response Plan
SIB	Statistical Institute of Belize
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SISB	Single Information System of Beneficiaries
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SRH/SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNCG	United Nations Communications Group
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene

UN Country Team in Belize

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PAHO/WHO	Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WFP	World Food Programme



**UNITED NATIONS
BELIZE**



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



IAEA



**International
Labour
Organization**



**IOM
UN MIGRATION**



**UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER**

PAHO



**Pan American
Health
Organization**



**World Health
Organization**



UNAIDS



**UN
environment**

United Nations
Environment Programme



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



ADVOCATING FOR
SMALL ISLAND
DEVELOPING STATES



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



for every child



UNODC
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



UNOPS



Foreword

This Country Results Report describes the UN's collective contribution to Belize's development and humanitarian goals in 2020, alongside national and international partners. It reports against the penultimate year of implementation of the United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework 2017–2021 (UN MSDF).

During the implementation of the UNMSDF in 2020, it was critical to ensure programmatic operations and development interventions of the United Nations Country Team, continued to align or were retrofitted to the changing socio-economic context within Belize.

To do this, communication of our joint results, challenges, and achievements becomes a critical element to that alignment and adjustment process. The **2020 UNCT Country Results Report** is one of the many communication tools that seek to highlight these joint results and challenges, with a view of establishing innovative strategies for accelerating Belize's progress towards the SDGs and building on the progress of previous years.

While some noticeable progress has been made for Belize's sustainable development agenda in 2020, the country's growth was severely stifled by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly within the last quarter. The pandemic overwhelmed the Belizean health, economic systems and institutions as well as further impacted the livelihoods of most Belizeans, especially those who are considered most vulnerable.

Through the United Nations COVID-19 Socio-economic Response Plan (SERP) for Belize, the UN continues to work with the Government of Belize, partners and stakeholders to respond to the immediate and medium-term impact of the pandemic on individuals and the health system. The SERP articulates the UN contributions towards mitigating impact and supports Belize's national efforts in the face of COVID-19. It embodies a comprehensive response based on people-centered and sustainable approaches that are intended to not only contribute to the recovery, but will also build resilience for future disasters and health shocks.

It is also important to highlight that the UN system in Belize and the Caribbean has commenced the development of a new Integrated UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for the period of 2022-2026. This places the UN and the Government of Belize in an auspicious position, as it now allows for more intricate planning, alignment, and articulation of the next iteration of the national development plan for Belize, which is also set to commence in 2021.

The new UNSDCF or MSDF 2.0 for the region, will take a multi-dimensional and consultative approach to address the most urgent needs of the Caribbean people, which includes Belizeans, to accelerate progress towards the SDGs in the region.

To achieve long-term sustainable development and to address the structural impediments caused by the pandemic in Belize, we continue to rely on our partnerships with the Government of Belize, development partners, civil society, the private sector and implementing agencies.

My sincerest gratitude to all who have made the achievements and results reported for 2020 possible. I look forward to working with all partners in the development of our new cooperation framework in the coming months, as we collectively enter a new era of recovery and building back better.



Birgit Gerstenberg

Resident Coordinator
United Nations Belize





Key Development Partners of the UNCT in Belize

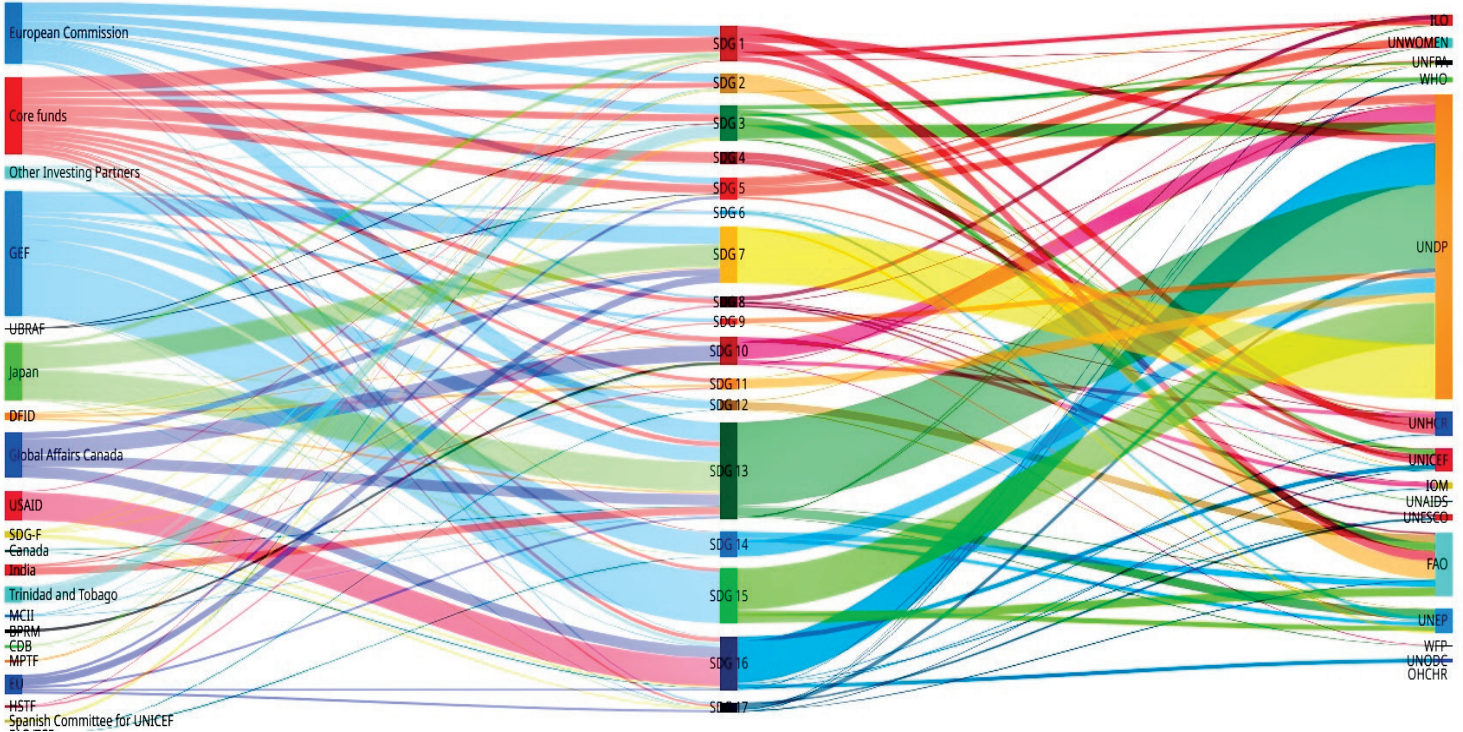
The United Nations continuously supports and engages key development partners towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework (MSDF) 2017-2021 emphasizes the need for an evolving partnership with national governments and non-traditional development actors, including the private sector and civil society organizations.

The graphic “Preliminary mapping of investment partners to UN agencies in the Caribbean using UNINFO”, shows how investments are contributing to the work of different UN agencies and partners specifically to advance the SDGs in the Caribbean. *The width of the lines represents the relative amount of resources being contributed.*

United Nations Belize collaborated closely with its development partners for the implementation of the 2020 Country Implementation Plan, which translates the outcomes of the MSDF into tangible, country-level outputs, and activities. See *listing of “Key partners engaged in 2020”*.

