



UNITED NATIONS  
BELIZE



DECADE  
OF >>>  
ACTION

# 2020

UNITED NATIONS BELIZE

Annual Country Results Report

March 2021



## **United Nations Belize Country Annual Results Report 2020**

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# Acronyms

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<b>BFLA</b>	Belize Family Life Association
<b>CARICOM</b>	Caribbean Community
<b>CIP</b>	Country Implementation Plan
<b>CCA</b>	Common Country Assessment
<b>COVID-19</b>	Coronavirus Disease 2019
<b>CPA</b>	Country Poverty Assessment
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>CRPD</b>	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<b>CSME</b>	CARICOM Single Market and Economy
<b>ECLAC</b>	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse Gas
<b>GSDS</b>	Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy
<b>HFLE</b>	Health and Family Life Education
<b>HRW</b>	Human Rights Watch
<b>IADB/IDB</b>	Inter-American Development Bank
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>KHMH</b>	Karl Heuser Memorial Hospital
<b>LAC</b>	Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>LGBTQI</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex
<b>LNOB</b>	Leave No One Behind
<b>MICS</b>	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
<b>MPA</b>	Marine Protected Area
<b>MPTF</b>	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
<b>MSDF</b>	Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework
<b>MSME</b>	Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
<b>NCDs</b>	Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NHRI</b>	National Human Rights Institution
<b>NSO</b>	National Statistical Office

<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>OECS</b>	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
<b>OPDs</b>	Organizations of Persons with Disabilities
<b>PLHIV</b>	Persons Living with HIV
<b>PWDs</b>	Persons with Disabilities
<b>RIA</b>	Rapid Integrated Assessment
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SERP</b>	Socio-Economic Response Plan
<b>SIB</b>	Statistical Institute of Belize
<b>SIDS</b>	Small Island Developing States
<b>SRH/SRHR</b>	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
<b>UB</b>	University of Belize
<b>UNCG</b>	United Nations Communications Group
<b>UNDESA</b>	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
<b>UPR</b>	Universal Periodic Review
<b>VAWG</b>	Violence Against Women and Girls



**UNITED NATIONS  
BELIZE**



# UN Country Team in Belize

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<b>FAO</b>	<b>Food and Agriculture Organization</b>
<b>IAEA</b>	<b>International Atomic Energy Agency</b>
<b>ILO</b>	<b>International Labor Organization</b>
<b>IOM</b>	<b>International Organization for Migration</b>
<b>OHCHR</b>	<b>Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights</b>
<b>UNAIDS</b>	<b>Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS</b>
<b>UNDP</b>	<b>United Nations Development Programme</b>
<b>UNDSS</b>	<b>United Nations Department of Safety &amp; Security</b>
<b>UNEP</b>	<b>United Nations Environment Programme</b>
<b>UNESCO</b>	<b>United Nations Educational, Scientific &amp; Cultural Organization</b>
<b>UNFPA</b>	<b>United Nations Population Fund</b>
<b>UNHCR</b>	<b>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</b>
<b>UNICEF</b>	<b>United Nations Children's Fund</b>
<b>UNODC</b>	<b>United Nations Office on Drugs &amp; Crime</b>
<b>UNOPS</b>	<b>United Nations Office for Project Services</b>
<b>UNRCO</b>	<b>Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator</b>
<b>UN Women</b>	<b>United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women</b>
<b>WFP</b>	<b>World Food Programme</b>
<b>WHO</b>	<b>World Health Organization</b>

# Foreword

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**This Country Results Report describes the UN’s collective contribution to Belize’s development and humanitarian goals in 2020, alongside our 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 that we ensured the programmatic operations and development interventions of the United Nations in Belize continued to align or were retrofitted to the changing socio-economic context in 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 of UNCT Belize, with a view of establishing innovative strategies for accelerating Belize’s progress towards the SDGs and building on the progress of previous years.

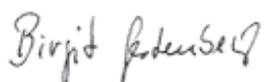
While some noticeable progress has been made for Belize’s sustainable development agenda in 2020, the country’s growth was severely stifled by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in the last quarter of the year. The pandemic overwhelmed the Belizean health and economic systems and institutions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

part of the vulnerable population. Through the UN COVID-19 Socio-economic Response Plan (SERP) for Belize, the UN continues to work with the Government of Belize and other partners 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 support 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 not only to contribute to the recovery but also resilience to future disaster 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 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 peoples of the Caribbean including Belizeans and medium-term, development requirements to accelerate progress towards the SDGs in the region.

