

## Programme Document for Belize (2013-2017)

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## **I. Situation analysis**

1. The Government of Belize continues to put the primary focus of its strategies on the fight against poverty. In addition to the MDGs, Belize has identified several development priorities, namely through key strategic documents such as Horizon 2030, including a focus on democratic governance through a transparent and accountable government machinery, capable of improving citizen security and access to justice; education for life and lifelong learning; building a resilient economy for healthy citizens, with care for the natural environment.

2. Belize's economy is a small and essentially a private-enterprise economy, grounded primarily in tourism and petroleum. Belize's long term growth performance has been positive (2001-2008: 4.5% on average; 2009-2011: 1.9%, source: Government of Belize), however, inequality remains high as GINI coefficient increased from 40% (2002) to 42% (2009). Belize is not on track to achieve MDG1 as population living below the poverty line has increased to 41.3% in 2009 (baseline: 33.5% (2002) despite its positive trending GDP; target: 16.8% by 2015). A crucial factor associated with backslides against the poverty MDG is the country's high unemployment rate of 23.1% (women recorded twice the unemployment rate of men/ age group 15/24 unemployment was 28.4% in 2010). The influence on food security, it is also worrisome as national figures indicate that the proportion of population with less than minimum dietary consumption also continues to increase (2009 figures suggest almost 16% of the population). High levels of poverty and weak institutional capacity within the criminal justice system are also thought to be at the core of the country's deteriorating citizen security. 2010 recorded an alarming 42 murders per 100,000 inhabitants placing the country among the 14 most violent countries in the world. (Secretariat, Geneva Declaration). Low school enrolment of young male and lack of opportunities, as well as exogenous causes, as Belize is a transshipment point and can become a full-fledged route for illicit drugs are all cited as contributing causes to the deterioration. Lags in advancing of the MDG's are linked with a weak public sector, both in terms of a dearth of qualified human resources and inadequate business processes for planning, procurement, financial management, audit, monitoring and reporting, which makes the civil service susceptible to political influence. Weak organizational capacities have also implications for the irregular reporting on human rights treaties and limited human rights based policy planning

3. Belize's HDI was 0.699 in 2011, which places the country at 93 out of 187 countries with comparable data. Belize is on track to achieve most of the health-related MDGs mainly due to strong emphasis on evidence-based planning and response but is unlikely to achieve the education and gender MDGs. The latter is chiefly related with very low levels of political participation of women – 0% of elected female MPs – and high female unemployment. As it relates to MDG 7 the country has invested in the creation of an enabling environment accommodating the sound management of its natural resource base. The present structure is characterized by the existence of legislative and regulatory frameworks as well as state/ none state partnership networks. The effective integration of sustainable development principles across all sectors of the Belizean economy, however, is thought to be lagging. Belize is ranked 8th among 167 countries as being most vulnerable to climate risk (World Bank). With such a large part of the national economy being dependent on the health of the natural resource base (tourism, agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, among other), vulnerabilities to natural disaster and climate change more broadly, has been moved to the centre of the national agenda. While climate change is predicted to increase the population's exposure to natural hazards, the presence of unsustainable management practices such as unchecked land conversion, the expansion of agriculture onto inadequate terrains or marginalized soils and the concentration of people in highly exposed areas increases both the risk and impact of climatic variation.

## **II. Past cooperation and lessons learned**

4. Between 2007 and 2012, the UNDP has concentrated on the three UNDAF main thematic areas, i.e. poverty, HIV/AIDS and sustainable development.

5. **Poverty/Governance:** UNDP support in this area focused on the reform of local government through the adoption of the National Policy on Local Government and development of capacities to promote program-based budgeting. Capacity development for decentralization was found to be necessary for the grounding/ localization of the MDG's. Belize as a pilot of the Millennium Acceleration Framework (MAF) initiative, unearthed governance bottlenecks in water sector management as well as recognized key way forward lessons including the need for a stronger multi sectorial approach to good governance, and the need to strengthen the institutional framework in which Village Councils operate having strong emphasis on transparency. The UNDAF review recommends continuity of programmed support for reporting on international human rights treaties, given that the Universal Periodic Review notes that 'Belize has a strong commitment to the normative human rights framework, but faces challenges in its full operationalization'; as well as supporting the establishment of development coordination mechanisms, confirmed by the early successes of the coordination groups on security and gender.