Preliminary mapping of investment partners to UN agencies in the Caribbean using UNINFO



* In absence of end of cycle CBF indicator, annual data is displayed above for UN Caribbean.
 * The values indicated are preliminary and do not represent values from audited financial statements.
 * Date: 2021-03-12 11:51 UTC

Key partners engaged in 2020

Government Partners & Statutory Bodies	Civil Society Organizations	Private Sector & Development Organizations
Office of the Prime Minister, Finance, Economic Development & Investment Ministry of Human Development, Families & Indigenous Peoples' Affairs Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change & Disaster Risk Management Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security & Enterprise Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development, Labour & Local Government Ministry of Education, Culture, Science & Technology	Belize Red Cross Rotary Belize CSO Hub National Trade Union Congress of Belize Help for Progress Humana People to People Belize Hotel Association and Tour Operators and Airlines	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade & Immigration Ministry of Health & Wellness National Climate Change Office National Emergency Management Organization Belize Social Investment Fund Statistical Institute of Belize Meteorological Office Pesticide Control Board
		Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industries World Bank Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama Organization of American States Inter-American Development Bank Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency Global Environment Facility
		National Commission for Families and Children National AIDS Commission National Health Insurance Department of Youth Services National Women's Commission Women's Department RESTORE Belize Human Rights Commission of Belize Belize Judiciary



CHAPTER 1

Key Developments in Belize and Regional Context

In 2020, the Caribbean's financial and health systems were severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This amplified the vulnerabilities of the Caribbean, which concurrently faces pressing debt sustainability issues; liquidity and financial solvency problems within the region's structural gaps; increases in poverty and inequality; limited coverage and access to social protection; as well as unemployment and labour informality.

Regional stakeholders were engaged in coordinating their response to support national governments in battling the health and economic crisis brought on by COVID-19 during 2020. Common regional health protocols for COVID-19 testing were developed along with regional coordination for the procurement of public goods and health-related equipment for the region. Additionally, there were collective responses in supporting livelihoods and business continuity, social protection, and provision of income support to those who lost their jobs.

COMMON COUNTRY ANALYSIS

In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, Belize was also severely impacted in the last quarter of 2020 by compounding natural disaster events specifically hurricanes Nana, Eta and Iota, which resulted in unprecedented flooding, impacting over 30,000 individuals. The combined loss was estimated at US\$80 million.

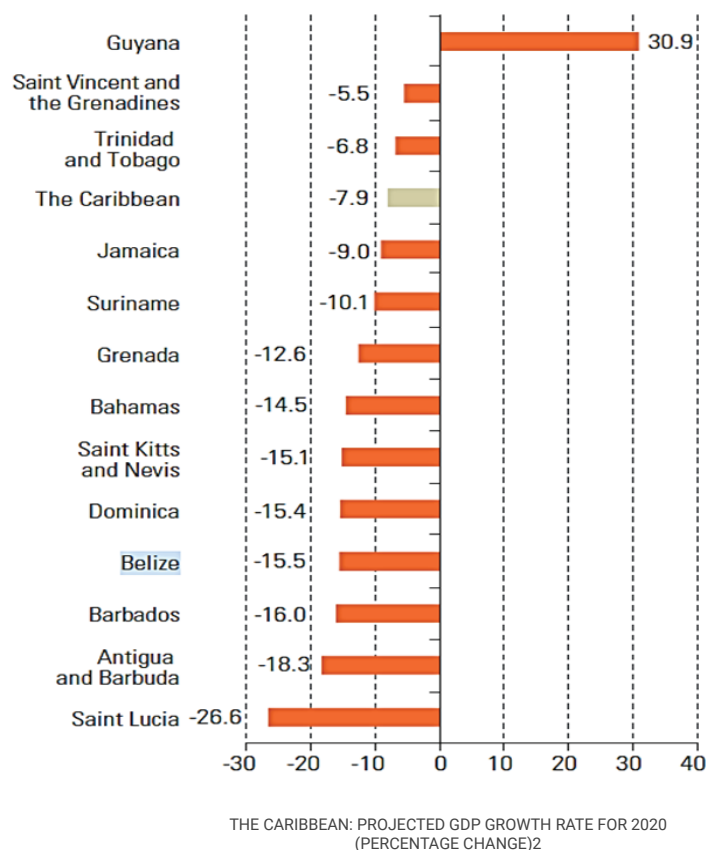
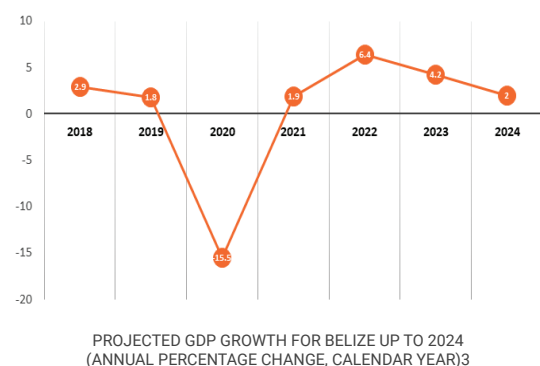


Roaring Creek Residents in the Cayo District, moving to higher ground due to excessive flooding by Hurricane Eta (UN Photo/Rebecca Stirn)

In the midst of the pandemic and recovery phase from Hurricane Eta, Belize completed its general election in November 2020, which saw the transition of a new government administration coming into office.

With recognition of the evolving economic and political context in Belize, and in preparation of the new programming cycle, the UNCT commenced the development of a Common Country Analysis which seeks to comprehensively examine the situation within Belize to shape the national context for sustainable development looking primarily on multidimensional risks, social exclusion, human rights, the environment and the economy

2020 Key Development Trends



The extended hiatus of tourism operations and the reduction of commercial activities due to COVID-19 restrictions dramatically increased the unemployment rate from 10.4% in September 2019 to 29.6% in September 2020. By the end of the third quarter of 2020, there were approximately 38,909 persons without work.

Preliminary data suggests Belize's economic contraction for 2020 would be 15.5% of Belize's GDP. Additionally, Belize borrowed heavily within 2020, to support its COVID-19 response, increasing its debt to GDP ratio sharply from 99%

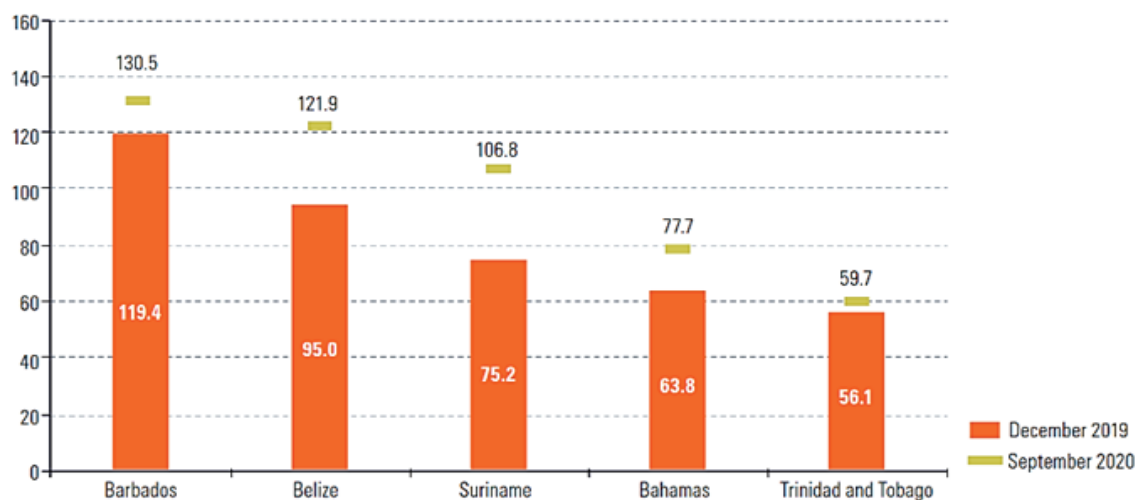
to more than 122%. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Belize's economic growth was slow, averaging 2.3% during 2010 – 2019 and the rate was reported at only 1.8% in 2019.