In order to achieve long-term sustainable development and address the structural impediments caused by the pandemic in Belize, we continue to rely on our partnerships with the Government, development partners, civil society, 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 in Belize.



**Birgit Gerstenberg**  
Resident Coordinator  
United Nations Belize









# 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 crisis. The pandemic 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; and unemployment and labor 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 – Nana, Eta and Iota that resulted in unprecedented flooding impacting over 30,000 persons. 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 (AP Photo/Rebecca Stirm)

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 into office.

With recognition of the evolving economic and political context in Belize and in preparation of the new programming cycle, the UN in Belize commenced the development of a Common Country Analysis which seeks to comprehensively examine the situation in the Belize that shapes the context for sustainable development: multidimensional risks, social exclusion, human rights, the environment and economy.

# 2020 Key Development Trends

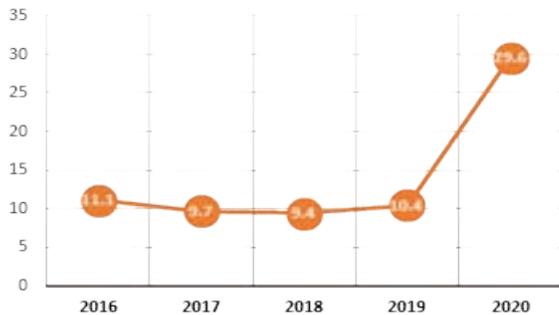


FIGURE 1: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN BELIZE FOR PERIOD 2016-2020 (PERCENTAGE)



FIGURE 3: PROJECTED GDP GROWTH FOR BELIZE UP TO 2024 (ANNUAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE, CALENDAR YEAR)

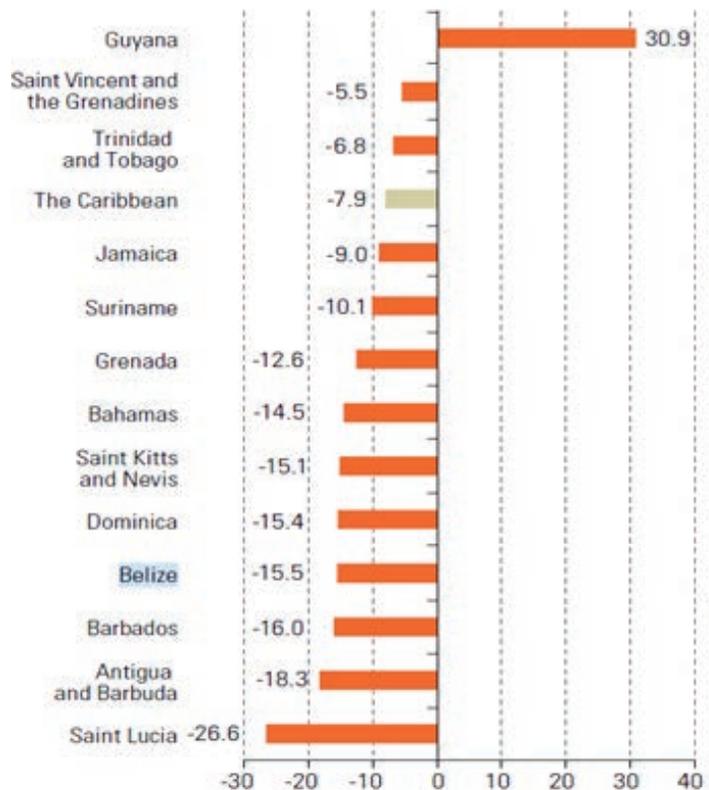


FIGURE 2: THE CARIBBEAN: PROJECTED GDP GROWTH RATE FOR 2020 (PERCENTAGE CHANGE)

The long hiatus of tourism operations and reduction of commercial activities due to COVID restrictions dramatically increased the unemployment rate from 10.4% in September 2019 to 29.6% in September 2020<sup>1</sup>. By the end of the third quarter of 2020, there were approximately 38,909 persons without work. One out of every three of these persons previously worked in the ‘Tourism’ industry.