6. **Poverty/ Gender:** In Addressing critical issues of gender inequalities which influences national development, national partners with the support of UNDP successfully launched a 16 members' platform for the analysis of gender and politics in Belize, resulting in the implementation of a renewed advocacy strategy responding to structural, social and cultural issues that prevent women from successfully engaging in electoral politics; UNDP also assisted with the preparation of the 5th and 6th combined reports to CEDAW and in carrying out a capacity assessment of the Women's Department as a means of facilitating its transition to the Gender Affairs Services. Lessons coming out of these interventions include need for greater coordination among UN Agencies and stakeholders groups.

7. **Sustainable Development/ Disaster Risk Reduction:** UNDP focussed its interventions in improving the country's institutional capacities for sound management of its natural resource base as well as for preparedness and resilience to climatic changes and natural disasters. Support to national response strategies in the areas of bio-diversity, sustainable land management, rural development, integrated water resource management, sound chemical management and adaptation/mitigation strategies to climate change contributed to the country's overarching goal of protection of its natural resource base. UNDAF evaluation identified that UN support (e.g. UNDP's technical, financial and advocacy support) was highly relevant for Belize in its development of policies and plans associated with the internalization of the three UN Rio Conventions and the country's sustainable development agenda. In-programme evaluations (e.g. from GEF projects) identified the need to invest in interventions targeting national responses to climate change, particularly the need to advocate for its integration across ministries. Evaluation also pointed out limitations within the national structure due primarily to the absence of a formalized strategy for national sustainable development. UNDAF evaluation noted that the joint UN support to the Government's capacity to conduct full disaster assessments has been very effective. The same evaluation also includes the need to direct future support to vulnerability mitigation and risk reduction efforts at local/community level; and the redirection of interventions towards vulnerability mitigation and risk reduction efforts.

8. **HIV/AIDS:** In supporting national efforts to reduce the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate (Government's data show that the number of new HIV cases have not increased during the UNDAF period), advocacy and technical assistance provided jointly with other UN agencies contributed to strengthen the national response (namely, by improving its information system and formulation of health-related policies), improving the coverage and quality of care services. This included HIV-related prevention and care services, for which UNDP has been supporting in Belize and Stann Creek districts as the PR of the Global Fund Round 9 project. UNDAF evaluation (page 13) also points out the need for vigilance and continuous support, particularly important in ensuring that Belize's meets the Health-related MDGs.

9. At an operational level, lessons learned (through reviews of internal processes) include improving coordination between the El Salvador and Belize offices (e.g. CAP) while within the Office there is a need to improve cost recovery to increase reserves to an optimal level and increase capacity of staff in the use of new Policies and Procedures, IPSAS, Atlas,

intranet and Teamworks. As to programmatic capacities, the office invested in drawing on its networks at regional and sub-regional level to increase and develop staff's knowledge and awareness of policy discussions.

### **III. Proposed programme**

10. The outline of the proposed UNDP Belize country programme 2013-2017 is directly derived from the Belize UNDAF 2013-2017, which in turn draws from Government's priorities, as captured in strategic documents such as Horizon 2030. The implementation strategy remains based on 'down-stream' interventions and 'up-stream' policy advice and advocacy, taking full consideration of the UNDP MDGs Breakthrough Strategy, and will focus in the following four areas:

**11. Advancing Human Rights with Equity.** In addition to efforts to mainstream HRBA and gender considerations within on-going programmatic works (design, implementation, evaluation), UNDP will support reporting on human rights treaties, with a special focus on CEDAW. The programme intends to create enhanced levels of awareness and application of human rights standards in policy making and to establish solid foundations for improving the use of human rights information in the articulation of national development strategies. Through on-going collaboration with the OHCHR and other UN agencies, the programme will seek to strengthen the institutional and technical capacity of the national entities involved in human rights education and monitoring. In that regard, and following the capacity assessment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNDP will support the Ministry in its role of monitoring reports and implementation of recommendations, building inter-ministerial collaboration and use of human rights related data in policy making.

