

NATIONAL GENDER POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PLANS AND M&E FRAMEWORK

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Government Agencies
Ministry of Human Development, Family and Indigenous People's Affairs
National Women's Commission National Gender and Gender Based Violence Committee
National Women's Commission District Gender and Gender Based Violence Committees
Department of Women and Family Services
Department of Human Services
National Council on Older Persons
Community Parent Empowerment Programme
National Committee for Families and Children
Department of Labour
BELTRAIDE
Ministry of Health
National Health Insurance (NHI)
National Drug Abuse Council
Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology
Police Department
Ministry of Economic Development
Sustainable Development Unit
Civil Society Organizations
Belize Family Life Association
Caribbean Women's in Leadership (Belize)
PETAL
Our Circle
UNIBAM
Tikkun Olam
POWA
Youth Enhancement Services
Helpage
Mental Health Association
Belize Association of Persons with Diverse Abilities
Haven House
Cayo Center for Education and Training
United Nations Agencies
UNDP
UNFPA
Spotlight Coherence Officer

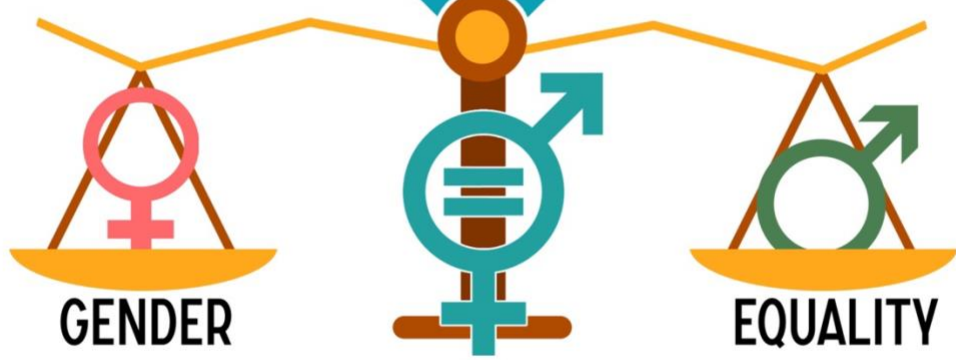
Table of Contents

1. BACKGROUND	7
2. THE NATIONAL CONTEXT	10
2.1 BASIC POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS.....	10
2.2 THE COVID 19 GLOBAL PANDEMIC.....	11
2.3 THE NATIONAL MACRO-ECONOMIC POSITION.....	12
3. SITUATION ANALYSIS	16
3.1 HEALTH.....	16
<i>Achievements</i>	16
<i>Gaps and Areas for Further Action</i>	24
3.2 EDUCATION.....	31
<i>Achievements</i>	31
<i>Gaps and Areas for Further Action</i>	40
3.3 WEALTH AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION.....	47
<i>Achievements</i>	47
<i>Gaps and Areas for Further Action</i>	53
3.4 GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN BELIZE.....	58
<i>Achievements</i>	58
<i>Gaps and Areas for Further Action</i>	66
3.5 POWER AND DECISION-MAKING.....	78
<i>Achievements</i>	78
<i>Gaps and Areas for Further Action</i>	81
3.6 ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS.....	81
4. REVISED NATIONAL GENDER POLICY (2021-2030)	85
4.1 PREAMBLE.....	86
4.2 KEY CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS.....	88
4.3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES.....	90
4.4 OVERARCHING GOAL.....	92
4.5 THE THEORY OF CHANGE.....	92
4.6.1 <i>Health Across the Life Course</i>	96
4.6.3 <i>Wealth and Employment Creation</i>	98
4.6.4 <i>Gender Based Violence</i>	100
4.6.5 <i>Power and Decision-Making</i>	102
4.6.6 <i>Organizational Strengthening</i>	103
5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK	105
ANNEX	116
ANNEX 1: IMPLEMENTATION PLANS.....	116
ANNEX 2: MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK.....	145

List of Acronyms

ACE	Adult and Continuing Education
BAPDA	Belize Association of Persons with Diverse Abilities
BAPSS	Belize Association of Principals of Secondary Schools
BCCI	Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry
BFLA	Belize Family Life Association
BOOST	Building Opportunities for Our Social Transformation
BOOST+	Building Opportunities for Our Social Transformation Plus
CAB	Child Advisory Board
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COMPAR	Community and Parent Empowerment Programme
CRC	Convention the Rights of the Child
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CRD	Community Rehabilitation Department
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DGBVC	District Gender-Based Violence Committee
DPP	Department of Public Prosecution
DVU	Domestic Violence Unit
EAP	Employee Assistance Programme
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EWS	Early Warning System
FACA	Families and Children's Act
FSW	Female Sex Worker
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GREAT	Gang Resistance Education and Training
GSDS	Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy
GSU	Gang Suppression Unit
HECOPAB	Health and Community Participation Bureau
HFLE	Health and Family Life Curriculum
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Syndrome
HPV	Human Papilloma Virus
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITVET	Institute for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MHA	Mental Health Association
MHDFIA	Ministry of Human Development, Families and Indigenous Affairs
MHDSTPA	Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
MSM	Men Who Have Sex with Men

NAC	National AIDS Commission
NARCIE	National Resource Centre for Inclusive Education
NCFC	National Committee for Families and Children
NCTVET	National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
NDACC	National Drug Abuse Control Council
NEMO	National Emergency Management Organization
NGBVAP	National Gender-Based Violence Action Plan
NGGBVC	National Gender and Gender-Based Violence Committee
NGP	National Gender Policy
NHI	National Health Insurance
NWC	National Women's Commission
PBIS	Positive Behaviour Intervention System
PETAL	Promoting Empowerment Through Awareness for Les/Bi Women
POWA	Productive Organization for Women in Action
PSE	Primary School Examination
PYDC	Positive Youth Development Curriculum
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
S&P	Standards and Poor
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SSB	Social Security Board
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
SVU	Sexual Violence Unit
TB	Tuberculosis
TIPA	Trafficking in Persons Act
UN	United Nations
UNDHR	United Nations Declaration on Human Rights
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIBAM	United Belize Advocacy Movement
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFSD	Women and Family Services Department
WHO	World Health Organization
YCT	Youth and Community Empowerment Programme
YES	Youth Enhancement Services
Youth RISE	Youth Resilience and Social Empowerment Programme
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association





1. Background

The National Gender Policy (NGP) was first developed in 2002. The National Women's Commission (NWC) revised the NGP in 2013. The Policy was revised to reflect new and emerging national priorities and incorporate key recommendations from the United Nations Committee on the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The Policy was further aligned with international commitments from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other similar international commitments signed and ratified by Belize. The National Gender Policy included the goals of Belize's Long-term Development Framework, Horizon 2030, as well as sector plans, mainly in health and education.

The priority areas of the Revised National Gender Policy emanated from a list of priorities established during the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China in 1995. In 2002, Belize identified five (5) main priorities for achieving gender equity and equity. These main priority areas were re-validated and maintained in 2013: (1) Health, (2) Education and Skills Training, (3)

Wealth and Employment Generation, (4) Violence Producing Conditions and (5) Power and Decision-Making.

Gender Focal Points were appointed within Government Ministries to facilitate implementation and monitor progress. The Women and Family Services Department (WFSM) coordinates these Gender Focal Points.

While the National Gender Based Violence Action Plan is nested mainly within Priority 4 of the National Gender Policy (Violence Producing Conditions), it also intersects significantly with commitments made under the other priority areas of health (1) education and skills training (2) and wealth and employment generation (3). Even power and decision-making (5) are critical factors in influencing actions geared toward addressing gender-based violence.

As with the National Gender Policy (2013), the National Gender Based Violence Action Plan (NGBVAP, 2017-2020) is multi-sectoral. The NGBVAP includes specific priority areas, strategic objectives, outcomes and outputs. Implementation includes service providers in the public and private sectors as well as civil society organizations (CSOs). National and District level Committees were

established to coordinate the implementation of this Action Plan.

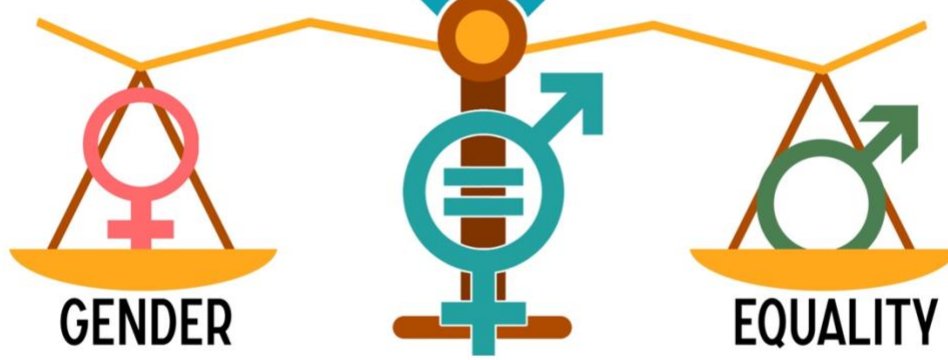
In 2021, with support from the joint United Nations-European Union Spotlight Initiative, the National Women's Commission reviewed progress related to the National Gender Policy (2013) and the National Gender Based Violence Action Plan (2017-2020). The review process identified achievements, challenges and gaps and informed the development of the proposed National Gender Policy and Gender Based

Violence Action Plan for the period 2021-2030.

This report presents a summary of the results of the review exercise as well as the proposed new National Gender Policy with the National Gender Based Violence Action Plan embedded as one of the six main thematic priority areas of the Policy.



THE NATIONAL CONTEXT





2. The National Context

2.1 Basic Population Demographics

Belize in general has a young population. According to Post Census estimates from 2010, the population size was 323,589 persons, with 35.6% of the population being under 15 years of age. The adolescent population accounted for 22.4% of the population. Another 53.7% was 20 years of age or older. The elderly (over 59 years) accounted for 6.6% of the total population.

Indicator	2010	2019
General Population	323,598	410,199
Under 5 years	11.7%	11.7%
Under 15 years	35.6%	35.6%
10-19 years	22.4%	22.5%
15-34 years Population	35.5%	35.5%
Over 19 years Population	53.7%	50.7%
Over 59 years	6.6%	6.2%

The general population structure in 2019 reflects a similar pattern. In 2019, the population was estimated at 410,199 persons. Approximately 35.6% of the population was under 15 years.

The adolescent population (10-19 years) comprised almost one-fourth (22.5%) of the total population. Half of the population (50.7%) was over 20 years of age. The elderly (over 59 years) accounted for 6.2% of the general population.

Noteworthy is the trend of the elderly being a smaller percentage of the population in 2019 compared to 2010. Because the elderly are at a high risk of morbidity and mortality from Covid 19, it will be important to continue to track its impact on this population. The population was evenly divided between males and females for all age categories, except for the 20 to 34 age range, in which there were more women than men.

Although women comprise half of Belize's population, they lag behind men in positions of power and political leadership. They continue to face barriers to economic empowerment and are the main victims of gender-based violence. Women's access to health and education has improved, yet there are gaps to be filled in adolescent health, mental health and in girls and women's access to non-traditional training and job opportunities. Nevertheless, boys and men face challenges in relation to social violence and school dropout. Men are victims of homicide at a higher rate than women. They also

engage in more risky behaviours that lead to road traffic accidents and HIV transmission.

This 2021-2030 National Gender Policy considers the gender dimensions of the population's political, socio-economic and cultural context in order to effectively achieve gender equity and equality in Belize.

2.2 The Covid 19 Global Pandemic

The development of Belize's National Gender Policy (2021-2030) was undertaken within a context of global public health emergency as well as the establishment of a new national government administration. Both played a significant role in the design and implementation of the process used to construct this new revised National Gender Policy (2021-2030).

In February 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared SARS COV 2 (or COVID-19) to be a global pandemic. This public health situation has triggered a humanitarian crisis that is affecting all dimensions of life. A United Nations Report states that this can lead to "significant setback for the first time since the start of measurement in 1990." ¹

This COVID-19 pandemic is expected to have an effect on the achievement of global priorities as stated in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). In particular, SDGs related to human

development are expected to be most affected. This includes: No Poverty (SDG 1), Zero Hunger (SDG 2), Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3), Quality Education (SDG 4), Gender Equality (SDG 5), Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8), Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10) and Peace, Security and Strong Institutions (SDG 16).

Any setback of this magnitude can have a devastating socio-economic and mental health impact on vulnerable and marginalized populations globally and in Belize. Among them are women and girls in urban and rural communities, young men and boys in urban communities, people and communities living in poverty, people with disabilities, migrant populations, other underserved populations, minority groups and those affected by gender-based violence.

Belize's response to the COVID 19 pandemic mirrors strategies employed globally: a national lockdown (April, 2020), a national state of emergency for two (2) months, a series of public health regulations outlining COVID 19 related economic and social restrictions and the distribution of employment relief and social safety-net services to affected individuals and families. This was accompanied by a restructuring of national priorities aimed at redirecting public sector investments toward COVID-19 related programmes. This pandemic has exacerbated a contraction in economic activity while simultaneously

¹ United Nations, *COVID-19 Socio-economic Response and Recovery Plan* (2020), 8.

increasing Belize's debt burden, which is estimated at over 100% of GDP.²

The UN COVID-19 Report states that over the last five years, average real growth was 1.3%³, meaning that economic growth has not kept pace with annual population growth estimated at approximately 2%.⁴ The real growth rate is expected to decline further as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, putting a serious strain on public and private sector resources.⁵

Furthermore, on November 11, 2020, Belize experienced a peaceful transition of power when a new government administration was elected. This new government proposed a set of priorities outlined in its Plan Belize manifesto. The manifesto documents propose strategies for achieving the overall goals of economic growth, poverty reduction and democratic governance. Of special importance is the Seven Point Women's Agenda entitled, "Families: Strong Families for Productive, Prosperous and Peaceful Communities."

In developing the new National Gender Policy and National Gender Based Violence Action Plan, the National Women's Commission's consultation process was guided by existing COVID-19 regulations for

² Honorable John Briceno, "New Year's Address" (speech, December 31, 2020), Belize Times, <https://belizetimes.biz/2020/12/prime-minister-hon-john-briceno-new-years-address/>.

³ United Nations, *COVID-19 Socio-economic Response and Recovery Plan*, 48.

⁴ Ministry of Economic Development, *Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy* (Belmopan: Government of Belize, 2016).

public safety. The development and naming of new priorities for the National Gender Policy and the Gender Based Violence Action Plan were influenced by:

- Immediate priorities outlined for COVID-19 pandemic recovery
- International commitments like the SDGs and international Conventions related to gender equity and equality, including human rights
- National frameworks like Horizon 2030 and the GSDS
- Priorities of the new government administration as stated in the #Plan Belize Manifesto documents, especially its Women's Seven Point Agenda
- Human and financial resources available now and expected to become available in the next 3-5 years.

2.3 The National Macro-Economic Position

Belize's real GDP growth was projected at less than 2% for the 2nd and 3rd quarters of 2019. This economic downturn was even greater in the 4th quarter of 2019 when Belize

⁵ Aaron O'Neill, "Belize - National Debt in Relation to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from 2016 to 2026," *Statista*, April 21, 2021, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/727069/national-debt-of-belize-in-relation-to-gross-domestic-product-gdp/>.

recorded negative 4% in GDP growth.⁶

⁷ This was far less than the projected annual growth of 5% articulated in Belize Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy 2016-2020. Growth was severely impacted by a downturn in tourism arrivals and a prolonged drought that affected agricultural production. Plant diseases further disrupted agricultural outputs. Investments in expanding the production of major crops like cane and banana helped to soften the impact on agriculture. The construction industry also experienced an economic decline.⁸

In 2019, inflation was flat. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) averaged a 0.2% increase for 2019. Central Government operations yielded a primary deficit of 0.1% of GDP in 2019 compared to a primary surplus of 2.4% of GDP in 2018. During this period, Belize's total expenditure grew by 6.5% to \$1,300.9mn. This increased the overall deficit from 0.7% of GDP in 2018 to 3.5% of GDP in 2019. Belize's domestic debt rose by 6.6% to \$1,114.4mn (29.8% of GDP), and the external public sector debt grew by 1.9% to \$2,618.9mn (69.9% of GDP). The total public sector debt increased by 3.3% to \$3,733.3mn (99.7% of GDP).⁹ During this period, Belize's

⁶ International Monetary Fund, "IMF Executive Board Concludes Article IV Consultation with Belize" (press release no. 19/448, December 9, 2019), <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2019/12/09/pr19448-belize-imf-executive-board-concludes-article-iv-consultation>.

⁷ United Nations, *COVID-19 Socio-economic Response and Recovery Plan*.

⁸ Central Bank of Belize, *2019 Annual Report and Statement of Accounts*, (Belize City, 2020).

international reserves remained at just over 3 months of imports of goods and services,¹⁰ putting the Belizean currency in a precarious position. The economy experienced an even greater decline in 2020 as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. By March 2020, tourism activities, which accounted for 21% of GDP, contracted when the Government closed Belize's international borders. The tertiary sector, mainly tourism services, restaurants and transportation, were devastated by this sharp decline in activity. The second quarter of 2020 recorded the largest GDP decline on record with a 23% downturn in economic activity. The overall negative effects of the pandemic overshadowed the positive performance of the primary sector, which continued to generate agricultural production.¹¹ By the third quarter of 2020, the economy saw a decline of 13.2% compared to the third quarter of 2019.¹² The IMF estimated that by the end of 2020, Belize would have experienced an overall 16% contraction in its economy as a result of Covid 19.¹³

The World Bank's 2020 Ease of Doing Business Report ranks Belize at 135 out of 190 economies. Of note, is that Belize's rank has declined since 2013, when it ranked 106 out of 189

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ International Monetary Fund, "IMF Executive Board Concludes Article IV Consultation with Belize"

¹¹ Statistical Institute of Belize, *Gross Domestic Product: Third Quarter Report 2020*, December 9, 2020, http://sib.org.bz/wp-content/uploads/GDP_2020_03_Quarter.pdf.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ United Nations, *COVID-19 Socio-economic Response and Recovery Plan*.

economies. Of the issues affecting business development, getting credit, protecting minority investors and starting a new business were identified as areas to be strengthened.¹⁴

By the end of 2020, Standards and Poor (S&P) and Moody both downgraded Belize's credit ratings due to the country's constrained liquidity pressures and its unsustainable debt ratio which Moody projected to reach over 130% of GDP in 2021.¹⁵

A UN Covid 19 Report states that "gender-neutral/blind budgeting and planning including at the macroeconomic level risks alienating women from participating in and contributing to the economy using the skills they have".¹⁶ This translates to ineffective poverty reduction and social protection programmes that are not adequate for addressing the risks of vulnerable groups, including women. This contributes to women's high unemployment levels and a

general lack of recognition of their value to the economy. This situation has become more complicated as a result of the dynamics of the Covid 19 pandemic, which led to a decrease in women's participation in the labour force as well as their increased unemployment.

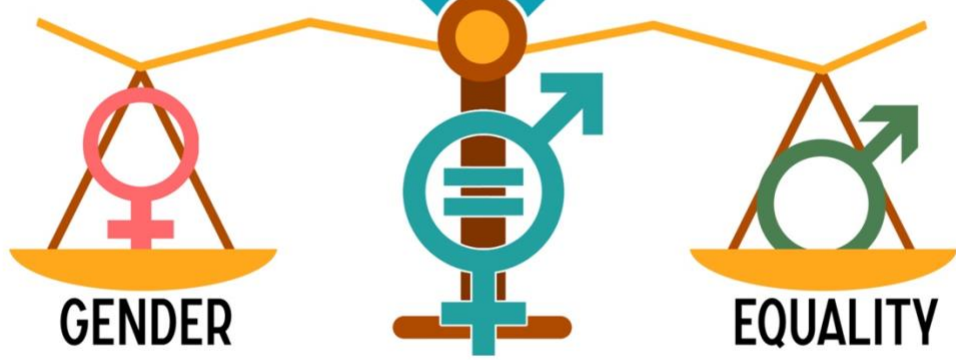
Notwithstanding the economic and social realities triggered by Covid 19, this situation was exacerbated by severe weather conditions. In September 2020 Hurricane Nana hit Belize and in November 2020, Hurricane Eta hit Central America. Both weather systems created flood conditions that inundated households and destroyed agricultural crops in Belize. This has raised issues regarding food insecurity and economic livelihoods protection, especially for women, indigenous and rural communities and people living in poverty.¹⁷

¹⁴ World Bank Group, *Ease of Doing Business in Belize, 2020*, <https://www.doingbusiness.org/en/data/exploreconomies/belize/>.

¹⁵ Trading Economics, *Belize News*, <https://tradingeconomics.com/belize/news>.

¹⁶ United Nations, *COVID-19 Socio-economic Response and Recovery Plan*, 24.

¹⁷ United Nations. (November 23, 2020). *Belize Covid 19 Socio-Economic Response and Recovery Plan*.





3. Situation Analysis

This situation analysis provides highlights on progress in achieving the goals of the National Gender Policy (2013) as well as the National Gender Based Violence Action Plan (2017-2020). It gives an overview of the current situation of gender issues in five of the thematic priority areas of the National Gender Policy (2013). These are: 1.) Health, 2.) Education, 3.) Wealth and Employment Creation, 4.) Violence Producing Conditions (including gender-based violence) and 5.) Women in Power and Decision-Making Positions.

3.1 Health

Achievements

National Health Insurance Expansion

The National Health Insurance (NHI) Programme was officially launched in 2003 with funding from the Social Security Board (SSB). Although the SSB continues to manage the programme, the Government of Belize, as of 2009, has been exclusively financing the NHI through transfers from the consolidated revenue fund to the Social Security Board (SSB).

¹⁸ Ariel Pino, *Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Review (SPER)* (MHDFAelopment, Social

Annual investment increased from \$3.2M in 2006 to \$18M in 2019.

In 2020, NHI accounted for 92.8% of Belize's non-contributory social protection programmes. NHI coverage was estimated at 30.7% of the population.¹⁸ NHI covers health throughout the life cycle from pregnancy to death.

Services are dispensed from the local level, through polyclinics, to tertiary care at hospitals. From its inception in 2003, a major achievement for women, adolescents, and youths was the inclusion of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services in the NHI package. Screening for cancers of the reproductive system, non-communicable and communicable diseases, laboratory testing and pharmaceuticals are covered in the NHI package of services. Using the Belize Family Life Association (BFLA) as an NHI service provider increased SRH services to vulnerable populations across the country. A Golden Citizen's Programme also ensures that geriatric patients benefit from NHI Programmes.

In February of 2020, prior to the WHO declaration of the Covid 19 pandemic, NHI was available to residents of Belize City's Southside, the Corozal

Transformation and Poverty Alleviation, UNICEF, ILO, 2020).

District and the Stann Creek and Toledo Districts. The NHI is currently reviewing the package of services offered, especially given the new challenges of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Geriatric Health Care

Geriatric health was highlighted as a priority in the National Gender Policy (2013). In 2018, overall life expectancy was 73 for men and 77 for women.¹⁹ The National Council on Aging states that the aging population (over 60 years) increased by 1,000 persons annually between 2010 and 2015 and that by 2040, the percentage of older persons within the Belize population is expected to double (from 7% in 2010 to 18% in 2040). Because women's life expectancy exceeds men's, a majority of geriatric patients are women. The 2013 Gender Policy called for the development of infrastructure and human resource capacity for addressing the health needs of older women and men. This included the development of geriatric healthcare services across the country.

The increase in life expectancy contributed to the establishment of the National Council on Aging in 2003. Since then, this Council has functioned as an education, support and advocacy body for older persons (aged 60 and over). A Situation Analysis conducted in 2010 outlined the important health, emotional and

physical infrastructure challenges facing this population.²⁰

Medical care for older persons is covered in the National Health Insurance (NHI) as long as older persons reside in the locations serviced by the NHI Programme. The Mercy Clinic, which specializes in geriatric care, is a registered NHI service provider that has enabled increased access to health and auxiliary services to older persons.

Sexual and Reproductive Health Services for Women and Children

The Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy (2002) is being implemented through Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategic Action Plans. The Ministry of Health provides sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services throughout health clinics and hospitals across the country. The package of sexual and reproductive health services includes maternal and child health, screening for cervical, breast and prostate cancers, as well as testing for STIs, syphilis, HIV and hepatitis. HIV medical monitoring and treatment services are provided to persons with HIV, regardless of whether or not they are part of a vulnerable population. The Kolbe Foundation provides HIV medical care to incarcerated populations.

Maternal and child health (MCH) Programmes cover health supplements

¹⁹ Adele Catzim, *Revised National Gender Policy* (National Women's Commission, 2013).

²⁰ National Council on Ageing, *Information Sheet on the Situation of Older Persons in*

Belize (Belmopan, 2015)
<http://www.ncabz.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/NCA-Fact-Sheet-Revised-2015.pdf>

(iron, folic acid and multivitamins) for girls and women ages 1- to 49 years. Over the last 10 years, the MCH Programme quadrupled its investment in sexual and reproductive health commodities (various contraception methods) from BZ\$100,000 to Bz\$400,000. Over this period, MCH Programmes expanded to cover ante and post-natal services, prevention of mother to child HIV transmission, breastfeeding support, child immunizations, Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccinations, fortified food for children (and families) suffering from malnutrition as well as counselling and referrals for gender-based violence.²¹

To enhance its Maternal and Child Health Programme, the Ministry of Health, in 2011, developed a National Obstetric Care Protocol. This Protocol states, “A pregnancy may be considered high risk when the mother has a medical condition that could affect the pregnancy or when there are signs of a potential complication in the foetus.”²² This protocol details procedures for managing high-risk pregnancies across all age categories. These obstetric protocols and guidelines are updated every 4-5 years.²³

Since 2010, all public hospitals countrywide and four polyclinics were certified as “Mother-Baby Friendly” hospitals. In 2015, approximately 97% of women giving birth receive care from at least one skilled birth attendant and at least one trained health care provider provides services after delivery.²⁴ This investment aimed to reduce neonatal and infant morbidity and mortality through increased protection from contracting diarrhoea, respiratory infections, ear infections, allergic skin disorders and other health complications.²⁵ These SRH services are provided to families and children who access services through the public health system or through National Health Insurance (NHI) service providers. Rural communities are targeted through the use of community health workers and mobile health clinics.

The Belize Family Life Association (BFLA) provides SRH services to vulnerable populations through its NHI clinic in Southside Belize City or at its other four clinics at a minimal cost. BFLA services are available to youth, persons with STIs and HIV, rural populations, transgender populations, men who have sex with men, sex workers and mobile workers. This includes sexual and reproductive health information, pelvic

²¹ Interview with Dr. Natalia Largespada Beer, Ministry of Health, February 25, 2021.

²² Ministry of Health, *Obstetric Care Protocols* (Belmopan, 2011).

²³ Government of Belize, *Draft Belize’s 25th National Country Report on the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (Belmopan, 2019).

²⁴ Statistical Institute of Belize and UNICEF Belize, *Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2015-2016*

(Belmopan: SIB and UNICEF, 2017); Statistical Institute of Belize and UNICEF Belize, *Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2011* (Belmopan: SIB and UNICEF, 2012).

²⁵ Government of Belize, *Draft Belize’s 25th National Country Report on the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*.

examinations, birth control, screening for cervical, breast and prostate cancers, HIV counselling and testing, HIV prevention commodities, tubal ligations and the HPV vaccine. BFLA clinics are available in the Belize, Stann Creek, Cayo and Orange Walk Districts.

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (2015-2016) reported an adolescent birth rate (15 - 19 year olds) of 74 per 1,000 compared to 64 per 1,000 in 2011. In 2015, a total of 17.3% of 20 - 24 year olds had at least one live birth before the age of 18 years, compared to 16.9% in 2011.²⁸ Early childbearing was 16.9% and 17.3% in 2015 and

Indicators	2011	2015
Total Fertility Rate		2.6
Adolescent birth rate (per 1,000)	64	74
Early childbearing	16.9%	17.3%
Contraceptive prevalence rate	55.2%	51.4%
Unmet Need	15.9%	22.2%
Antenatal Care Coverage (At least once)	96.2 %	97.2 %
Antenatal Care Coverage (At least four times)	83.1%	92.6%
Content of Antenatal Care	96.6 %	97.2%
Skilled Attendant at Delivery	92.6%	96.8%
Institutional Deliveries	93.8%	96.4%
Caesarean Section	28.1%	34.2%
Postpartum stay in health facility	92.3%	94.3%
Postnatal health check for newborn	97.3%	96.4%
Postnatal health check for the Mother	94.6%	96.4%

The 2015 MICS Survey²⁶ recorded a total fertility rate of 2.6. However, UNICEF reports that, “Despite the Ministry of Health’s efforts to provide contraception, adolescent usage is the lowest.”²⁷ Adolescents have the highest unmet need for family planning. Approximately 11% of Belize’s adolescent girls aged 15-19 years have given birth.

2019, respectively. This is a slight increase in early childbearing, which is consistent with the increase in the adolescent birth rate.

Based on the MICS surveys, births rates were influenced by a female contraceptive prevalence rate of just over 50% in both 2011 and 2015. The unmet need for contraceptive showed an upward trend from 15.9% to 22.2% between 2011 and 2015. Other

²⁶ Statistical Institute of Belize and UNICEF Belize, *Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2015-2016*; *Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2011*.

²⁷UNICEF, "Adolescent Health," <https://www.unicef.org/belize/adolescent-health>.

²⁸ Statistical Institute of Belize and UNICEF Belize, *Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2015-2016*; *Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2011*.

reproductive health indicators improved or were maintained at over 90%. Caesarean section deliveries increased from 28.1% to 34.2% over the same period.