To address the COVID-19 health crisis, the Government of Belize instituted regulations in response to the pandemic that led to the closure of businesses and borders, physical distancing protocols, curfews and internal travel restrictions. Thus, the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the fragility of the Belizean economy, with an estimated 15.5%

¹ Statistical Institute of Belize. Estimates derived using previous definition of unemployment. Revised definition results in lower unemployment but cannot be measure against previous years.

² ECLAC Fourth Report on Regional Progress and Challenges in Relation to Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

³ Estimates based on IMF 2020 Article IV Mission in Belize: Staff Concluding Statement



CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES: CENTRAL GOVERNMENT PUBLIC DEBT, DECEMBER 2019, AND SEPTEMBER 2020 (PERCENTAGES OF GDP)

contraction in the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020 (see figure 2) well below the regional average of 7.9% in the Caribbean.

The compounded effect of COVID-19 has been devastating, particularly to vulnerable groups who were and continue to be disproportionately impacted. Population groups with limited or no access to the internet has seen major challenges in online

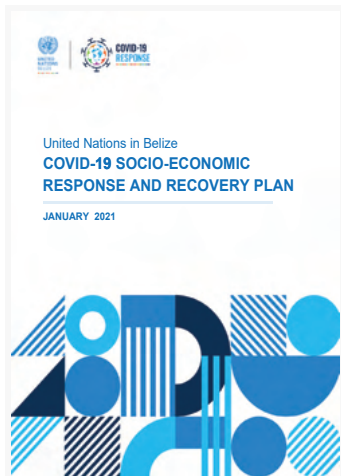
schooling, accessing electronic applications for economic relief, as well as keeping up to date with critical information on emergency and safety measures.



CHAPTER 2

UN Support to Belize’s National Development Priorities through the UN Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework

United Nations Socio-Economic Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic



In April 2020, UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, launched the UN framework for the immediate global socio-economic response to COVID-19 which called for shared responsibility and global solidarity to address the crisis.

In Belize, the UN Resident Coordinator led the development, coordination and implementation of a Socio-economic Response and Recovery Plan (SERP) for Belize. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as the technical lead, concurrently developed a Socio-economic impact assessment of COVID-19, complemented by a sectoral analysis led by other UN entities that highlighted

the impact of the pandemic.

The SERP complemented the Health and Humanitarian Response Plan to COVID-19 led by PAHO/WHO, which were all in consultation with the Government of Belize. The SERP included contributions from eleven (11) UN agencies, funds, and programs (ILO, IOM, OHCHR, PAHO/WHO, UNODC, UNDP, UNEP, UNFPA, UNODC, UNHCR, and UNICEF); that supported with strategic actions and initiatives for implementation over the period of July 2020 – December 2021. The initial programme portfolio included a financial investment of over USD \$10.9 million in addition to technical assistance support. UN entities reprogrammed their portfolio to address critical and urgent needs and actively mobilized additional financial resources.

In July 2020, the Government of Belize developed and published a medium-term economic recovery strategy aimed at mitigating the economic and social impact of the health crisis. The strategy emphasized the importance of supporting business recovery through small grant funding and revolving loans, retrofitting major health facilities, strengthening the productive sector and the provision of unemployment relief to population displaced due to COVID-19 restrictions. The strategy document

indicated an initial invest of BZD \$233 million by the Government of Belize, for initiatives to manage the health response, to support families and protect local jobs.

During the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the United Nations System in Belize accompanied the government's mitigation and recovery efforts through the development and implementation of the SERP. Table 1 outlines the five strategic pillars of the SERP and the accompanying programme portfolio across each pillar. The SERP framework details the mobilization of necessary financial

resources and the partnerships required for a comprehensive and effective approach in addressing the impact of COVID-19 within Belize. Given that the SERP budgetary framework is not entirely separate from the 2020 Country Implementation Plan and noting some CIP interventions were only reprogrammed to respond the pandemic, the two frameworks (CIP and SERP) will be amalgamated and presented to GOB in 2021.

UN Entities	UN Interventions	Total Cost (\$USD)	Available (\$USD)	Total Gap (\$USD)
1  Health First Protecting Health Services and Systems during the Crisis				
8	32	5,328,388	2,793,404	2,534,984
2  Protecting People Social Protection and Basic Services				
9	43	3,398,293	1,217,493	2,180,800
3  Economic Response and Recovery Protecting Jobs, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, and the informal sector workers				
7	20	1,568,000	1,328,000	240,000
4  Macroeconomic Response and Multilateral Collaboration				
4	4	100,000	-	100,000
5  Social Cohesion and Community Resilience				
5	8	505,000	85,000	420,000

UN JOINT PROGRAMME PORTFOLIO FOR THE COVID-19 SOCIOECONOMIC RESPONSE PLAN BY STRATEGIC PILLAR

CIP 2020 OVERVIEW

Strategic Priority 1: An Inclusive, Equitable and Prosperous Caribbean

SDGs: 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 16
GSDS Outcome(s): CSF 1 and CSF 2
Co-Chairs: UNICEF and MOE
Contributing UN Agencies: UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR, ILO, IOM, UNDP, FAO
Total Required (USD): \$1,920,650
Total Available (USD): \$1,820,650
Number of Key Activities: 25

Strategic Priority 2: A Healthy Caribbean

SDGs: 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 16
GSDS Outcome(s): CSF 2
Co-Chairs: PAHO/WHO and MOHW
Contributing UN Agencies: PAHO/WHO, UNFPA, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF
Total Required (USD): \$3,862,399
Total Available (USD): \$2,604,399
Number of Key Activities: 35

01

02

Strategic Priority 3: A Cohesive, Safe and Just Caribbean

SDGs: 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 16
GSDS Outcome(s): CSF 4 and CSF 5
Co-Chairs: UNICEF and MED
Contributing UN Agencies: ILO, PAHO/WHO, UNFPA, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM, OHCHR
Total Required (USD): \$3,416,303
Total Available (USD): \$3,346,303.24
Number of Key Activities: 44

Strategic Priority 4: A Sustainable and Resilient Caribbean

SDGs: 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 16
GSDS Outcome(s): CSF 3
Co-Chairs: UNDP and MSDE
Contributing UN Agencies: PAHO/WHO, UNDP, IOM, UNICEF, UNEP, FAO, IAEA
Total Required (USD): \$1,888,708.00
Total Available (USD): \$1,878,708.00
Number of Key Activities: 33

03

04



UNMSDF Strategic Priority 1: An Inclusive, Equitable and Prosperous Caribbean

Interventions by the UN in Belize in 2020 under the strategic pillar related to inclusive and equitable economic development focused on strengthening national policies and standards to increase access to high-quality, equitable, and inclusive early childhood development, education services, and protective learning environments. The UN, in collaboration with the Government of Belize and various CSOs, supported with the strengthening of human and institutional capacities to develop and deliver inclusive and equitable social protection systems to strengthen the resilience of, and protect children, youth, and older persons, from all forms of poverty and social exclusion. Furthermore, UN technical support was also made available for the enhancement of the national systems and capacity that govern, generate, analyse, and utilize data and evidence for national policies and programmes linked to sustainable development.

Access to quality education and life-long learning increased, for enhanced employability and sustainable economic development

In 2020, the UN in partnership with the National Commission for Families and Children (NCFC), the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health supported a total of 591 parents and more than 1500 children by providing support in positive parenting practices, which was crucial during the stringent lock-down measures put in

place to curb the spread of COVID-19 in Belize. This support was made possible through capacity development initiatives for parenting and the distribution of **Early Childhood Development (ECD) tools** and recreational material to support learning opportunities for children, from birth to eight years old.

As preschools and primary schools remain closed in Belize due to the pandemic, there remained the need to support parents in responsive care-giving and to support the cognitive, psychosocial, and physical development of young children in emergencies, disasters, and/or unstable conditions.