Preliminary data suggests Belize’s economic contraction for 2020 to be 15.5% of GDP. Additionally, Belize borrowed heavily in 2020, to support its COVID-19 response, increasing its debt to GDP ratio sharply from 99% to more than 122%<sup>2</sup>.

The compounded effect of COVID-19 is devastating, particularly to vulnerable groups who are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Population groups with limited or no access to the internet have not been able to access online schooling, electronic applications for COVID-19 economic relief, and critical information on emergency and safety measures.

<sup>1</sup> Estimates derived using the previous definition resulted in an unemployment rate of 29.6 percent  
<sup>2</sup> Belize: Staff Concluding Statement of the 2020 Article IV Mission

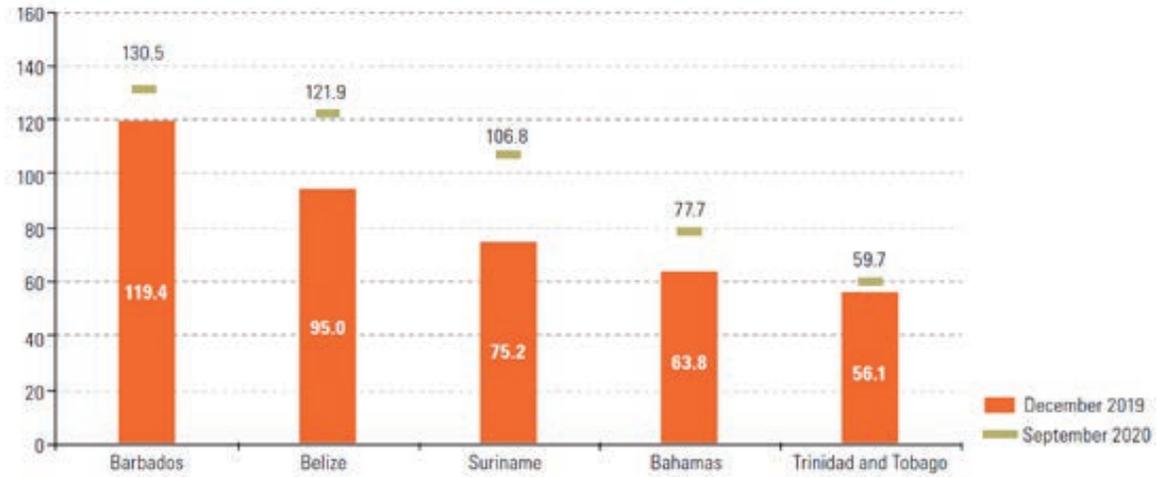


FIGURE 4: CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES: CENTRAL GOVERNMENT PUBLIC DEBT, DECEMBER 2019, AND SEPTEMBER 2020 (PERCENTAGES OF GDP)

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 COVID19 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% contraction in the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020 (see figure 2) well below the regional average of 7.9% in the Caribbean.



## CHAPTER 2

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

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### 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 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, 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 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 highlights that the Belizean Government initially programmed to invest BZD \$233 million in initiatives to manage the health response and also to support Belizean families and protect local jobs.

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 highlights that the Belizean Government initially programmed to invest BZD \$233 million in initiatives to manage the health response and also to support Belizean families and protect local jobs.

Within the initial stages of the COVID-19 emergency, 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 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 in 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.

1 Health First Protecting Health Services and Systems during the Crisis				
UN Entities	UN Interventions	Total Cost (USD)	Available (USD)	Total Gap (USD)
8	32	5,328,388	2,793,404	2,534,984
2 Protecting People Social Protection and Basic Services				
UN Entities	UN Interventions	Total Cost (USD)	Available (USD)	Total Gap (USD)
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				
UN Entities	UN Interventions	Total Cost (USD)	Available (USD)	Total Gap (USD)
7	20	1,568,000	1,328,000	240,000
4 Macroeconomic Response and Multilateral Collaboration				
UN Entities	UN Interventions	Total Cost (USD)	Available (USD)	Total Gap (USD)
4	4	100,000	-	100,000
5 Social Cohesion and Community Resilience				
UN Entities	UN Interventions	Total Cost (USD)	Available (USD)	Total Gap (USD)
5	8	505,000	85,000	420,000