Belize has high rates of child immunization coverage. Education on immunization is integrated with maternal health care. Community outreach programmes have also helped to move towards universal coverage. Based on Ministry of Health data, child immunization coverage remained stable between 2010 and 2018:²⁹

Type of Immunization	2010	2018
Measles, Mumps, Rubella	98%	97%
Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, Tetanus	96%	96%
Polio (OPV)	95%	96%
Tuberculosis (BCG)	98%	99%

In addition to child immunizations, the Ministry of Health introduced the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine in 2016. This HPV vaccine targets adolescent girls and boys who are 10 years and older in primary school. HPV vaccination coverage increased from 58.8% in 2016 to 62.4% in 2018.³⁰ HPV vaccination coverage in girls is slightly higher at 65% with an increasing trend.³¹ This vaccine is available

²⁹ Statistical Institute of Belize and UNICEF Belize, *Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2015-2016; Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2011*.

³⁰ Government of Belize, *Draft Belize's 25th National Country Report on the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*.

through public health facilities as well as through BFLA.

Covid 19 has resulted in reduced overall access to health services. The Ministry of Health has cautioned that this could affect Belize's 2020 immunization coverage.³²

The Ministry of Health and civil society partners recognize men's health as important. Therefore, health education campaigns seek to target both men and women to increase their access to preventive care and primary health care services. Even with these campaigns, women are still the main consumers of health services.

Section 112 of the Criminal Code (Chapter 1010 of the Laws of Belize Revised Edition 2000) has been maintained. Pregnancies can be legally terminated if the pregnancy endangers the health and wellbeing of the mother or if the child may be handicapped. Registered medical professionals in both public and private hospitals/clinics offer services consistent with these legal provisions. Women overall, and particularly women living in vulnerable conditions, are able to access these services.

The Belize Family Life Association (BFLA), the Youth Enhancement Services (YES) and the Haven House shelter receive small subventions from the Government. These civil society

³¹ Ministry of Health, *Cervical Cancer Prevention and Control Strategic Plan 2016-2021* (Belmopan, 2016).

³² See Ask the Experts Public Education Campaign.

organizations provide varying levels of support services to pregnant teenagers and young women who are vulnerable to, or are victims of, gender-based violence and/or HIV.

In 2009, the Ministry of Health provided maternal health supplements (iron and folic acid) only to pregnant women. Based on maternal health data and field observation, the Ministry began offering these two supplements as well as multivitamins to all women ages 10 to 49 years. This new policy led to a decrease in observable neural tube birth malformations (e.g. spinal bifida and encephalitis) among newborn children.³³

A Nutrition Survey was also completed in 2012 to identify children living with chronic malnutrition and stunted growth. Based on this data, the Ministry of Health provided fortified food to families. Amounts of fortified foods were eventually doubled as it was discovered at the entire family fed off the fortified food provided for the children. This intervention therefore impacted the health, not only of the targeted children, but also their families.³⁴

The Health Education and Community Participation Bureau (HECOPAB) provides parent education and awareness sessions to urban and rural communities. HECOPAB incorporates

child safety messages into its programmes. It utilizes a Parenting Manual that was developed by a multi-sectoral Parenting Task Force coordinated by the National Committee for Families and Children (NCFC). The mission of HECOPAB is to provide accurate, relevant and current information necessary for the promotion of health and wellness as a positive resource for the development of human potential in an environment of social and gender equity.

STI/HIV/TB Programming

The adult HIV prevalence rate fell from 2.1% in 2010 to 1.4% in 2016.³⁵ The HIV national response has increased its HIV testing capacity. HIV tests are now available in both public and private health institutions and through community outreach testing programmes. From 2010 to 2018, testing increased almost five-fold. During that time period, the HIV seropositivity rate dropped from 2.7 in 2010 to 0.72 in 2018.³⁶

2010			2018		
Tested	Positive	Rate	Tested	Positive	Rate
8,956	244	2.7	35,195	254	0.72

Men who have sex with men (MSM) comprise close to two-thirds of the expected annual number of HIV cases. A Study on the MSM population size estimates a total of 596 transgender and 9,891 MSM countrywide.³⁷ MSMs

³³ Interview with Dr. Largaespada Beer, February, 2021.

³⁴ Interview with Dr. Largaespada Beer, February, 2021.

³⁵ National AIDS Commission, *National HIV-TB Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020* (Belize City, 2015).

³⁶ Statistics Institute of Belize, *Abstract of Statistics 2019*; Statistics Institute of Belize, *Abstract of Statistics 2012* (Belmopan, 2012).

³⁷ National AIDS Commission, *Annual Report 2019* (Belize City, 2019).

represent one of the main target populations for HIV-related prevention, testing and treatment and support services. Inconsistent condom use, legal and social barriers to self-identification as MSM and late health seeking behaviours from men in general, were highlighted as being key drivers of vulnerability for HIV among men in Belize.³⁸ In 2018, men accounted for only 35.43% of all HIV tests conducted.

In 2018, of a total of 40,162 persons who got tested for HIV, 14,224 were males and 25,938 were females. A majority of tests were done for females within reproductive age (15 to 49 years). Even though females get tested for HIV two to three times the rate of males, men still test positive for HIV infection at a higher rate than women.³⁹ In 2018, there were 254 newly diagnosed cases of HIV infection with a male to female distribution ratio of 2:1 (170 males and 84 females). Even in the geriatric stage, men continue to test positive for HIV more than women. Once men are diagnosed with an HIV infection, they access treatment at a similar rate than women.⁴⁰ Overall, the HIV antiretroviral retention rate in 2018 was below 50%, highlighting treatment as an area for programme strengthening.⁴¹

The gender difference in HIV testing is attributed to the mainstreaming of testing services into Belize's maternal

and child health programme. Of the 7,859 women who delivered a child in 2018, a total of 39 or less than 1% of all deliveries were to HIV infected women. Anti-retroviral treatment is also integrated into maternal care. Therefore, of the 39 HIV infected pregnant women in 2018, there was only 1 mother to child transmission. This case was of a newly immigrated woman who had not received maternal care services in Belize.⁴²

HIV viral load suppression lowers the risk of HIV related morbidity and mortality as well as HIV transmission. In 2018, a total of 935 persons received viral load testing. Of these persons, 60% met the clinical criteria of being virally suppressed. National mortality data shows that in 2018, HIV was the sixth leading cause of death compared to being the fourth cause of death in 2010.

HIV infection increases the risk of contracting Tuberculosis. In 2018, a total of 30 persons were newly diagnosed with TB/HIV co-infections. As is the trend with HIV infection, males were diagnosed with TB/HIV co-infections more than females.⁴³ The onset of the Covid19 pandemic has increased the risk of HIV/Covid 19 co-infection and co-morbidity. The Covid 19 mortality rate is already shown to be higher for men than women. Incorporating Covid 19 information and prevention measures among HIV infected populations, especially men,

³⁸ National AIDS Commission, *National HIV-TB Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020*.

³⁹ Ministry of Health, *Annual HIV Statistical Report 2018* (Belmopan, 2019).

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ National AIDS Commission, *Annual Report 2019*

⁴² Ministry of Health, *Annual HIV Statistical Report 2018*.

⁴³ Ibid.

may be an important strategic step in preventing co-morbidity.

Except for the increased detection of syphilis cases in health surveillance system (2010-2018), it is unclear if there is a comprehensive STI Programme that is integrated as a key component of HIV reduction efforts. Currently, the HIV surveillance system does not report on STI cases and STI is not an aspect of the HIV response as outlined in the National Strategic Plan for HIV and Tuberculosis.

The Belize National HIV and TB Strategic Plan (2016-2020) incorporated gender equity and equality as one of its guiding principles. The HIV Strategic Plan states, “The principle of gender equity and equality, and non-discrimination requires a response that secures for all persons the right to freedom from discrimination on account of age, race, sex, gender roles, sexual orientation...” This plan aligns with the National Gender Policy in identifying strategies targeting vulnerable and at-risk populations most impacted by HIV. This includes men who have sex with men, transgender persons, commercial sex workers, young persons (15-24 years) and incarcerated populations, among others.

The 2016-2020 HIV/TB Strategic Plan highlights that men who have sex with

men, young persons and persons living with HIV and TB co-infections are the most vulnerable populations for which programmes need to be scaled up.⁴⁴

Human Rights Protections for Vulnerable Populations

In 2016, same-sex sexual activity was decriminalized as a result of a legal challenge. The Supreme Court of Belize declared Belize's anti-sodomy law as unconstitutional. Belize's Constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, which Belizean courts have interpreted to include sexual orientation. In 2019, this ruling was upheld by the Court of Appeals.⁴⁵

The Equal Opportunities Bill (2020)⁴⁶ provides vulnerable populations with equal access to health, education and employment services. This law lays out a definition for gender and gender identity to ensure that all vulnerable populations benefit from the provisions of this legislation. The law also prevents and prohibits discrimination on the ground of HIV positive status and establishes an equal opportunities commission and a tribunal for redress of discrimination, in violation of the law. The Government is currently reviewing this Bill.

⁴⁴ National AIDS Commission, *Annual Report 2019*.

⁴⁵ Emma Eastwood, "Belize Court Upholds Finding That LGBT People Are Protected by Non-discrimination Laws - Major Victory for Human Rights," *Human Dignity Trust*, December 30, 2019, <https://www.humandignitytrust.org/news/belize>

-court-upholds-finding-that-lgbt-people-are-protected-by-non-discrimination-laws-major-victory-for-human-rights/.

⁴⁶ National AIDS Commission, *Equal Opportunities Bill* (Belize City, 2020).

Gaps and Areas for Further Action

Sexual and Reproductive Health Across the Life Course

Adolescents: In 2018, Belize reported 3 live births to children under 15 years and 1,395 live births to young women between 15 and 19 years old.⁴⁷ The adolescent birth rate is an important gender issue that can have long-lasting effects on the teen mother and her family. Teenage mothers are more likely to drop out of school, live in poverty, unable to find and keep decent employment and protect their children from crime, drugs and alcohol abuse.⁴⁸

In 2019, UNICEF, PAHO and UNFPA collaborated with the Ministry of Health, and civil society partners like the Belize Family Life Association (BFLA), to develop an Adolescent Health Strategic Plan (2019). This Plan is consistent with the National Gender Policy's life cycle approach.⁴⁹ It recognizes that prevalence data on issues affecting adolescent health is not readily available.⁵⁰ Therefore, using a participatory and qualitative approach, adolescents and service providers came together to decide on major issues affecting adolescent health and well-being. Four priorities were incorporated into this Strategic Plan: 1. Positive Health and Development, 2. Violence and Injury,

3. Sexual and Reproductive Health and 4. Mental Health, Substance Use and Self-Harm. These four priorities are aligned with the provisions of the National Gender Policy (2013).

UNFPA also worked with the Ministry of Health and civil society partners to develop a Child Marriage and Early Union Roadmap to protect the girl child from early unions and early pregnancies that increase health risks and create barriers to economic and social empowerment.

Additionally, older persons (over 65 years) have indicated that although they now have access to cancer screening tests, they would like to see an increase SRH education and services for their age group.

Older Persons: The National Council on Aging advocates for strengthening sexual and reproductive health for older persons. Older persons (over 65 years) admit they have interest in remaining sexually active and in protecting themselves from sexually transmitted infections such as HIV. They also indicate that they need greater support for managing health related changes that come with aging, including menopause, mental health issues and non-communicable diseases.⁵¹

While the National Health Insurance (NHI) extends protection to older

⁴⁷ Statistical Institute of Belize, *Abstract of Statistics 2018* (Belmopan, 2018).

⁴⁸ UNICEF, "Adolescent Health."

⁴⁹ Ministry of Health, *Developing a National Adolescent Health Strategic Plan for Belize: Country*

Experience and Lessons Learned (Government of Belize and UNICEF, UNFPA, PAHO, 2018).

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 11.

⁵¹ Interviews with representatives of the Council on Aging, February, 2021.

persons through a specialized clinic in Belize City, older persons call for consideration in expanding geriatric care clinics across the country.

Other Vulnerable Populations: SRH and HIV Programmes for vulnerable populations need to be scaled up. A 2016 study⁵² on HIV prevention among female sex workers (18-49 years) demonstrated a downward trend in HIV knowledge over a 3-year period (57% in 2013 to 29% in 2016). During that period, 62.2% of them had gotten an HIV test and picked up their results in 2016 compared to 69.7% in 2013, showing a downward trend. Additionally, only 27% of female sex workers reported using a condom correctly. Therefore, even though there was a slight increase in the percentage of female sex workers who used a condom with their last sexual partner (73.2% in 2013 to 84.8% in 2016), they still had a high exposure to HIV and other STIs.

A study of sexual practices among MSMs and women trans revealed the average number of sexual partners they had over the last 30 days (4.5 for MSM and 8.3 for trans women).⁵³ Trans women had almost double the average sexual intercourse acts of MSMs. In the 12 months prior to the survey, 16.7% of MSM and 21% of women trans had participated in group sex. Of these, 8% of MSM and 14.9% of women trans had used a condom when engaging in group sex. However, only approximately half of

both MSM and trans women reported having knowledge of HIV prevention and reject community myths associated with HIV transmission.

A high percentage of both MSM and women trans used a condom during their last sexual intercourse (81.4% MSM and 85% women trans) although a smaller percentage used condoms consistently and correctly in the 30 days prior to the survey. More women trans tend to obtain an HIV test compared to MSM obtain an HIV test and receive their results (44.3% MSM and 84.6% women trans).

Data on behavioural patterns of men at risk of HIV infection shows that only 31% of them had knowledge of HIV prevention. Only 34.7% of them used a condom with all types of partners. Just over half (59.9%) of men at risk had engaged in healthy sexual behaviours in the 30 days prior to the survey. Only 26.7% had used a condom consistently in that time period. Of these men, 38.4% of them had obtained and received the result of their HIV test in the last 12 months prior to the survey.

The PlanBelize Women's Agenda seeks to strengthen and promote sexual and reproductive health in all stages of women and girl development to decrease teenage pregnancy, unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections including HIV and cancer.⁵⁴

⁵² *Follow up Survey: HIV and AIDS Prevention* (PEPFAR, PASMO, USAID, 2016).

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ People's United Party, *Plan Belize: Women's Agenda and Family*.

Mental Health

The Health Human Resources Strategic Plan (2019-2024) acknowledged that mental health services have expanded and that these have been integrated into primary health care.⁵⁵ The Strategic Plan called for an increase in primary health care providers to deliver a comprehensive package of primary health services, including mental health. Mental health services are gender neutral, treating all clients based on their symptoms.

In 2010, a Mental Health Policy (2010-2015) was passed. The Mental Health Unit within the Ministry of Health is charged with policy implementation. This Mental Health Unit is comprised of Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners (PNPs) and psychiatrists. The country suffers from a chronic shortage of professional mental health therapists. There are currently 8 mental health services located within primary health care facilities or on hospital compounds across the country. There is one residential facility in Belmopan and one intense community treatment service and one-day hospital/drop-in centre in Belize City. This is supported by mobile clinics that visit rural communities and the Cayes, the Kolbe Foundation, and residential facilities for children. Mental health sensitization sessions are provided to primary and secondary schools across

the country as well as to new police recruits and police supervisors. Additionally, there has been an increase in the number of professional mental health therapists and counsellors providing services in a private clinical setting. A list of some of these professionals is on the Mind Connect website.⁵⁶

Since 2010, mental health issues have received increased visibility in the national discourse. In 2017, the Mental Health Unit, Health Education and Community Participation Bureau (HECOPAB) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) hosted a Conference under the theme, “Depression Let’s Talk”. This Conference opened dialogue of some of the mental health issues that affect men. As stated by a doctor, “Real men get depressed. There’s nothing wrong with seeking medical attention.” The Ministry of Health official stated that the Ministry is paying attention to incidents such as road rage, and increasing alcoholism, as being possibly being linked to untreated depression.⁵⁷

Every year, HECOPAB conducts a series of public education activities to raise awareness on the importance of mental health. This is demonstrated in regular television and radio shows that host mental health providers to share information on mental health issues.⁵⁸ Representatives from the

⁵⁵ Ministry of Health, *Belize Human Resources for Universal Health Strategic Plan 2019 – 2014*, 28.

⁵⁶ See for a list of mental health professionals in Belize, <https://www.mindhealthconnect.com/>.

⁵⁷ Breaking Belize News, “Ministry of Health Talks Depression,” *BBN*, 2017,

<https://www.breakingbelizenews.com/2017/04/07/ministry-health-talks-depression/>.

⁵⁸ See the “Open Your Eyes” Morning Show on Channel 5 at

<https://www.facebook.com/OpenYourEyesBz/>.

Mental Health Association (MHA) and “Mind Health Connect” (both NGOs), work closely with the Ministry of Health to provide awareness on a range of mental health topics such as: Suicide Prevention, and dealing with Anxiety and Trauma.⁵⁹ Among adolescents, mental health, substance abuse and harm were identified as priorities to be addressed in a National Adolescent Health Strategic Plan.⁶⁰

UNICEF⁶¹ states that according to Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners (PNPs), there were three leading causes for admission of adolescents to mental health clinics: (1) disorders due to psychoactive substances use, (2) attempted suicide and (3) mental health disorders due to anxiety and stress-related disorders. On its “Ask the Experts” Covid 19 media programme, the Ministry of Health indicated that Covid 19 has had mental health impacts on the general population but that adolescent and geriatric populations were especially in need of mental health services.

The Ministry of the Public Service developed and implemented an Employee Assistance Policy (2013). This Policy provided public officers with access to short-term mental health services for marital issues, substance abuse, family violence, mental illness and work-related stress. Additionally, the former Ministry of Human Development, Social

Transformation and Poverty Alleviation (MHDSTPA) operates a Counselling Centre in Belize City. The Counselling Centre provides mental health counselling to children and families. They also provide mental health services to children in residential care facilities such as the National Youth Hostel.

In recognition of the need for more mental health providers countrywide, this Ministry, from 2017 to 2020, through a Project called, Youth Resilience and Inclusive Social Empowerment (Youth RISE), contracted private sector mental health professionals to treat mental health issues among targeted youth populations in the Cayo and Stann Creek Districts. The Ministry also increased its budget to allow its Departments to hire private counsellors to provide mental health services for their clients (children, adolescents and adult victims of abuse).

However, mental health is still one of the biggest gaps in the child protection system. Children manifesting with acute mental health issues in residential and non-residential care facilities have limited options for treatment. For example, the National Youth Hostel is not designed to address the acute mental health needs of children who have a mental health diagnosis. Yet, they have had to provide residential care to these

⁵⁹ See Mind Health Connect’s website at <https://www.mindhealthconnect.com/>.

⁶⁰ Ministry of Health, *Developing a National Adolescent Health Strategic Plan for Belize: Country Experience and Lessons Learned*.

⁶¹ UNICEF, “Adolescent Health.”

children. The Hostel has established a ward in which children can receive psychiatric medical treatment. There is limited capacity for providing these children with on-going counselling and other forms of mental health treatments. The Former Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation and the Ministry of Health opened dialogue on the need to resolve this growing issue. The focus is on developing a multi-tiered community mental health system that builds capacities at all levels of the health system.

Members of the Mental Health Association have a similar view. They indicate that there is much room for further strengthening of mental health services across the country. This includes the need for greater levels of training in psychological first aid and trauma informed interventions for front-line workers, enhanced professional mental health support for vulnerable populations (such as victims of gender-based violence), more effective and efficient referral and counter-referral systems and protocols, and greater specialized services for persons with addictions and other related issues. Recommendations for strengthening also include official recognition of school counsellors as a profession

⁶² The Memphis Model CIT is an innovative, community-based, and collaborative Programme to increase safety for persons in crisis, family members, the public, and police officers, and to divert individuals living with mental illness from the criminal justice system to appropriate mental health supports in a safe and effective manner. For more information go to: <https://www.memphistn.gov/government/police-department/crisis-intervention-team/>.

distinct from teachers and providing primary and secondary school children with psycho-education sessions to prevent issues like gender-based violence. To guide this institutional strengthening process, the MHA members recommend conducting a community assessment and mapping of existing resources, mobilizing technical support from organizations like the Memphis Police Department's Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)⁶² and modernizing mental health policies and legislation.

No code of practice for mental health workers has been developed. However, the Ministry of Health has established a licensing process for allied health professionals. Mental health professionals can apply for a license to practice. The license is renewable annually.

The Plan Belize Women's Agenda (2020) highlights the need to eradicate stigma surrounding mental health by promoting educational programmes and supporting mental health professionals.⁶³

Substance Abuse

A Study⁶⁴ on the prevalence and pattern of drug use in third year high school students in Belize City revealed that there were gender difference in

⁶³ People's United Party, *Plan Belize: Women's Agenda and Family*.

⁶⁴ Jean Briceno-Perriott, Fermin Olivera and Esner Velloso, *Prevalence and Pattern of Drug Use in Third Year Belize City High School Students 2012-2013* (University of Belize and National Drug Abuse Control Council, 2013).

the frequency of use for marijuana, cocaine, crack, inhalants, non-medical use of prescription drugs and ecstasy. Female students mainly consumed inhalants compared to male students who mainly consumed tobacco, marijuana and crack. Marijuana use was more popular than tobacco use.

The Study reported that overall, students got drunk approximately 4 times per month. Female students reported getting drunk fewer times than male students. The age of first alcohol use was 13.2 years with female students starting one year later than male students. Alcohol consumption occurs mainly in the student's home (27.1%), a friend's house (27.5%) or at social events (25.5%).

The 2015 MICS Survey⁶⁵ reported that 2.1% of women and 16.4% of men aged 15 to 49 years smoked cigarettes, or used smoke or smokeless tobacco products within the last month. Additionally, 1.4% of women and 11.8% of men said that they had smoked a cigarette before the age of 15. A total of 29.3% of women and 53.7% of men aged 15-49 years stated that they had at least one alcoholic drink during the last month. Furthermore, 4.5% of women and 18.7% of men aged 15-49 said that they had at least one alcoholic drink before the age of 15. This data indicates that consumption of alcohol and tobacco products begins either in early adolescence (10 to 15 years) or even younger (under 10 years).

The early initiation of alcohol and drug use has gender implications such as gender-based violence. Gender implications also emerge when drug use and abuse is involved in the commission of criminal activities that then lead to imprisonment, mostly of young men.

Even with evidence of the need to develop rigorous and comprehensive substance abuse programmes, the Government of Belize has not yet passed the National Substance Abuse Policy. There are no comprehensive drug rehabilitation programmes in the country. Three alcohol rehabilitation programmes are operating in the country. All three provide services for men only. There are Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) support groups in all districts, except for the Stann Creek District: Corozal (5), Orange Walk (3), Belize (3), Cayo (2) and Toledo (3).

Gender Responsive Health Prevention and Treatments

Gender responsive services were integrated mainly into sexual and reproductive health programmes.

The crude death rate in 2018 has remained constant compared to 2010. The total crude death rate in 2018 was 4.7 (per 1,000 population) with 5.49 for males and 3.99 for females. Overall, men have a higher crude death rate compared to women.

The causes of death over the 2010-2018 period demonstrate that

⁶⁵ Statistical Institute of Belize and UNICEF Belize, *Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2015-2016*.

although heart diseases remain one of the top three causes of death, malignant neoplasms (or cancer tumours) now account for the second cause of death, overall. Meanwhile, HIV and homicides have declined in ranking among the top ten causes of death. In 2019 males accounted for 75% of all suicides in Belize. A majority of victims were over 30 years old. Among persons under 18, equal numbers of males and females committed suicide in 2019.

The National Health Sector Strategic Plan (2014-2024) incorporates strategies that focus on preventing and treating non-communicable diseases, particularly those that rank high as a cause of death. However, the strategies developed to address these health issues are gender neutral. They are not tailored to the specific needs of males or females who live with these illness.

Rank	Causes of Death	2010		2018		
		#	%	Causes of Death	#	%
1	Diabetes mellitus	148	9.5	Diseases of the heart	259	13.8
2	Ischaemic heart diseases	120	7.7	Malignant neoplasms	213	11.4
3	Homicide and Injury purposely inflicted by other persons	119	7.6	Diabetes mellitus	192	10.3
4	HIV/AIDS	104	6.7	Unintentional injuries	140	7.5
5	Cerebrovascular disease	83	5.3	Assault (homicide)	138	7.4
6	Diseases of pulmonary circulation and other forms of heart diseases	63	4.0	HIV disease	107	5.7
7	Other chronic pulmonary diseases excluding external agents, residuals	59	3.8	Cerebrovascular diseases	106	5.7
8	Acute respiratory infections	57	3.7	Influenza and pneumonia	105	5.6
9	Hypertensive diseases	53	3.7	Essential hypertension and hypertensive renal disease	65	3.5
10	Transport accidents	48	3.1	Chronic lower respiratory disease (CLRD)	56	3.0

Road safety is another issue that has been recognized as a public health problem but which has not benefited from gender specific programming. In spite of investments in road infrastructure and in road safety projects, road safety continues to have uneven impact on males mortality and morbidity. In 2009, Belize recorded 70 deaths due to road traffic accidents. In 2018, there were 79 deaths from 71 road traffic accidents.⁶⁶ Men accounted for four out of every five road traffic deaths, making this an on-going issue affecting mostly men.⁶⁷

As proposed in the National Gender Policy, the Health Sector Strategic Plan (2014-2024) acknowledged that gender specific approaches are needed to address gender differences in mortality and morbidity related to road traffic accidents. In 2013 Belize launched the first phase of a Road Safety Project and in 2019, it launched the second phase. This project focused on reducing deaths and serious injuries associated with road traffic crashes along a “demonstration corridor”. In phase 1, this corridor extended from Belize City along the George Price Highway to Belmopan. In phase 2, the Coastal Road between George Price Highway and the Southern Highway was included.⁶⁸ This project included infrastructure development, road safety education and behaviour management, traffic law enforcement, post-crash care and

capacity building. Through the project, a Road Safety Master Plan (2030) was developed.

The Plan Belize Women’s Agenda (2020) proposes to incorporate health promotion and lifestyle changes across all government sectors for the prevention of non-communicable diseases.⁶⁹

3.2 Education

Achievements

Legal Reform in Gender Equity, Child Protection and Teacher Training

The 2011 Education and Training Act (Section 46) attempted to hold grant-aided schools accountable. Grants to schools were to become conditional on schools’ compliance with this legislation, including provisions related to gender sensitivity and non-discrimination on the basis of sex. Accountability systems were not fully implemented due to resistance from grant-aided schools. These schools, which are only partially funded by the Government, were reluctant to provide access to their financial records to demonstrate how their subsidies were utilized.

The Education and Training Act also explicitly states that no person should be refused admission to a school on the basis of sex, except where such schools

⁶⁶ Adele Catzim, *Situation Analysis of Gender Issues in Belize* (Belize City: National Women’s Commission, 2010).

⁶⁷ Belize Crime Observatory, "Road Traffic Fatalities 2018," infographic, *BCO*, October 22, 2019, accessed January 31, 2021,

<https://bco.gov.bz/download/road-traffic-fatalities-2018/>.

⁶⁸ Ministry of Economic Development, "Road Safety Project – Belize," <https://med.gov.bz/rsp/>.

⁶⁹ People’s United Party, *Plan Belize: Women’s Agenda and Family*.

are historically non-coeducational. The Act also legislates equitable access to education for males and females as well as students with special needs. Section 49 states:

“The Ministry shall ensure equitable access for both sexes to education at all levels, and that provision of education is sensitive to the particular needs of both males and females and caters to the special needs of challenged pupils. (2) Managing Authorities shall ensure that schools under their management are free of gender, racial and other biases, and shall be managed in such a way that all students shall, as far as may be applicable, co-exist as peacefully and harmoniously as possible”.

Furthermore, section 50 of the Act banned corporal punishment as a form of discipline within education institutions. This section also legislated students right to be free from harassment, intimidation and other harmful activities.

“School authorities shall ensure that pupils are free at school from physical, sexual or other forms of harassment, from intimidation and corporal punishment, and from exposure to drugs, pornography and other

forms of morally, mentally or physically harmful activities.”

By the end of 2011, corporal punishment was illegal in preschools, day care institutions and in all schools countrywide. Much publicity was given to this change, which was championed by civil society organizations.

In 2012, the Ministry of Education amended the Education (Amendment) Rules. These rules focused on professional staffing and employment conditions.⁷⁰ The Ministry enhanced its enforcement of these Rules, particularly in relation to teacher hiring and licensing requirements. Since then, the number of trained teachers has increased at all levels of the education system.

The Government of Belize initiated dialogue on the expansion of mandatory education to the first two years of secondary school. However, no legislative reform was implemented to achieve this goal. The Plan Belize Education Strategy (2020)⁷¹ proposes to address these issues by instituting free education from pre-school to 6th form (the first two years of tertiary education). This free education policy is currently being piloted in selected high schools in the southside of Belize City.

⁷⁰ Ministry of Education, *Draft Strategic Framework for Education Consultation Document* (Belmopan, 2019).

⁷¹ People’s United Party, *Plan Belize: Education Policy*, 2020, <https://planbelize.bz/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/PUP-Education-Nation-2020.pdf>.

Early Childhood Development

In 2017, the Government developed an Early Childhood Development Strategy (2017-2021)⁷² that recognizes gender equity and equality as foundational principles. The Strategy states that, “gender-based and gender-specific interventions are essential at the earliest stages of a child’s life and have long-lasting effects on developing healthy identities and later achieving gender equity and equality”.⁷³

There were 199 preschools in 2010/2011 compared to 229 in 2019/2020, representing an increase of 30 preschools. Government, the private sector and denominational schools all expanded preschool spaces to increase children’s access to preschool education.

Type of Preschool	2010/2011	2019/2020
Government/Community	40	50
Private	51	60
Denominational	108	119
Total	199	229

Almost equal numbers of boys and girls are enrolled in preschools. Most are enrolled in denominational preschools, followed by private preschools and then by Government or community preschools. Children in urban areas tend to go to private preschools while those in rural areas attend either denominational or

⁷² Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation, *Early*

Government/community preschools. The preschool pupil to teacher ratio was 16.3:1 in 2010/2011 and 18:1 in 2019/2020, respectively.