The UN partnered with the Ministry of Education to support the roll-out of **the Care for Child Development (CCD) capacity development initiative** which led to the establishment of a solid network of care providers, offering multiple points of contact and opportunities for parental support. This initiative enhances Early Childhood Development (ECD) outcomes, preparedness for lifelong learning and prevention of violence in early childhood. In 2020, capacity development initiatives for CCD front-line workers impacted a total of 54 communities with advocacy platforms established or strengthened. The 'Promoting Positive Parenting' case study, developed in 2020, highlights the roll-out of CCD in Belize as a best practice in the region on how to incorporate the prevention of Violence Against

Against Children.

To strengthen the **Quality Child-Friendly Schools Framework**, the UN provided technical support to the Ministry of Education for the implementation of safe school operations guidance for the identification and development of context appropriate strategies to ensure educational continuity through flexibility and distance home-based learning methods during the pandemic. Through the implementation of this framework, a total of 25,000 vulnerable school children in Belize benefited as the UN supported the acquisition and distribution of Crocs foamed clogs. This was an important exercise in service delivery and a continued partnership between the UN and CROCS, who have committed to support more Belizean schools in 2021.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN also provided technical assistance and financial resources to the **Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)** Multi-Sectoral Body, chaired by the Ministry of Health and Wellness, to develop and disseminate communication materials on creating safe, healthy and clean environments. In light of the pandemic and various emergency responses to natural disasters which impacted Belize in the last quarter of 2020, Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) became a key focus area for the UNCT. RCCE efforts focused on countering misinformation about COVID-19 and WASH service delivery. A total of twelve primary schools were provided with washing facility, providing improved COVID-19 protection to 2,200 primary school students.

12 Primary schools provided with washing facilities

2,200 primary school students provided with washing facilities



WASH service delivery and risk communication to boys and girls in **9 most vulnerable municipalities.**

The UN, in collaboration with the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry, also provided online support for **Business Continuity Planning (BCP)** for COVID-19. A total of 53 persons were trained in conducting risk assessments to establish the level of risk/vulnerability to business enterprises and implementing COVID-19 business continuity plans. This intervention is expected to lead to the reduction in spreading of COVID-19 in the workplace to enable workers to return safely.

Access to equitable social protection systems, quality services, and improved sustainable economic opportunities

The UN partnered with the Ministry of Human Development to provide technical assistance, capacity building in shock-responsive social protection, and research support for the management of the national COVID-19 **Food Assistance Programme and the development of the Belize COVID-19 Cash Transfer Program (BCCAT)** which prioritizes poor families with pregnant women, children, persons living with physical disabilities and the elderly. The Food Assistance Programme assisted persons with food baskets and the BCCAT provided vulnerable households with direct financial support.

39,129 households assisted countrywide with up **four food baskets** valued at **USD \$75**



21,000 vulnerable households provided with \$75 to \$300 USD per month through **BCCAT**

IMPACT: STRENGTHENED NATIONAL CAPACITIES TO DELIVER INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE SOCIAL PROTECTION

Additionally, the UN, through the World Food Programme, commissioned and published a Belize specific case study on Shock-Responsive Social Protection. In 2020, the UN conducted the Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods Impact Survey which was launched by CARICOM. The survey led to more robust data on the impacts to livelihoods, food security and access to markets. Two rounds were conducted, and Belize specific reports were thereafter published.

The UN also supported the national HIV response through the provision of prevention packages and nutrition packages for targeted MSM, adults, and children. In 2020, 1595 MSM or 42.48% of the MSM population were reached with HIV prevention and testing packages. This target was achieved in collaboration between the CSO Hub and Belize Family Life Association (BFLA) by applying various strategies such as community-based testing, drop-in centre testing, and one on one sessions with the various sub populations. Persons identified as HIV reactive were successfully linked to care with nine persons put on ART after confirmation.

Additionally, the UN provided technical and financial support to the Statistical Institute of Belize (SIB) for the **implementation of preparatory**

measures for Belize's census (now scheduled for May 2022). As a direct result, the SIB finalized GIS maps for priority districts, finalized mobile Census Training Application, and procured public awareness items with support from the UN. Implementation of this intervention will strengthen national capacity to generate, analyse and utilize data and evidence for national policies and programmes linked to sustainable development.



UNMSDF Strategic Priority 2: A Healthy Caribbean

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted the Belizean economy at a time when fiscal, political, and environmental challenges were already affecting the country's growth. Due to the restrictions and prevention measures imposed by the government to control outbreaks, Belize's already fragile fiscal state is expected to worsen before economic growth is rekindled. In response to the health crisis, the UN, in partnership with its national counterparts, supported with the development and implementation of a COVID-19 socio-economic response strategy, inclusive of a number of resource mobilization and mitigation initiatives.

Access to quality health care services and systems improved.

In 2020, the UN responded to multiple health emergencies resulting mainly from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government of Belize is in a better position to respond and rebound from the pandemic following the **procurement of key medical items**: canisters, shipping packages for shipment of samples, laboratory test kits, personal protective equipment (PPEs), probes, and critical care management equipment procured and delivered by the United Nations.

Additional support was provided to the Ministry of Health and Wellness to **strengthen surveillance capacity at the Philip Goldson International Airport (PGIA)**, particularly to screen arriving, returning Belizean nationals, and international tourists. This assistance was made to also

enhance the International Health Regulation core capacity within Points of Entry.

250 COVID-19 basic field kits delivered to Community Health Workers in vulnerable areas

3228 pregnant women/Lactating women receive remote ANC/PNC support

4 main public health facilities received medical equipment and items and PPE items



206,435 persons (49% of population) benefitted from successful implementation of MPTF Joint Programme

Through the **UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund**, standardized medical supplies and equipment were delivered to isolation units within the most vulnerable regions of Belize. With funding assistance from the EU, the UN also supported the Ministry of Health in strengthening the delivery and maintenance of integrated health services at the community level. Community Health Workers were equipped with basic health monitoring equipment and received training for health promotion, prevention, and self-management of NCD and care of patients in the community with COVID-19.

With UN support, Belize achieved a key milestone with the development and institutionalization of **strategic, operational, and M&E plans for HIV, TB, Viral Hepatitis, and STIs**. A completely integrated plan of this nature is considered innovative in this field. A cadre of civil society partners is now

capable of providing counselling and testing support to the national HIV response network. Additionally, national laboratory capacities have been strengthened for viral load monitoring and TB diagnosis. This increased national capability to plan, budget, manage and monitor basic services advance the Ministry of Health's mandate by leaving no one behind.

5-YEAR

National and Integrated Strategic Plan for HIV, TB, Viral Hepatitis and STIs



IMPACT: INCREASED NATIONAL CAPACITY TO BUDGET, MANAGE AND MONITOR DELIVERY OF BASIC HEALTH SERVICES

Through capacity-building efforts by the UN, via training and testing kits, the Ministry of Health is now able to conduct both testing for TB and Viral load in Belmopan in addition to the pre-existing testing availability in Belize City. **GeneXpert technology** is now being applied which yields quicker results within a shorter period which allows for swifter treatment.

Laws, policies, and systems introduced to support healthy lifestyles among all segments of the population.

Health sector expansion and strengthening was a key focus area of UN's national health response to COVID-19. The UN provided support for the **expansion of the national Electronic Case Management Platform (FAMCARE)** which underlies the National Food Assistance and BOOST programmes. The upgraded system accommodated the registration of approximately 30,000 new families (120,000 individuals), and

the processing of more than 100,000 food orders in response to COVID-19.

The UN also supported the improvement of the response capacity of the Ministry of Human Development by initiating the processes for the **development of a Single Information System of Beneficiaries (SISB)**. The ministry was also assisted with the opening of four new temporary shelters for GBV victims, allowing them provision of added opportunities for psychosocial support and increased communications which informs victims of protection services that are available to them.