**12. Promoting Economic and Social Wellbeing, Citizen Security and Justice.** Prioritizing interventions that contribute the most to off-track or slow progress MDGs, UNDP's approach to addressing social and economic well-being includes the promotion of agriculture and associated value chain related enterprises as vehicles for poverty alleviation and the attainment of national food security goals. The execution of such a programme requires strategic partnering with the WFP, the FAO and PAHO. Interventions aimed at planning for, and building national capacities within social and productive sectors to respond to predicted impacts of climate change are integral to the attainment of the desired impact of social and economic resilience. UNDP will work with national and international development partners in the promotion of SME's for employment creation particularly among marginalized female and youth populations. Youth empowerment programmes will focus on the enhancement of youth's work skills and on job creation, while strengthening capacities for the implementation of rule of law and promoting mechanisms to facilitate access to justice. The proposed programme will also support the strengthening of capacity of the country coordinating mechanism of the Global Fund and the National AIDS Commission, including through the UN theme group on HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, in partnership with PAHO and other UN agencies, the UNDP aims to expand its support to Government's health initiatives beyond HIV, to encompass MARPs, TB and discrimination in access to health services, as well as health system strengthening,

**13. Environmental and Natural Resource Management, Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change mainstreamed into public policies and development processes.** UNDP will focus on strengthening national capacities for effective land and water resources management and on the creation of poverty and environmental linkages within national medium and long term planning and policy making processes. A specific objective of the proposed programme of work is to align the management of the country's natural resource base to the economic development needs of the country. UNDP has as a central supporting initiative the formulation of an overarching/ comprehensive sustainable development strategy which investigates the possibility of the country's transition towards a green/low carbon economy. It is expected that the recent elaboration of the National Energy Policy will create additional opportunities for support actions targeting specifically energy sustainability and national energy security. Proposed intervention within this programmatic theme includes efforts supporting improved water and land resource governance, the protection of environmental services and the sustained productivity of the resource base as

well as the promotion of sustainable livelihoods particularly within the context of rural development. Efforts aimed at improving regulatory frameworks which supports the integration of multilateral environment agreements will continue, with an emphasis on the creation and maintenance of cross-thematic synergies, highlighting the poverty-reducing potential of sound natural resource management practices. As climate change is still seen as a technical subject, rather than a cross-ministerial challenge, UNDP will support national assessment exercises aimed at determining existing capacities for integrated climate change management as well as national efforts aimed at creating a Climate Change office within the Government of Belize with primary responsibility for the coordination of climate change planning and response and the mainstreaming of climate change considerations across national sectors. In the area of disaster risk reduction and following UNDAF evaluation, UNDP will support mainstreaming of DRR considerations in planning response mechanisms, focusing on local/community capacities.

**14. Democratic Governance, Capacity Development, Effectiveness and Responsiveness enhanced.** The UNDP will support Government's efforts to strengthened key public administration functions and enabling systems for effective service delivery, thus improving transparency, political participation of women and excluded groups, citizen security and aid coordination. As it relates to development coordination, the UNDP will work closely with the Ministry of Economic Development, supporting efforts for development aid management and tracking. UNDP will contribute to improvements in public sector accountability and transparency in line with the UNCAC and the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (ratified by Belize in 2002) providing technical/financial support. An underlying effort will be to contribute to the further separation between political and administrative public administration functions, also through support to public oversight of executive functions (by media and NGOs). UNDP programming agenda also includes continued advocacy for political participation and strengthen capacities of civil society groups, including women, youth, PWDs and minorities in national governance. Finally, UNDP will support implementation aspects of the Government's citizen security strategy (i.e. 'RESTORE Belize') and support donor coordination in this area, promoting an articulated response to the Government's priorities in addressing crime.

#### **IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation**

15. UNDP has a strong preference to support national implementation (NIM) but occasion may arise for one of the following to be used: (a) direct implementation by UNDP; (b) UN agency implementation; (c) NGO implementation (either national or international); and (d) implementation by an inter-governmental organization. UNDP will continue to make efforts in promoting harmonization and standardization among UN agencies, by applying modalities such as the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT). In responding to the operational challenges identified, there is a need to create a 5 year roadmap to strategically align operations' capacities with UNDP programmatic focus and ensure the office's sustainability. As to the partnership strategy, the programme will continue to build on its partnership with the government at all levels, with development partners, civil society, UN system, civil society, private sector and academic groups, while working closely with International Financial Institutions (IFIs). Partnership modalities will include joint programming with other UN agencies and bilateral donors such as United States, United Kingdom and Mexico, among other. The government may request UNDP to invoke 'fast track' procedures if needs arise for rapid response to unanticipated crisis

16. Monitoring and evaluation: UNDP will strengthen the country office and national capacity for monitoring and evaluation. One outcome evaluation and end-term country programme evaluations are planned, with gender disaggregated data. These evaluations will be aligned with the calendar of the UNDAF M&E framework, with periodic programme and project reviews at inter-agency level and support to MDG reports. UNDP will closely monitor critical risks which may affect country programme results, including natural disasters and citizen security. Risk mitigation strategies will focus on strengthening communication with national counterparts. The estimated budget for this CPD period is US\$ 13,276,000 of which US\$ 236,000 will come from regular resources of UNDP and US\$ 13,040,000 is expected to be mobilized from other sources.