Preschool Enrollment					
2010/2011			2019/2020		
Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
6,739	3,391	3,348	7,312	3,689	3,759

The Plan Belize Education Sector Strategy (2020) calls for an increase in preschool enrollment from 37.7% to 100% over the next five years. Basic nutrition services as well as technology, reading, visual arts, dancing, planting, music and civics are to be incorporated in order to provide a holistic learning experience for preschool children.

The Early Education and Development (ECD) Strategy (2017-2021) supported the strengthening of the COMPAR and Roving Caregivers Programmes, which provides early childhood support services to vulnerable parents, including single women.

In 2018 the National Committee for Families and Children, through a parenting task force, developed a new Parenting Manual. This manual contains a curriculum for parenting interventions from infancy to adolescence. It is being used by parent educators of the COMPAR Programme as well as by other parenting trainers

Childhood Development National Strategic Plan 2017-2021 (Belmopan: Government of Belize, 2017).
⁷³ Ibid, 17.

from both government and civil society organizations. This includes the Belize Family Life Association (BFLA), HECOPAB, and other agencies that are members of the task force. Gender socialization and gender issues are mainstreamed into the Parenting Manual.

The National Gender Based Violence Committee in Belize City established a men's education and advocacy group. Additionally, the Belize Family Life Association (BFLA) has engaged men in open dialogue on gender role socialization issues. Sustaining these programmes has been extremely challenging for implementation agencies.

School Participation and Completion among Targeted Populations

The Ministry of Education implemented a per capita financing and subsidy programme to reduce school repetition and dropout rates, particularly among boys and students from rural communities. The Ministry also provided a secondary school subsidy of \$300 to all students attending schools in three districts with high poverty rates: Toledo, Stann Creek and more recently, the Corozal District. In the other three districts this \$300 subsidy was provided to students in rural schools as well as students from poor households in urban areas.

The Ministry of Education also implemented an equity-based secondary finance reform (SFR) initiative. The Ministry changed the formula from a "per tuition" (which ranges from \$25 to \$75 per month per student depending on the school they attend) to a "per capita" financing system that pays a flat sum per student across schools. Additional funds were then provided to secondary schools that accepted students who received scores below 60% on the Primary School Examination (PSE). This financing formula took into consideration students' level of vulnerability, such as low PSE results, poverty and geographic location.

These reforms provided incentives for increased retention of students, therefore reducing secondary school dropout. The 2011 and 2015 MISC surveys reported improved school attendance rates for lower social-economic income brackets. The secondary school dropout rate was halved, from 10% to 5%.

While targeted children showed an improvement in school completion, these programmes were not enough to have a national impact. Children living in poverty still continue to face barriers to school participation.⁷⁴ A 2017 Study⁷⁵ revealed that male, poor, rural, disabled and migrant children were still more likely to start school late, repeat a grade and drop out of school, compared to other children.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Ministry of Education, *Draft Strategic Framework for Education Consultation Document*.

⁷⁵ Roy Young et al., *Out of School Children Initiative (OOSCI)* cited in

Ministry of Education, *Draft Strategic Framework for Education Consultation Document*.

⁷⁶ Ministry of Education, *Draft Strategic Framework for Education Consultation Document*.

The Plan Belize Education Strategy (2020) seeks to replace the above-stated per capita financing formula with one that incentivizes performance and strong school leadership that produces improved learning outcomes. In addition, this Plan proposes to implement a “Fair Access \$5M Education Loan Fund” and an “Equal Opportunity \$3M Rural Education Grant Fund” to increase education access to vulnerable children.⁷⁷

At the tertiary level, the enrolment rate was 13% in 2019. Out of the 7,000 students enrolled in a tertiary education institution, women outnumbered men at a ratio of 62:38.⁷⁸ The Ministry of Education provides incentives for males and females to transition from secondary school to tertiary education. The Ministry of Education pays up to \$500 for fourth form students to take the Caribbean Examinations (CXC) in multiple subject areas. Each student who passes six CXC subjects then immediately qualifies for a grant subsidy to attend tertiary education. The Government also provides a grant subsidy to the University of Belize (UB) to increase accessibility and affordability. These targeted financial aid programmes have shown success. Merit and need-based tuition scholarships and grants have contributed to a 29% increase in

tertiary enrolment over the last 10 years.⁷⁹

The Government of Belize initiated dialogue on the expansion of mandatory education to the first two years of secondary school. However, no legislative reform was implemented to achieve this goal. The Plan Belize Education Strategy (2020)⁸⁰ proposes to address these issues by instituting free education from pre-school to 6th form (the first two years of tertiary education).

School Support Services

The former Ministry of Human Development, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health collaborated in the implementation of a Building Opportunities for Our Social Transformation (BOOST) Programme. This poverty reduction Programme provided differentiated conditional cash transfer payments based on the sex and grade level (Standard or Form) of students. With the aim of achieving gender parity in enrolment and completion rates, payments to parents for male students were slightly higher than for female students. In 2019, payments for female students were raised to that of male students. In recognition of the increasing cost of education with each grade level, payments increased accordingly.

⁷⁷ People’s United Party, *Plan Belize: Education Policy*.

⁷⁸ Ministry of Education, *Education Sector Strategy (2011-2016): Improving Access, Quality and*

Governance of Education in Belize (Belmopan: Government of Belize, 2012).

⁷⁹ Ministry of Education, *Draft Strategic Framework for Education Consultation Document*

⁸⁰ People’s United Party, *Plan Belize: Education Policy*.

The Government of Belize initiated dialogue on the expansion of mandatory education to the first two years of secondary school. However, no legislative reform was implemented to achieve this goal. The revision of the secondary school financing formula, the provision of the BOOST conditional cash transfer programme for poor households, the \$300 education subsidies for students from poor households, school feeding programmes, and the development of a child labour intervention programme all supported the goal of increasing the secondary school enrolment and completion rate, with a particular focus on boys.

One of the conditions for the Building Opportunities for Our Social Transformation (BOOST+) Programme was that children, ages 5 to 14 years, from qualifying households must attend at least 85% of their classes per month. The BOOST monthly cash transfers ranged from \$44.00 to \$82.00 per person, for up to a maximum of six beneficiaries per household.⁸¹ An evaluation of the BOOST Programme indicated that it was successful in improving parents and children's motivation to engage in schoolwork.

With the support of UNICEF, the Ministry of Education, during the time of COVID-19, provided 1,000 nutrition hampers, including hygiene kits, to families of children who have been beneficiaries of the Ministry's School Feeding Programme.

⁸¹ Government of Belize, *Draft Belize's 25th National Country Report on the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*.

In addition to school feeding programmes, the former Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation implemented a Food Pantry Programme⁸² in the Toledo, Stann Creek, Belize and Cayo Districts. The programme provided working poor households with a weekly basket of basic staples, vegetables, and fruits to be purchased at a subsidized cost of \$12.50. This increased children's access to food, thus addressing one of the barriers to school participation and completion rates.

Curriculum Reform Initiatives

The Ministry of Education revised and standardized the national primary school curriculum. The Ministry is in the process of revising its secondary and vocational and technical education curricula. This revision process set out to ensure alignment with the country's overall vision and goals. This is an on-going process that presents an opportunity for mainstreaming gender equity and equality in secondary school and ITVET curricula.

New education projects are already mainstreaming gender issues. One of the main objectives of a new Education Quality Improvement Project (EQIP II) is the promotion of gender-sensitive STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) teaching in primary and secondary schools.

⁸² Government of Belize, *Draft Belize's 25th National Country Report on the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*.

The primary education curriculum has been revised to incorporate specific learning outcomes for sports and the expressive arts. A new curriculum framework is being developed for secondary education. The framework will provide guidance on the core subject areas. The framework will provide information on course content and learning outcomes.

Environmental protection issues are mainstreamed into the science curriculum at both primary and secondary levels. Technology is being mainstreamed through the use of multi-media and digital learning platforms. Gardening has been discussed as an important learning activity but this has not yet been included in the primary or secondary school curricula.

The Plan Belize Women's Agenda (2020)⁸³ seeks to mainstream dance, culture, arts and sports into the curriculum, as well as introduce Information Technology (IT) concepts. Together, this transformation of the curriculum is to contribute to developing a more peaceful and productive society, in which women are meaningfully engaged and empowered.

HFLE and Life Skills

Since 2017, a revised HFLE Curriculum is being implemented in primary schools across the country. To increase implementation success, training programmes were conducted

with teachers nationwide. HFLE resources were developed with support from the Peace Corps. District Education Officers are charged with monitoring HFLE implementation across the country.

In 2014, the Positive Youth Development Curriculum (PYDC) was developed covering topics such as sexuality and positive relationships. All secondary schools and ITVET counsellors and life skills teachers were trained in the use of this curriculum. In 2018, the Ministry of Education, with support from UNICEF, revised this curriculum to span the four years of secondary school. This revision was done in collaboration with the Belize Association of Principals of Secondary Schools (BAPSS) and church managements to ensure alignment with school values.

This Life Skills Curriculum is to be delivered as a mandatory core subject within secondary schools. This is to ensure that students have access to accurate information on sexuality and positive relationships. The Ministry has strengthened teachers' capacities for delivering this revised curriculum. The main challenge will be the enforcement of curriculum implementation in secondary schools across the country.

Safe School Initiatives

The Education and Training Act was amended in 2011 to prohibit the use of

⁸³ People's United Party, *Plan Belize: Women's Agenda and Family*.

corporal punishment in schools. Since then, the Ministry implemented a Positive Behaviour Intervention System (PBIS) in schools across the country. This new PBIS system built the capacity of schools to integrate positive discipline approaches and procedures into existing school governance mechanisms.

The Ministry also partnered with agencies like UNICEF and RESTORE Belize to implement an Early Warning System (EWS)⁸⁴ in selected primary schools. The EWS was implemented for early identification and support to at-risk students to enable their completion of primary education. The EWS addressed social as well as academic, home and community-based risk factors. The EWS system encompassed a literacy programme and a trauma informed practices curriculum.

These EWS pilot initiatives demonstrated success in improving teacher morale and performance and in improving students' academic and behavioural records. Schools that implemented the EWS stated that the programme's weakest link was the referral and counter-referral system for reporting cases of child abuse and neglect and for gaining access to social safety net programmes. The EWS required collaboration among the Department of Human Services, the Department of Women and Family Support Services, the Police

Department, health facilities, parents and community-based organizations.⁸⁵

The main challenge facing school-based child protection programmes (e.g.: EWS, PBIS, TIPS) is that they have limited human and financial resources to expand coverage to all schools.

The Ministry of Education hired approximately 200 school wardens as well as school counsellors to increase the safety of children and teachers, mainly in high crime urban areas.

The Women and Family Services Department also implemented an annual Gender Awareness Safe School Programme.⁸⁶ This programme targeted boys and girls in Standard 5 and 2nd Form students. The programme created awareness of various forms of violence and provides information on social protection and legal services available to victims. The programme analysed gender roles and socialization patterns that perpetuate violence while introducing strategies that build self-esteem and self-worth.

In 2015, through the UN Trust Fund Project, countrywide teacher training workshops were conducted to mainstream the "Safe Schools Programme" within schools. The objectives of the Safe Schools Programme are being met through a revised HFLE school curriculum.

⁸⁴ Adele Catzim, *Report on Roundtables: Quality Child Friendly Schools. Education Response to Citizen Security* (RESTORE Belize and the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports and Culture, June 2019).

⁸⁶ Government of Belize, *Draft Belize's 25th National Country Report on the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*.

Trained Teachers

The average scores for the Primary Selection Examination (PSE) in English, Math and Science in 2010/2011 showed that 20% of students scored over 76% while the majority (58%) scored between 50 and 75%. The other 21% scored below 50% on the exam. The average scores for the PSE in 2019/2020 show a slight improvement with 25.7% of students scoring either an A (excellent) or a B (competent), while 21% scored a C (satisfactory) and 54% scored either a D (adequate) or an E (inadequate).

These results indicate that over the last 10 years, approximately 20-25% of students pass the PSE with a grade of 75% and above while approximately half of students receive a grade below 50%, which is below satisfactory.

Children from rural areas traditionally score lower than their urban counterparts, pointing to a lack of equity in the quality of education in urban and rural areas.⁸⁷

To increase the quality of education, the Government amended the Education Rules in 2012. These Rules increased the number of qualified teachers in the education system. Trained teachers increased from 18.1% to 52.1% at pre-primary level. At the primary education level, trained teachers increased from 42.8% to 82.3%. At the secondary level, trained teachers increased from 30.6% to 65.0%. Approximately 30% of ITVET instructors completed diploma

courses to enhance the quality of education delivery.

Protection of Teachers from Gender Based Discrimination

The Ministry did not mandate educational institutions to abide by all the provisions of this National Gender Policy. However, in 2011, the Government amended the Labour Act to provide protection to workers (including teachers) from unfair dismissal due on the basis of sex, pregnancy, pregnancy-related reasons or HIV status. While the Labour Act protects teachers from this type of gender-based discrimination, it does not protect students from discrimination for pregnancy-related reasons.

The Ministry of Education has also established a National Teaching Services Commission (NTSC) that addresses all forms of discrimination or serious disciplinary actions against teachers. If a teacher is not satisfied with the decision of the NTSC, the teacher can apply to a Tribunal to appeal his or her case.

Since 2011, no teacher has lodged a complaint related to gender-based discrimination in the education system. This includes no cases of discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, marital status, HIV status, sexual harassment or family related reasons.

⁸⁷ Statistics Institute of Belize, *Abstract of Statistics 2019*; *Abstract of Statistics 2012*.

Gaps and Areas for Further Action

Digital Technology in the Classroom

In 2019, the Ministry of Education partnered with the Belize Telemedia and the Belize Association of Principals of Secondary Schools (BAPSS) to implement a DigiLearn cloud based digital teaching and online platform in nine pilot secondary schools. This project included the provision of laptops to all first form students and teachers from selected schools. Digi upgraded these schools' internet speeds to accommodate more effective use of Wi-Fi technology in the classroom.

With the transition from in-person schooling to online education, the Ministry of Education, with support from UNICEF, developed an online, television and radio-learning platform. Through this platform, the Ministry delivered online lessons for primary schools and created teacher's guides for high school courses. The Ministry also made electronic hardware (tablets) and MiFi devices available to vulnerable students.

At the national level, students with economic needs and students from some rural communities still struggle with sustained access to internet services. These students were disadvantaged in the transition to online learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Plan Belize Education Strategy (2020) proposes to support learning

outcomes within the digital age. The Strategy aims to launch a laptop computer programme for students from Standard 4 to 4th Form.

Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) for Girls

A loan proposal to the Inter-American Development Bank reports that internationally, girls show higher levels of anxiety in relation to enrolling in STEM subjects. In Belize, girls comprise only 34 percent of students in STEM-related fields, while they represent almost 60 percent of students in other fields.⁸⁸ This gender disparity remains one of the most important gaps in education. The proposal states,

“Belizean girls lag boys in Mathematics and Science learning. Learning gaps between males and females appear to develop over time, as the differences on the PSE are small and significant only in some academic years. By the time students reach the secondary level of education, the gap is pronounced with boys outscoring girls on the CSEC by 14.2 and 12.5 percent in mathematics and science, respectively.”⁸⁹

In June 2019, the Inter-American Development Bank approved this loan proposal for up to US\$10M to implement a new Education Quality

⁸⁸ Emma Näslund-Hadley et al., *Belize: Education Quality Improvement Programme (EQIP) II (BL-L1030)*,

Loan Proposal (Inter-American Development Bank 2018), 3.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 2.

Improvement Project (EQIP II). EQIP II focuses on improving the quality and gender equity of education at the primary and secondary levels, with a special focus on innovation in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) education. The construction of a model STEAM high school, development of a STEAM curriculum, and teacher training are key aspects of this project.

The Government will incorporate basic STEM concepts into the primary education curriculum, create partnerships that promote STEM, mobilize scholarships for STEM Programmes and build visibility for women in STEM. These strategies aim to create a workforce that meets the needs of the future⁹⁰ as outlined in a Study conducted by the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

This 2018 Study⁹¹ identified career opportunities that are expected to grow in the fields of computer technology and mathematics; sales and related fields; installation and maintenance; and architecture and engineering. The study revealed that the need for digital skills is widespread across industries, including those that employ the largest number of people with

secondary education or higher. The study stated that at the tertiary level, the few institutions (UB and Galen University) offering ICT-related programmes are not adequate to prepare students to meet the skills demands of the sector for middle-skilled jobs, especially in software, web development, database development, and networking. The study further highlights the need to invest in ICT skills development as early as elementary school.⁹²

To this end, PathLight Belize⁹³, has trained teachers in how to migrate to virtual learning platforms to enhance the online learning experience of their students. PathLight has also teamed up with the Building Ships Initiative in Colorado, Visa International, Michigan State University and the University of the West Indies to offer STEM related afterschool online programs for high school students. Initiatives include the Martian Greenhouse Initiative 2.0, Girls who Code, Girls who Venture and Future Me programmes. These afterschool programmes target mostly girls. The objective is to introduce girls to industry leaders and professionals in Belize and abroad so as to generate girls' interest in selecting careers in STEAM related subject areas.

⁹⁰ People's United Party, *Plan Belize: Women's Agenda and Family*, 4

⁹¹ Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry and International Labor Organization, *Skills Mismatch in the Agriculture and ICT Labor Markets* (Belize City, 2018).

⁹² Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry and International Labor Organization, *Skills Mismatch in the Agriculture and ICT Labor Markets*.

⁹³ PathLight Belize is a local NGO linked to PathLight International. PathLight Belize is dedicated to teacher training and providing comprehensive scholarships for students to complete secondary and post-secondary education.

The Plan Belize Women’s Agenda (2020)⁹⁴ seeks to actively promote women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics through educational partnerships and raising funds for scholarships of which at least 50% are to be granted to women. The plan further endeavors to incorporate STEM concepts into the primary education curriculum to improve computational thinking, and to support digital literacy.

Additionally, a STEM Ambassador is to be created to advocate for gender equity in STEM, raise awareness of gender imbalance issues, pursue the case for change and build visibility for women in STEM.

constant over the last ten years with women comprising only 20% to 21% of total enrolments.⁹⁵ Indigenous and rural women and women in the Orange Walk District are especially absent from technical and vocational training and from adult and continuing education programmes.⁹⁶

No special incentives were offered to encourage women to apply for ITVET courses. Even when girls or women apply, they tend to enrol in female dominated courses rather than in non-traditional subject areas. Therefore, girls and women remain underrepresented in ITVET programmes.

ITVET Enrollment					
2010/2011			2019/2020		
Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
569	453	116	856	674	182
100%	80%	20%	100%	79%	21%

Technical and Vocational Education Curriculum Strengthening

In ITVETs across the country, enrolment rates remain low. Total enrolment in 2019/2020 was 856 (674 men and 182 women). This represented an increase in total enrolment by only 287 over the 10-year period. Men continue to outnumber women at a rate of 3.7 men to 1 woman. This male:female ratio has remained

Several issues contribute to this low enrolment rate. One issue is that the minimum age for participation in ITVET Programmes is 15 years. This leaves a gap for those who complete primary school at age 12, 13 or 14 years. During this gap, many of the children interested in skills building or trade related programmes fall victim to the challenges of daily survival and eventually lose their

⁹⁴ People’s United Party, *Plan Belize: Women’s Agenda and Family*.

⁹⁵ See Table 31: Full Time Enrolment in ITVETs by District and Sex 2013/14 to 2017/18 in Ministry of

Education, *Abstract of Education Statistics: 2017 - 2018* (Belize City, 2019).

⁹⁶ Government of Belize, *Draft Belize’s 25th National Country Report on the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*.

chance of entering into the programme when they turn 15 years old.⁹⁷

The National Education Sector Strategy (2011-2016) set out to undertake a Labour Market Survey to align the ITVET curriculum, in both design and delivery, to ensure that it meets the needs of the labour market. The Ministry also planned to link ITVET with Adult and Continuing Education Programmes in order to increase the pool of persons who access ITVET programmes.

Several studies report that major improvements are needed to increase the quality of the curriculum to meet regional standards. A study on the Belize Active Labour Market Landscape recommends that ITVET programmes become more demand driven, that skills correspond to employers' current and future needs, that high performing programmes be scaled up, that quality standards be improved and that coverage be increased for both men and women.⁹⁸ This study⁹⁹ was consistent with the National Gender Policy in calling for campaigns to address gender stereotypes that hinder women from seeking training at ITVETs in order to get jobs in non-traditional sectors.

The Ministry of Education is exploring the establishment of a Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) Certification process. The CVQ would offer a set of criteria for certifying

ITVET Programmes. The goal is to strengthen current programmes by building competencies linked to specific quality standards and learning outcomes.

The Plan Belize Education Strategy (2020-2030)¹⁰⁰ proposes to invest in, and revitalize, technical and vocational education. This is to be done by matching training programmes to the economic priorities of the country and immediately re-establishing a strong public private partnership (PPP) through the National Council for Technical Vocational Education and Training (NCTVET). The Plan Belize Women's Agenda (2020)¹⁰¹ specifically seeks to create training opportunities to encourage women to take up non-traditional careers.

Education's Relevance to Labour Market Needs

The private sector collaborates with secondary schools, ITVETs and tertiary education institutions to offer opportunities for on-the-job training. More recently, the private sector began working closely with the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education to enhance the quality of the labour force.

A Youth Employment Study revealed that in Belize (2017 data), only 39% of the labour force had completed a secondary school education or higher.

⁹⁷ Ministry of Education, *Draft Strategic Framework for Education Consultation Document*.

⁹⁸ J Ritcher, *The Belizean Active Labour Market Landscape: A Mapping Exercise* (World Bank, 2019).

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ People's United Party, *Plan Belize: Education Policy*.

¹⁰¹ People's United Party, *Plan Belize: Women's Agenda and Family*.

Therefore, 61% of the labour force had not completed a secondary school education. This accounts for mostly unskilled labour operating within the work force, a situation that the private sector has identified as a major concern.¹⁰² Another Study¹⁰³ indicated an absence of business training at any level of the education system in Belize, especially where entrepreneurship training is concerned. This was stated as a major gap in preparing young men and women for the world of work, particularly the establishment of their own business ventures.

This study also reported that employers in Belize are looking for workers with digital transformation skills, critical thinking skills and socio-emotional skills. Areas of priority for the skills training were: business processing, social and health services, marketing and media, and information and communication technologies (ICT). The above-mentioned skills-gap and skills-mismatch study recommended a re-design of the training curricula to adequately train students in software and applications development skills and to incorporate web and multimedia development skills in training.

Regarding agriculture, the labour market study recommends the integration of agriculture programmes (including aquaculture) in the

secondary education curriculum as a distinct study track. Integration into the secondary school curricula would allow for greater access to this study track across the country. This latter recommendation is based on the fact that Belize is an agriculture-based economy with a marine sector that is expected to grow in the medium term.¹⁰⁴

A mapping exercise¹⁰⁵ also highlighted the need for Belize to expand work experience opportunities to youths across the country, particularly in the growth sectors identified above. This includes strategic job internships and job placement support programmes within ITVET and tertiary education institutions. Ideally, this would be more effective if the country had a dedicated employment agency that would collaborate with education institutions to implement these programmes to facilitate the school-to-work transition.¹⁰⁶

Protection for Pregnant Students

Belize's adolescent birth rate is high at 74 per 1,000 births. Adolescent pregnancy and early marriages (particularly among Maya and Mestizo girls) are critical barriers to girls' education and later economic empowerment. Although more secondary schools now allow girls to return to school after giving birth,¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² International Labour Organization, *Mapping of Youth Employment Interventions in Caribbean Countries*.

¹⁰³ J Ritcher, *The Belizean Active Labour Market Landscape: A Mapping Exercise*.

¹⁰⁴ Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry and International Labor Organization, *Skills Mismatch in the Agriculture and ICT Labor Markets*.

¹⁰⁵ International Labour Organization, *Mapping of Youth Employment Interventions in Caribbean Countries*.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Government of Belize, *Draft Belize's 25th National Country Report on the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*.

school-aged students who become pregnant are still likely to be expelled from school or be put on special leave.

Over the last ten years, Government and civil society organizations can provide young mothers with opportunities for completing secondary school. Girls can access educational opportunities through the Gwen Lizarraga Night Division or at the Kaina Online High School after giving birth. Pregnant students and students who have a child can also access education and skills training opportunities through the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and the Youth Enhancement Services (YES). YES supports teen mothers during their pregnancies and shortly thereafter.¹⁰⁸

The need to address this issue using a school-wide policy approach remains an important gap in child protection in the education system. Therefore, the Ministry of Education collaborated with the Belize Association of Principals of Secondary Schools (BAPSS) to initiate dialogue on the formulation of a national school policy on pregnant students. This dialogue has been stalled by the changes in education protocol as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Inclusive Education

The ECD Strategy¹⁰⁹ warns that when net enrolment rates reach 90% and

above, a substantial proportion of the children who remain out of school are those with special needs. The ECD Strategy calls for greater training and other support for schools so that they can better accommodate children with special needs. A Ministry of Education Study showed that children with disabilities made up 25% of 4-year-olds who were not in school and 36.4% of children between ages 5 and 10 who never attended primary school.¹¹⁰

The National Resource Centre for Inclusive Education (NARCIE) is responsible for supporting and monitoring the mainstreaming of children with special needs. The Ministry of Education has increased the number of Special Education Officers (from 2 to 14 officers). At the primary school level, children continue to benefit from the Government's mainstreaming policy. Only one primary school provides education solely for children with special needs; All others mainstream children with special needs. At the secondary school level, the Ministry mandates schools to hire interpreters to assist students with hearing impairments.

The Ministry is partnering with the University of the West Indies to offer a master's degree programme in Special and Inclusive Education. This aims to strengthen Belize's capacity for diagnosis, treatment and support for students with physical impairments and learning disorders.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and MHDFAelopment, Social Transformation and Poverty

Alleviation, Early Childhood Development National Strategic Plan 2017-2021.

¹¹⁰ Ministry of Education, *Draft Strategic Framework for Education Consultation Document.*

Since 2015, the government has rehabilitated and/or constructed new classroom spaces for more than 15 schools countrywide.¹¹¹ These new schools were designed to facilitate wheelchair access for children with physical disabilities.

While this shows a concerted effort to integrate children with special needs into the classroom, a lack of resources hampers the effective implementation of support services for children with special educational needs.¹¹² The Belize Association for People with Diverse Abilities (BAPDA) advocates for greater investments in training programmes that meet the practical needs of children with special needs and their families, for example, more caregivers for people with diverse abilities, more physiotherapists and more diagnosticians for learning disabilities.¹¹³

Inclusive education is a major focus on the Plan Belize Education Strategy (2020). This Strategy seeks to implement new special education policies and laws to foster greater inclusion and respect for children with special needs. This includes teacher training in special education (speech therapy, physical therapy and occupational therapy) as well as additional itinerant teachers to support a more effective transition from primary school to post-primary education. Capacity for Diagnostics and Curriculum Development will be

¹¹¹ Belize Social Investment Fund. *Education projects completed in the last five years, 2013 - 2018*.

¹¹² Ministry of Education, *Draft Strategic Framework for Education Consultation Document*.

built to ensure that children are properly diagnosed academically and are being provided with life skills training. The Plan states that it will provide NARCIE with greater support and attention.¹¹⁴

Mental Health Services for Students and Teachers

A Report on the Education Sector Response to Citizen Security¹¹⁵ highlights the need for trauma-informed practices (TIPS) in schools. School officials reported that school policies are not always trauma-sensitive and there are insufficient counsellors to meet the demands of students. Additionally, school counsellors face numerous barriers to the delivery of sustained, high quality mental health services. There are currently no public service posts for school counsellors within the public sector. School counsellors are hired as teachers and must follow the education rules that apply to teachers. They must teach a life skills curriculum, coordinate other school activities, access continuing professional development courses and apply for a teaching license, which reduces their availability to provide counselling services to students. Additionally, many school counsellors are not trained mental health professionals.

The Ministry of the Public Service operates an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for public officers,

¹¹³ Interview with members of the Belize Association of Persons with Diverse Abilities, April, 2021.

¹¹⁴ People's United Party, *Plan Belize: Education Policy*.

¹¹⁵ Adele Catzim, *Report on Roundtables: Quality Child Friendly Schools. Education Response to Citizen Security*.

but this has not been extended to teachers. No mental health support mechanisms for teachers have been established.

The Plan Belize Strategy for Education (2020) recognizes that community support and counselling programmes are important and that there is a need for more trained, certified counsellors in all schools. The Plan states that these programmes aim to build linkages and create a safer and more responsive school environment. Therefore, the plan proposes to enhance coordination with community resources like the community policing unit.

Gender Equity and Strengthening of the Teaching Workforce

The Ministry of Education has not offered special scholarships or any other special incentives to attract males into the teaching workforce. A media campaign was implemented to recruit and retain qualified male teachers. However, at the end of the campaign, this goal was not achieved; in fact, there were fewer male teachers in the education system after the campaign.

The Government constructed schools in rural communities. Yet, recruiting qualified male and female teachers to work in rural schools remains a challenge. This contributes to the inequitable distribution of human and financial resources in rural compared to urban schools.

The Plan Belize Education Strategy (2020) sets out to achieve 100% trained teachers by 2025. This is to be accomplished by developing a comprehensive year-round teacher-training programme that will ensure that principals and teachers have ongoing access to new and relevant tools and techniques aimed at enhancing their capacity and effectiveness to deliver quality education.

Teachers will be offered structured ongoing professional development training through a Teacher and Learning Institute. This is to be accompanied by leadership and administrative training by the Ministry of Education.