Additionally, the UN supported with capacity building for health educators on how to address malnutrition. 187 health care workers were trained on vitamin supplementation, de-worming, hygiene, breastfeeding, nutrition counselling, malnutrition management, in addition to sessions facilitated by the UN on the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes.

The UN engaged with the Ministries of Health, Agriculture, and Education to strengthen the health and nutrition status of women, children, and adolescents. Technical support was also given to finalize the Breastfeeding National Policy; draft the National Nutrition Policy and organize events with national coverage in mass and social media.

30,000 new families (120,000 individuals) registered for Belize's upgraded FamCare Platform

100,000+ food orders were processed in response to COVID-19

900 persons received nutritional counselling material and **71 teachers across 6 districts** received continuous professional training



IMPACT: IMPROVED NATIONAL SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AMONG MOST VULNERABLE POPULATION

Lastly, the UN supported the Ministry of Health with the revision of the 2002 Sexual & Reproductive Health (SRH) Policy with objectives of ending all forms of violence against women and children; reducing adolescent pregnancy & maternal deaths; reducing child mortality and reducing the prevalence of HIV and STIs. This was grounded in the strategic policy commitments such as universal access to sexual and reproductive health, including in emergencies settings and in accordance with the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for Sexual and Reproductive Health.



Sexual Reproductive Health information being offered at Mobile Women Centres to (UN Photo/Perla Hinojosa/Spotlight Initiative)



Mobile women's centres offering a range of services to women in rural communities of Belize (UN Photo/Perla Hinojosa/Spotlight Initiative)



UNMSDF Strategic Priority 3: A Cohesive, Safe and Just Caribbean

Transparency and accountability are critical for strengthening the credibility of institutions and the overall justice system in Belize. Equally critical are the institutional and technical capacities in place to protect and ensure the rights of Belizeans. Rule of law, access to justice, and citizen security remain important to Belize's economic development path because prosperity without peace means all development interventions remain rescindable. As such, in order to advance development with stability in Belize, the UN continues to provide its support in critical areas such as citizen security, child protection, prevention of all forms of violence, human rights, and access to justice.

Capacities of public policy and rule of law institutions and civil society organizations strengthened

In March of 2020, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the Government of Belize, signed the [Spotlight Initiative Country Programme to end violence against women and girls](#). This programme is being implemented jointly by UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator. Its principal goal is to advance SDG 5: Gender Equality by strengthening the policy and legislation environment and ensuring that plans are in place to respond to violence against women and girls (VAWG). Early outputs of the programme include the revision of the national gender policy; revision, update, and costing of the National Gender-Based Violence (NGBV) Action Plan; assessment of the

implementation of family law legislation; and comprehensive review of existing policies and protocols that respond to sexual violence with Belize's security force.

These outputs are expected to strengthen access to justice for women and girls, as well as contribute to strengthening institutional capacity to respond to VAWG and promote zero tolerance for VAWG.

The UN has contributed to the strengthening of the national capacity to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV), including in emergency settings, through the [development of a GBV Referral Pathway for front-line workers](#). In collaboration with the National Women's Commission, this pathway was developed using a national GBV mapping exercise to identify service providers and types of services available in Belize.

8,000+ men, women, boys and girls impacted by community level GBV prevention response

Women and girls benefitted from counselling services and access to SRH commodities

40,000+ women and girls directly impacted by service delivery and dissemination of GBV messages



IMPACT: STRENGTHENED POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT TO RESPOND TO VAWG AND GBV

Major accomplishments for 2020 also included the formulation of the [Belize Crime Observatory \(BCO\) first costed Action Plan for 2020 - 2023](#); production of quarterly analysis and reports; two (2) special reports on GBV; Needs Assessment and Gap Analysis for Inter-Agency sharing of crime data and information; development of information management and situational analysis tools for key agencies. The UN provided technical support to the BCO for the achievement of these results that have led to improved national capacities to collect, monitor and report on relevant policies and national programming on citizen security and child protection.

3-YEAR

First costed action plan for the Belize Crime Observatory (BCO) and regular quarterly reports



IMPACT: IMPROVED NATIONAL CAPACITY TO REGULARLY COLLECT, MONITOR AND REPORT ON DATA RELATED TO CITIZEN SECURITY AND CHILD PROTECTION

Equitable access to justice, protection, citizen security, and safety reinforced.

The UN partnered with the Immigration Department to provide technical support for the development and adoption of a [formal standard operating procedures \(SOPs\) for law enforcement officials](#) for the identification and referral of persons in need of international protection. Twenty-two border guards and government officials were trained to in applying these SOPs.

In 2020, the UN also supported the population in need of international protection by providing basic and domestic items in light of the adverse socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, especially for those involved in the prolonged refugee status

determination process or facing legal challenges for gaining wage employment. New legal aid and legal representation services for persons in need of international protection are now operational and yielding impact by improving access to justice and reinforcing protection for all persons.

In 2020, the UN and Belize's National Committee for Families and Children (NCFC) launched a five-year Road Map to End Child Marriage and Early Unions in Belize, the first in the English-speaking Caribbean. With this important milestone, the country has joined the global effort to prevent girls from marrying too young and to support those already married as girls. The Road Map highlights worrying trends in child marriage, early unions, early sexual debuts, and teenage pregnancy across urban/rural and social divides. Belize has the second-highest level of child marriage and early unions in the Caribbean: one in five girls (20.8%) and one in ten boys (10.7%) aged 15 to 19 are married or in a union. To tackle these harmful practices, the Road Map takes a holistic approach across sectors, with a focus on girls.



UNMSDF Strategic Priority 4: A Sustainable and Resilient Caribbean

Interventions by the UN in Belize in 2020 under the sustainable and resilient pillar focused on adaptation and mitigation to climate change; support to the implementation of the nationally determined contributions (NDC); and sustainable use and management of natural resources.

Policies and programmes for climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and universal access to clean and sustainable energy in place.

Belize has made significant strides in enhancing national capacities for climate change planning, management, and monitoring. In 2020, the UN provided direct technical, financial, and capacity building support to the National Climate Change Office and Ministry of Energy in an effort to **reduce GHG emissions from commercial and residential buildings**. Energy-saving initiatives included the development of regulations for the monitoring and verification of Energy Performance Contracts (EPCs); support to the Government of Belize for the establishment of an energy data processing system that can assess energy efficiency and renewable energy in buildings; energy retrofitting of two key government buildings; and support for the development of revolving funds dedicated to supporting the adoption and scale-up of renewable energy and energy efficiency in Belize. The government, through the Development Finance Corporation, has issued a total of 8 loans valued at BZD \$470,135.13 during 2019-2020.



- Sir Edney Cain Building
- Karl Heusner Hospital

2 key government buildings energy retrofitted with LED lighting, insulation and AC units.

8 loans (\$470,135) directly distributed through revolving fund for supporting energy efficiency and renewable energy in Belize



IMPACT: ENHANCED NATIONAL CAPACITY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE PLANNING, MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

UN support was also provided for the update of Belize's **National Determined Contributions (NDCs)** to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Direct support was provided to key NDC costing, capacity building and coordination actions in 2020. The UN collaborated with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) for the delivery of a comprehensive gender assessment of planned NDC actions. The results of this assessment is being utilized to ensure greater inclusivity of planned NDC actions. Complementing the NDC update, was the elaboration of Belize's **Low Emission Development Strategy (LEDS)**. The UN partnered with the National Climate Change Office to support the elaboration of foundational national planning and policy documents supporting climate change integration into national development planning. The LEDS is expected to redefine the country's development pathway, setting Belize

on a path towards the potential realization of a green economy future.

In 2020, Belize took one of the most important steps toward becoming a member of the **Minamata Convention**. The UN provided support to the Department of Environment and Ministry of Health for the completion of Minamata Initial Assessment, in which potential mercury sources were identified and data was collected for the identification and quantification of mercury releases. Ratification and implementation of this convention will solidify Belize's plan to join the global effort to help reduce mercury pollution over the coming decades.