## Annex. Results and resources framework for Belize (2013-2017)

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### National Priority: *HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE CITIZENS THROUGHOUT THE LIFECYCLE*

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**UNDAF/CPD Outcome:** By 2017, a culture of human rights with equity is institutionalized at all levels. Outcome indicators: No of national legislative reform laws and policies enacted to meet international standards. Area of the UNDP's Strategic Plan: Poverty Reduction and achievement of the MDGs.

<i>Contribution from the national counterparts</i>	<i>Contribution from other counterparts</i>	<i>Contribution from UNDP</i>	<i>Indicators, baselines and targets</i>	<i>Intended Outputs</i>	<i>Indicative Resources</i>
a.) <b>Creating a culture of HR:</b> Coordination and networking between line ministries, statutory bodies and civil society to enforce, monitor and integrate human rights mechanisms into national policy processes	a.) Coordination and networking between line ministries, Statutory bodies and civil society to enforce, monitor and integrate human rights mechanisms into national policy processes	UNDP will support capacity development for independent monitoring and implementation of national legislation in support of human rights;	<b>Indicator 1:</b> Existence of an operational interministerial human rights group <b>Baseline:</b> No interministerial human rights group <b>Target:</b> Creation of an interministerial human rights group;	Enhanced levels of awareness and application of human rights standards in policy-making; Ministry of Foreign Affairs' role of monitoring reports and implementation of human rights recommendations strengthened and fully functional	Core Resources: 0.020 million USD Other resources: 0.125 million USD
b.) <b>Securing basic HR for the poor and marginalized:</b> Assist in community mobilization efforts, develop and support programmes, facilitate system strengthening	b.) Assist in coordination and networking, provision of TA, and inputs	UNDP will assist in the strengthening of the organizational capacities of state and non-state institutions for the creation of livelihood opportunities and support services	<b>Indicator 2:</b> Existence of disaggregated Information systems on labour and employment status <b>Baseline:</b> increasing unemployment rate among youth and female populations <b>Target:</b> Contribute to acceleration of MDGs 1 and 3	Capacity assessment of productive sector; Strategic action Plans for the removal of identified gaps; Piloted engendered livelihood programmes	

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### National Priority: *HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE CITIZENS THROUGHOUT THE LIFECYCLE*

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**UNDAF/CPD Outcome:** By 2017, improved institutional and human capacity in facilitating the goal of universal access by men, women and children to responsive, safe, and high quality health services across the life cycle. Outcome indicators: HIV prevalence in young people age 15-24. Area of the UNDP's Strategic Plan: Poverty Reduction and achievement of the MDGs.

<i>Contribution from the national counterparts</i>	<i>Contribution from other counterparts</i>	<i>Contribution from UNDP</i>	<i>Indicators, baselines and targets</i>	<i>Intended Outputs</i>	<i>Indicative Resources</i>
National coordination of HIV initiatives among different institutional and non-governmental actors; institutional capacity to coordinate access to improved rural water supply and sanitation services	Support strengthening of district health systems and delivery strategies using integrated campaigns (Ministry of Health); Ministry of Rural Development leadership in improving transparency and performance of water boards.	Advocate for and develop national capacities for decentralized, integrated and chronic disease management approach in the provision of STI/HIV/TB care and treatment; build strategic planning capacity of water boards and benchmark M&E system	<b>Indicator 1:</b> HIV prevalence in young people age 15-24; <b>Baseline:</b> 1.01% (UNGASS 2010) <b>Target:</b> 0.72% (2015) <b>Indicator 2:</b> # of water boards with performance based evaluation <b>Baseline:</b> 0 <b>Target:</b> 10	coverage of high-impact preventive and outreach interventions increased; Strengthen institutional capacity of the Ministry of Health to coordinate access to improved rural water supply and sanitation services	Core Resources: 0.016 million USD Other resources: 2.029 million USD