3.3 Wealth and Employment Creation

Achievements

Legal Reform in Employment, Pension, Child Maintenance and Child Labour

In April 2011, the Government of Belize enacted the Labour (Amendment) Act.¹¹⁶ Section 42 addresses unfair dismissal on the basis of sex, age, race, ethnic origin, marital status, family responsibilities, a female worker's pregnancy or a reason connected with her pregnancy or absence from work during maternity leave, HIV status or sexual harassment at the workplace. Other reasons include union membership, disability, religion, indigenous

¹¹⁶ Labour (Amendment) Act, No. 3 of 2011.

population, political opinion and social origin. This amendment aligns with the commitments of the National Gender Policy (2013).

In March 2016, the Government of Belize enacted the Private Pensions Act.¹¹⁷ This Act allows for the registration, supervision and increased protection of private pensions. This Act offers greater levels of gender equality in the management of private pension benefits. It provides for benefits to be given to a spouse, which is defined as a man and women married to each other or living in a common law union. The law also makes provision for a surviving spouse, in the case of a death pension, to continue to receive that benefit, even if he or she subsequently remarries. The law allows for money and assets of a pension plan to be transferred based on a court order in the case of divorce or a settlement agreement for spouse maintenance.

As far back as 2002, the National Council on Aging developed recommendations for legislative reforms that offer greater protection for older persons in employment and social safety net programmes. In 2011, the Labour Act was amended to prohibit unfair dismissal on the basis of age.

Women tend to access credit from money lending and informal lending sources. In recognition of the importance of moneylending as a prevalent source of borrowing, the Government of Belize, in 2017,

amended the Money Lenders Act to strengthen regulations governing this type of lending institution.¹¹⁸

Amendments to the Married Persons (Protection) Act in 2017 extended the age for children born within a *marriage* entitled to maintenance from 16 years to 18 years. This amendment is in line with legislation for children born outside of marriage who qualified for maintenance for up to eighteen (18) years.

The Labour Department in collaboration with the National Child Labour Committee is developing a 2021 National Child Labour Policy and National Strategic Action Plan. ILO Convention 182 provided the springboard for this Policy, which was supported by the “Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labour Project II (CLEAR II)”. This project focused on eliminating the worst forms of child labour, particularly within the agriculture sector. The CLEAR II project included a legislation review exercise as well as training and capacity building aimed at enhancing Belize’s response to eliminating all forms of child labour. Recommended legal reforms include:

1. Raise the age of compulsory education, in order to close the gap between the minimum age for employment.
2. Change the definition of a “child” to include all persons under the age of 18 instead of 14, as it is presently.

¹¹⁷ Private Pensions Act, No. 4 of 2016.

¹¹⁸ Moneylenders (Amendment) Act, No. 13 of 2017.

3. Raise the minimum age for work to 14 to 15 years.
4. Raise the minimum age for light work to 12 to 13 years; and ensure it applies to all sectors.
5. Modify laws as necessary to prohibit commercial sexual exploitation of children ages 16 and 17.
6. Adopt a list of hazardous occupations and activities prohibited for children.
7. Prohibit all children under the age of 18 from engaging in hazardous work.
8. Prohibit the use of children in specific illicit activities such as drug trafficking.
9. Develop a draft Hazardous and Light Work List to guide a determination of the type of work children can and cannot do.

In 2019, the Ministry of Labour established a Child Labour Secretariat and Inspectorate Desk to monitor and enforce child labour regulations as well as to conduct child labour inspections, to provide child labour education training and sensitization programmes, particularly in the agriculture sector, and to collect and analyse child labour statistics.¹¹⁹

The Draft Equal Opportunities Bill (2020) also increases protection for women and vulnerable populations. This Draft Bill has seven main objectives. The most important objective is to eliminate discrimination as outlined in the Constitution,

including discrimination from harassment and victimization. The Bill gives equal opportunity protections in relation to HIV prevention and care, particularly to vulnerable and at-risk populations. It guarantees access to justice and brings Belize in compliance with international laws and conventions that promote women, children and human rights.

The Bill extends protection in the workplace within professional and industrial organizations, educational institutions, sporting associations, and in the health care setting. Of note is that discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, maternity, sex, sexual orientation, domestic violence, and marital status, among other characteristics, are all protected. Therefore, pregnant students and teachers would be offered protection from expulsion from school or termination from work solely on the basis of these characteristics.¹²⁰

The former Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation conducted a series of national consultations on the Bill. This Bill is still currently being reviewed to address the concerns of private sector organizations and the faith-based community. The private sector is concerned about the potential impact of this Bill on their recruitment, employment, and labour practices. This includes the proposed mechanisms for complaints and the penalties for non-compliance. Some

¹¹⁹ Information provided by the Labour Department, April 9, 2021.

¹²⁰ National AIDS Commission, *Equal Opportunities Bill*.

faith-based organizations raised concerns about the Bill's protection of persons on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.¹²¹

Women's Economic Empowerment Initiatives

In 2014, the Special Envoy's Office hosted a National Call to Action Conference on Women and Girls' Financial Health. The event highlighted the importance of supporting women's economic empowerment activities through job skills training and entrepreneurship development Programmes.

Beginning in 2014, BELTRAIDE and the Women and Family Services Department implemented three cycles of a project called "Emprende". Through this project women entrepreneurs received full entrepreneurship and business development training. Selected women participants also received funding to implement their business ideas. In 2015, through a Gender-Based Violence Project, these two partner agencies provided further training to women and provided 200 women with materials and seed grants to start their businesses.¹²²

In 2016, BELTRAIDE, through its Small Business Development Centre

(SBDC), held a one-day workshop on Entrepreneurship and Gender. The goal was to promote women's participation in the national entrepreneurship ecosystem by equipping participants with techniques and tools to facilitate gender and entrepreneurship development within their respective institutions. High-level decision-makers and technical officers from across the public, private and civil society sectors participated in the workshop.¹²³ The participants all represented organizations that provide entrepreneurship assistance to women.

In 2019, BELTRAIDE collaborated with the US State Department and the Regional Centre for the Promotion of MSMEs (COMPROMYPE) to implement a Female Entrepreneurship Programme (FEP). The FEP seeks to improve and strengthen women's leadership, economic empowerment and business development skills. In the first cohort, a total of thirteen (13) participants completed the programme.¹²⁴

BELTRAIDE has also identified key sectors for business development, including the spa and wellness industry; the culture industry; the marine sector; and information and communications technology (ICT). BELTRAIDE has collaborated with the culture industry to provide technical

¹²¹ Adele Catzim, *Gap Analysis: Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (2016-2020)* (Government of Belize, 2020).

¹²² BA1 Project, *Implementation of National Gender-based Violence Plan of Action* (UN Trust Fund, 2012 - 2015).

¹²³ Beltraide, "Beltraide Holds Workshop on Entrepreneurship and Gender," October 21, 2016,

<https://belizeinvest.net/2016/10/21/beltraide-holds-workshop-on-entrepreneurship-and-gender/>.

¹²⁴ Government of Belize, *Draft Belize's 25th National Country Report on the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*.

support services for the promotion of music products. Both men and women benefited from this programme. They have also supported the development of the cacao, coconut water and BPO outsourcing industry.

Currently, BELTRAIDE, through its BelizeINVEST Unit, provides online business support services in the form of business establishment guidance, information on investment opportunities, assistance with setting up virtual business meetings with public and private stakeholders, guidance on fiscal incentives and other related issues.

The Building Opportunities for Our Social Transformation Plus (BOOST+) Programme of the former Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation (MHDSTPA) offered a Job Readiness Course (JRC). The JRC prepares women and men for the job market by providing them with economic skills training courses accompanied by life skills classes and entrepreneurship support activities.¹²⁵ At the end of 2017, an estimated 953 persons, mostly women, had benefited from this programme.¹²⁶

A top priority for the Ministry of Youth, Sports and E-Governance is youth economic empowerment. The Department of Youth Services Strategic Plan (2018-2023)¹²⁷

¹²⁵ BOOST+ contains two accompaniment models – one for the family providing general psychosocial support, and the JRC providing employment readiness support

¹²⁶ Human Rights Council, National Report Submitted in Accordance with Paragraph 5 of the

recognizes the challenges of youth unemployment, poverty and exposure to violence. The DYS provides opportunities for young persons to learn a marketable economic skill while also benefiting from positive social and cultural activities. In collaboration with BELTRAIDE's Small Business Development Centre and other agencies like Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Belize, DYS offers economic empowerment to vulnerable youth. DYS encourages young men and women to take advantage of niche markets in the culture and agriculture sectors. For example, the Ministry of Agriculture has joined the Department of Youth Services to promote youth-led agriculture and agro-businesses. This is being implemented to enhance food security and improve the health and well-being of the population.

One of the most important characteristics of the DYS Programmes is that it provides the option of business incubation for microbusinesses owned and operated by young men or women. In that sense, the DYS has provided a springboard for young persons to be successful in their business ventures. This economic empowerment programme is implemented in all Districts through community-based youth resource centres.

The Government also operated a Youth Apprenticeship Programme

Annex to Human Rights Council Resolution 16/21* - Belize, A/HRC/WG.6/31/BLZ/1 (United Nations, 2018).

¹²⁷ Department of Youth Services, *Department of Youth Services Strategic Plan 2018-2023* (Government of Belize, 2018).

that provides training in practical skills alongside participation in on-the-job training. This Programme targeted young men and women from the most vulnerable urban communities in Belize City. Other youth entrepreneurship programmes are scattered across the country, most of them focusing mainly on skills training and not on job support services. While these target young women and men alike, a mapping of the active labour force highlighted the need for entrepreneurship programmes to be more gender responsive by specifically targeting women. This would include amending the times of training programmes to suit women and the provision of childcare services to enable greater women's participation. This is an area in which much work needs to be done.

The PlanBelize Women's Agenda supports the development of an entrepreneurial curriculum from upper primary through high school as well as the provision of on-going skills and capacity building programmes through existing training centres and institutions in the districts.¹²⁸

The National Employment Services System

The Labour Department has begun to develop a National Employment Policy. This proposed policy will seek

¹²⁸ People's United Party, *Plan Belize: Women's Agenda and Family*.

to address the issues of decent work (including ages) and the minimum age of employment in context of ILO Convention 138. This policy is being developed as part of a public-private partnership (PPP) with inputs from key stakeholders including the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) and the National Trade Union Congress of Belize (NTUCB). This collaboration, with input from the World Bank, the International Labour Organization and the Statistical Institute of Belize, has produced a report of active labour markets as well as a jobs diagnostics report. Both reports are being used to inform policy development.

The Ministry of Labour has revamped its Employment Unit to improve its delivery of labour market and employment services across the country.¹²⁹ This Unit, staffed with ten Employment Officers, manages a national online, secured Employment Services System (ESS). The Unit collects, analyses and matches structured information from employers and jobseekers to facilitate job matching.

Equity in Access and Protection for Women in Non-Traditional Jobs

Promoting women's participation in non-traditional subject areas and non-traditional jobs were priorities of the National Gender Policy. Since the

¹²⁹ A Thompson, *Notes on Progress with Child Labour Programmes in the Ministry of Labour* (January 17, 2020).

1980's only 5% and 8% of employees in the Belize Defence Force and Belize Coast Guard, respectively, have been women. This reflects a ceiling for employment that relegates women, mainly to positions of clerical support workers, rather than officers and leaders within the security forces. Even when women advance through the ranks, they face an unequal probability of experiencing gender-based violence such as sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape.

In September 2020, the Ministry of National Security launched its Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda for the Security Forces in Belize. The overall vision of this WPS is "to empower women as equal partners in the development of a prosperous and stable Belize especially in achieving our national security goals". This WPS Agenda seeks to achieve this vision by increasing women's participation in initiatives that promote security, maintain peace, and prevent conflict. The three priority areas of the WPS Agenda are: 1.) Increase women's participation 2.) Take action against sexual and gender-based violence and 3.) Promote proactive policies for women's empowerment. These priorities are specific to achieving gender equity and equality within the security forces.¹³⁰

Within the framework of this Agenda, the Police Department, Belize Defence Force and the Coast Guard have

begun to review their employment practices with the goal of updating these to promote gender equity and equality within their organizations. This process has required concerted strategic effort in identifying and supporting champions for change from among men and women within these organizations.

This Agenda supports the national security goal articulated in Belize's National Security and Defence Strategy 2018-2020, the Horizon 2030 Long-Term Vision for Belize and the National Gender Policy (2013). This Agenda is also aligned with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.

Gaps and Areas for Further Action

Women's Unemployment and Underemployment

Women participate less in the labour force. Even when women enter the labour force, they continue to have higher rates of unemployment and underemployment compared to men. The labour force participation rate shrunk from 70% in September, 2019 to 55.1% in September, 2020. Of the working age population, 68.7% of men compared to 42.4% of women participated in the labour force. Of a total of 145,455 employed persons, 61.8% were men and 38.2% were women.

¹³⁰ "The Case of Women in Security," 7 News, September 11, 2020,

<http://www.7newsbelize.com/sstory.php?nid=54714>.

In September 2020, the national unemployment rate was 13.7%, increasing from 10.4% the previous year. The unemployment rate for women was 17% compared to 11% for men. Traditionally, women's unemployment rate is double that of men. However, a change in the definition for labour force participation resulted in a general reduction in the unemployment rate overall, including for women. Under the 2019 definition for labour force participation, the unemployment rate overall would have increased to 29.6%. The Covid 19 pandemic also affected women's labour force participation rate. More women left the labour force to assume family care responsibilities¹³¹ due to the demands of online schooling for children and more health protection of the elderly.

Promoting women's economic empowerment is one of the hallmarks of the Plan Belize Women's Agenda (2020).¹³² The Plan seeks to:

- Improve labour rights (increase minimum wage, equal pay for work of equal value)
- Foster accessible and affordable child care facilities (day care and after school care)
- Promote investments in industries that will facilitate employment opportunities especially in rural communities
- Promote occupational health
- Energize cottage industry

¹³¹ Statistical Institute of Belize, *Belize Labour Force Survey Report: September 2020*; *Belize Labour Force Survey Report: September 2019*.

¹³² People's United Party, *Plan Belize: Women's Agenda and Family*.

Child Care and After School Care

While childcare centres exist across the country, these were not established with the goal of being strategically placed close to, or within, workplaces. No incentives were provided to the private sector to establish childcare or afterschool care centres for their employees. Having a more strategic approach to increasing access to affordable childcare services would address one of the barriers to women's participation in the active labour market.

Social Protection for Older Persons

Older persons face increased poverty and deprivation, as they have no pension to help take care of their basic needs.¹³³ In 2011, the Council conducted a feasibility study on universal pension in Belize. This study was intended to draw attention to the older person's need for greater social protection. This issue remains one of the priorities for the Council.¹³⁴ The current non-contributory pension scheme, managed by the Social Security Board, was established in 2003 but because of stringent criteria for acceptance, many older persons do not benefit from the programme. Additionally, the restructuring of other non-contributory social protection programmes has reduced the level of priority given to the aging population, in favour of single women

¹³³ Charles Knox-Vydmano, *The Feasibility of a Universal Pension in Belize* (London: HelpAge International, 2011).

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

with school-aged children. In 2015, the National Council on Aging developed a Strategic Plan (2015-2019) to address these issues.

In 2019, a Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Review¹³⁵ reported that 56.8% of older persons were covered by at least one social protection programme. This included contributory and non-contributory social protection programmes managed by the Social Security Board (SSB) as well as non-contributory Programmes implemented by the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation (MHDSTPA).

The SSB provided older persons with contributory long-term social insurance, the National Health Insurance Programme and the non-contributory pension scheme. When it began in 2003, the non-contributory pension scheme provided a monthly pension of \$100 to women aged 65 and older. In 2007, this pension programme was expanded to include men aged 67 and older. In 2019, the SSB and the MHDSTPA discussed a proposal to transfer the management and financing of this non-contributory pension programme from the SSB to the MHDSTPA.

The former MHDSTPA provided non-contributory conditional cash transfers to older persons aged 60 years and older. This was facilitated through the Building Opportunities for Our Social

Transformation (BOOST) Programme. The second phase of the BOOST Programme (BOOST+) used a case management system to identify the economic empowerment needs of its beneficiaries. As part of this process, family members were offered enrolment in a Job Readiness Course (JRC) and provided with support for accessing employment opportunities/becoming entrepreneurs.

Addressing social protection for older persons remains an important goal of the National Strategic Plan of the National Council on Aging. The National Council on Aging is well poised to participate in the on-going discussion on national pension reform, poverty reduction and economic empowerment Programmes for older persons.

Women's Financial Inclusion

In 2019, a Financial Inclusion Survey¹³⁶ was conducted. The survey demonstrated that in 2014, financial account ownership (at a bank or credit union) was 52% among women compared to 44% among men. By 2019, the gender gap not only widened; it reversed. In 2019, a total of 62% of women reporting that they owned a financial account compared to 69% of men. This shows that men's financial inclusion rate grew at a faster rate than women's financial inclusion. The overall financial inclusion rate was 65.5% for adults over 18 years.

¹³⁵ Ariel Pino, *Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Review (SPER)*.

¹³⁶ Central Bank of Belize, *National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2019-2022* (Belize City, 2019).

Of note is the fact that participation in social protection programmes like the BOOST and BOOST+ Programmes, require beneficiaries, mostly women, to own an account at a bank or credit union. In many cases, participation in this programme created an incentive for beneficiaries to open an account into which Government funds are deposited. An estimated 77% of beneficiaries joined a credit union because of BOOST.¹³⁷ Even so, women's financial account ownership did not keep pace with men.¹³⁸

The survey revealed that in urban areas, women were slightly more likely than men to save at a formal financial institution. In 2019, 37.5% of adults reported having borrowed money in the previous year compared to 52.2% in 2014. More men reported having borrowed money in the past year than women. Only 17.3% of adults in 2019, compared to 19% in 2014, reported having borrowed from a bank or credit union. Adults with higher levels of education borrowed from formal banking sources compared to those with lower levels of education who relied on informal sources like money lending agencies, syndicates, or family and friends.¹³⁹ Women tend to use these syndicates as regular sources of borrowing.

In 2018, the Central Bank developed a National Financial Inclusion Strategy

¹³⁷ Thomas Otter, Elsie Butterworth, and Carlos Villalobos, *Comprehensive Review of Belize's Social Protection System with Policy Recommendations for System Strengthening* (MHDFAelopment, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation, UNICEF and UNDP, 2017).

(NFIS) 2019-2022 that seeks to increase financial inclusion. The NFIS seeks to prioritize actions that can expand access and usage of financial services to underserved individuals including women, lower-income populations, and rural populations, especially those engaged in agriculture, and micro, small, and medium enterprises. The focus will be on stimulating economic activity, employment and livelihoods protection through agriculture and small business development. The NFIS also includes specific strategies for increasing financial literacy among children and youth, as well as among men and women interested in MSMEs. Overall, the NFIS proposes to expand the availability of financial products and services for women, youth, MSMEs, and agribusiness.¹⁴⁰

The PlanBelize Women's Agenda supports women's financial inclusion through the active encouragement of saving schemes at financial institutions like credit unions or banks.¹⁴¹

Women's Access to Credit

The Central Bank has indicated that Belize has no credit registry, making it difficult to collect and analyse data on access to credit, particularly for

¹³⁸ Central Bank of Belize, *National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2019-2022*.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Central Bank of Belize, *National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2019-2022*.

¹⁴¹ People's United Party, *Plan Belize: Women's Agenda and Family*.

women, youth and rural populations.¹⁴² The Central Bank also has limited information on loan facilities provided to Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises. Estimates are made based on the value or size of loans provided by credit unions and commercial banks. In 2017, the average size of credit unions' commercial loan was \$29,183, while commercial banks averaged \$111,191. This puts 8% of credit unions' commercial portfolio and two thirds of banks' commercial portfolio at a value of less than \$20,000. Additionally, 46.8% of banks' commercial loans were valued at \$5,000 or less, representing 0.7% of the banks' total loans portfolio.¹⁴³

The Central Bank states that according to a 2014 Global Index Survey, only 5.8% of adults in Belize reported accessing credit for starting, operating, or expanding a farm or business. Public sector financial institutions like the Development Finance Corporation (DFC) provided financing options for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and agriculture activities. The DFC rolled out agricultural loan programmes in the past, and the National Bank of Belize (NBB) started offering loans to small businesses at better terms and conditions than those offered by other institutions.¹⁴⁴

According to DFC's five-year strategic plan, "Strategy 2021: Building Resilience Against Climate Change &

Economic Volatility", DFC aims to mainstream gender and climate resiliency in all operations.¹⁴⁵ In 2019, the DFC received a US\$3Mn loan from the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF) for the development of a credit line that improves access to developmental financing for productive sector support consistent with the Government's Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy 2016- 2019 (GSDS) and DFC's Strategic Development Plan (SDP 2021). The CDF also approved a complementary Technical Assistance Grant facility of US\$0.1 million (BZE\$0.2 million) to facilitate the DFC's preparation of its Medium-Term Business Plan and for the development of a Business Continuity Plan. The CDF further granted them US\$0.2 million to assist projects that target employment creation for rural women and disadvantaged youth.¹⁴⁶

The Plan Belize Women's Agenda calls for creating a credit window within existing government lending institutions so that women can access credit that is of low interest and requires limited collateral.¹⁴⁷

Women's Access to Land

In 2018, a Draft Updated National Land Use Policy was developed. This Policy seeks to comprehensively address issues of land use,

¹⁴² Central Bank of Belize, *National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2019-2022*

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Cited in Central Bank of Belize, *National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2019-2022*.

¹⁴⁶ Adele Catzim, *Gap Analysis: Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (2016-2020)*.

¹⁴⁷ People's United Party, *Plan Belize: Women's Agenda and Family*.

development, distribution, and administration, within the context of social and economic conditions and the impacts of climate change. In 2019, a Draft Land Use Policy Framework document was created to define the critical elements and considerations for effective implementation of the Updated National Land Use Policy.¹⁴⁸

The Draft Policy and the Framework seek to create a greater level of inclusivity, accessibility, accountability and transparency in land use and land management systems. This includes public transparency in the lease application and issuance process. It also seeks to foster public-private partnerships for the provision of low-income housing.¹⁴⁹ Although gender issues are not specifically mainstreamed, the Land Use Policy can have a positive impact on women's access to land resources. Since the Draft Policy and Policy Framework have not yet been approved, there is still an opportunity to ensure that gender-specific language be included.

The PlanBelize Women's Agenda calls for:

- increasing women's access to and ownership of affordable land and housing,
- ensuring that land and housing opportunities are made

accessible and affordable to women,

- prioritizing access to affordable land and housing for single mothers,
- ensuring at least 50% of all land and housing made available go to women, and
- providing fiscal incentives to businesses and financial institutions which contribute to the construction and financing of affordable housing for women.

3.4 Gender-Based Violence in Belize

Achievements

Legal Reform on Protection Against Gender-Based Violence

In 2003 the Government amended the 1996 Protection Against Sexual Harassment Act.¹⁵⁰ This Act attempts to protect against harassment in employment, within institutions and in residential and business accommodations. The Act outlines the procedures for lodging a sexual harassment complaint with the court and indicates the process for hearing the cases, including the presentation of evidence. The law also provides a penalty for making false complaints. This Act has never been utilized in court and there is no precedent for how sexual harassment cases are to be

¹⁴⁸ Ministry of Natural Resources, *Updating of the National Land Use Policy and Planning Framework and preparation of an Action Plan for the implementation of the National Land Use Policy and Planning Framework* (World Bank and

Government of Belize, 2019).

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Protection Against Sexual Harassment Act. #10 of 1996. Chapter 107 of the Laws of Belize. 2000.

managed. This is one of the laws that may require review and updating to make the presentation of cases more user friendly.

In 2013, the Government of Belize enacted the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (Prohibition) Act (No. 2 of 2013).¹⁵¹ This Act prohibits and punishes acts of commercial sexual exploitation of a child in Belize and allows Belize to implement the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This Optional Protocol refers to the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. The Act defines various categories of commercial sexual exploitation and provides for assistance and restitution to victims as well as stiff penalties for perpetrators. It also provides for public education campaigns to be developed as part of the national response to this type of crime.

Also in 2013, the Government of Belize repealed the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons Act (No. 18 of 2003) and replaced it with the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Act of 2013.¹⁵² This Act criminalizes sex trafficking and labour trafficking of both adult and child victims. The Act prohibits trafficking in children for adoption, for sexual exploitation, child prostitution and other criminal activities. It also offers greater assistance and protection

for victims, including immigrant victims. The Act prescribed procedures for the forfeiture of assets related to trafficking offences. The penalties are commensurate with other serious crimes like rape: up to eight years' imprisonment for offenses involving adult victims, and up to 12 years' imprisonment for offenses involving child victims.¹⁵³ This law provides for the implementation of public awareness campaigns and for the establishment of an Anti-trafficking in Persons Council.

Section 2 of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Act, No. 2 of 2013 also gives greater protection to persons who are forced into marriage as a result of human trafficking. The law prohibits any proceedings that compel marriage, which is described as being tantamount to modern slavery.

In February 2014, the Criminal Code Chapter 101 of the Laws of Belize¹⁵⁴ was amended to expand the provisions of existing legislation regarding sexual offences against boy, girls, adolescents and persons with mental illnesses. Amendments included reforms related to crimes of child abduction, kidnapping, procurement, incest, inducement to abandon criminal proceedings and perverting the course of justice. Definitions were updated, including the definition of rape, which now encompasses penis penetration

¹⁵¹ The Human Trafficking Institute, *Belize Trafficking in Persons: Key Documents and Resources*, 2017, <https://www.traffickingmatters.com/wp-content/uploads/legal-resources/belize/Belize-TIP-Resource-Book.pdf>.

¹⁵² This new law repeals and replaces the 2003 Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Act.

¹⁵³ United States of America, U.S Department of State, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, *2020 Trafficking in Persons Report: Belize* (Washington, D.C., 2020), <https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-trafficking-in-persons-report/belize/>

¹⁵⁴ See Criminal Code (Amendment) (No.2) Act, 2014. <https://bco.gov.bz/sex-offenders-registry/>.

through the mouth, vagina or anus, without the person's consent. Martial rape was also included as a crime and the circumstances for this were defined in the new law.

The amendments also increased penalties for crimes committed, made provisions for rehabilitation, and established a sexual offenders registry to track and monitor persons convicted under this legislation. This law is currently being enforced. It has removed gender biases and increased protection for a wide range of victims of sexual crimes.

The sexual offenders registry or database is managed by the Belize Crime Observatory (BCO), located within the Ministry of Home Affairs and New Growth Initiatives. It requires inter-Ministerial coordination and collaboration to ensure that sex convicts be placed in this database and that the Ministry of Human Development is notified when they are being released from serving their time in prison. This database includes information of persons convicted of rape, attempted rape, marital rape, incest, indecent assault, procurement and unlawful sexual intercourse. In 2017, the Evidence Act was amended to allow oral evidence to be taken by live video link or other electronic means. This is to create more efficiency in getting witness testimony while also protecting

witnesses who may not be able or willing to be physically present in the court to give witness testimony. The amendment states that a witness will be able to "see and hear and be seen and heard by persons in that place, and evidence so taken shall have the same effect as if it were oral evidence taken in court."¹⁵⁵ This allows for witnesses (like children victims of sexual crimes and gang related crimes) to provide oral testimony without being physically present in the court during the trial proceedings.

In 2018, the Government of Belize amended the Crime Control and Criminal Justice Act (No. 6 of 2018). This amendment penalizes gang membership, recruitment, harbouring and any other type of gang activity, including gang symbols. It aims to improve public safety measures by limiting gang movements, including activities that affect children. This law has implications mainly for males, including children and adolescent boys who are the target of gang recruitment but who also engage in perpetrating acts of violence.

In 2011, the Indictable Procedures (Amendment) Act was enacted.¹⁵⁶ This Act allowed for trial without a jury in certain criminal cases. This amendment has given the trial judge the power, authority and jurisdiction to conduct the trial just as if it were a jury trial. It allows for serious cases

¹⁵⁵ S.I. No. 4 of 2017. Evidence (Amendment) Act. <https://nationalassembly.gov.bz/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Act-No.-24-of-2017-Evidence-Amendment-Bill-2017.pdf>.

¹⁵⁶ Christopher Coye, "Indictable Procedure (Amendment) Act and Juries (Amendment) Act,"

International Law Office, 2012, <https://www.internationallawoffice.com/Newsletters/Litigation/Belize/Courtenay-Coye-LLP/Indictable-Procedure-Amendment-Act-and-Juries-Amendment-Act>.

like murder, attempted murder, abetment of murder or conspiracy to commit murder to be tried before a judge sitting alone without a jury. There are also situations in which the prosecution can request trial without a jury. These situations are:

- Danger of jury tampering or intimidation of jurors or witnesses;
- Fear or unwillingness of material witnesses to give evidence;
- Involvement of a criminal gang element; or
- The complexity and length of the trial being so burdensome on the jury that the interests of justice would require a trial without a jury.
- Likelihood of unfair trial due to pre-trial publicity.

This law is expected to become even more important in order to conduct trials that abide by safety protocols to prevent the spread of Covid 19.

In 2016, the Supreme Court delivered its verdict in the landmark case of Caleb Orozco vs. the Attorney General of Belize lodged in 2010. Mr. Orozco claimed that the Section 53 of the Criminal Code discriminated against him on the basis of his sexual orientation in contravention of the Belize Constitution. The Supreme Court found that:

“the Claimant has been discriminated against on the

basis of his sexual orientation by virtue of section 16(1) and (3) and there is an ongoing violation of his right under section 6(1) to equality before the law and the equal protection of the law without discrimination. It is hereby declared that section 53 of the Belize Criminal Code, Chapter 101 contravenes sections 3, 6, 12 and 16 of the Belize Constitution to the extent that it applies to carnal intercourse against the order of nature between persons... In the present case, the challenge was restricted to consensual sexual acts between adults in private...”