TABLE 1: 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  
 Total Required (USD): \$1,920,650  
 Total Available (USD): \$1,820,650  
 Number of Key Activities: 25

01

## 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

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

03

## 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

04



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

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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, analyze, 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 lockdown 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 caregiving and to support the cognitive, psychosocial, and physical development of young children in emergencies, disasters, and 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 frontline

workers impacted a total of 54 communities with advocacy platforms established or strengthened. The 'Promoting Positive Parenting' case study, developed in 2020, highlights the rollout of CCD in Belize as a best practice in the region on how to incorporate the prevention of Violence Against Children.

In an effort 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 emergency response to the three hurricanes which affected Belize in 2020, Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) became a key focus area for the UN. 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.

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**12 Primary schools** provided with washing facilities

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**2,200 primary school students** provided with washing facilities

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

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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 a physical disability and the elderly. The Food Assistance Programme assisted persons with food baskets and the BCCAT provided vulnerable households with direct financial support.

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**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

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

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Additionally, the UN, through the World Food Programme, commissioned and published a Belize specific case study on Shock-Responsive Social Protection in the Caribbean. 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 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 center

testing, and one on one sessions with the various subpopulations. 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, analyze and utilize data and evidence for national policies and programmes linked to sustainable development.



# UNMSDF Strategic Priority 2: An Healthy Caribbean

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In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic 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 the 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 socioeconomic 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 UN.

Additional support was provided to the Ministry of Health and Wellness to **strengthen surveillance capacity at the international**

**airport**, particularly to screen arriving, returning Belizean nationals, and international tourists. This assistance was made to also enhance the International Health Regulation core capacity in the Points of Entry.

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

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

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

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

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Through the **UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund**, standardized medical supplies and equipment was delivered to the isolation units of the most vulnerable regions in Belize. With funding assistance from the European Union, the UN also supported the Ministry of Health in strengthening the delivery of integrated health services and maintenance of essential 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 in 2020, 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 counseling 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 leaving no one behind the mandate.

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#### 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**

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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 and less turnaround time for 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 national health response to COVID-19. The UN provided

support for the **expansion of the national Electronic Case Management Platform (FAM-CARE)** 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 with 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, the provision of added opportunities for psychosocial support services, and increased communications, informing victims of protection services available to them.

In 2020, the UN supported with capacity building for health educators on how to address malnutrition. 187 health care workers were trained on vitamin supplementation, deworming, hygiene, breastfeeding, nutrition counseling, 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.

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

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

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

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

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The UN also 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 (AP Photo/Perla Hinojosa/Spotlight Initiative)



Mobile women's centres offering a range of services to women in rural communities of Belize (AP 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 the Belizean people. 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 continued 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.

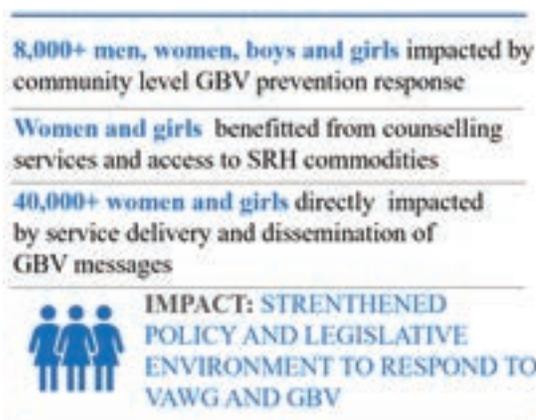
## Capacities of public policy and rule of law institutions and civil society organizations strengthened

In March of 2020, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the government of Belize, signed the [Spotlight Initiative to end violence against women and Girls county programme](#). 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 on 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 nation-

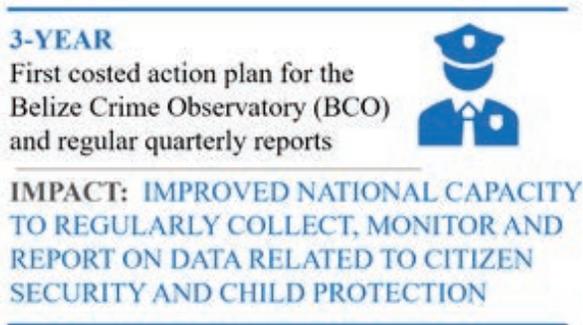
al gender policy; revision, update, and costing of the National Gender-Based Violence (NGBV) Action Plan; assessment of the implementation of family law legislation; and comprehensive review of existing policies and protocols that respond to sexual violence in the security force.