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**National Priority:** Caring for the natural environment as the source and basis of economic and social progress

**UNDAF/CPD Outcome:** By 2017, Public policies and development processes are mainstreamed with cross-cutting environmental, disaster risk reduction and climate change dimensions. Outcome indicators: Green House Gas per GDP emission; Prevalent Vulnerability Index; Environmental Performance Index. Area of the UNDP's Strategic Plan: Environment and Sustainable Development

<i>Contribution from the national counterparts</i>	<i>Contribution from other counterparts</i>	<i>Contribution from UNDP</i>	<i>Indicators, baselines and targets</i>	<i>Intended Outputs</i>	<i>Indicative Resources</i>
a.) <b>Sustainable management of natural resources:</b> Coordination across relevant line ministries; capacity of human resources to implement public policies and mainstream environmental, Disaster risk reduction and climate change dimensions	a.) Coordination and networking between non-governmental organizations, private sector, civil society and other UN agencies; technical assistance in promoting SD principles	Technical support and limited capital assistance is provided to strengthen capacity of the government and civil society to take informed action on climate change and disaster risk reduction. Assistance in development of national programmes and in national fund raising efforts	<b>Indicator 1:</b> Existence of integrated national frameworks/capacities for water, land use management, and comprehensive disaster management (CDM) <b>Baseline:</b> Framework for resource management fragmented or absent; No overarching SD framework; limited capacities for local participation in CDM efforts (only 15% of coastal communities with completed VCA) <b>Target:</b> 50% of coastal communities with vulnerability assessments; Appropriate institutional structures for water and land use management identified and operationalization supported.	Strengthened national capacities for effective planning & management of land and water resources; Comprehensive national SD strategy elaborated  National and local capacities for CDM strengthened at local levels (capacities for self-assessment, early warning, mitigation planning)	Core Resources: 0.1 million USD  Other resources: 8.7 million USD
b.) <b>Comprehensive disaster management:</b> Integration of national CDM objectives in planning frameworks; coordination of relevant supporting line ministries supporting national CDM framework	b.) Coordination and networking between non-governmental organizations, private sector, civil society and other UN agencies		<b>Indicator 2:</b> Existence of national climate office to mainstream climate change adaptation and mitigation measures <b>Baseline:</b> Climate change is currently a technical subject within the Ministry of Environment. <b>Target:</b> A National CC office and supporting structure defined and operational	Comprehensive National CC Policy elaborated; Sector adaptation strategies /plans supported; National framework for CC management defined and made operational	

**National Priority:** A democratic society and efficient governance systems

**UNDAF/CPD Outcome:** By 2017, democratic governance, capacity development, effectiveness and responsiveness are enhanced. Outcome indicators: # homicides per 100.000 habitants; % of women in the House of Representatives. Area of the UNDP's Strategic Plan: Democratic Governance

<i>Contribution from the national counterparts</i>	<i>Contribution from other counterparts</i>	<i>Contribution from UNDP</i>	<i>Indicators, baselines and targets</i>	<i>Intended Outputs</i>	<i>Indicative Resources</i>
Government is committed to implementing actions and complies with standards established in international obligations	The media, civil society and non-governmental organizations collaborate and are able to participate in initiatives pertaining to transparency, accountability and citizen security.	UNDP will advocate for and inform national debate on transparency, accountability and women political participation while increasing capacities of Police, Justice and other state and non-state actors to reduce insecurity.	<b>Indicator 1:</b> # of justice and security institutions produce fully budgeted work-plans to implement aspects of RESTORE Belize. <b>Baseline:</b> RESTORE Belize plans not yet budgeted. <b>Target:</b> 10 civil society and public sector organizations implementing fully budgeted aspects of RESTORE Belize  <b>Indicator 2:</b> # of Laws developed or revised and presented in the national assembly to support national and international obligations on anticorruption <b>Baseline:</b> UNCAC not signed; <b>Target:</b> Signing of UNCAC and plan to develop and implement provisions of the convention in place.	Access to justice, rule of law and security institutions as well as civil society capacities to reduce citizen insecurity and vulnerabilities and enhance access to justice strengthened  Strengthened national capacities for effective implementation of UNCAC POA and consistency in national reporting	Core Resources: 0.1 million USD  Other resources: 1.95 Million USD