In 2019, the Belize Court of Appeals upheld this 2016 ruling by the Supreme Court, making this case a landmark victory for the protection of the human rights of LGBT persons. Therefore, consensual sexual acts between adults in private can no longer be criminalized.

In 2020, a Cybercrime Law¹⁵⁷ was enacted. Among other things, this new legislation, in section 11, criminalizes and punishes the act of using a computer system to lure a child to engage in sexual conversations or activities, produce child pornography or meet with a child for the purpose of abusing or engaging in sexual activity with that child, or producing child pornography. The Act, Section 12, further criminalizes the act of intentionally capturing, storing,

¹⁵⁷ Cybercrime Act #32 of 2020, Government of Belize.

publishing or transmitting through a computer system, images of the private area (genitalia, buttocks of breasts) of another person without their explicit consent. The Law further criminalizes the use of a computer system to intimate, threaten or harass another person as this can cause mental and emotional consequences of the intended target.

While Belize's legislative framework has been strengthened significantly over the last decade, the Family Violence Baseline Assessment¹⁵⁸ points out that there is not a single law on sexual violence. Rather, Belize has several laws that address this issue as demonstrated above. The Assessment further notes that although the legal definition for rape includes marital rape, there is still a marital rape exemption in section 72 of the Criminal Code. In this section, marital rape is conditional upon the act being committed with violence. Similarly, although a Protection Against Sexual Harassment Act¹⁵⁹ exists, the law is devoid of criminal penalties and the scope of organizations covered within the law needs to be widened to include other public and private sector establishments.

Programming to Reduce Gender-Based Violence

¹⁵⁸ IMC Worldwide. *Baseline Assessment Report: Belize Executive Summary. Volume 1.* UNICEF, 2021.

¹⁵⁹ Belize Protection Against Sexual Harassment Act. Chapter 197 Revised Edition, 2020. Government of Belize.

There was an increase in sexual violence reports for both rape and sexual assault. Rape cases increased by 43% from 21 to 30 and unlawful sexual intercourse (sex with a minor) increase by 37% from 49 to 67 in 2018 and 2019, respectively. Adolescent boys and girls comprised the majority of rape survivors. In 2019, 60% of rape survivors were under 18 years and 50% of them were female minors.

Reports of domestic violence increased by 10% in 2019 from 517.78 to 571.86 (per 100,000 population).¹⁶⁰ Intimate partner violence accounted for 80% of all domestic violence reports. Furthermore, an average of 73% of domestic violence reports were against a present or past intimate partner. This percentage varied by district, with all districts, except the Orange Walk District, showing below 73%.¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ Belize Crime Observatory, *2019 Situational Analysis on Crime and Violence in Belize* (Belmopan, 2020).

¹⁶¹ Belize Crime Observatory, *2021 Calendar of Infographics* (Belmopan, 2021), 8.

Top 10 Categories of Domestic Violence Crimes	2019
Common assault	698
Harm	300
Using threatening words	190
Damage to property	170
Aggravated assault	148
Wounding	125
Using insulting words	118
Breach of protection order	87
Theft	79
Harassment	52

A majority of domestic violence reports were filed by females in the 20 to 39 age range with the highest reports made by women in the 25 to 29 age category. However, there were reports filed by persons under 19 years old as well as persons over 60 years old.¹⁶² Half of all domestic violence reports were filed in the Belize District. In the Belize District 25% of all reports were filed by men.

Based on police records, arrests comprised 25.7% of all domestic violence cases filed in 2019. In 2018, arrests comprised 16.6% of all domestic violence cases filed. In almost 7 in every 10 instances reported during 2018, cases were recorded for “future reference,” so

police would keep a record but refrain from levying charges. That figure declined to about 6 in 10 during 2019. Furthermore, the percentage of arrests increased markedly, from 17% to 26%. From 2017 to 2019, there was a decline in cases marked for “future reference” (from 66% in 2017 to 59% in 2019) and an increase in cases that resulted in arrests (from 15% in 2017 to 26% in 2019).¹⁶³

In 2019, females accounted for 80% of documented human trafficking victims. In this period, 9 human trafficking cases were investigated. Of these, 3 for forced labour and 1 for sex trafficking. Two convictions have been made under the 2013 Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Act, 1 in 2016 and another in 2020.¹⁶⁴

Indicator	2013 (%)	2016 (%)
Psychological	16.6	23.7
Verbal	21.9	29.8
Physical	14.3	19.2
Sexual	8.9	9.9
All Types	35.0	46.3

¹⁶² Belize Crime Observatory, 2019 Situational Analysis on Crime and Violence in Belize.

¹⁶³ Belize Crime Observatory, 2019 Situational Analysis on Crime and Violence in Belize.

¹⁶⁴ Belize Crime Observatory, 2021 Calendar of Infographics, 3.

Special vulnerable populations such as female sex workers continue to experience gender-based violence. Between 2013 and 2016, more female sex workers reported that they suffered some type of violence in the last 12 months prior to the survey.

When asked if they felt comfortable seeking legal support services in cases of sexual violence, more female sex workers said they would do so in 2016 (91.6%) compared to in 2013 (80.2%). Overall, fewer of them perceived that they had access to legal processes in case their rights were violated but this shows an increasing trend over the 3-year period (51.3% in 2013 and 63.5% in 2016).¹⁶⁵

The BA1 Project (2014-2016)¹⁶⁶ used a multi-sectoral approach to reduce violence against women, trafficking in women and femicide. This project supported the development of a revised Gender Based Violence Action Plan (2017-2020) and completed a National Communication Strategy on gender-based violence. The project also supported activities leading to the harmonization of a legal framework for addressing violence against women, trafficking of women and femicide. This project strengthened institutional capacity, information sharing and data collection and service delivery among agencies responding to gender-based violence. The project supported the development of localized action plans, improved physical infrastructure, stronger community-

based networks, and a referral and counter-referral system. Economic empowerment was also provided to victims of gender-based violence.

The Gender-based Violence Action Plan (2017-2020) was a national multi-sectoral plan designed to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in Belize. The Plan stated that power inequalities between men and women contribute to gender based violence. It recognized that while men are also victims of gender-based violence, they tend to comprise a majority of the perpetrators. This Action Plan focuses on 4 main aspects of gender-based violence: Physical, Sexual, Psychological and Economic. The National Women's Commission (NWC) coordinated the implementation of this Action Plan. The Goal of this Action Plan was to:

*“establish and harmonize the response to gender-based violence, resulting in decreased incidence and increased adequate support for and access to justice for all victims”.*¹⁶⁷

This vision and the strategies outlined in this Action Plan reflect a continuation and strengthening of actions implemented under previous National Gender-Based Violence Action Plans. The Action Plan lays out a comprehensive set of actions that together, aim to prevent and protect male and female victims and their children. The Plan has 4 priority

¹⁶⁵ Follow up Survey: HIV and AIDS Prevention.

¹⁶⁶ BA1 Project, Implementation of National Gender-based Violence Plan of Action.

¹⁶⁷ National Women's Commission, National Gender-Based Violence Action Plan 2017-2020, (Government of Belize, 2017).

areas: 1. Effective Governance and Sustainability, 2. Primary Prevention of Gender-Based Violence, 3. Adequate Response to Victims and 4. Effective Monitoring and Evaluation.

The types of gender-based violence addressed in the Action Plan are physical and emotional abuse, rape, sexual abuse, carnal knowledge, trafficking in persons and commercial sexual exploitation of children. The provisions of the Action Plan include the harmonization of the national response, increasing political will for implementation, increasing knowledge of the dynamics of gender-based violence among key populations, strengthening the response of the police and justice system, providing access to comprehensive support services and improving systems for documenting, reporting and measuring the effectiveness of interventions.

In 2018, the former Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation (MHDSTPA) restructured the Women's Department in an attempt to strengthen service delivery to women and their families. The new Women and Family Services Department now utilizes a case management approach to ensure that they provide women and their families with social protection, social safety net and economic empowerment programmes.¹⁶⁸ Still, reported cases of sexual and domestic violence continued to increase.

¹⁶⁸ Interview with the Director of the Women and Family Services Department, March, 2021.

In 2020, United Nations Agencies along with the Government of Belize, began implementation of the Spotlight Initiative (2020-2022). Spotlight is a multi-sectoral, multi-dimensional project that builds on the achievements of the BA1 Project and on the implementation of successive gender based violence action plans. This Initiative expands the scope of interventions based on lessons learned. The overall goal of the Spotlight Initiative is:

*“to contribute to ending family violence by strengthening policy and legislation that will guarantee increased protection of women and girls, building capacity of state and non-state actors to respond to family violence, expanding the range of services available and addressing social norms and behaviours that promote violence against women and girls”.*¹⁶⁹

The Spotlight Initiative comprehensively addresses the multiple dimensions of gender-based violence in Belize. This Project aligns with the commitments outlined in the National Gender Policy.

In 2017, the National Committee for Families and Children (NCFC) developed a National Children's Agenda (2017-2030). This Agenda promotes the rights of children and adolescents by providing them with opportunities for optimum physical, social, mental, economic, spiritual and cultural development. The holistic

¹⁶⁹ Spotlight Initiative, *Country Programme Document: Belize* (November 2019).

approach of the National Children's Agenda ensures that children have the best chance to develop their full potential.

Gaps and Areas for Further Action

Behaviour Change Communications

Although the 2017-2020 National Gender-based violence Action Plan highlighted the importance of behaviour change, efforts at behaviour change communication were not sustained or targeted to the needs of specific vulnerable and underserved populations. In fact, a 2021 Family Violence Baseline Assessment ¹⁷⁰reports that although 78% of respondents would name at least one type of available service, almost half of respondents (42%) did not know where to go to look for help. Behaviour change communication remains a major gap in programming in the primary prevention of gender-based violence.

In the second half of 2021, the Spotlight Project will support the development of a 3-year costed social and behaviour change communications (SBCC) strategy. This Strategy aims to promote gender-equitable knowledge, attitudes, norms and practices that will contribute to ending family violence, particularly violence against women, boys and girls. Key

¹⁷⁰ IMC Worldwide. *Baseline Assessment Report: Belize Executive Summary. Volume 1.* UNICEF, 2021.

individuals and communities are to be targeted, including key stakeholders within state and non-state organizations at both the national and community levels.

Strategic actions will be developed based on: 1.) existing data on family violence, 2.) the results of a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Study and 3.) information from a family violence stakeholder mapping exercise of state and non-state actors involved in family violence prevention and intervention services.¹⁷¹

The SBCC Strategy is to produce multi-media products that are to be “evidence-based, socio-culturally relevant, age and gender sensitive and inclusive (disability, indigenous, etc.)...”¹⁷² To develop these products, the consultants are to consult with a wide range of stakeholders such as: in and out of school youth, parents, teachers, service providers, social sector workers, survivors, perpetrators, women and girls with disabilities and LGBT+ persons. These products are to take into consideration the literacy levels and languages of various target populations across the country.

After the development of the SBCC Strategy and products, investments will need to concentrate on implementation. This will require a sustained and well-coordinated effort

¹⁷¹ *Spotlight Initiative. (2021). Concept Note: National Social and Behaviour Change Communications Strategy.*

¹⁷² *Spotlight Initiative. (2021). Concept Note: National Social and Behaviour Change Communications Strategy. p.8.*

if it is to result in reducing gender-based violence among vulnerable and underserved populations across the country. The National and District Based Gender and Gender-Based Violence Committees can play a significant role in ensuring effective roll out of the strategy.

Parenting Education and Support

Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys recognize that positive parenting is correlated with higher levels of self-esteem, physical and psychological integrity and dignity. Alternatively, violent discipline can have both immediate and long-term impacts of children's physical and emotional growth and development.¹⁷³

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (2015-2016) revealed that in 2015, of a sample of 6,747 children aged 1-14 years, only 25.6% experienced non-violent forms of discipline.¹⁷⁴ Over half of children (51.6%) experienced psychological aggression with 48.3% experiencing various types of physical punishment. Another 6.5% experienced severe physical punishment. In total, 65.1% of children aged 1-14 reported that they had experienced violent discipline methods within their households. More males (51%) than females (45%) experienced physical discipline. Children in Belize City and the Orange Walk District had been subjected to at least one form of

psychological or physical discipline in the last month.¹⁷⁵

In 2011, of a total of 1,211 children aged 2-14, 23.5% stated that they had experienced non-violent forms of discipline.¹⁷⁶ Over half of these children experienced psychological punishment (53.5%) while 58.4% experienced many forms of physical punishment. Another 5.2% experienced severe physical punishment. In total, 71.3% of children experienced violent discipline methods within their households. In 2011, male and female children were equally likely to experience both minor and severe physical punishment.

Regarding attitudes to physical punishment, of 2,516 parents surveyed in 2015, 25.7% believed that a child needs to be physically punished. Slightly more female respondents have this belief than men (26% of women compared to 24.5% of males). Of these respondents 39.7% had no education while between 20-26% had either a primary, secondary or tertiary level education.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Statistical Institute of Belize and UNICEF Belize, *Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2015-2016*.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Statistical Institute of Belize and UNICEF Belize, *Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2011*.

¹⁷⁷ Statistical Institute of Belize and UNICEF Belize, *Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2015-2016*.

Indicator	2011 N = 1,211 (%)			2015 N = 6,747 (%)		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Non-violent discipline	23.5	22.5	24.5	25.6	24.6	26.6
Psychological aggression	53.9	53.5	54.2	51.6	52.3	51
Physical punishment	56.9	58.4	55.4	48.3	51.2	45.1
Severe physical punishment	5.2	5.2	5.2	6.5	7.8	5.0
Any violent form of discipline	70.5	71.3	69.7	65.1	66.9	63.2

A more recent Family Violence Baseline Assessment (2021)¹⁷⁸ “45% of men and 46.9% of women interviewed, agree that it is the right of the parent to punish or discipline a child in whatever way he or she sees fit.” Slightly more women than men agree that it is not justifiable to beat a child under any circumstances. However, a majority of both men (85.7%) and women (85.5%) surveyed, agreed that beating was one of the most effective ways to discipline a child. Over 50% of the respondents stated that their own childhood beatings had a positive impact on their upbringing.

On the most important findings of the Spotlight Baseline Assessment was the correlation between attitudes on violence towards beating a child and attitudes towards other forms of family violence such as violence towards a partner. This is complemented by the findings of Gayle et. al. who stated that male on male violence in the streets is another side of the same coin of violence within the home as one affects the other. This information has serious implications

for the level of investment required to address the culture of violence that permeates the Belizean society.

In 2018, the NCFC’s multisectoral Parenting Task Force published a new parenting manual and curriculum entitled, “The Art of Parenting Training Manual”. The Manual quotes studies indicating that the lifetime benefits of early investments in children far outweigh the costs of interventions. This parenting programme is one mode of influencing social transformation by changing behaviour at the household level.

This Manual standardizes the curriculum for parenting education. The Manual takes a holistic approach to parenting education and support. The Manual is gender, family, human rights and child rights-oriented. It covers issues of infancy through to adolescence. It is designed to promote positive parenting and discipline, communication skills and conflict management, healthy sexual and reproductive health, mental health and economic empowerment. The Manual also includes provisions for

¹⁷⁸ IMC Worldwide. *Baseline Assessment Report: Belize Executive Summary. Volume 1.*

UNICEF, 2021.

dealing with children with disabilities and children who are chronically ill.

The Community and Parent Empowerment Programme (COMPAR), with support from UNICEF, hired community mobilizers to conduct parenting sessions in local communities. COMPAR's services are in demand but the programme is constrained by limited resources to deliver the number of sessions being requested. The Health and Community Participation Bureau and the Belize Family Life Association also conduct parenting education sessions with the clients and communities that they serve across the country.

Over the last 10 years, COMPAR implemented a “roving caregivers” programme in Belize City and the Toledo District. The “roving caregivers” provide one-on-one parenting support to families with children 0-3 years old. These caregivers teach mothers and fathers how to engage their infants in positive play and physical and emotional stimulation activities. During the time of Covid, the programme adapted to providing online support to parents. Parents are supported to develop their own homemade toys for their children. Through this process, the “roving caregivers” assist parents in understanding how to engage in positive discipline that promotes child development.

Outlook - Homicides and Femicides

All other major crime indicators showed a downward trend. Crime rates for children under 15 years went from 262.18 in 2018 to 254.28 in 2019. Similarly, the crime rate for persons older than 24 years declined from 620.80 in 2018 to 563.39 in 2019.

Murder rates of over 24.33 per 100,000 inhabitants are considered to be civil war levels. In 2012, Belize had the highest murder rate of the 2010-2020 decade at 42.55. Except for 2013 and now 2020, all other years finished with a murder rate of over 30 per 100,000 inhabitants. Although both men and women are victims of murder, men comprise the vast majority of murder victims.¹⁷⁹ An overview of the percentage of female murder victims compared to male victims shows that females accounted for between 7.56% and 13.28% of all murder victims in the 2010 to 2019 period.

The female murder victim rate also fluctuated from between 9.89 in 2010 to 8.32 in 2019. In 2019, the murder rate (per 100,000 population) for men was 57.28 whilst the murder rate for women was 8.32. This represents 4 times the global homicide rate for females (2 per 100,000 population).

The murder rate fell from 32.80 in 2019 to 24.33 in 2020. Murders of both men and women showed a decline over this period. A total of 117 men and 17 women were murdered in 2019 compared to 91 males and 11 females

¹⁷⁹ Belize Crime Observatory, *BCO Crime Report 2021* (Belmopan, 2021).

in 2020. Even with this overall decline, Belize City continued to account for the same numbers of murders as in 2019 but accounted for a larger percentage of all murders in 2020. Among those murdered were young men, young women and children. Of note, these children were murdered in their homes.

Special measures such as localized States of Emergencies in Belize City were instituted to lock up gang members as a crime preventive measure. Additionally, to prevent the spread of Covid 19, the Government instituted a national lockdown in April 2020 and then passed public health safety regulations to limit human movement. Together, these actions may have contributed to the decline in murders in 2020.

Shelters and Safe Spaces for Victims of Gender-Based Violence

The Department of Human Services practices a community based approach to child protective services. Over the last 10 years, the Department has intensified its campaign to invite more foster parents to participate in caring for children who are wards of the state. By doing this, the Department has reduced the number of children who live within the Dorothy Menzies Child Care Centre (from approximately 80 children to between 30-35 children at a time). They have also coordinated with existing small group homes and shelters to place adolescents who become wards of the

state. In this regard, the Department has mapped out the childcare facilities that are available. They place children in the facility that best suits their needs. In relation to children with disabilities, the Department established a Hospice Caregivers Programme that allows it to hire persons to provide care and attention specifically for those children.¹⁸⁰

Over the last 10 years, the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation increased the number of small shelters and places of safety for victims of child abuse and gender-based violence. Regarding child abuse, homes have been established in San Pedro (Hope Haven) and Flowers Bank (Hopewell). Two additional group homes with a capacity of 9 adolescents each, were opened at mile 14 and Coral Grove, respectively. Adolescents in these group homes receive planning and life skills so they can transition to independent living.

For girls over 18 years who are in school (secondary or tertiary), the Department pays for education expenses, allows them to hold part-time employment and provides them with life skills to increase their capacity to transition to independent living when they graduate. For adult victims of domestic violence or sexual exploitation (including trafficking in persons), there are only 3 shelters. Two of these 3 shelters closed their operations in 2020 due to the Covid 19 pandemic. This has widen an already

¹⁸⁰ Interview with Iliani Arthurs, Director of the Department of Human Services, March, 2021.

existing gap in the availability of shelters and other safe spaces available to children and adult victims of abuse and gender-based violence.

Prior to the onset of Covid 19, the former Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation (MHDSTPA) was proposing to relocate the Dorothy Menzies Children's Home to Belmopan. The location of the Home would then have been rehabilitated to function as a group home for boys as well as an apartment building for independent living.

In 2018, UNICEF collaborated with the Belize's National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) to implement two capacity building workshops for improved preparedness for children, adolescents and their families. The workshops focused on creating and managing safe spaces for children and women, particularly within shelters. The training also built capacity in the provision of psychosocial support to children and families affected by disasters. In February 2020, UNICEF and NEMO launched a National Protocol for Integrated Protection of Children and Adolescents in Emergency and Disaster Situations. This Protocol mainstreams the needs of children, women, the elderly and persons with disabilities to ensure greater inclusion of vulnerable populations in Belize.¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ UNICEF, *UNICEF Humanitarian Good Practice Series: Strengthening Preparedness for Emergency Response with the Government in Belize*, 2019, <https://www.unicef.org/belize/media/1811/file/>

Recovery Services for Victims of Gender-Based Violence

Several policies, plans and programmes include provisions for psychosocial support to enable the rehabilitation of victims. The laws enacted in 2013 on commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking in persons also enshrine this right in legislation.

The National Anti-Trafficking Action Plan (2017-2020) was developed and coordinated by the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation. In 2019, Belize remained on the United States Tier 2 Watch List. A total of 24 potential victims were identified compared to 17 in 2018 and 17 in 2017. These 24 victims included 5 children. All victims were foreign nationals of which 18 were from Central America, 5 from India and 1 from Mexico. Seventeen of the 24 victims were exploited in labour trafficking and the other 7 were identified as victims of sex trafficking. Through collaboration with local NGOs, adult victims received shelter and psychosocial support while children were placed in child protection services. Belize has no designated shelters exclusively for victims of human trafficking. As a result of legislative reform, victims were able to testify behind an opaque screen to minimize the fear and trauma of re-victimization, which usually accompanies survivors of gender-based violence.¹⁸²

Good-Practice-Emergency-Preparedness-Belize-Preparedness-with-Government.pdf.

¹⁸² United States of America, U.S Department of State, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, *2020 Trafficking in Persons Report: Belize*.

The Youth Enhancement Services (YES) also implements programmes for victims and survivors of gender-based violence, including victims of commercial sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and domestic violence. Over the last 10 years they have provided their clients with access to professional counselling services as well as access to professional legal services. They also make referrals to shelters, social safety net programmes and SRH services provided by other organizations.¹⁸³

Other civil society organizations like Our Circle, PETAL, UNIBAM and Tikun Olam also provide their members or clients with access to professional counselling and legal support services. They act as advocates to ensure that their client's human rights are protected when dealing with front line workers responding to cases of sexual abuse, sexual assault and domestic violence.¹⁸⁴

The BA1 Project, between 2015 and 2017, assisted with the development of a referral and counter referral system for victims of gender-based violence. The YCT, RISE Project, RESTORE Belize, Project Health and the Child Development Foundation have offered psycho social services, including counselling, to their clients. Additionally, the Community Counselling Centre in Belize City continues to provide free counselling services to at risk populations. New youth and women's programme now actively seek to include psychosocial

care services, including counselling. However, it is unclear if there is a well-defined package of services being delivered to victims of gender-based violence.

Victims of gender-based violence report that they still see a need to develop more trauma informed and gender responsive police, psycho-social and legal services. They still call for the development of a more effective referral and counter-referral system to address their needs. Members of the Mental Health Association (MHA) also made these recommendations for the way forward in addressing all forms of gender-based violence and other related issues in Belize.

Of immediate concern, is that existing domestic violence and sexual violence health protocols are no longer being implemented due to the health system's prioritization of Covid 10 protocols. This has left victims (along with their assigned social workers and police officers) waiting in hospital lines to receive care that would normally have been accessed immediately and confidentially. Service providers therefore recommend that due to the nature of child abuse and gender-based violence, the Ministry of Health work out a special arrangement for fast tracking these cases through the health system, while still maintaining Covid safety protocols.

¹⁸³ Interview with Ms. Jennifer Lovell, February, 2021.

¹⁸⁴ Interviews held with representative of Our Circle, PETAL, UNIBAM, Tikun Olam and the Mental Health Association during February, March and April, 2021.

Access to Justice for Victims of Gender-Based Violence

*Police Department: A 2021 Family Violence Baseline Assessment*¹⁸⁵ reports that “men and women, regardless of age, location and ethnicity, are most confident in reporting incidents of violence to the police.” This is following by being comfortable reporting incidences of violence to family members, a medical officer or community health worker and social worker. This places police officers at the forefront of the delivering intervention services to victims of gender-based violence.

The Police Department was restructured and upgraded over the last 10 years. The Department established a Precinct Policing Structure and supported community policing programmes such as the Gang Resistance Education Programme (GREAT). Domestic Violence Units (DVU) were established within police stations across the country. The DVU officers were trained in protocols for responding to sexual and domestic violence. Because there is no pathway for upward mobility within the DVU, officers rotate to other units within the Department. This rotation has required constant training for new DVU officers. The DVU in Belize City operates a 24 hour shift with 2 sets of officers per shift. The DVU in the other districts operate during 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. working hours. Therefore, sexual and domestic violence cases

reported after 5 p.m. are handled by regular police officers on call at that time. This has created an uneven quality of response to sexual and domestic violence cases.¹⁸⁶

In March, 2019, the Police Commissioner and representatives from the former Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation (MHDSTPA), and the Belize Defence Force, and UNICEF visited the Jamaica Centre for the Investigation of Sexual Offences and Child Abuse (CISOCA). After this visit, the Commissioner of Police expressed an intention to establish a similar one-stop centre for domestic violence, sexual assaults and child abuse in Belize.

Since 2010, a Gang Suppression Unit (GSU) was established to prevent and intercept gang activities across the country. The GSU received much negative publicity for its suppression methods. In 2020, the GSU was disbanded.

The Police Department has not increased its capacity for forensic investigation of crimes. The Police Department has also not made significant advancements in increasing its overall capacity for greater gender responsiveness in handling criminal matters.

Office of the Department of Public Prosecution: Over the last 10 years,

¹⁸⁵ IMC Worldwide. *Baseline Assessment Report: Belize Executive Summary. Volume 1.* UNICEF, 2021.

¹⁸⁶ Focus group consultations with members of the District Gender and Gender Based Violence Committees, March 18, 2021.

the Office of the Department of Public Prosecution (DPP) was upgraded. This Office appears on behalf of the State in criminal and quasi-criminal matters in all the Courts and advises the Police Department on prosecution matters. This DPP also championed legislative amendments to the Evidence Act and the Indictable Procedures Act.¹⁸⁷

The DPP opened new offices in Belmopan and Orange Walk Town. The Office was fully staffed and prosecutors were assigned to prosecution zones so each police formation and precinct had a dedicated Crown Counsel to address prosecution matters. The DPP's Office assigned legal assistants to each Court, to assist these Crown Counsels in trial preparation. A Case Care Unit was established and staffed with police officers.¹⁸⁸ The need for capacity building to ensure gender-responsiveness remains.

The Judiciary: There are only two Family Courts in Belize: one in Belize City and the other in Punta Gorda. The other four Districts have Magistrate Courts, which assign one day of the week to hear family matters. In 2021, retirements and resignation of judges in the Magistrate Courts, led to shortages of judges to hear cases in Punta Gorda, Independence, San Ignacio and Belize City.

¹⁸⁷ C Ramirez, "Presentation made to the OAS Onsite Anti-Corruption Visit" (2014).

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ Honorable Chief Justice Kenneth Benjamin, "Address to Mark the Formal Opening of the Supreme Court for the Law Year 2020" (speech, January 13, 2020).

The former Chief Justice of Belize reported that Rules for court-connected mediation have been enacted, so that Part 73 of the Supreme Court (Civil Procedure) Rules 2005 is now devoted to arbitration.¹⁸⁹ The Judiciary therefore offers family mediation services in the Family Courts. These mediation services are currently developing and expanding. A National Mediation Committee and the Association of Dispute Resolution and Arbitration of Belize continue to support the work of the Judiciary in rolling out alternative dispute resolution services.¹⁹⁰ This process has helped in the management of family court cases by empowering claimants and defendants to agree on solutions outside of the courtroom. Agreements made through mediation are legalized and enforced through the family court system. Strengthening the Family Court system, including court connected mediation services, will increase women's access to justice for child maintenance and other family matters.

The Acting Chief Justice of Belize¹⁹¹ reported that the judiciary has been under-resourced and underfunded for many years, leading to chronic problems such as: insufficient number of legal personnel and support staff, inadequate physical infrastructure of chambers and courts and a lack of information technology hardware and

¹⁹⁰ Adele Catzim, *Gap Analysis: Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (2016-2020)*

¹⁹¹ Honourable Madam Acting Justice Michelle Arana, "Annual Report to mark the formal opening of the Supreme Court for the Law Year 2021" (speech, January 18, 2021).

software. These impair the efficiency and effectiveness with which the judiciary is able to hear, file and dispense of cases.

In 2020, all levels of the Judiciary (Supreme Court Criminal and Civil Division, Magistrate Court, Family Court and Court of Appeals) experienced the retirement and resignations of judges. This exacerbated the already limited human resources of this branch of Government. The Supreme Court has transitioned to accommodate virtual hearings.

Legal Advice and Services Centre: The Legal Advice and Services Center was not expanded or upgraded. The Centre is staffed by only three attorneys. They are expected to provide legal services and representation for a range of civil and criminal cases, including cases of domestic violence and criminal cases up to attempted murder.¹⁹² These three attorneys are unable to reach both urban and rural communities to provide free legal advice or to prepare and defend cases in court.

To fill this gap, civil society organizations, through their own resource mobilization initiatives, access legal services privately. Through this system, these organizations are able to pay for their clients to receive legal advice on issues related to gender-based violence, separation and divorce.

¹⁹² United States of America, U.S Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 2019 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Belize, 5.