The UN is also supporting the Ministry of Health and the Department of Environment with strategies **aimed at improving infectious waste management**. The UN is facilitating discussions with the Ministry of Health and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) on the specifications and procurement process for 6 autoclaves.

Inclusive and sustainable solutions adopted for the conservation, restoration, and use of ecosystems and natural resources.

The UN supported the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Forestry Department in enhancing green development and strengthening the legal and institutional reforms to operationalize Belize's sustainable development framework. In early 2020, the government **formalized the National Biodiversity Office (NBIO) as a part of the national structure for resource management**. This was managed through BIOFIN-Belize, which is commonly highlighted as a UN success story. This is due to the wide acceptance of the initiative by the Government of Belize and the extraordinary

steps taken to house the initiative within the receiving ministry. The outcome being greater national ownership of results, greater participation in the project steering processes and the "nationalization" of the programme and its processes.

5 Strategic Grants

Awarded to NGO and Community-based Organizations in 2020 supporting resources sustainability



National Biodiversity Office (NBIO)

Formalized as a part of the Government of Belize through the BIOFIN Project

IMPACT: IMPROVED LEGAL AND INSTITUTION WITHING GOVERNMENT TO OPERATIONALIZE BELIZE'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Additionally in 2020, the UN signed a strategic partnership agreement with Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association (TASA) and is currently facilitating the design of a **blended impact financing option to support and invest in the marine protected areas network**. Design is being developed in collaboration with the National Biodiversity Office (NBIO) and the Nature Conservancy of Belize (TNC).

Support to Partnerships and Financing the 2030 Agenda

Financing the Goals

The main source of SDG financing in Belize is from the public sector through recurrent revenues and borrowing. Other sources of funding are external donor funds (both public and private) and the local private sector.

There are currently no estimates on the share of public revenues dedicated to SDG targeting since the SDGs have not been sufficiently main-streamed into the national budget structure or costed at the national level. Therefore, it becomes quite important that the linkage to SDG implementation be established to facilitate the tracking of financial progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Private sector investment is critical for SDG implementation especially given the government's current financial constraints. Investments by private companies, in which the state has majority shareholdings, are not included in the Government of Belize's capital investment budget. These investments are substantial, equating to more than 50% of all Government of Belize's capital investment (externally and nationally funded), and has direct development impacts linked to the SDGs.

Addressing current and future financing gaps in

SDG investment will require looking beyond the public sector. It will require greater collaboration and partnership between the public and private sectors, at both the domestic and global levels, in order to attract the needed investments and grant funding. Only by getting the private sector to see opportunities in SDG financing will the investment gap for the 2030 Agenda begin to close. With the pressing need to mobilize financing for the SDG targets and in the context of the COVID-19 Socio-economic Response and Recovery Plan, the UNCT prepared several joint project proposals, with mixed outcomes.



Project Titles	Lead UN Entities	National Partners	Budget in \$USD (Funding Source)	Status
Inclusion through Empowerment: Applying the Human Security Approach to Build more Inclusive Societies	UNDP UNHCR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Association of Village Council Humana People for People Belize Association of Planners Ministry of Labour 	\$293,715 <i>UN Trust Fund for Human Security</i>	Unfunded
Enhancing human security and socio-economic resilience by tackling risks through the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030	UNDRR UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Emergency Management Office 	\$300,000 <i>UN Trust Fund for Human Security</i>	Unfunded
Advance CRPD implementation and improve and increase the implementation of disability inclusive SDGs at the country level	PAHO/WHO UNFPA UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Human Development Organizations of Persons with Disabilities 	<i>The UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Multi-Partner Trust Fund</i>	Unfunded
COVID-19 response to vulnerable population and front-line workers in Belize	PAHO/WHO UNFPA ILO UNHCR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Health and Wellness 	\$300,000 <i>COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund</i>	Funded
Strengthening mental health and psychosocial support to populations vulnerable to COVID-19 in Belize	PAHO/WHO UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Health and Wellness Ministry of Education Ministry of Human Development National Emergency Management Belize Mental Health Association 	\$450,000 <i>COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund</i>	Unfunded
Safe reopening of schools in Belize with continued access to holistic learning and essential wrap-around services	UNICEF UNFPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Health and Wellness Ministry of Education Ministry of Youth, Sports and E-governance BBelize Family Life Association 	\$300,000 <i>COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund</i>	Unfunded
Strengthening Clinical Management of COVID-19 Patients and Reducing of risk of COVID-19 Transmission among health workers in BBelize	PAHO/WHO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Health and Wellness Ministry of Foreign Affairs 	\$1M <i>India-UN Development Partnership Fund</i>	Funded

UN JOINT PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR FINANCING SDG IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING DECISIONS

National progress in reaching those left behind

The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted various populations. Some groups are differently affected by a multitude of factors including: place of residence, age, employment status, employment sector, gender, health, and access to internet connectivity.

UN Belize has adapted to the changed programmatic context by mobilizing, redirecting, and fast-tracking resources to reach those populations who were most at risk of becoming left behind during the pandemic. To reach these populations, in 2020, the UN enabled the active and meaningful participation of local communities, particularly those at risk of being left even further

behind in the context of COVID-19. The RC/UNCT led consultations with women rights organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDS) to contribute to the CCA and UN programmatic actions. Human rights and gender perspectives were advanced through consultations with indigenous peoples, OPDs and women’s organizations, to facilitate their participation and inclusion.

Programmatically, the UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes focused on implementing the following:



Inclusive Communication

The UN developed and expanded its health information and communication messages on the prevention of COVID-19 infection to include messages in Spanish, Kékchi, Garifuna and Creole. This enabled non-English speaking populations to make healthy decisions to prevent the spread of the disease.



Repatriation support

The UN produced communication messages to inform migrant populations about support for voluntary repatriation to countries of origin during the COVID-19 pandemic, facilitating their right to movement in a regularized manner.



Social Protection

The UN provided support to children, and adults through the provision of prevention packages and nutrition packages targeted MSM, adults, and children beneficiaries. The UN is also providing the Government of Belize with technical assistance to explore the expansion of key social programs including food assistance to a wider population of vulnerable groups. While schools remain close due to the threat of COVID-19, the UN is also supporting the translation of educational materials for migrant children.



Health care, services, and systems

As the COVID-19 infection numbers increased in Belize, some populations, especially front-line workers, the elderly, and people with chronic underlying conditions were deemed to be at greater risk of contracting the disease. The UN-supported Belize’s National COVID-19 Health System Response through improved testing and the provision of support to vulnerable populations and front-line workers in priority health regions at the central, west, and southern hospitals.



Citizen Security and Violence Prevention

The UN supported the Government of Belize through technical and other resources to strengthen the integration of its response to family violence as part of the national response to COVID-19.

Results of the UN Working More and Better Together

Response to the UN Reform

United Nations Belize reaffirmed its continued commitment to work more cohesively and coordinated on the SDGs in response to the new reform environment. This was manifested through key actions and expressions of commitment to provide support to the unique circumstances and development challenges faced within Belize in 2020, under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator.

The Government of Belize acknowledges and continues to express its desire for a Resident Coordinator to be based in Belize. Nonetheless, the Resident Coordinator and UN Country Team enjoys a strong partnership with the government.

In accordance with the reform, the de-link of the RCO from UNDP was successfully managed and a Service Level Agreement was formalized for UNDP to provide operational services to the RCO. This included the [complete recruitment and staffing of an enhanced Resident Coordinator Office](#) in the third quarter of 2020. Core technical capacities include a Strategic Planner/Team Leader, an Economist, a Data Management/Monitoring and Reporting Officer, a Human Rights Advisor, a Programme Communication and Advocacy Officer as well as Administrative Support Staff.