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 also 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 frontline 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.



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, report on relevant policies and national programming on citizen security and child protection.



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

The UN partnered with the Immigration and Refugees 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 socioeconomic 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.



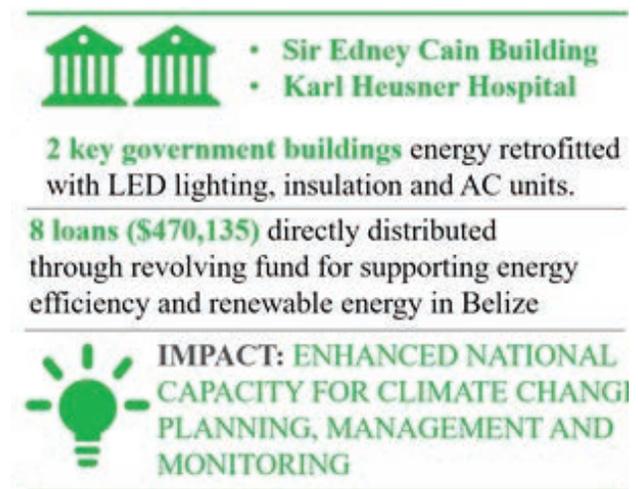
# UNMSDF Strategic Priority 4: A Sustainable and Resilient Caribbean

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 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)**. 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 Wellness and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) 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 Belize BIOFIN, which is commonly highlighted as a UN success story in Belize. 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.

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**5 Strategic Grants**  
Awarded to NGO and Community-based Organizations in 2020 supporting resources sustainability



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**National Biodiversity Office (NBIO)**  
Formalized as a part of the Government of Belize through the BIOFIN Project

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

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In 2020, the UN signed a strategic partnership agreement with Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association (TASA) and 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 and the Nature Conservancy of Belize.

# Support to Partnerships and Financing the 2030 Agenda

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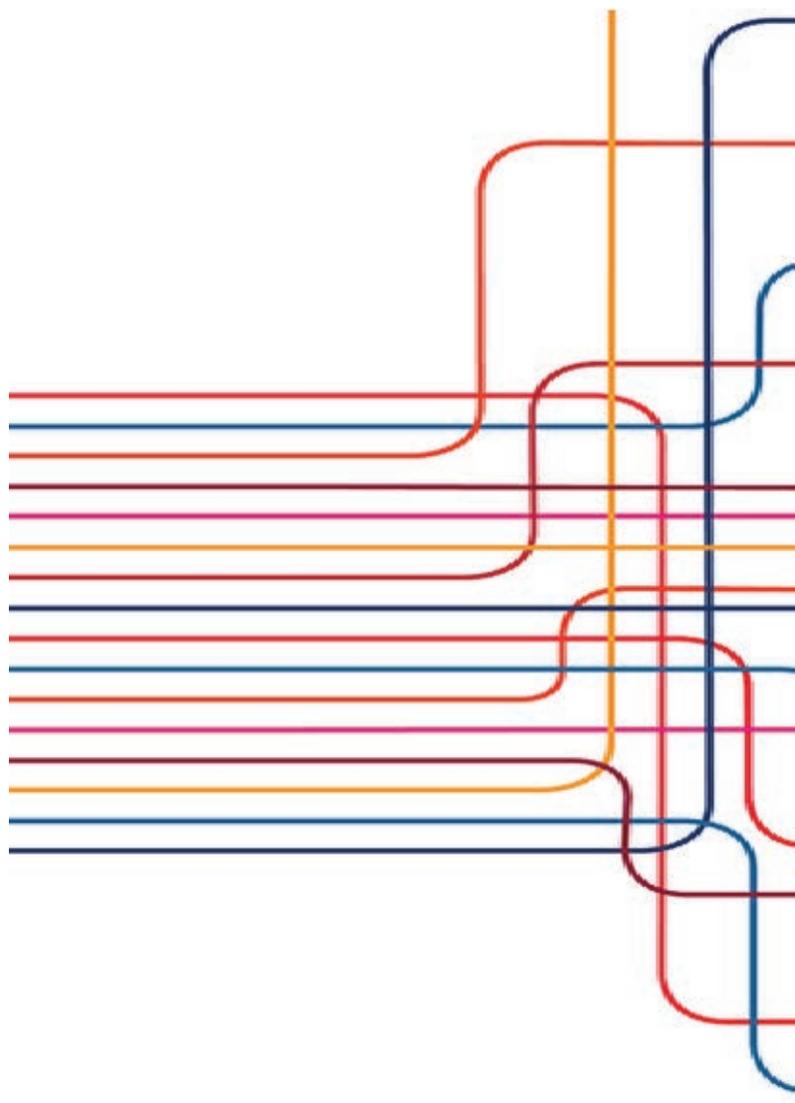
## Financing the Goals