Gender Mainstreaming in the Judiciary

In October, 2017, the Government of Belize joined other Caribbean countries, the judiciary and child protection agencies in implementing a Judicial Reform and Institutional Strengthening (JURIST) Project. This Project, supported by the Government of Canada, aimed to support national efforts to improve court governance and administration, ensure social inclusion and gender equity and equality in the administration of justice. In October, 2017, the Project produced Model Guidelines for Sexual Offence Cases in the Caribbean Region.

In 2018, the Judiciary, with the support of the NCFC, the Family Court and the Government of Canada, developed a Gender Equality Protocol for Judicial Officers.¹⁹³ This Protocol addresses major factors that create barriers to the effective administration of justice for men, women and vulnerable populations. The Protocol was developed as a part of the implementation of the National Gender Policy, CEDAW and the CRC. The Protocol states that. “Gender inequalities in the court system are apparent in its treatment of family law cases, its handling of survivors of gender-based violence and its attitude towards sexual minorities and other vulnerable individuals”.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ Belize Judiciary, *Justice through a Gender Lens: Gender Equality Protocol for Judicial Officers* (Belize Judiciary, CCJ, CAJO, UN Women, JURIST Project, 2018).

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 1.

The Protocol defines gender concepts and provides guidance on how to apply gender analysis to the adjudication of cases. The Protocol provides information on gender socialization, including an understanding of masculinities. It offers guidance on how to use a gender lens when dealing with child custody issues and working with victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and human trafficking. It includes tools on how to take evidence from children and vulnerable witnesses, as well as evidence presentation and cross-examination. It also includes guidelines for how to deal with protection and occupation orders for victims of domestic violence and sexual violence as well as social support for both male and female survivors of sexual violence. The Protocol supports the rehabilitation of offenders of sexual violence. New judges and magistrates will require training in how to apply the Gender Equality Protocol for Judicial Officers.

Enhancing the Response for Vulnerable and Underserved Populations

Vulnerable and underserved populations such as older persons, persons with disabilities, persons with mental health illnesses, sex workers and members of the LGBTQ community continue to face

discrimination in the national response to gender-based violence. Incidences of abuse and sexual assault are either not recognized as violence or are deliberately left unaddressed by the police, health officials, or the judicial system.

A 2021 Spotlight Baseline Assessment¹⁹⁵ indicates that while both men and women recognize physical (79.4%), sexual (37.3%) and verbal (34.4%) abuse as types of violence, they are less likely to recognize emotional abuse (19.9%) and the deprivation of liberties (7.4%) as forms of violence. This supports the work of UNIBAM, PETAL, Our Circle, Tikkun Olam and the Belize Association of Persons with Diverse Abilities (BAPDA) to advocate for greater social justice for their members.¹⁹⁶

A UNIBAM Situation Analysis Report outlines the need for greater attention to be provided to understanding the added layers of discrimination that affect underserved LGBT populations in their access to services as well as treatment when they access these services.¹⁹⁷ As stated in the Report, this situation “forces marginalized populations to operate independently outside the system.”¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵ 195 IMC Worldwide. *Baseline Assessment Report: Belize Executive Summary. Volume 1.* UNICEF, 2021.

¹⁹⁶ Interviews with Our Circle, PETAL, Tikun Olam, UNIBAM, BAPDA, Mental Health Association, March-April, 2021.

¹⁹⁷ Orosco, Caleb. Ed. Mineesha Thomas. *Indifference: A Question of Dignity.*

United Belize Advocacy Movement, 2018. And Our Circle. *The Impact of COVID-19 on the LGBT Community in Belize: March-June, 2020.* June, 2020.

¹⁹⁸ Orosco, Caleb. Ed. Mineesha Thomas. *Indifference: A Question of Dignity.* United Belize Advocacy Movement, 2018.

For example, violence among intimate partners who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender is not recognized as domestic violence and children of these unions go underserved in the response to gender-based violence. A 2020 Report from Our Circle further states, “Many LGBT victims are unable to access support as there is little mainstream recognition of domestic abuse that occurs outside of opposite-sex relationships.” In their survey of LGBT persons, 85% were experiencing domestic violence during the COVID 19 lockdown period in 2020. The Report therefore indicates that, “A lack of access to social connections within Belize’s LGBT community during the COVID 19 pandemic is exacerbating existing mental health problems and worsening family conflicts”.¹⁹⁹ Combined with decreased access to HIV and sexual and reproductive health services, the LGBT community remains one of Belize’s most underserved populations.

Similarly, persons with mental health issues and persons with special needs and sex workers are not treated with dignity and respect when they become victims of domestic or sexual violence. These vulnerable groups receive attention when they are accompanied by advocates. These advocates speak on their behalf and follow up on matters of police investigation, legal representation and rehabilitative care. In some cases, it is law enforcement officials who are guilty of violating the

rights of these vulnerable populations, making enforcement of existing laws more challenging for these vulnerable groups.²⁰⁰

Some of these civil society organizations have mobilized resources to provide their members with access to safe houses, counselling and legal support services. If the national response is to be inclusive, institutions responding to gender-based violence will need to more gender-responsive and trauma informed.

The Gender Based Violence Surveillance System

Currently, administrative data on family violence can be accessed through three main sources: the Family Care case management database (FAMCARE), the Crime Information Management System (CIMS) and the Belize Health Information System (BHIS), each managed by a different Ministry. A National Gender Based Violence Surveillance System aims to improve data collection, reconciliation, analysis and reporting across agencies. Using these various data sources, the Belize Crime Observatory collects and reports on incidents of domestic violence, rape, unlawful sexual intercourse, trafficking in persons and femicide. Through the Spotlight Initiative, this System is to be developed and strengthened so that it can function as a statistical M&E

¹⁹⁹ Our Circle. The Impact of COVID-19 on the LGBT Community in Belize: March-June, 2020. June, 2020.

²⁰⁰ Interviews with Our Circle, PETAL, Tikun Olam, UNIBAM, BAPDA, Mental Health Association, March-April, 2021.

system as well as a case management system for all forms of gender-based violence.

3.5 Power and Decision-Making

Achievements

Capacity Building for Leadership

In 2009 and 2010, the National Women's Commission implemented a "Women in Politics (WIP) Training Programme" that reached 100 women. In 2013, the Women's Issues Network, with funding from the UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF), also implemented a Women in Politics training Programme²⁰¹ that trained women how to implement a campaign to seek political office. In 2017, the NWC hosted Belize's first Women in Politics (WIP) Conference for 200 actively serving, and aspiring, women politicians and women in leadership roles in organizations and communities. The conference built on previous WIP initiatives.²⁰² It attempted to create a critical mass of women advocates for increased women's political participation. By this time, one woman who had participated in the WIP Programme had risen to the position of CEO in the Ministry of Tourism (2012 to 2015) and later became the Minister of Trade and Investment (2015 to 2020).

²⁰¹ Daniel Alemu, "Remarks - Opening of BRIDGE Training on Gender and Elections" (speech), 2013, accessed May 2021, <https://www.bz.undp.org/content/belize/en/home/presscenter/speeches/2013/02/11/remarks-opening-of-bridge-training-on-gender-and-elections.html>.

At the local level, the Toledo Maya Women's Council also implemented a "Women in Local Government" training programme which had participation from indigenous women, some of whom later ran for office in the village council elections.²⁰³

The PlanBelize Women's Agenda proposes to:

- conduct awareness and capacity building campaigns of men and women in governance on the role and significance of women in governance, and
- support capacity building initiatives for women in politics.²⁰⁴

Women's Leadership in the Public and the Private Sectors

At the technical level, women are gaining ground, particularly as high-level non-elected public officials, the judiciary and the private sector. This shows positive movement and can serve as a springboard for women's participation in electoral politics. For example, having strong female representation on the judiciary has resulted in capacity building aimed at enforcing justice through a gender lens.²⁰⁵ It also helps with strengthening the enforcement of laws related to gender-based violence.

²⁰² Government of Belize, *Draft Belize's 25th National Country Report on the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*.

²⁰³ Pulcheria Teul.

²⁰⁴ People's United Party, *Plan Belize: Women's Agenda and Family*.

²⁰⁵ Belize Judiciary, *Justice through a Gender Lens: Gender Equality Protocol for Judicial Officers*.

Public Sector Leadership (2020)	Female		Male		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
House of Representatives (Plus Speaker)	3	9.3%	29	90.6%	32	100%
Senate (Plus President)	5	35.7%	9	64.3%	14	100%
Members of Cabinet	2	8.3%	22	91.7%	24	100%
Chief Executive Officers	8	42.1%	11	57.9%	19	100%
Directors of Heads of Departments	18	43%	24	57%	42	100%
Mayors	0	0%	9	100%		100%
Municipal Councillors	18	31%	40	69%	58	100%
Village Councillors	465	32.4%	972	67.6%	1,437	100%
Judicial Officers Totals						100%
Supreme Court Judges	4	44%	5	56%	9	100%
Magistrate Court Judges	13	72%	5	28%	18	100%
Registrar's Office	3	100%	0	0%	3	100%
Solicitor General's Office						100%

Source: National Women's Commission, 2020

The 2018, a total of 32% of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) in the government were women. This was slight increase from the 25% registered in 2013. In 2020, a total of 8 women (42.1%) were appointed as Chief Executive Officers within Ministries. At this technical level, women were appointed to important portfolios such as the Office of the Prime Minister, Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Human Development, Tourism, Blue Economy, Natural Resources, Health and Education. Women comprise 43%, almost half, of Directors or Heads of Departments. Women hold the positions of Auditor General, Accountant General, Director of Immigration, Chief Elections Officer, Fisheries Administrator, and Labour Commissioner, among others.²⁰⁶

Women also play an important role in the judiciary. They comprise almost half of all Supreme Court Judges (44%) and account for a majority of Magistrate Court Judges (72%). All Registrars are women. The Acting Chief Justice, the Attorney General, the Solicitor General and the Director of Public Prosecution are all women.²⁰⁷

Women own a majority (59%) of the businesses that are members of the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI). The President and the Executive Director of the BCCI are both women. Within the conservation community, 42% of Executive Directors are women. Within the agriculture sector, 28.7% of farmers were women. Within the tourism sector, only 10% of licensed tour guides were women.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ National Women's Commission, "Database of information on women in politics and decision-making" (2021).

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ National Women's Commission, "Database of information on women in politics and decision-making."

Private Sector Leadership	Female		Male		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Belize Chamber of Commerce Memberships - Business Owners	138	59%	202	41%	340	100%
Protected Areas Executive Directors	5	42%	7	58%	12	100%
Farmers (2002 data) 61 cases of other that were unclassified by gender	5,534	28.7%	13,646	71.3%	19,241	100%
Licensed Tour Guides	229	10%	2029	90%	2,258	100%

Source: National Women's Commission

The PlanBelize Women's Agenda recognizes the importance of increasing women's leadership participation. This Plan seeks to enforce a quota of at least 30% women as Board Chairpersons, Chief Executive Officers, and other leadership roles in the public sector.²⁰⁹

Women's Participation in Local Government

In 2020, women accounted for 31% of municipal councillors and 32.4% of village councillors. This means that approximately one in every three councillors at the municipal and village council levels, are women. In 2021, the municipal representation of women increased to 39%; one woman was elected as Mayor and 22 women were elected as councillors. The data shows that women's political participation increases when women run for political office as part of a slate for a seat in local government rather than as an individual candidate for a specific constituency seat in central government. For some women,

running for office at the municipal level opens the door to participation in national electoral politics.

In 2014, the Ministry of Local Government began collaborating with the Mayor's Association, UNICEF and UNDP to implement the Sustainable and Child Friendly Municipalities initiative (SCFM). This initiative supports children and adolescent boys and girls in building skills and experiences in public participation in decision-making. Boys and girls are provided with opportunities to advocate for children rights in health, education, protection, economic empowerment and social inclusion. These children participate in Child Advisory Boards (CABs). These CABs serve as a platform for voicing their concerns on issues affecting them, hold officials accountable and propose solutions to national and municipal issues. Through this process, the SCFM and CABs are building boys' and girls' capacities for participation in power and decision-making positions.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ People's United Party, *Plan Belize: Women's Agenda and Family*.

²¹⁰ Government of Belize, *Draft Belize's 25th National Country Report on the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*.

Gaps and Areas for Further Action

Women's Participation in Central Government

No temporary special measures were legislated to guarantee a quota of seats for women to run for political office. No legal framework or support structure was developed to promote the equitable sharing of parental responsibilities as a strategy for enhancing women's political participation and leadership in private and public institutions.

In the 2020 national general election, 6 women, 5 from the Belize District and 1 from Belmopan, ran for political office. Of these, 2 of the women had previously been elected to serve in a municipal government. In 2021, there were only 3 women (9.3%) in the House of Representatives, 5 women (35.7%) in the Senate and 2 women (8.3%) in Cabinet. The 10 women in the Parliament include the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate, the Senate Representative for the National Trade Union Congress, 2 Senate Representatives representing the party in power, one representing the Opposition, and four Area Representatives.²¹¹

3.6 Organizational Systems Strengthening

In 2010, the National Women's Commission, with the support of

UNICEF and UNDP, updated the 2002 National Gender Policy. This Policy outlined the institutional arrangements needed to ensure the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the objectives and commitment contained in the Policy. The Policy was developed in consultation with key stakeholders in Government and civil society organizations. While consultations were undertaken during the Policy development phase, only a few organizations were included in the Policy validation phase. Validation was done with key implementation agencies across Government and within the Women's Issues Network.

The Policy reflected a human rights approach to achieving gender equity and equality under the five priority areas established in the 2002 National Gender Policy: Health, Education, Wealth and Employment Creation, Violence Producing Conditions and Power and Decision-Making. In the new Policy, greater protection was extended to key vulnerable groups such as children, older persons, people with disabilities, men who have sex with men, sex workers, people with mental illness and men and women based on their gender specific needs in each of the five priority areas of the Policy agenda.

In health, it was noted that HIV prevention and treatments services must be tailored to the groups most affected such as adolescent girls, men who have sex with men, mobile populations (police, military, migrant

workers). In education, a focus was on boys' secondary school completion, gender mainstreaming in the curriculum and gender equity in girls' access to non-traditional subject areas. Under wealth creation, older persons were highlighted because of their social protection concerns. Yet, this gender focus became confounded with the human rights movement to recognize the rights of the LGBT population.

National Gender Policy Setbacks

The greatest challenge for the National Women's Commission was the fact that the National Gender Policy (2010) suffered severe resistance from faith-based organizations (FBO) prior to being official launched. In 2011, after Cabinet passed the Policy, faith-based organizations, mainly from the evangelical churches, mounted public protests against the Policy's inclusive language of human right protection for vulnerable populations such as men who have sex with men and female sex workers. The FBO also protested the provision of contraceptives as a public good and the delivery of sexual health education in schools. These protests led the Government to dialogue with several stakeholder groups (including the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Church organizations) to get feedback aimed at editing the Policy document. In 2013, the Policy was edited but was still not officially launched. The new National Gender Policy (2013 version) included edits based on input from stakeholders consulted between 2010 and 2011.

Since then, key implementation agencies were not convened to develop an implementation or monitoring and evaluation plan for the National Gender Policy (2013).

Organizational Mechanisms for NGP Coordination and Monitoring

The National Women's Commission operates without a legislative framework. The Secretariat has limited human resources with only two technical and one administrative staff. It is constrained by a lack of legal or formally recognized documentation that demonstrates its authority to require information from agencies (both Government and Non-Government) on the implementation of the National Gender Policy.

In 2018, the Women's Department was upgraded to a Women and Family Services Department to enable the provision of complete "wrap around" social protection services for women and their families. This includes services to address poverty, economic empowerment and gender-based violence. The Women and Family Services Department coordinates Gender Focal Points established within line Ministries.

These Gender Focal Points are charged with ensuring gender mainstreaming within the policies and programmes of their Ministries. To strengthen national capacity for gender mainstreaming, UNICEF, in 2018, supported a gender and development training programme for the staff of the Women and Family

Support Department (WFSD) and the National Women's Commission. The training covered topics such as the history of the women's movement in Belize and globally, national and international conventions and gender related legislation, gender concepts, and gender analysis frameworks.

Even with this training, limited human resource capacity has constrained the Department's capacity to convene and coordinate Gender Focal Point activities as well as the Commission's capacity to ensure effective coordination and monitoring and evaluation of the National Gender Policy (2013).

Gender Mainstreaming

Belize's Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (GSDS) 2016-2020 outlined the country's medium-term strategy for achieving the sustainable development objectives (SDGs). Necessary Condition 2.8 of the GSDS called for gender equality to be mainstreamed into the development of measures and targets of GSDS operational plans and budgetary proposals of all relevant ministries.²¹² This component of the GSDS was never fully articulated in operational plans and budgets.

Similarly, as a result of setbacks in the official launch and socialization of the National Gender Policy (as stated above), the National Women's

Commission was unable to ensure that the objectives and commitments of the National Gender Policy were mainstreamed into the annual workplans and budgets of implementation partners in the public sector or within civil society organizations. Although much work was still implemented, these occurred mainly because the commitments of the Policy reflected already existing priorities for agencies and were therefore articulated in other strategic plans.

Budgeting for Greater Gender Mainstreaming

In 2013, the Government initiated a Programme Budgeting²¹³ exercise with 5 pilot ministries, including the former Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation (MHDSTPA). Programme Budgeting, as of 2015, was implemented in all Ministries using a 3-year budgeting cycle. The Ministry of Finance has developed a new chart of accounts to strengthen the implementation of Programme Budgeting. Public officers were trained to use the new chart of accounts. However, the use of this new chart of accounts was deferred to the 2021-2022 financial year. With this deferral, it is unclear if programme budgeting will indeed become implemented, given the economic and fiscal crises brought on by COVID-19. This makes it even more

²¹² Ministry of Economic Development, *Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy*, 60.

²¹³ A programme budget is a budget prepared specifically for a project or program. This type of budget includes expenses and revenues related to one specific project.

challenging to move to the next step of implementing gender budgeting.²¹⁴

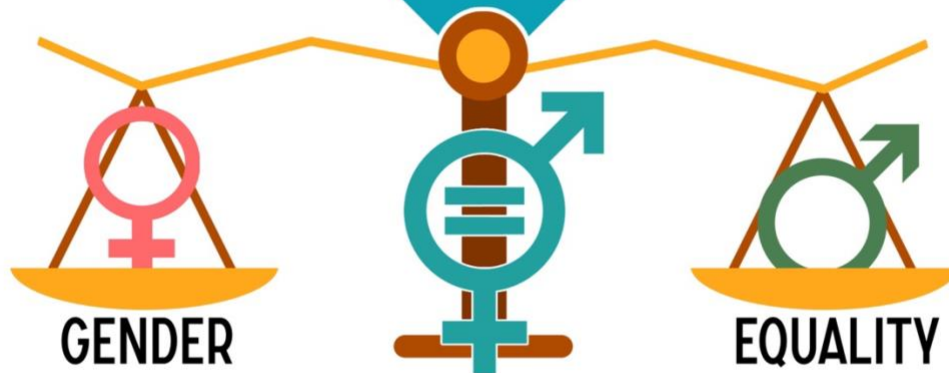
For this new National Gender Policy (2021-2030) to be successful, the National Women's Commission, through its Gender Focal Points, can propose gender priorities to be mainstreamed into Ministry's annual implementation plans and budgets. Using this approach, achievements made in the initial years of investment can be expanded upon over time, as the country's macro-economic position improves.

Through the Spotlight Initiative, the National Women's Commission and other key implementation partners have an opportunity to look at the key success as well as the barriers to implementation in order to improve systems that will increase the implementation rate of a new revised National Gender Policy.

²¹⁴ Adele Catzim, *Gap Analysis: Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (2016-2020)*.



**REVISED NATIONAL
GENDER POLICY**
2021–2030





4. Revised National Gender Policy (2021-2030)

The National Gender Policy (2021-2030) builds on the achievements of the 2013 Policy. It focuses on the gaps and areas for further action in each of the six areas of health, education, wealth and employment creation, gender-based violence, women in power and decision-making and organizational systems strengthening.

This Policy begins with a preamble that sets out the national, international instruments that guide Belize’s aspiration of achieving gender equity and equality and ending discrimination against women and girls. The Policy also identifies key gender related concepts and definitions as well as human rights-oriented principles that shape Policy interventions. The Policy sets out the overarching goal to be achieved as well as individual goals, outcomes and outputs for each of the six thematic priority areas of the Policy.

Implementation Plans and an M&E framework for each thematic priority area accompany this Policy document to act as a roadmap for policy interventions.

4.1 Preamble

Recalling that the Preamble to the Constitution of Belize (1981) guarantees gender equality for all its citizens and provides them protection from discrimination on the grounds of race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex;

Recalling that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948)) sets out a charter of basic human rights to which everyone is entitled without distinction or discrimination of any kind, including race, colour, sex or other status;

Recalling that CEDAW (1979) is a legally binding International Agreement that gives legitimacy to “women’s human rights claims and promotes equality in all areas of life” and that this means that states parties to the Convention must introduce legal and policy changes that end discrimination against women and ensure women’s access to de jure and de facto equality;

Recalling that the Convention of Belem Do Para (1994), also known as the Inter- American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women, is a legally binding instrument developed by the Organization of American States (OAS). This Convention recognizes violence against women in both the public and private spheres, as a violation of their basic human rights. This Convention also reaffirms women’s basic human rights to the recognition, enjoyment, exercise and protection of all human rights and freedoms embodied in regional and international human right instruments;

Recalling that the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989) is a legally binding international instrument that protects children below 18 years and that this Convention recognizes that children also have human rights. This includes their right to survival, to develop to the fullest, to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation, and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life;

Recalling that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) reaffirms women’s rights as human rights; These documents declare that “women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development

and peace for women everywhere”. It reaffirms that these rights are in “the interest of all humanity” and calls on states parties to intensify efforts aimed at achieving gender equality;

Recalling that Belize has signed and ratified numerous ILO Conventions that guarantee all person’s right to dignified employment and to non-discrimination in the world of work;

Recalling that the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2015) set out specific development targets to be achieved by the year 2030, including specific targets for the achievement of gender equality;

Recalling that on 18 December, 2019, the United National General Assembly adopted Resolution A/RES/74/126 on the Improvement of the Situation of Women and Girls in Rural Areas.

Recognizing that together, these commitments are designed to advance national and international progress in the achievement of de jure and de facto gender equality and equity;

The Government of Belize undertakes this National Gender Policy as the framework through which these rights are translated into the achievement of de jure and de facto gender equality, equity and women’s empowerment in Belize. The National Gender Policy is founded on principles outlined in the Belize Constitution and in International Conventions and Agreements signed and ratified by the Government of Belize.

4.2 Key Concepts and Definitions

Gender: The social constructed roles allocated respectively to women and men in particular societies and in particular historical and cultural contexts. Such roles, and the differences between them, are conditioned by a variety of political, economic, ideological and cultural factors and are characterized in most societies by unequal power relations.

Gender Equality: This refers to non-discrimination on the grounds of a person's sex.

Gender Equity: This refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of resources, benefits and/or access to services between women and men. This approach recognizes that women and men have different needs across the life course.

Gender Mainstreaming: This refers to bringing in the perceptions, knowledge, contributions, priorities and needs of both women and men to enrich development. The process includes assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It makes their specific concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres so that all persons can benefit equality and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

Gender Perspective: This is an approach in which the ultimate goal is to create equity and equality between women and men. Such an approach has a set of tools for analysis and guidelines on how to identify the impact on development of the gender relations and roles ascribed to men and women.

Gender Responsive: This refers to the planning process in which programmes and policy actions are developed to deal with, and counteract, problems that arise out of socially constructed differences between women and men as well as lay the groundwork for the achievement of gender equity, equality and women's empowerment.

Gender Roles: The expectations, demands, compulsions, opportunities, responsibilities placed on women and men because of, or on the basis of, biological differences. These roles generate different attitudes, behaviours and assumptions indicating what it means to be identified with a particular gender.

Gender Sensitive: This refers to the state of knowledge of the socially constructed differences between women and men, including differences in their needs, as well as to the use of such knowledge to identify and understand the problems arising from such differences and to act purposefully to address them.

Human Rights: "Basic rights and freedoms to which are humans are entitled. All humans are born free and equal in dignity and human rights"

Life Course: The life-course approach recognizes that all stages of a person's life are not only intricately intertwined with each other, but also connected with the lives of others born in the same period, and with the lives of past and future generations of their families. It acknowledges that the health and wellbeing of both individuals and communities depend on interactions between multiple risk and protective factors throughout life.

Life Cycle: The stages of life that a person goes through from birth to death. This approach recognizes that human beings have different physical, social, emotional and economic needs at each stage of their lives.

Practical Gender Needs: The needs identified to help women cope better in their existing subordinate positions. Practical needs are related largely to issues of welfare. These do not challenge the existing gender division of labour or women's subordinate position in society.

Policy: Declared principles and objectives that decisions-makers use to guide a course of action to address a particular issue or issues, which in this case, is the achievement of gender equality, equity and women's empowerment.

Reproductive Rights: "The recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number,

spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health. They also include the right of all to make decisions concerning reproduction free from discrimination, coercion and violence."

Sex: This identifies the biological/anatomical differences between males and females.

Strategic Gender Needs: The needs which are identified as necessary to transform the existing unequal relations between women and men. Addressing women's strategic gender needs expedites women's empowerment and facilitates the fundamental social transformation necessary for the establishment of gender equality.

Sustainable Development: This conceptual framework, adopted by the United Nations is an underlying principle mainstreamed throughout this Policy. Sustainable development refers to "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." There are four dimensions to sustainable development – society, environment, culture and economy – which are intertwined, not separate.²¹⁵

Underserved Populations: means populations who face barriers in accessing and using services, and

²¹⁵ As defined in the 1987 Bruntland Commission Report. <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-sustainable-development/what-is-esd/sd>

includes populations underserved because of geographic location, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, race and ethnicity. It also includes populations who are not able to access or use services because of special needs such as language barriers, disabilities, immigration status, or age.

Vulnerable Populations: refers to persons or groups of persons in need of special attention, care, support and protection because of age, disability, poverty, or risk of discrimination, abuse or neglect.

4.3 Guiding Principles

Recognizing Belize's international and national commitments to gender equality and equity, this National Gender Policy will be guided by the following key principles:

Human Rights: State policies, regulations, programmes and allocation of resources must be based on the realization of human rights for all within the context of the Constitution of Belize. This includes the fact that women's rights are human rights and that every person has a right to live free of discrimination and violence and enjoy full participation in, and benefits from, all aspects of social, economic and political life.

Gender Equality: State policies, regulations and programmes should explicitly aim to identify and eliminate gender-based discrimination in the allocation of resources, benefits, or access to services. This includes every

person's right to equality of opportunity, of access, and/or of outcomes.

Gender Equity: State policies, regulations, programmes and allocation of resources must ensure fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men, boys and girls. The concept of equity recognizes that different genders have different needs and power, and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies this imbalance. This extends to persons of all ages, geographic location and ethnicities.

Women's Empowerment: State policies, regulations, programmes and allocation of resources must include specific, deliberate actions that identify and give redress to power imbalances and gives women more autonomy to manage their own lives. Women's empowerment is a vital aspect of human centred, sustainable development and the realization of human rights for all.

Gender Mainstreaming: Ensure that policy makers and practitioners do not assume that all persons are all the same. Policy makers and practitioners must engage in evidence-based policy making that mainstreams a gender perspective into all stages of national policies, regulations and programmes.

Respect for Diversity: People in Belize are not a homogeneous group. All policies and programmes must therefore reflect this reality of

diversity among the Belizean populace.

Family Strengthening: Family life lies at the core of creating a healthy, productive and well-functioning society. Family strengthening must be recognized as one of the most important strategies for addressing gender inequalities and inequities throughout the life course.

Best Interests of the Child: The best interests of the child, as defined in the Families and Children's Act, must be a priority in the establishment of all policies, programmes and decisions that impact on development in Belize.

Inclusivity: For citizens to successfully exercise their human rights they require access to multiple spaces for participation in the development process. Spaces must be designed to allow for the active, meaningful participation of all persons of diverse backgrounds in the policy development, planning, monitoring and evaluation cycle.

Good Governance: Good governance promotes development and the eradication of poverty. Good governance recognizes the rights of all genders to participation and legitimacy of voice as well as the right to benefit from strategic leadership, long-term visioning, performance measurements, accountability and equity and justice in the rule of law.

Accountability of Outcomes: Rights entail corresponding duties and obligations. As a signatory to the Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and various ILO Conventions, the Government of Belize is accountable for progress made in achieving gender equity, equality and women's empowerment among its citizens, who are the holders of these rights.

Coordination and Harmonization: Gender equality, equity and women's empowerment requires a multi-sectoral approach to development. This includes collaborative planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, as well as the alignment of policies and programmes with national and international commitments.

Human Centred Development: Human centred development remains at the core of development planning that will benefit existing and future generations. A human centred development approach will ensure that people, regardless of their age, sex, race, gender, ethnicity or creed, are allowed to participate fully in the development process. This approach ensures that advancements in gender equality, equity and women's empowerment set the stage and the pace for the further achievement of human rights for all.

4.4 Overarching Goal

The overarching goal for the new revised National Gender Policy is to:

“Achieve gender equity and equality and end discrimination against women and girls in Belize”

This goal was lifted from the National Gender Policy (2013) as well as the Plan Belize Women’s Agenda and Family Plan (2020). This goal aligns with Sustainable Development Goal on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (SDG 5) of the United Nations Agenda 2030.

4.5 The Theory of Change

To achieve gender equity and equality requires Government, civil society and the private sector to agree to a common set of outcomes that define the priorities of the revised National Gender Policy (2021-2030). Based on a review of the National Gender Policy (2013), the existing five priority areas continue to be relevant to achieving gender equity and equality in Belize. These are health, education, wealth and employment creation, violence producing conditions and power and decision-making. An additional area, organizational systems strengthening, has emerged to support the multi-sectoral programming of the first five priority areas.