In addition, the RCO also includes the Spotlight Initiative team which encompasses a

Programme Coordinator and a Communication Officer.

In line with the Secretary General reform targets, UN Belize has designed its first [Business Operations Strategy \(BOS\)](#) in support of a more effective programme delivery on the 2030 Agenda. With the objective of promoting greater operational efficiency, the BOS is a results-based framework that focuses on joint business operations with the purpose of eliminating duplication and leveraging the common bargaining power of the UN. The BOS focuses on common services that are implemented jointly or delivered by one UN entity on behalf of one or more other UN entities. Common services for future collaboration were identified in the areas of common administration services and including common facilities/premises, common human resources services, common finance services as well as common procurement services. The following UN Agencies are participating in the Belize BOS: PAHO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, FAO, UNFPA, UN (RCO and other Secretariat entities), UNOPS and OHCHR.

Joint Programming

Also, in the context of the UN Reform, the UNCT Belize, in 2020, utilized joint planning and programming to ensure improved and effective inter-agency collaboration and partnerships for programme delivery. Joint programmes bring together two or more UN agencies, under a shared results framework and mutual responsibility for the achievement of planned results. During 2020, two joint programmes were rolled out and are illustrated in the graphic below:

	Result Outcomes and Outputs	Budget and Status	UN Entities	Source of Funds
 Spotlight Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Support • Institutional Strengthening • Prevention & Social Norms • Quality Essential Services • Data & Evidence • Women & CSOs 	<p>Total: USD\$ 4.35 M 2020 Expenditure: US\$ 990k Status: Ongoing</p>	<p>UNFPA UNICEF UNDP</p>	<p>European Union & Agency Funds</p>
 COVID-19 RESPONSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Communication • Practical Guidelines for Workers • Support to Community-based health workers • Restored Interrupted services • Improved Facilities and Health Services 	<p>Total: USD\$ 300,135 2020 Expenditure: USD\$ 300k Status: Completed in December 2020</p>	<p>ILO PAHO/WHO UNFPA UNHCR</p>	<p>COVID-19 Response & recovery fund</p>

Communicating and Advocating Together

The RCO also supports the UN Communication Group and channels to form, develop and implement joint UN communications strategies at the country level. This is integral for providing coherent messaging and advocacy on normative and operational matters in order to ensure a consistent strategic dialogue with various stakeholders and target audiences. This has become particularly important as the UN looks at the COVID-19 Response and Recovery to build political will and encourage popular ownership of the Sustainable Development Agenda, especially at this critical time.

In 2020, the United Nations Communications Group (UNCG) was formalized and convened regularly to discuss joint communication items and agency communication updates. This dialogue space aims to increase the visibility of the UN and focuses on national and international development objectives as well as global normative frameworks for communication.

As a result of the growing collaboration within the UNCG, and the pooling of communication resources and several advocacy campaigns were launched in the last quarter of 2020 prioritizing target audiences most vulnerable under the “leave no-one behind” mandate, mostly using virtual tools and platforms. Some major events and campaigns to highlight are:



Co-hosts Marleni Cuellar and William Neal with UNRCO Associate Development Coordination Officer for Communications and Advocacy on set for the Spotlight Initiative Virtual Launch (UN Photo/Colorblind Studios)

The launch of the Spotlight Initiative, which was held virtually on August 19th 2020. To ensure a wide cross-section of state and non-state actors, including representatives from groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of violence were fully aware of the Spotlight Initiative, the official launch prioritized virtual participation through various platforms: Channel 7 (National Television), Love FM (National Radio) and the Government of Belize Press Office’s Facebook Page (Social Media Live Stream) with an estimated 252,000 persons reached and 80 participants engaged.



United Nations Belize Resident Coordinator, Birgit Gerstenberg virtual message for United Nations Day 2020 (UN Photo/UNRCO)

Social media has been an integral part in every organization’s success, and the UN is no different. With over 1,400 followers across various platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube, the United Nations Belize virtual space continues to grow, with a reach of 5,000 - 8,000 persons per week. With this in mind, various social media lives were launched for UN observances such as United Nations Day, 16 Days of Activism, Human Rights Day and International Volunteer Day just to name a few. All lives were done in collaboration with the UN Country Team and Civil Society partners where relevant.



COVID-19 Infographic created under the UN Risk Communication and Community Engagement Strategy under the Multi-Partner Trust Fund (UN Photo/United Nations Belize)

The COVID-19 outbreak is continuously evolving, highlighting the importance of keeping target audience(s) informed, cognizant, and prepared. The MPTF working group and the UNCG created a joint **UN Risk Communication and Community Engagement Strategy** which addresses three priority areas, including two core elements of ‘Communicating as One’. It builds on key considerations in promoting health equity, gender, and ethnic equality as well as the human-rights bases approach. It identifies specific cohorts, messages, and the means through which messages will reach the identified target audience(s).



Image from UN75 video inviting stakeholders and community members to engage in a UN75 Dialogue (UN Photo/UNRCO)

In 2020, the UN launched a global dialogue initiative known as **UN75** to mark the UN’s 75th Anniversary. This dialogue space was open to everyone, everywhere to voice their opinions on global priorities, cooperation across borders and partnerships as well as views, concerns and ideas that could be presented to world leaders and senior UN officials. RCO held 12 virtual meetings with various stakeholder groups reaching approximately 300 individuals. Additionally, there were over 200 UN75 survey submissions by Belizeans which will be presented in a UN75 global report due in the third quarter of 2021.

MSDF Evaluation and Lessons Learnt

Overview

The evaluation of the Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework (MSDF 2017 – 2021) officially commenced in the last quarter of 2020 and is set to be completed by April 2021. The evaluation is an external and independent exercise with the broad purpose of assessing what worked well and what did not work over the past five years. It will produce a detailed assessment of the achievements, challenges and lessons learned, in order to inform key stakeholders and the new cooperation framework, UN MSDCF. The evaluation is being carried out jointly with the UNCTs in the Caribbean and will serve as the main accountability instrument for gauging the UN Development System's collective contribution. It will ultimately assess whether the UNCTs contributed to transformative change that goes beyond the scope of programmes and projects in their respective country implementation plans.

Preliminary Findings

Overall, the work of the UN remains relevant as it continues to address the national priorities in the respective countries and territories in the Caribbean, including Belize. The shared perception among UN staff and national counterparts is that the UN is working on the right issues and development challenges. While UN programming in the region has covered all 17 SDGs, to an extent, it is evident that interventions are mostly aligned with the first five SDGs, as well

as SDG 17. Initial findings of the evaluation are also suggesting that UN programmes in the region tend to focus on vulnerable sections of society, particularly with regards to women, children and youth.

Emerging Challenges

Knowledge and Awareness of the UNMSDF and CIP – While there is an overall awareness of the UNMSDF among government counterparts, there is limited understanding of its content, processes, implications, and results. Therefore, there is a need for greater visibility and understanding of the UNMSDF and CIP at the national level.

Coordination and Cooperation – The recent restructuring of the RCO function is a positive development that has contributed to better coordination. However, partners pointed out the absence or lack of consistency and regularity in the functioning of coordination structures across the region. The annual regional coordination meeting (UN, governments, private sector, and development partners) was postponed in 2020 due to COVID-19.

Results-based Management – There are shortcomings in monitoring results, using good data and consistent reporting and limited participation in coordination structures (i.e. Steering Committee, results groups, etc.). Due to the challenging context in 2020, the Joint National Steering Committee did not convene in Belize. However, the committee is set to convene

in second quarter of 2021.

Financial Sustainability – Resource mobilization among UN agencies remains largely uncoordinated and conducted in an ad-hoc fashion. National counterparts perceive the resources brought to the table by the agencies as insufficient for the results expected of the UN.