The main source of SDG financing in Belize is 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 mainstreamed 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 tracking financial progress towards achieving the SDGs.

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 have 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 Socioeconomic 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
<b>Inclusion through Empowerment: Applying the Human Security Approach to Build more Inclusive Societies</b>	UNDP UNHCR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Association of Village Council</li> <li>Humana People for People</li> <li>Belize Association of Planners</li> <li>Ministry of Labour</li> </ul>	<b>\$293,715</b> <i>UN Trust Fund for Human Security</i>	<b>Unfunded</b>
<b>Enhancing human security and socio-economic resilience by tackling risks through the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030</b>	UNDRR UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Emergency Management Office</li> </ul>	<b>\$300,000</b> <i>UN Trust Fund for Human Security</i>	<b>Unfunded</b>
<b>Advance CRPD implementation and improve and increase the implementation of disability inclusive SDGs at the country level</b>	PAHO/WHO UNFPA UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Human Development</li> <li>Organizations of Persons with Disabilities</li> </ul>	<i>The UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Multi-Partner Trust Fund</i>	<b>Unfunded</b>
<b>COVID-19 response to vulnerable population and frontline workers in Belize</b>	PAHO/WHO UNFPA ILO UNHCR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Health and Wellness</li> </ul>	<b>\$300,000</b> <i>COVID19 Response and Recovery Fund</i>	<b>Funded</b>
<b>Strengthening mental health and psycho-social support to populations vulnerable to COVID19 in Belize</b>	PAHO/WHO UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Health and Wellness</li> <li>Ministry of Education</li> <li>Ministry of Human Development</li> <li>National Emergency Management</li> <li>Belize Mental Health Association</li> </ul>	<b>\$450,000</b> <i>COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund</i>	<b>Unfunded</b>
<b>Safe reopening of schools in Belize with continued access to holistic learning and essential wrap-around services</b>	UNICEF UNFPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Health and Wellness</li> <li>Ministry of Education</li> <li>Ministry of Youth, Sports and E-governance</li> <li>Belize Family Life Association</li> </ul>	<b>\$300,000</b> <i>COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund</i>	<b>Unfunded</b>
<b>Strengthening Clinical Management of COVID-19 Patients and Reducing of risk of COVID-19 Transmission among health workers in Belize</b>	PAHO/WHO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Health and Wellness</li> <li>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> </ul>	<b>\$1M</b> <i>India-UN Development Partnership Fund</i>	<b>Funded</b>

TABLE 2: UN JOINT PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR FINANCING SDG IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING DECISIONS

## National progress in reaching those left behind

COVID-19 pandemic has not impacted everyone in the same manner. Some groups are differently affected by the pandemic owing to 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 invisible 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 frontline 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

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## Response to the UN Reform

The UN in 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 in 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 delink 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:

1. Strategic Planner/Team Leader
2. Economist
3. Data Management/Monitoring and Reporting Officer
4. Human Rights Advisor