These six priority areas are linked to Belize’s commitments enshrined in international instruments, such as: 1.) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against

Women (CEDAW, 1979), 2.) the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989), 3.) the Convention of Belem do Para (1994) the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and 5.) the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, 2015).

These six priority areas also reflect the consensus of key stakeholders. In some cases, actions are already underway to address critical issues such as early marriage and adolescent health. In other areas, such as women’s economic empowerment, there is recognition among stakeholders that gaps exist and that new approaches need to be developed to address these gaps.

Under each priority area, the proposed outcomes and outputs comprise the cross-sectoral programme to be implemented over a specific period to be agreed upon by the National Women’s Commission. The elements of the cross-sectoral programme integrates the commitments of the #PlanBelize Women and Family Agenda (2020). Several sections of this Agenda outline specific actions that align with the overall priorities of the proposed revised National Gender Policy (2021-2030).

For this cross-sectoral programme to move towards achieving gender equity and equality, it will follow four main strategies that cut across priority areas:

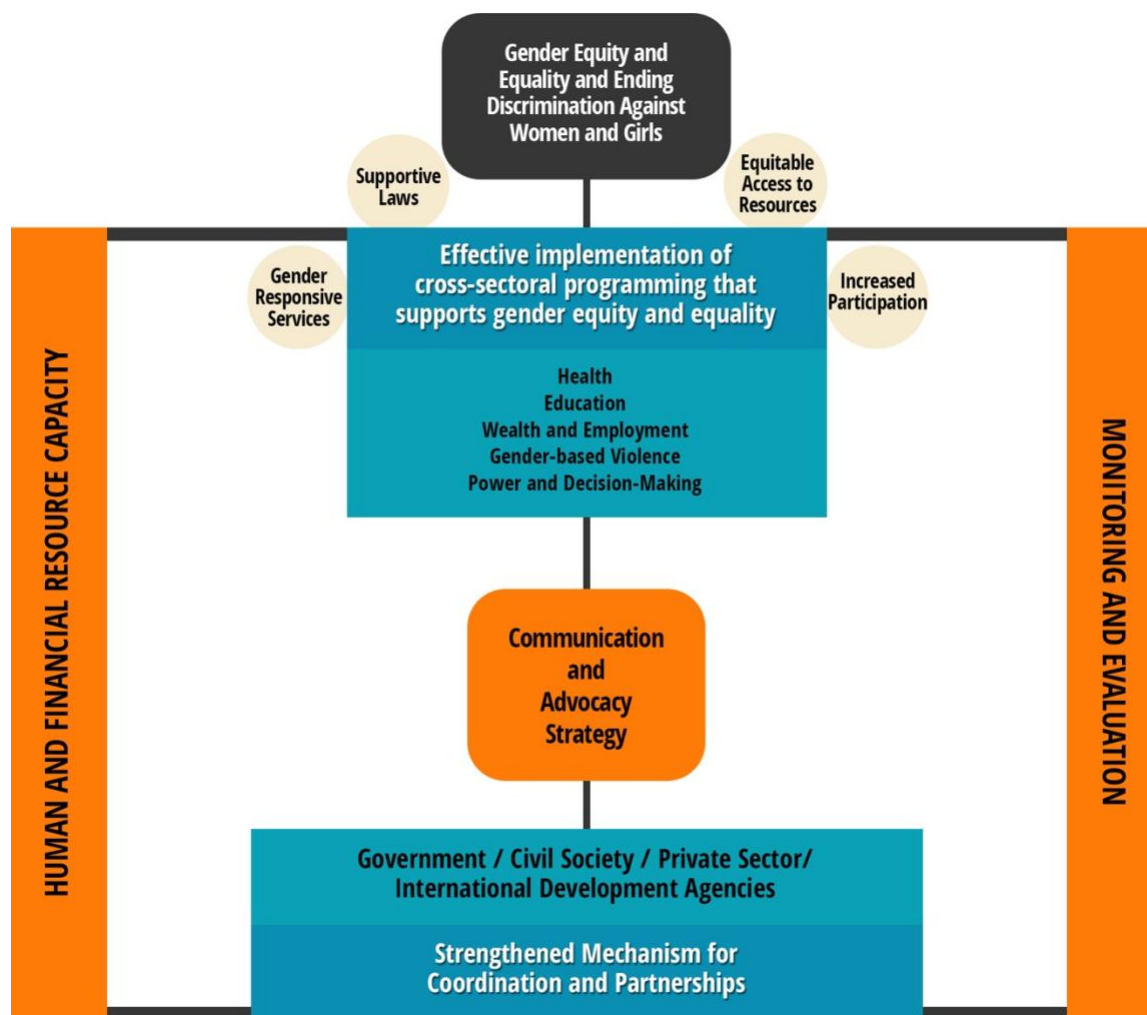
- 1.) creating and enforcing supportive laws,

- 2.) delivering gender-responsive services,
- 3.) providing equitable access to resources and
- 4.) fostering increased participation or inclusion.

This cross-sectoral programme is to be implemented through a collective effort driven by a strong institutional mechanism situated within the Government. This institutional mechanism is currently the National Women's Commission (NWC). The NWC must have the capacity for active, ongoing communication and advocacy on gender issues. It must also have adequate human and

financial resources to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the cross-sectoral programmes of the National Gender Policy. This is to be done by building effective partnerships with organizations in the public and private sectors, as well as with civil society organization and international development agencies.

The graphic below provides a visual representation of how the elements of programming and organizational strengthening dovetail to increase the chances of positive change towards achieving gender equity and equality in Belize.



Based on the proposed Theory of Change (ToC) presented above, two parallel pathways are necessary for the Revised National Gender Policy (2021) to achieve its goal of gender equity and equality in Belize.

The second pathway pays attention to the organizational systems that will facilitate the effective implementation of the programmes outlined in pathway 1.

The first pathway contains the cross-sectoral programmes to be implemented by key Government and civil society stakeholders in collaboration with the private sector, as needed.

NGP IMPLEMENTATION PATHWAYS



Advance the equitable participation of women in leadership and political governance.



Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender-based violence.



Empower women through creation of economic opportunities in urban and rural areas.



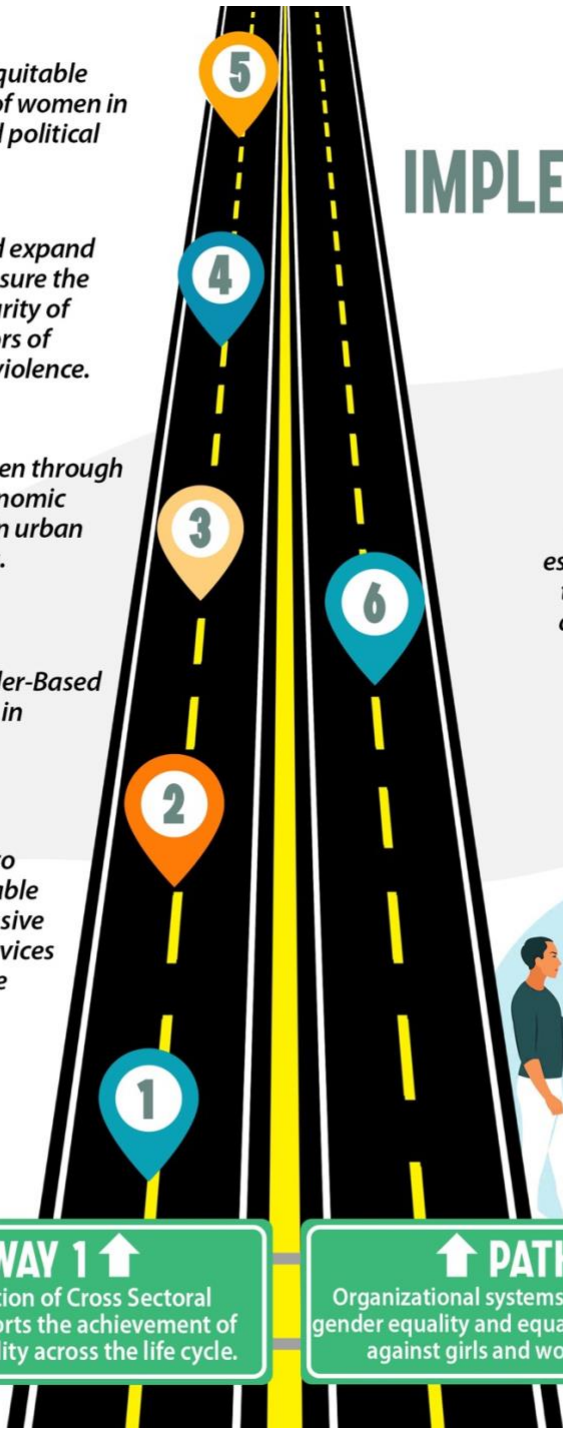
Eliminate Gender-Based Discrimination in Education



Secure access to quality affordable gender-responsive health care services throughout the life course.



Organizational systems are established and strengthened to support the coordination, advocacy, capacity building, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming and gender programming.



↑ PATHWAY 1
 Effective Implementation of Cross Sectoral Programming that supports the achievement of gender equity and equality across the life cycle.

↑ PATHWAY 2
 Organizational systems support the achievement of gender equality and equality and ending discrimination against girls and women across the life cycle.



Pathway 1:

Effective implementation of cross-sectoral programming that supports the achievement of gender equity and equality and ending discrimination against girls and women across the life course.

4.6.1 Health Across the Life Course

In 2014 the Ministry of Health published its Belize Health Sector Strategic Plan (2014-2024) entitled, “Improving Quality Health Services: A Safer and Healthier Belize by 2024.” The Strategic Plan references the National Gender Policy (2013) as a framework for developing gender-based strategies to improve health outcomes for men, women, boys and girls across the life cycle. This Plan also recognizes gender (alongside cultural, biological, environmental, and socio-economic factors), as a key determinant of health outcomes.²¹⁶

The Belize Health Information System (BHIS) collects sex disaggregated health data, which is analysed, by the Policy and Planning Unit of the Ministry of Health.

Main achievements in health were made in the decentralization of the

health delivery system, the provision of sexual and reproductive health services for women and children, incorporation of geriatric care services and the expansion of the national health insurance programme. Legislation was also drafted to ensure greater protection for vulnerable populations.

Areas to be strengthened include sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents, older persons and vulnerable populations, mental health and substance abuse programmes and targeted gender-responsive health services to address communicable and non-communicable diseases.

²¹⁶ Ministry of Health. (April, 2014). “Belize Health Sector Strategic Plan 2014-2024.

Improving Quality Health Services: A Safer and Healthier Belize by 2024.” Government of Belize.

Priority Thematic Area 1: Health Across the Life Course	
Goal 1: Secure access to quality affordable gender-responsive health care services throughout the life course	
Outcomes	Outputs
1.1 Reduced male and female morbidity and mortality from communicable and non-communicable diseases with high mortality rates, including COVID, using gender-responsive strategies	Output 1.1.1 Mortality rate from communicable and non-communicable diseases reduced, especially among youth, underserved populations and older persons.
	Output 1.1.2 Transmission of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and cancers from STIs, decreased with particular attention to youth, underserved populations and older persons.
Outcome 1.2 Increased access to affordable, gender-responsive sexual and reproductive health information and services throughout the life course	Output 1.2.1: Affordable comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and services provided for all persons of reproductive age, including adolescents.
	Output 1.2.2: Awareness and management of male and female sexual health information and services for older persons increased.
Outcome 1.3 Increased availability of gender responsive mental health and substance abuse treatment services to all groups, with particular attention to adolescents, youth, underserved populations and older persons.	Output 1.3.1 Gender sensitive approaches to mental health care provided to all persons, with particular attention to adolescents, youth, underserved populations and older persons.
	Output 1.3.2: Gender responsive residential, outpatient and community-based substance abuse services made available and affordable to all persons, with particular attention to adolescents, youth, underserved populations and older persons.

4.6 2 Education for Life and Lifelong Learning

The education sector showed achievements in legislative reform and programming that protected the right of girls and boys to an education, and increased child protection measures in education. Legal reforms also increased employees protection (including teacher) from unfair dismissal on the grounds of sex,

pregnancy, pregnancy related reasons or HIV status. Early childhood development programmes were prioritized as well as initiatives aimed at increased school participation and completion among targeted vulnerable populations living in poor geographic areas. Literacy education for children and adults was also a highlight of education sector programming. Areas for strengthening include increasing the quality and relevance of

education to the needs of the labour market. This includes increased investments for curriculum reform, including in science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics (STEAM). A major gap is the need for gender equity in access to STEAM

subjects. Other areas for further action include strengthening ITVET education, inclusive education, mental health support for teachers and students and non-discrimination on the basis of gender.

Priority Thematic Area 2: Education for Life and Lifelong Learning	
Goal 2: Eliminate Gender-Based Discrimination in Education	
Outcomes	Outputs
Outcome 2.1: Increased girls and women’s enrolment in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and other non-traditional educational programs.	Output 2.1.1. STEM concepts incorporated into the primary education curriculum
	Output 2.1.2 Gender balance achieved in enrolment in STEM programmes and other non-traditional education programs (at the secondary school level, ITVET and tertiary education level)
Outcome 2.2: Increased male achievement and completion of primary, secondary and tertiary education.	Output 2.2.1 Post-primary education advancement and completion rate of boys increased.
Outcome 2.3: Increased girls and women’s participation in arts, physical education and sports.	Output 2.3.1 Gender responsive arts and physical education programmes implemented at all primary and secondary schools.
	Output 2.3.2 Girls and women’s participation in sports at all levels, including the elite level, increased with support from Sports Federations.
Outcome 2.4: Increased legal protection for all persons from gender-based discrimination in the education system.	Output 2.4.1 Rights based protections against gender-based discrimination incorporated into anti-discrimination laws, Education Rules and primary and secondary school policies.
	Output 2.4.2. Legal representation for victims of gender-based discrimination in the education system.

4.6.3 Wealth and Employment Creation

Women’s access to wealth and employment was supported by legislative reform in labour, private pensions, child maintenance and child labour. The Labour (Amendment) Act protects employees from unfair

dismissal due to pregnancy, pregnancy related reasons, family responsibilities, marital status, age, race, HIV status or harassment at work, disability, union membership, among other things. Amendments to the Pensions Act offers greater levels of gender equality in the management of private pensions while amendments

to the Married Persons' Protection Act levels out age disparities in child maintenance matters. A review of child labour related legislation is underway to bring greater protection to children. The Government of Belize ramped up women's economic empowerment initiatives and began to employment. In 2020, as a result of Covid, even more women fell out of the labour force to care for children and older persons. This unpaid work is not valued within the country's economic system.

Areas for further action include a continued focus on urban and rural women's empowerment programmes using a more coordinated approach

address gender disparities facing women working in national security agencies.

Even with important investments in legislative and policy reform, women continue to lag behind men in their labour force participation rate and building women's financial inclusion in formal monetary systems. Both urban and rural women need more meaningful access to credit, markets for their products, land and housing. Support for childcare and afterschool programmes are also critical elements of a women's empowerment strategy as these address important barriers to women's labour force participation.

Priority Thematic Area 3: Wealth and Employment Creation	
Goal 3: Empower women through creation of economic opportunities in urban and rural areas	
Outcomes	Outputs
Outcome 3.1 Increased employment rate of women in urban and rural areas.	Output 3.1.1 Investment in viable industries developed/expanded to provide gender responsive employment opportunities for urban and rural women.
	Output 3.1.2 Women's access to job opportunities increased.
Outcome 3.2 Increased women's entrepreneurship.	Output 3.2.1 Women's access to local and/or international markets for their business products and services increased.
	Output 3.2.2 Financial inclusion/participation of women through credit unions or banks increased.
	Output 3.2.3 Increased success rate of businesses owned by women.
Outcome 3.3 Increased women's ownership of land and housing.	Output 3.3.1 Access to affordable and government-subsidized land and quality standard housing by women increased.
Outcome 3.4 Legislative framework to support	Output 3.4.1 Legislative framework expanded to account for economic contribution of unpaid labour.

women's economic empowerment strengthened.

Output 3.4.2 Legislative framework strengthened to achieve equality of women in employment.

4.6.4 Gender Based Violence

Addressing gender-based violence has been one of the most challenging aspects of achieving gender equity and equality. The Government amended the Criminal Code to give greater protection to children overall, especially the boy child. It also recognized marital rape as a distinct form of sexual violence. The Government also passed laws supportive of prevention, intervention and rehabilitation of victims of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking in persons. These laws increased the penalties for perpetrators and the Criminal Code allowed for the establishment of a Sexual Offenders Registry. The Evidence Act and the Indictable Procedures Act were also amended to facilitate greater access to justice. Judicial Officers engaged actively with national and regional initiatives seeking to eliminate gender-based violence and developed a gender equity protocol for judicial officers.

A series of projects designed to eliminate gender-based violence have been implemented nationally. These projects have been effective in mobilizing resources and momentum for legislative reform. They have also

been successful in creating public awareness on issues of child protection, domestic violence, commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking in persons and child labour. This has set the foundation for building capacity to deliver greater gender-responsive and trauma informed intervention and rehabilitation programmes.

Areas of further action include greater focus on parent education programmes, strengthening the police response, increasing access to justice and expanding victim recovery services, including shelters, professional counselling and economic empowerment opportunities. These are critical to breaking the cycle of violence that can persist from unhealed trauma.

With the onset of the Covid pandemic, these components of the response have become even more important as the country witnessed an increase in reports of various forms of gender-based violence. Other considerations for further action include the need to eliminate discrimination against all victims of gender-based violence on the basis of their gender identity, type of employment, disability or mental health status.

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence	
Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender-based violence.	
Outcomes	Outputs
Outcome 4.1 Reduced incidence of all forms of gender-based violence (sexual violence, commercial sexual exploitation, human trafficking, domestic or family violence).	Output 4.1.1 Public education and awareness campaign implemented, tailored to different target groups including victims/survivors, adolescents, youth, media, service providers and the general public.
	Output 4.1.2 GBV victims/survivors empowered to report on, seek care for, and leave violent situations.
	Output 4.1.3 Education on gender awareness, gender equality, positive role models, and positive family interaction delivered through HFLE, Positive Youth Development, and parenting education and services.
Outcome 4.2 Increased access to gender-sensitive, trauma-informed, and victim/survivor-centred care and support services for victims/survivors of all forms of gender-based violence.	Output 4.2.1 Multi-sectoral protocols and essential package of services implemented for the management of GBV cases.
	Output 4.2.2 Number of emergency shelters and transition homes for survivors of gender-based violence and their children increased.
	Output 4.2.3 Professional, free or affordable, trauma-informed, gender-sensitive, and victim/survivor-centred psychological counselling services made accessible to victims/survivors of gender-based violence and their children.
	Output 4.2.4. Effective case management for GBV survivors implemented countrywide.
	Output 4.2.5 Psychological counselling and behaviour change programmes provided for perpetrators of gender-based violence through legal mandate as well as other referral mechanisms.
	Output 4.2.6 Victims/survivors of gender-based violence supported in becoming economically independent of their abusers.
	Output 4.2.7 Survivor advocacy support systems strengthened.
Outcome 4.3. Increased access to justice for GBV survivors	Output 4.3.1 Capacity of the Judiciary strengthened to effectively manage GBV cases using rights-based, gender-sensitive, victim/survivor-centred approaches for GBV.
	Output 4.3.2 Rate of conviction improved in sexual and family violence cases.
	Output 4.3.3 Electronic data management strengthened through improved evidence-based decision-making, intervention design, data analytics, and case management.

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence	
Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender-based violence.	
Outcomes	Outputs
	Output 4.3.4 Legislation strengthened to provide for greater penalties for GBV cases and mandatory rehabilitation interventions for behaviour change.
	Output 4.3.5 Legal support services are free or affordable for victims/survivors of gender-based violence.

4.6.5 Power and Decision-Making

Women’s political participation and representation are important aspects of ensuring women’s human rights. Along with the right to vote, women ought to have the right to be equally represented in power and decision-making positions. In Belize, women comprise approximately half of the population. While there are gradual improvements in women’s access to technical positions within the public sector, Belize has struggled with increasing women’s leadership participation at the highest levels of decision-making. Currently, Belize has

no formal special measures to meet specific targets for increasing women’s political participation on an equal basis with men.

Issues of campaign financing, marketing and family and childcare responsibilities continue to act as barriers to women’s political participation and their access to leadership within the public and private sectors. This plan proposes to address these barriers through specific actions that will require public education, legislative reform, capacity building and advocacy action.

Priority Thematic Area 5: Women in Power & Decision Making	
Goal 5: Advance the equitable participation of women in leadership and political governance.	
Outcomes	Outputs
Outcome 5.1 Increased political representation of women in the House of Representatives, Senate, Cabinet, Municipal Councils and Village Councils.	Output 5.1.1 Number of women holding political office increased through the legislation of special measures, including quotas and campaign finance reform.
Outcome 5.2 Increased representation of women in executive and middle-management positions in	Output 5.2.1 Professional membership organizations and private businesses committed to gender balance in private sector leadership.

Priority Thematic Area 5: Women in Power & Decision Making	
Goal 5: Advance the equitable participation of women in leadership and political governance.	
Outcomes	Outputs
the public and private sectors.	Output 5.2.2 Women's appointments as Board Chairpersons, Chief Executive Officers and other leadership roles in public and quasi-government agencies increased.
Outcome 5.3 Women's capacity to advocate for, and participate in, power and decision-making strengthened.	Output 5.3.1 New and existing women's advocacy groups established/strengthened with support from government, donors, private sector and civil society.
	Output 5.3.2 Leadership programmes for women in the public and private sector strengthened.

4.6.6 Organizational Strengthening

The Theory of Change identifies the importance of building organizational support systems to enable the achievement of the cross-sectoral programme of the National Gender

Policy. Building on the experience of two previous National Gender Policies (2002 and 2013), this 2021-2030 Policy sets out to deliberately create systems that will allow for greater coordination, advocacy, capacity building, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation.

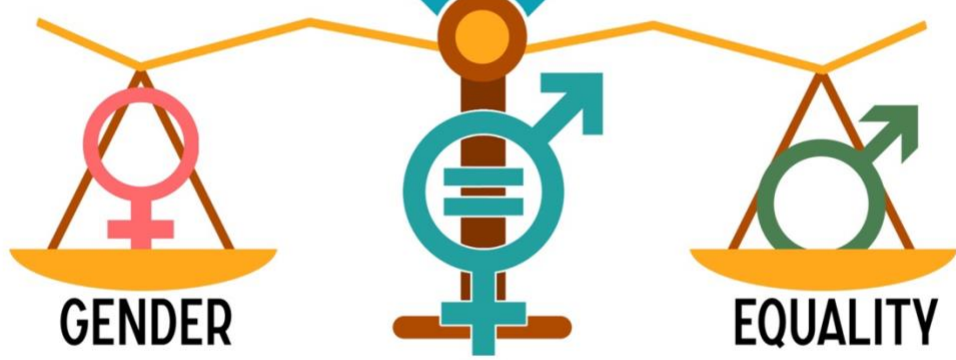
Pathway 2:

Organizational systems support the achievement of gender equality and equality and end discrimination against women and girls across the life course.

This pathway seeks to ensure that the National Women's Commission, including its multi-sectoral national and district committees, have the human and financial resource capacity to implement a set of integrated,

harmonized multi-sectoral interventions to achieve gender equity and equality and end discrimination against women and girls across the life course.

Priority Thematic Area 6: Organizational Systems Strengthening	
Goal 6: Organizational systems are established and strengthened to support the coordination, advocacy, capacity building, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming and gender programming.	
Outcomes	Outputs
Outcome 6.1 Increased national human and financial capacity for Gender Mainstreaming.	Output 6.1.1 The National Women’s Commission and Secretariat strengthened to support effective leadership in advancing gender equality, with particular attention to gender mainstreaming.
	Output 6.1.2 Multi-sectoral capacity for the coordination, advocacy, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender programming on current and emerging issues, including the National Gender Policy and the National Gender-Based Violence Action Plan.
	Output 6.1.3 Resources mobilized from government, donors and private sector to support greater gender programming, including the implementation of the National Gender Policy and the National Gender-Based Violence Action Plan.
	Output 6.1.4 A national multi-sectoral gender mainstreaming coordination mechanism is strengthened.
Outcome 6.2 Increased multi-sectoral government, civil society, private sector and public support for gender programming, including the implementation of the NGP and NGBVAP.	Output 6.2.1 A behaviour change communications strategy implemented to build support for gender programming, including the NGP and NGBVAP, among multi-sectoral implementing agencies, international partners, the private sector, the media and the general public.
	Output 6.2.2 Gender priorities reflected in national development plans and donors’ country development strategies and funding opportunities for Belize.
	Output 6.2.3 Private sector and CSO organizations engaged to provide financial and/or in-kind support for gender programming,
Outcome 6.3 Increased evidence-based policy and decision-making and adaptive management in gender programming.	Output 6.3.1 A monitoring and evaluation framework and plan implemented for gender programming.
	Output 6.3.2 Monitoring and evaluation reports produced on schedule to support increased gender equality.





5. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

The logical framework was developed based on (i) the evaluations of the previous NGP and NGBVAP; (ii) a desk review of logical frameworks and M&E Frameworks for relevant national plans; (iii) a series of technical sessions with working groups in each of the six programmatic areas comprising the NGP. A technical consultation to review the M&E Framework was also held with the NCFC Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group to obtain further information and guidance needed to develop a feasible and meaningful framework.

The following design considerations were critical in developing an achievable set of indicators for measuring implementation results.

The NGP and NGBVAP require multi-sectoral investment and collective responsibility. By extension then the monitoring of implementation results would also rely on close collaboration on data sharing and data management between implementation partners.

Establishing an effective M&E function within the NWC will be

essential for the successful implementation of the NGP and NGBVAP. The hiring of an M&E Officer early on in policy/plan implementation is included as an action in the first year of implementation. This staff member will be responsible for:

- (i) effecting collaboration with implementing partners and national data sources;
- (ii) drafting a comprehensive M&E Plan at the start of the NGP and NGBVAP implementation;
- (iii) compiling rapid assessments and desk reviews to establish some baseline data as indicated in the M&E Framework; and
- (iv) producing and sharing monitoring and evaluation reports.

The nascent state of M&E practice in Belize requires a modest approach to monitoring activities given that minimal public investment is made in monitoring activities and that the national development data infrastructure is still at an early stage of development. A recent GSDS Gap Assessment Report (July 2020) demonstrated this situation, pointing out that although the GSDS had adopted a comprehensive set of

indicators, less than 10% were collected by the end of the GSDS planning period. The report points to inadequate human resources, irregular collection, and lack of electronic data management.

The Belize National Statistical System, coordinated by the Statistical Institute of Belize, is the national infrastructure for tracking public sector data and therefore should be the primary tool for tracking gender-related indicators for the NGP and NGBVAP.

The M&E functions of the NWC should be carried out in close partnership with the NSS. Key sources of data and indicator definitions were the National Statistical System, the Belize Health Information System, and Belize Education Management Information System, and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS).

The strong guidance of the NCFC M&E Working Group was to use existing indicators and statistics that are regularly monitored by the line ministries and the Statistical Institute of Belize. The Group advised against incorporating indicators that would require broad-based, costly surveys, e.g., Knowledge, Attitudes, and Perception Surveys. This M&E Framework, therefore, includes many indicators that are already being tracked through national data collection efforts.

Opportunities offered by externally funded data collection exercises such as KAP surveys can be taken advantage of to build a wider evidence base for effective and responsive gender programming but have not been included in the M&E Framework since it is unlikely that they would be funded from the national budget.

The UN Spotlight Initiative in Belize is conducting several studies on GBV and other gender issues that can provide valuable information. When these studies are published, the NWC may choose to incorporate them into the M&E Framework.

In some cases, the existing indicators may need to be slightly adapted to facilitate a more in-depth analysis of the gender dimensions of development and discrimination, which is needed for evidence-based decision-making and resource allocation. Whereas some of the existing national data is disaggregated by sex, there are very few indicators for gender equality or gender responsiveness.

To measure improvements in the gender responsiveness of services, the NWC should work with line ministries to develop a simple Gender Responsiveness Index that can be applied to services in different sectors.

The M&E Framework, therefore, refers to such an index in the expectation that it can be defined early in the implementation of the NGP and NGBVAP. Refer to the full M&E Framework in Annex 2.