Key Recommendations for MSDF 2.0

- Strengthen awareness and knowledge around the UNMSDF and related implementation and reporting mechanisms.
- Strengthen coordination structures and processes (i.e. steering committees and results groups) at the country level to ensure good coordination between UN agencies and government bodies.
- Prioritize support in the area of statistics, which are essential for planning, implementation and monitoring of national and agency policies.
- Explore financing models that increase the availability of funding for programming in strategic areas where there is unmet demand.
- CSOs and the private sector should be involved more pro-actively in the planning process.

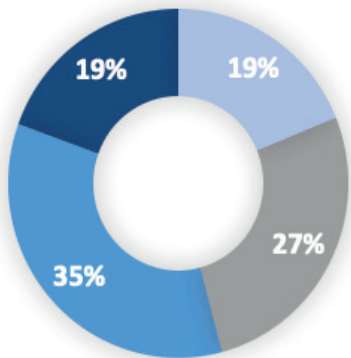
2020 CIP BUDGET OVERVIEW



COVID-19 SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESPONSE PLAN 2020

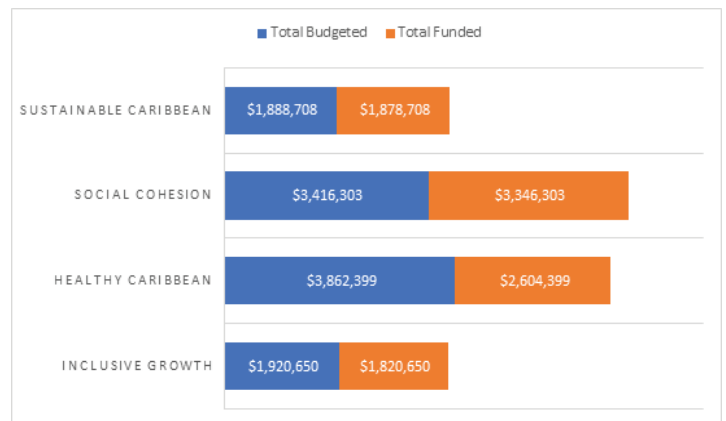


FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION ³



- Inclusive and Prosperous Caribbean
- A Healthy Caribbean
- A Safe, Cohesive and Just Caribbean
- A Sustainable and Resilient Caribbean

TOTAL EXPENDITURE ESTIMATES FOR 2020 CIP BY MSDF PILLARS



TOTAL REQUIRED AND FUNDED BUDGET FOR 2020 CIP BY MSDF PILLAR

³ 2020 CIP and COVID-19 SERP activities were programmatically developed to respond to the pillars of the MSDF and global socioeconomic response framework, respectively. Some CIP activities were re-programmed to respond to COVID-19 and therefore added to the SERP budget. In order to avoid double counting, both budgets will be combined in 2021, clearly distinguishing SERP-specific funding (new and reprogrammed) and CIP funding.

The financial information included in the tables and graphs to the left were extracted from the 2020 Country Implementation Plan for Belize, data collection tool for country results and SERP Programme Portfolio 2020. Expenditure data is consolidated based on the budgetary framework submitted by participating UN organizations. The figure “Total expenditure estimates for 2020 CIP by MSDF pillars” shows that the health pillar carried the largest funding gap in 2020 while the gap in other pillars was not as wide. As depicted in the SERP initial funding framework USD \$10.9 million was budgeted with only 41% of funds available for implementation. This budget is not completely separate from the CIP 2020 budget as some activities are cross cutting. For this reason, the 2021 CIP will subsume the SERP programme portfolio for the development of one comprehensive Country Implementation Plan for 2020/2021.

UN Agency	Planned Budget 2020 (\$USD)	Available Budget 2020 (\$USD)	Total Expenditure 2020 (\$USD)	Avg. Delivery Rate %
FAO	\$130,000	\$130,000	\$125,914	97%
IAEA	\$584,723	\$584,723	\$663,765	113%
ILO	\$97,238	\$86,800	\$69,188	80%
IOM	\$269,778	\$269,778	\$265,387	98%
OHCHR	\$38,500	\$38,500	\$38,500	100%
PAHO/WHO	\$2,075,000	\$647,000	\$302,500	48%
UNDP	\$2,494,555	\$2,481,615	\$1,488,267	60%
UNEP	\$424,555	\$424,555	\$271,555	64%
UNFPA	\$542,041	\$440,041	\$341,067	78%
UNHCR	\$1,668,200	\$957,600	\$953,800	99%
UNICEF	\$2,804,208	\$955,000	\$915,759	96%
WFP	-	-	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	\$11,128,798	\$7,015,612	\$5,435,702	77.48%

The table above provides a financial overview of the Country Implementation Plan as of 31 December 2020, highlighting the key figures as well as the estimated delivery rate per agency. Preliminary expenditure shows USD \$5.4 million as total expenditure which translates to a total average delivery rate of 77.5 percent for 2020.

⁵ IAEA in 2020 was not a member of the UN Sustainable Development Group, however it continued its programme activities in Belize and collaboration with the UNCT

CHAPTER 3:

UNCT Key Focus in 2021

COVID-19 Response

The UNCT will ensure the integration of the socio-economic response plan to COVID-19 programmatic portfolio into the UNMSDF country implementation plan 2020/2021 and integration of analysis into the CCA and agency strategic priorities.

The UN will continue to provide technical and policy advisory services to the government of Belize to prepare, receive and roll-out COVID-19 vaccines to the population as well as supporting the social and economic recovery programme.

The UN will also implement a safe transition and revision of its business continuity plans due to COVID-19, providing necessary support for UN personnel and dependents to access vaccines in a timely manner.

SDG Implementation

The UNCT will continue to focus all its efforts in this the Decade of Action to support Belize in accelerating SDG implementation, through the following results:

Elaboration of an updated high quality CCA and sustain advocacy actions with government and other national stakeholders to accelerated SDG implementation focused on the furthest left behind.

The UN will also complete the design and

approval of the UN Multi-country Sustainable Development Framework 2022-2026 to support Belize to address SDG priorities and gaps; and a reconfigured UNCT with the improved capacities to deliver on this commitment. As agencies, funds and programmes will fully participate and complete capacity assessments and statement of plans to deliver on the Cooperation Framework commitments and operational efficiencies to support its implementation in Belize.

Operationalizing the Secretary General's Prevention Vision

The UNCT will undertake to prepare a Humanitarian Needs Overview and regular conflict and development analysis to inform UN's strategic engagement and evidence-based advocacy actions for the inclusion of forgotten vulnerable populations and response to impacts of human mobility.

Strategic Financing and Partnerships

The UNCT will lead the preparation and implementation of a resource mobilization and partnership strategy, including strategic forecasting and preparation of joint proposals to secure financing flows aligned with UNMSDF (CIPs) priorities outcomes and national determined humanitarian needs, including in the framework of the health and socio-economic response plans. A robust and comprehensive financial landscape analysis including SDG costing assessments will be undertaken; and will

provide policy and technical advice to the government towards realizing an integrated national financing framework (INFF) of the SDGs.

The UNCT will actively promote ownership and engagement of all national stakeholders for SDG achievement and sustain and foster new partnerships with the private sector, civil society, academia and media, establishing platforms for dialogue and knowledge exchange. As well, the UNCT will also monitor and report on the Business Operation Strategy.

Leaving No One Behind, Human Rights and Gender Equality

The UN will continue to lead the effective implementation of gender equality initiatives to end VAWG including the Spotlight Initiative programme.

The UNCT will ensure a coordinated approach to building national capacity for the implementation of human rights, facilitating engagement with UN human rights mechanisms and expertise on international human rights norms and principles to advance State and non-state actors efforts to monitor, report and advance implementation of recommendations from UN human rights mechanisms.

KEY MSDF PROGRAMMATIC INTERVENTIONS FOR 2021





United Nations Belize