5. Programme Communication and Advocacy Officer

6. Administrative Support Staff

In addition, the RCO also includes the Spotlight Initiative team – Programme Coordinator and 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, 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
 <b>Spotlight Initiative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy Support</li> <li>• Institutional Strengthening</li> <li>• Prevention &amp; Social Norms</li> <li>• Quality Essential Services</li> <li>• Data &amp; Evidence</li> <li>• Women &amp; CSOs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Total: USD\$ 4.35 M</b>  <b>2020 Expenditure: US\$ 990k</b>  <b>Status: Ongoing</b></p>	<p><b>UNFPA</b>  <b>UNICEF</b>  <b>UNDP</b></p>	<p><b>European Union &amp; Agency Funds</b></p>
 <b>COVID-19 RESPONSE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Communication</li> <li>• Practical Guidelines for Workers</li> <li>• Support to Community-based health workers</li> <li>• Restored Interrupted services</li> <li>• Improved Facilities and Health Services</li> </ul>	<p><b>Total: USD\$ 300,135</b>  <b>2020 Expenditure: USD\$ 300k</b>  <b>Status: Completed in December 2020</b></p>	<p><b>ILO</b>  <b>PAHO/WHO</b>  <b>UNFPA</b>  <b>UNHCR</b></p>	<p><b>COVID-19 Response &amp; recovery fund</b></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, several advocacy campaigns were launched in the last quarter of 2020 prioritizing target audiences most vulnerable under the “leave no-one behind” spectrum, mostly using virtual tools and platforms. Some major events and campaigns to highlight are:



**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.



**Social media** has been an integral part in every organizations 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.



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).



In 2020, the UN launched a global dialogue initiative known as **UN75** to mark the UNs 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

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## 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 proactively in the planning process.

# Financial Overview and Resource Mobilization

## 2020 CIP Budget Overview

Total Planned Budget	Total Funded Budget	<sup>3</sup> Total Expenditure
<b>USD</b>	<b>USD</b>	<b>USD</b>
<b>\$11,120,298</b>	<b>\$8,128,120</b>	<b>\$4,202,881</b>

## COVID-19 Socioeconomic Response Plan 2020

Total Planned Budget	Total Funded Budget	<sup>4</sup> Funding Gap
<b>USD</b>	<b>USD</b>	<b>USD</b>
<b>\$10,899,681</b>	<b>\$4,423,897</b>	<b>\$6,475,784</b>

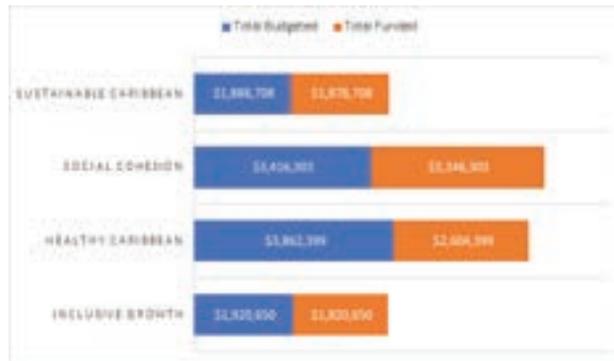


FIGURE 3: TOTAL REQUIRED AND FUNDED BUDGET FOR 2020 CIP BY MSDF PILLAR

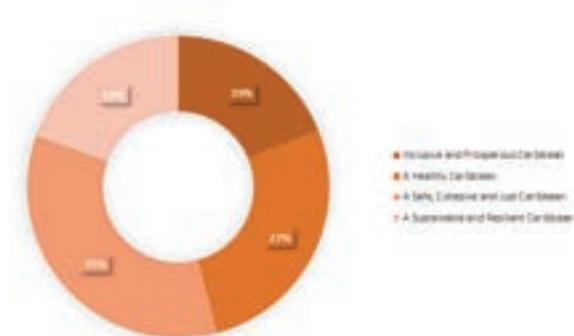


FIGURE 4: TOTAL EXPENDITURE ESTIMATES FOR 2020 CIP BY MSDF PILLARS

<sup>3</sup> 2020 CIP and COVID-19 SERP budget are not completely separate. Some CIP activities were re-programmed to respond to COVID-19. In order to avoid double counting, both budgets will be combined in 2021.

<sup>4</sup> This budget does not represent new or additional funds that is separate from the CIP. i.e. some SERP activities are existing CIP activities that were reprogrammed to respond to COVID.

The financial information included in the tables and graphs above was 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. Figure 3 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 table above, the SERP initial funding framework budgeted USD \$10.9 million 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 <sup>5</sup>	\$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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,128,798</b>	<b>\$7,015,612</b>	<b>\$5,435,702</b>	<b>77.48%</b>

The above table 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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

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### COVID-19 Response

The UNCT will ensure the integration of the socioeconomic 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 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.

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.

Agencies, funds and programmes fully participate and completes capacity assessment 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 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.

### Business Innovation

Implement, monitor and report on the Business Operation Strategy.

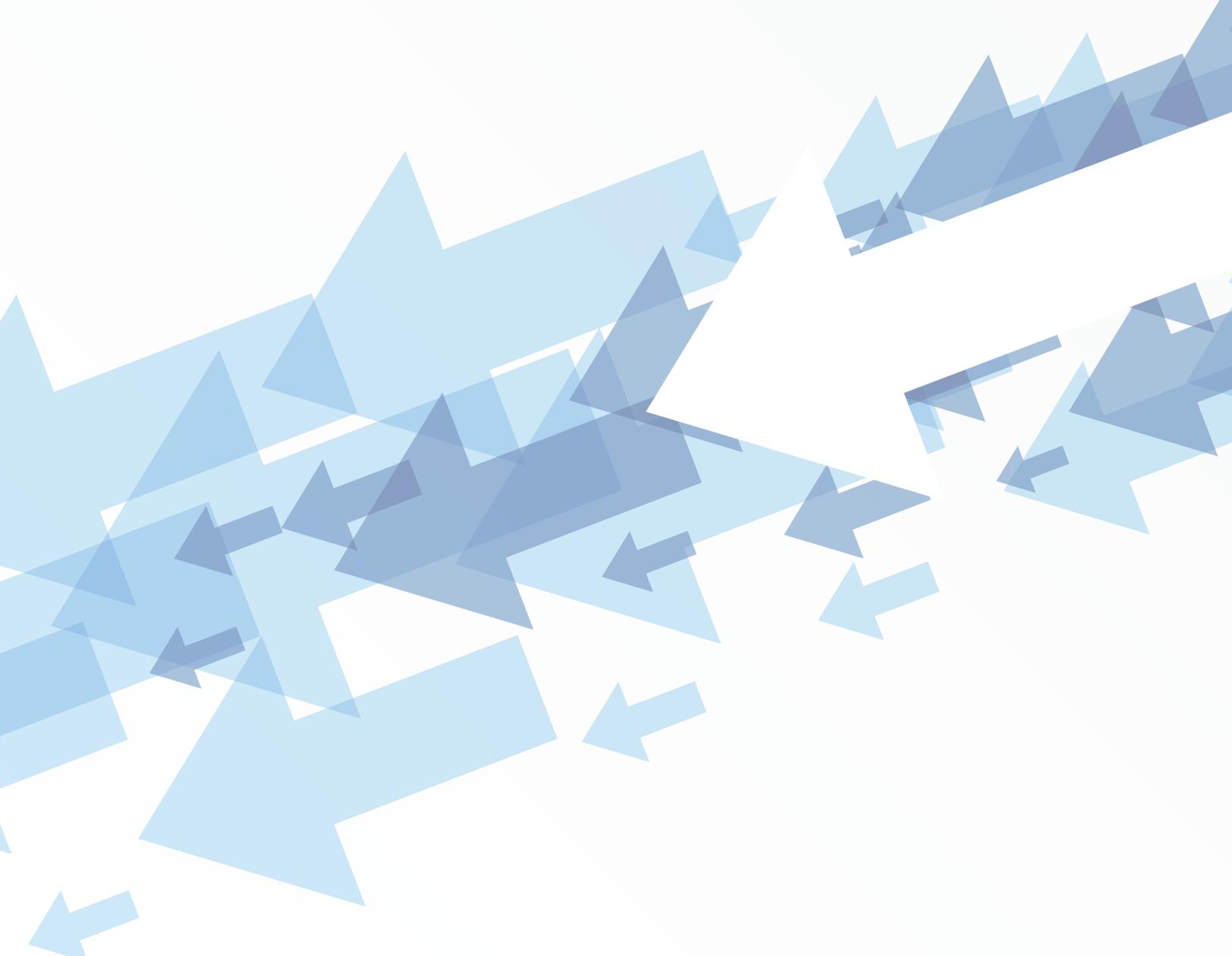
### Leaving No One Behind, Human Rights and Gender Equality

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