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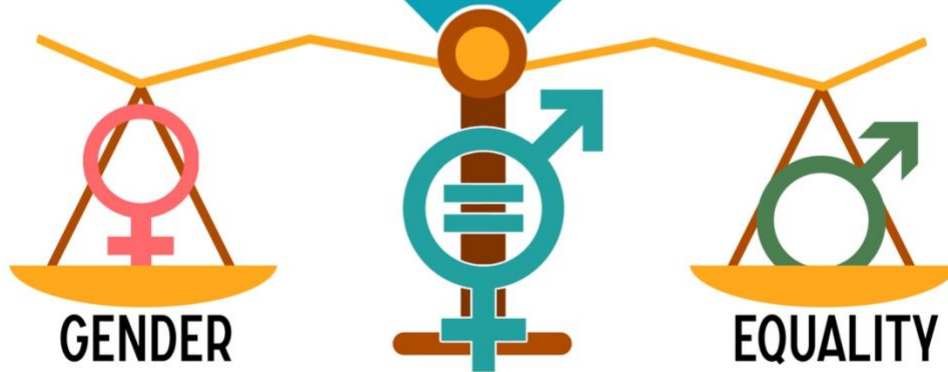
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ANNEXES



6. Annexes

ANNEX 1: IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

<i>Priority Thematic Area 1: Health</i>		
<i>Goal: Secure access to quality affordable gender-responsive health care services throughout the life course</i>		
<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
<i>Outcome 1.1 Reduced male and female morbidity and mortality from communicable and non-communicable diseases with high mortality rates, including COVID, using gender-responsive strategies.</i>		
<i>Output 1.1.1 Mortality rate from communicable and non-communicable diseases reduced, especially among youth, underserved populations and older persons.</i>		
1	Analyse gender differences in health seeking behaviours and health outcomes (morbidity and mortality) from communicable and non-communicable disease, including COVID-19, ensuring inclusion of youth, underserved populations, and older persons.	MOH PAHO, NWC, BFLA, NCA, NHI and NHI Clinics, CSOs
2	Implement a gender-responsive public education campaign, based on a comprehensive national strategy, targeting men and women with information on prevention, treatment, risk factors and complications of communicable and non-communicable diseases, as well as the linkages between non-communicable and communicable diseases, e.g., COVID.	MOH HECOPAB PAHO, NWC, BFLA, NCA, NHI and NHI Clinics, CSOs
3	Integrate gender responsive practices in provision of all prevention and treatment services through the public and private sectors, that consider the needs of persons across the life course, with particular focus on youth, underserved populations, and older persons.	MOH HECOPAB PAHO, NWC, BFLA, NCA, NHI and NHI Clinics, CSOs
4	Integrate gender specific and gender disaggregated indicators in health information and monitoring systems.	MOH Epi Unit (BHIS) NWC, NHI, CSOs, Human Right Observatories
<i>Output 1.1.2 Transmission of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and cancers from STIs, decreased with particular attention to youth, underserved populations and older persons.</i>		
1	Increase capacity to deliver gender responsive services in the prevention and clinical management of STIs and HIV (along with co-infections) at the community level and within the health and social sectors.	MOH, HECOPAB, NAC, NWC, MOE, MHDFIPA, CSOs (EYBM, CNET, Autism Belize, BAPDA, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam, PETAL, Our Circle, BFLA, YES), PAHO

Priority Thematic Area 1: Health

Goal: Secure access to quality affordable gender-responsive health care services throughout the life course

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
2 Expand comprehensive gender responsive STI and HIV education, testing, counselling, and prevention services targeting vulnerable and underserved populations (rural populations, men who have sex with men, sex workers, and young men and women aged 15 to 24 years, older persons, uniformed services, incarcerated populations, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, persons with mental illness, etc.).	MOH, HECOPAB, NAC	MOH, MOE, MHDFIPA, CSOs (BRC, EYBM, CNET, Autism Belize, BAPDA, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam, PETAL, Our Circle, BFLA, YES), UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, PAHO, BFLA
3 Implement a referral system for persons with cancers related to STIs and HIV, linked to an electronic national referral and counter-referral system.	MOH, NAC	BRC, Cancer Society, Cancer treatment centres, PAHO
4 Mainstream gender responsive approaches into the National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan.	NWC, NAC	MOH, MOE, MHDFIPA, CSOs (BRC, CNET, Autism Belize, BAPDA, EYBM, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam, PETAL, Our Circle, BFLA, YES), UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP

Outcome 1.2 Increased access to affordable, gender-responsive sexual and reproductive health information and services throughout the life course

Output 1.2.1: Affordable comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and services provided for persons of reproductive age, including adolescents.

1 Deliver tailored education programmes and services to adolescents, youths, and adults with particular attention to underserved populations, (including adult males, LGBT persons, older persons and sex workers) on SRH, STIs, safe sex practices, family planning and sexuality, based on specific barriers they face in accessing information and services in each geographic region.	MOH HECOPAB	CSOs (BRC, CNET, PETAL, Our Circle, Autism Belize, BAPDA, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam), BFLA, UNICEF
2 Engage men and boys countrywide in a series of community-based dialogues on masculinity, fatherhood, responsible sexual behaviours, caregiving, intimacy, healthy relationships, and peaceful communities.	NWC, HECOPAB	SCLAN, CSOs (BRC, PETAL, Our Circle, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam), BFLA, UNICEF, private sector, SCOUTS
3 Implement a gender responsive Adolescent Health Strategy using a holistic wellness approach that incorporates biological, sexual and mental health.	MoH - MCH	PAHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, BFLA, DYS, CSOs, (BRC, Autism Belize, BAPDA, Go Belize, PETAL, Our Circle, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam, BFLA, YES), private sector resources

Priority Thematic Area 1: Health

Goal: Secure access to quality affordable gender-responsive health care services throughout the life course

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
4 Implement a gender responsive National Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy and Strategic Plan (including the prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment for cervical cancer) with increased capacity for gender responsive service delivery across the life course, with particular attention to underserved populations and older persons at all levels of care including through community-based organizations.	MoH -MCH, HECOPAB	PAHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, BFLA, DYS, CSOs, (BRC, CNET, GoBelize, Autism Belize, BAPDA, PETAL, Our Circle, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam, BFLA, YES), private sector resources

Output 1.2.2: Awareness and management of male and female sexual health information and services for older persons, increased.

1 Develop a public awareness campaign to promote positive sexual health and rights for older men and women.	NCA, HECOPAB	PAHO, BFLA, NAC, MOH, MHDFIPA
2 Implement protocols in the public and private sectors on how to manage sexual health-related physical and mental health issues among older men and women, based specifically on the relevant sexual practices of older persons.	MOH, HECOPAB	NCA, PAHO, BFLA, Autism Belize, BAPDA, Belize Medical and Dental Association
3 Educate older men and women on what physical and mental health changes occur during the aging process (from 45 years and older) and the impact this has on sexual health, including the effects that prescription medicines (taken for non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and cancer) can have on their sexual health and on the risk for sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and cancers of the reproductive system.	MOH, HECOPAB, Internal Medicine	Hospital social workers, HECOPAB with MH Dept., Autism Belize, BAPDA, MCH, Specialists, NCA

Priority Thematic Area 1: Health

Goal: Secure access to quality affordable gender-responsive health care services throughout the life course

Objectives	Lead Agency	Implementation Partners	
Outcome 1.3 Increased availability of gender responsive mental health and substance abuse treatment services to all persons, with particular attention underserved populations, adolescents, youth, and older persons.			
Output 1.3.1 Gender sensitive approaches to mental health care provided to all persons, with particular attention to adolescents, youth, underserved populations, and older persons.			
1	Conduct a gender analysis of mental health data in each geographic region to identify gender specific patterns and needs, using specific data collection formats and strategies agreed upon by mental health service providers in the public and private sectors to ensure confidentiality of client information.	MOH, Mental Health Department & PPU	Private sector (hospitals, counsellors), MHA, Min. Human Dev, Autism Belize, BAPDA, Mind Health Connect
2	Incorporate evidence-based, human rights based, gender responsive mental health strategies into all new or updated legislation, policies and programmes implemented within the public and private health sectors as well as through community-based organizations (including the clarification of roles and responsibilities of mental health providers at the various levels of care, coordination mechanisms, and a client referral pathway, linked to a national referral and counter-referral system.)	MOH, Mental Health Department,	MHDFIPA, MHA, PAHO, Autism Belize, BAPDA, Mind Health Connect
3	Build capacity among psychiatric nurses, psychologists, mental health therapists, school counsellors, community health workers, police officers and first responders on gender-sensitive approaches to delivering mental health care, including Psychological First Aid and rights-based crisis intervention protocols, ensuring ongoing and institutionalized training that is evidence-based and results oriented, with particular attention to the needs of, adolescents, youth, underserved populations, and older persons.	NWC	MOH, HECOPAB, Police, MHA, Autism Belize, Mind Health Connect, BAPDA, private service providers

Priority Thematic Area 1: Health

Goal: Secure access to quality affordable gender-responsive health care services throughout the life course

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
<i>Output 1.3.2: Gender responsive residential, outpatient and community-based substance abuse services made available and affordable to all persons, with particular attention to adolescents, youth, underserved populations, and older persons.</i>		
1 Conduct a gender analysis of substance abuse data and patterns of behaviour that takes into account the correlation with communicable and non-communicable diseases, road traffic accidents, and GBV.	MOH, NDACC	Community Policing, MHDFIPA, MOE, school counsellors, CSOs, Rehab treatment facilities, Support groups (AA, Al anon), PAHO, OAS/CICAD, UNODC, CARICOM
2 Adopt a National Substance Abuse Policy that is gender responsive and that takes into account the correlation with communicable and non-communicable diseases, road traffic accidents, and GBV.	MOH, NDACC	Community Policing, MHDFIPA, MOE, school counsellors, CSOs, Rehab treatment facilities, Support groups (AA, Al anon), PAHO, OAS/CICAD, UNODC, CARICOM
3 Implement gender responsive substance abuse protocols and services for prevention, detoxification, rehabilitation, and community-based support group programmes, including minimum standards of care for rehabilitation treatment facilities to ensure gender equity and strengthen the licensing and accreditation of these facilities.	MOH, NDACC	Community Policing, MHDFIPA, MOE, school counsellors, CSOs, Rehab treatment facilities, Support groups (AA, Al anon), PAHO, OAS/CICAD, UNODC, CARICOM
4 Build capacity among substance abuse educators, health professionals (including mental health providers), community health workers, police officers, school counsellors, social workers and community-based organizations in the application of gender-responsive substance abuse protocols.	MOH, HECOPAB, NDACC	Community Policing, MHDFIPA, MOE, school counsellors, CSOs, Rehab treatment facilities, Support groups (AA, Al Anon), PAHO, OAS/CICAD, UNODC, CARICOM

Priority Thematic Area 2: Education for Life and Lifelong Learning

Goal 2: Eliminate Gender-Based Discrimination in Education

<i>Objectives</i>		<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
<i>Outcome 2.1: Increased girls and women’s enrolment in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and other non-traditional educational programs.</i>			
<i>Output 2.1.1. STEM concepts incorporated into the Primary Education Curriculum.</i>			
1	Conduct analysis on gender bias in the design and delivery of science, technology, and mathematics subjects in primary school.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, primary schools, school management authorities, Pathlight, BNTU, IDB, JICA
2	Incorporate gender sensitive technological, digital, and scientific literacy into the curriculum.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, primary schools, school management authorities, Pathlight, IDB, JICA, telecommunication providers
3	Build capacity among principals and teachers in the delivery of a gender responsive primary education curriculum that includes foundational STEM concepts.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, primary schools, school management authorities, Pathlight, IDB, JICA
<i>Output 2.1.2 Gender balance achieved in enrolment in STEM Programmes and other non-traditional education programs (at the secondary school level, ITVET and tertiary education level)</i>			
1	Identify and address barriers to girls and women’s enrolment in STEM programmes and other non-traditional subject areas at the secondary, ITVET and tertiary education levels.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, Secondary schools, ITVETs, tertiary education institutions, IDB, JICA
2	Create gender responsive STEM and other non-traditional education programmes offered at the secondary, ITVET and tertiary education levels.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, Secondary schools, ITVETs, tertiary education institutions, Pathlight, IDB, JICA
3	Mainstream gender responsive STEM subjects into the upper high school curriculum, ITVETS and tertiary education institutions.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, Secondary schools, ITVETs, tertiary education institutions, Pathlight, IDB, JICA
4	Implement a culturally sensitive behaviour change strategy to increase girls' and women's enrolment in and completion of STEM and non-traditional technical subject areas.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, MHD, Secondary schools, ITVETs, SCLAN, tertiary education institutions, IDB, JICA, Building People

Priority Thematic Area 2: Education for Life and Lifelong Learning

Goal 2: Eliminate Gender-Based Discrimination in Education

<i>Objectives</i>		<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
			Movement, Maya Women Solar Engineers
5	Award at least 40% of government-based and government-influenced scholarships in the fields of STEM and other non-traditional areas awarded to girls and women.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, Secondary schools, ITVETs, tertiary education institutions, IDB, JICA
6	Implement strategies to achieve greater gender balance in the enrolment in, and completion of, programmes traditionally dominated by girls and women.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, Secondary schools, ITVETs, tertiary education institutions, IDB, JICA
<i>Outcome 2.2: Increased male achievement and completion of primary, secondary, and tertiary education.</i>			
<i>Output 2.2.1. Post-primary education advancement and completion rate of boys increased.</i>			
1	Identify barriers to male engagement, achievement and transitioning through the education system from primary through to post-secondary, with a special focus on boys 12 to 16 years old.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, NCFC, UNICEF
2	Implement comprehensive, evidence-based strategies and services to increase males' post-primary education achievement and attainment.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, NCFC, UNICEF
3	Attract more men to the teaching profession, especially in urban primary schools.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, NCFC, BNTU, UNICEF, SCLAN, Education Institutions
4	Increase offerings for tertiary education and vocational programmes that are attractive to males.	MOE	Tertiary education institutions
<i>Outcome 2.3: Increased girls' and women's participation in arts, physical education, and sports.</i>			
<i>Output 2.3.1 Gender responsive arts and physical education programmes implemented at all primary and secondary schools.</i>			
1	Implement strategies to address gender barriers to meaningful participation in year-round arts and physical education at the primary and secondary school levels.	MOE	National Sports Council, NICH, civil society agencies (e.g., TIDE, Estevan Cup (FBO))
2	Build capacity among teachers and sports coaches to deliver gender responsive arts and physical education curricula.	MOE	National Sports Council, NICH, civil society agencies (e.g., TIDE, Estevan Cup (FBO))

Priority Thematic Area 2: Education for Life and Lifelong Learning

Goal 2: Eliminate Gender-Based Discrimination in Education

<i>Objectives</i>		<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
3	Implement evidence-based strategies to increase the participation of girls in national and regional sports competitions.	MOE	National Sports Council, CODICADER, civil society (e.g., TIDE)
Output 2.3.2 Girls and women's participation in sports at all levels, including the elite level, increased with support from Sports Federations.			
1	Incorporate gender responsive strategies into a new National Sports Strategic Plan developed in collaboration with sports federations and associations.	National Sports Council	Sports federations and associations
2	Mobilize technical support and funding, through the sports federations and associations, to strengthen girls' and women's capacity to excel at all levels of sporting competition, including the elite level.	National Sports Council	Sports federations and associations
3	Implement strategies to achieve gender balance in participation in coaching courses.	National Sports Council	Sports federations and associations
4	Increase percentage of secondary and tertiary education sports scholarships awarded to adolescent girls and women.	MOE, National Sports Council	Sports federations and associations, Bilateral cooperation
Outcome 2.4: Increased legal protection for all persons from gender-based discrimination in the education system.			
Output 2.4.1 Rights-based protections against gender-based discrimination incorporated into anti-discrimination laws, Education Rules, and primary and secondary school policies.			
1	Update legislative framework and Education Rules to offer greater protection of human rights and protection against gender discrimination in the education system.	MOE	AG Ministry, NWC, NGGBVC, BNTU, NCFC, UNICEF, CSOs
2	Implement a communications strategy, targeting education management, principals, teachers, students, and other education stakeholders, to build awareness of legislative frameworks that protect all persons in the education system from gender-based discrimination.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, BNTU, NCFC, UNICEF, CSOs
3	Promote the adoption of model primary and secondary school policies (using best practices) reflecting the legal protections against gender-based discrimination, developed in consultation with the Belize National Teachers Unions.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, BNTU, NCFC, UNICEF

Priority Thematic Area 2: Education for Life and Lifelong Learning

Goal 2: Eliminate Gender-Based Discrimination in Education

<i>Objectives</i>		<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
4	Incorporate legal protections against gender-based discrimination into principals and teachers' contracts and in student handbooks.	MOE	Primary and secondary schools, school management authorities, BNTU
<i>Output 2.4.2. Legal representation for victims of gender-based discrimination in the education system increased.</i>			
1	Conduct a public education campaign to increase support for protection against gender discrimination in the education system.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, BNTU, BSCA, NCFC, UNICEF CSOs (YES, YWCA, UNIBAM, PETAL, Our Circle)
2	Promote collaboration among human rights advocacy agencies, the Judiciary, and the Ministry of Education to increase documentation of violations and enforcement of laws that protect against gender-based discrimination.	MOE	NWC, NGGBVC, BNTU, NCFC, UNICEF CSOs (YES, YWCA, UNIBAM, PETAL, Our Circle)
3	Sensitize the Judiciary and Bar Association on gender-based discrimination in the education system.	MOE	AG Ministry, Family, Magistrate and Supreme Court, NWC, NGGBVC, NCFC, UNICEF
4	Establish free or affordable legal services for victims of gender-based discrimination in the education system.	Legal Aid Centre, AG Ministry	CSOs (YES, YWCA, UNIBAM, PETAL, Our Circle)

Priority Thematic Area 3: Wealth and Employment Creation

Goal: Empower women through creation of economic opportunities in urban and rural areas.

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
<i>Outcome 3.1 Increased employment rate of women in urban and rural areas.</i>		
<i>Output 3.1.1 Viable industries developed/expanded to provide gender responsive employment opportunities for women from urban and rural area.</i>		
1 Identify issues (including relocation, child care, language competence, cultural barriers, literacy, numeracy, etc.) that women face in accessing employment opportunities, with particular attention to marginalized groups.	NWC	Beltraide, Min. of Labour, ILO
2 Promote investment in new and existing industries (e.g., BPO, solar energy, culture and creative industries) and in non-traditional sectors (agriculture, fisheries) that provide job opportunities for women in urban and rural areas, with particular attention to socioeconomically disadvantaged women.	Min. of Trade and Investment	NWC, Beltraide, Municipal Bodies, BSCAP, BCSP, BAVIA, MIAB
<i>Output 3.1.2 Women's access to job opportunities increased.</i>		
1 Conduct gender-sensitive recruitment campaigns targeting women to fill available job opportunities.	Min. of Labour	NWC, Beltraide, Municipal Bodies, Min. of Rural Dev., Village Councils
2 Conduct job training for women (with stipends where needed) that builds personal development, literacy and marketable, industry specific skills to fill identified needs in the job market.	Beltraide	NWC, Min. of Labour
3 Expand the Employment Services System to serve as a national clearinghouse for information on job training opportunities, available jobs, and job-seekers, which is accessible to a comprehensive network of job training providers (including academia, government and non-government agencies), employers, and job-seekers.	Min. of Labour	Beltraide, NWC, ILO
4 Provide public education to women on the availability and use of the ESS, with particular attention to unemployed and underemployed women.	Min. of Labour	NWC

Priority Thematic Area 3: Wealth and Employment Creation

Goal: Empower women through creation of economic opportunities in urban and rural areas.

	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
5	Provide free, affordable or subsidized child care and after-school care services for working women, particularly socioeconomically disadvantaged women and women who are just entering or re-entering the formal labour force.	Min. of Trade and Investment	NWC, WFSO, Beltraide
<i>Outcome 3.2 Increased women's entrepreneurship.</i>			
<i>Output 3.2.1 Women's access to local and/or international markets for their business products and services increased.</i>			
1	Conduct an assessment of business owned or co-owned by women to determine the barriers to women's businesses and their particular needs for greater access.	BCCI	NWC, ILO, Min. of Labour, Beltraide
2	Implement evidence-based strategies to improve the quality of products and services to market standards for women's businesses.	Beltraide	Min. of Trade and Investment, NWC, WFSO
3	Implement evidence-based strategies to overcome specific geographic, cultural, market-based, logistical, economic, social and financial obstacles to women's access to local and/or international markets.	Beltraide	Min. of Trade and Investment, NWC, WFSO, MinAgriculture, MoL, WFSO
4	Secure markets that favour women-owned businesses including niche markets (culture and creative industries, solar energy, fisheries, etc.) and markets that pay premiums for sustainably produced products and services.	Beltraide	Min. of Trade and Investment, NWC, WFSO, BSCAP, BCSP, BAVIA, MIAB
<i>Output 3.2.2 Financial inclusion/participation of women through credit unions or banks increased.</i>			
1	Conduct an assessment of women's saving, borrowing, banking and investment practices and barriers to financial inclusion to develop a suite of financial services targeting women including non-traditional collateral.	DFC	National Credit Union League, NWC, WFSO, ILO, IDB
2	Implement gender responsive, evidence-based strategies to overcome particular barriers to women's financial inclusion in the credit union and banking sectors.	Central Bank	DFC, National Credit Union League, NWC, WFSO, ILO, IDB

Priority Thematic Area 3: Wealth and Employment Creation

Goal: Empower women through creation of economic opportunities in urban and rural areas.

	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
3	Create low interest and limited collateral credit facilities within existing government lending institutions for women micro and small entrepreneurs, prioritizing unemployed women and women-owned start-ups.	Min. of Finance	DFC, National Credit Union League, National Bank, NWC, WFSD
4	Provide start-up grants through earmarked for micro and small businesses owned by women.	WFSD, Beltraide	DFC, National Bank, National Credit Union League, NWC, WFSD
5	Establish greater linkages between banks, credit unions and development agencies to ensure women's access to development financing opportunities, including in ICT, agriculture, fisheries and other growth industries.	WFSD, Beltraide, NWC	DFC, National Bank, National Credit Union League
<i>Output 3.2.3 Increased success rate of businesses owned by women.</i>			
1	Offer affordable (or free), gender-sensitive business management short courses regularly to women entrepreneurs (in the formal and informal economy) and recipients of micro and small business grants and loans.	Beltraide, WFSD, DYS, CSOs	NWC, IDB
2	Offer business mentorship and advice for women entrepreneurs in the formal and informal sectors to foster confidence and promote successful practices.	BCCI, Beltraide, DYS, CSOs	WFSD, NWC
3	Establish government and community-based business incubator spaces in two municipalities for women micro and small entrepreneurs in the formal and informal sectors.	BCCI, Beltraide, DYS, CSOs	DYS, WFSD, DFC, National Bank
<i>Outcome 3.3 Increased women's ownership of land and housing.</i>			
<i>Output 3.3.1 Access to affordable and government-subsidized land and quality standard housing by women increased.</i>			
1	Implement a campaign to encourage women to become landowners and homeowners.	Min. of Housing, Min. of Natural Resources	WFSD, NWC, Hand-in-Hand Ministries
2	Re-engineer land application processes to make them gender-sensitive and easier for women to access.	Min. of Natural Resources	WFSD, NWC

Priority Thematic Area 3: Wealth and Employment Creation

Goal: Empower women through creation of economic opportunities in urban and rural areas.

<i>Objectives</i>		<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
3	Prioritize women's access to affordable land and housing, with particular preference given to single mothers.	Min. of Housing, Min. of Natural Resources	WFSD, NWC, Hand-in-Hand
4	Ensure that at least 50% of new land leases and government subsidized housing are granted to women.	Min. of Housing, Min. of Natural Resources	WFSD, NWC
5	Provide fiscal incentives to businesses and lending institutions which contribute to the construction and financing of affordable housing for women.	Min. of Housing, Min. of Finance	WFSD, NWC
<i>Outcome 3.4 Legislative framework to support women's economic empowerment strengthened.</i>			
<i>Output 3.4.1 Legislative framework expanded to account for economic contribution of unpaid labour.</i>			
1	Conduct an evaluation of women's unpaid work to the economy.	NWC, WFSD	ILO, IDB
2	Enact legislation to assign fair value to women's unpaid work, including access to social security benefits (including non-contributory pensions) and other labour-related benefits.	NWC, WFSD, Min. of Human Dev	Min. of Labour, ILO, IDB,
<i>Output 3.4.2 Legislative framework strengthened to achieve equality for women in employment.</i>			
1	Strengthen legislation to guarantee equal pay to women for work of equal value.	Min. of Labour	BCCI, NWC
2	Enact Equal Opportunities Bill to protect women from gender-based discrimination in the work place.	Min. of Labour	BCCI, NWC
3	Enact the Occupational Safety and Health Bill with particular attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of women.	Min. of Labour	BCCI, NWC

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
<i>Outcome 4.1 Reduced incidence of all forms of gender-based violence (sexual violence, commercial sexual exploitation, human trafficking, domestic or family violence).</i>		
<i>Output 4.1.1 Public education and behaviour change communications campaign implemented, tailored to different target groups including victims/survivors, adolescents, youth, media, service providers and the general public.</i>		
1	NWC	HECOPAB, WFSO, YES, BFLA, NCA, PETAL, NCFC, UNFPA, UNICEF, media houses, telecommunications service providers
2	NWC	MOH, WFSO, BFLA, YES, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam, PETAL, Our Circle, NCFC, UNFPA, UNICEF, Police Dept., Judiciary, NCA
3	NWC	SCLAN, UNFPA, BFLA, UNIBAM, NAC
4	NWC	SCLAN, UNFPA, BFLA, UNIBAM, NAC
5	NWC	Media houses
6	NWC	BBA, Min of Human Affairs, Cable Operators Association, media houses, MOH, WFSO, YES, UNIBAM, PETAL, Our Circle
<i>Output 4.1.2 GBV victims/survivors empowered to report on, seek care for, and leave violent situations.</i>		
1	NWC/ DGGBVC	POWA, Tikkun Olam, TMWC, NAVCO, DAVCO, Community

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

Objectives		Lead Agency	Implementation Partners
			Health Workers, Rural Health Nurses
2	Strengthen and expand the 24-hour GBV hotline countrywide to provide emergency assistance to GBV victims/survivors in crisis.	Police Dept. (DVU)	NWC, WFSD
Output 4.1.3 Education on gender awareness, gender equality, positive role models, and positive family interaction delivered through HFLE, Positive Youth Development, and parenting education and services.			
1	Engage with education stakeholders to identify and address barriers to full implementation of culturally relevant and age-appropriate HFLE and PYD curricula.	MOE	Primary and secondary schools, school management authorities, BAPSS, PTOs, NWC, civil society
2	Establish partnerships between schools and civil society organizations to use community outreach officers to deliver gender awareness topics of the HFLE and PYD curricula in schools, where appropriate and necessary.	MOE/NWC	WFSD, POWA, BFLA, BAPSS
3	Incorporate self-defence instruction into the physical education curriculum for girls and boys in primary and secondary schools.	MOE	Primary and secondary schools, BAPSS
4	Expand the delivery of the NCFC parenting education manual at the community level through government, civil society and faith-based organization s parental support programmes.	NCFC	COMPAR, Roving Caregivers, BFLA, YES, HECOPAB, YWCA, UNICEF
Outcome 4.2 Increased access to gender-sensitive, trauma-informed, and victim/survivor-centred care and support services for victims/survivors of all forms of gender-based violence.			
Output 4.2.1 Multi-sectoral protocols and essential package of services implemented for the management of GBV cases.			
1	Train police officers, health care workers, social workers and other service providers in application of the multisectoral protocols and essential package of services.	NWC, UNFPA, Spotlight Initiative	WFSD, Police Dept., HECOPAB, YES, BFLA
2	Train police officers, health care workers, social workers and other services providers in effective, victim/survivor-centred, trauma informed, gender-sensitive standards and practice.	NWC, UNFPA	WFSD, , MOH, hospitals and clinics, Police Dept., HECOPAB, YES, BFLA

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

Objectives		Lead Agency	Implementation Partners
3	Deliver essential package of services to GBV victims/survivors.	NWC, UNFPA, UNICEF	WFSB, MOH, hospitals and clinics, Police Dept., HECOPAB, YES, BFLA, Judiciary
4	Establish a pilot Crisis Intervention Centre for coordinated response to all forms of GBV cases.	Police Dept.	NWC, WFSB, Police Dept., HECOPAB, YES, BFLA, UNFPA, UNICEF
5	Implement an effective referral and counter-referral system (including in emergency settings).	NWC	NWC, WFSB, Police Dept., HECOPAB, YES, BFLA, UNFPA, UNICEF

Output 4.2.2 Number of emergency shelters and transition homes for victims/survivors of gender-based violence and their children increased.

1	Establish certification standards that govern the operation of all emergency shelters and transition homes.	MHDFIPA	NWC, WFSB, Haven House, Hope Haven, House of Dorcas, Mary Open Doors, YES, BFLA, UNFPA, UNICEF
2	Establish at least one government or non-government emergency shelter in each district with a full suite of services for victims/survivors. Three already exist countrywide. (House of Dorcas, Mary Open Doors, Haven House)	MHDFIPA	NWC, WFSB, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, House of Dorcas, YES, BFLA, UNFPA, UNICEF
3	Establish at least two government or non-government well-resourced halfway houses countrywide with accommodations for families, adult women and adolescents.	MHDFIPA	NWC, WFSB, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, House of Dorcas, YES, BFLA, UNFPA, UNICEF
4	Train a cadre of residential care givers and social workers to provide services at emergency shelters and halfway houses.	MHDFIPA	NWC, WFSB, BTEC, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, House of Dorcas, YES, BFLA, UNFPA, UNICEF

Output 4.2.3 Professional, free or affordable, trauma-informed, gender-sensitive, and victim/survivor-centred psychological counselling services made accessible to victims/survivors of gender-based violence and their children.

1	Train school principals, teachers, school counsellors, peer helpers, parents, and school wardens in identifying, responding to, and making referrals for student GBV cases, including cyber related sexual crimes (as part of an early warning	NWC/WFSB	Primary and secondary schools, school counsellors, association, Pathlight, PTOs, BFLA, BAPSS
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Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
system) with structured protocols for roles and responsibilities.		
2 Prioritize gender-sensitive, trauma-informed counselling as an area for education development, including through government-sponsored scholarships.	MOE	MOH, MHA
3 Increase the cadre of professional counsellors employed to provide free or affordable services to GBV victims/survivors.	MOH	MHA, MOE
4 Implement curricula on trauma-informed, gender-sensitive and victim/survivor-centred practices for counselling professionals offering services to GBV survivors.	MOH	MHA, Mind Health Connect
5 Develop a mental health referral and counter-referral system that details the roles and responsibilities of mental health service providers in the management of GBV cases at the different levels of care (primary, secondary, tertiary)	MOH	MHA, Mind Health Connect

Output 4.2.4. Effective case management for GBV survivors implemented countrywide.

1 Evaluate the effectiveness of existing information systems (including FAMCare, CIMS, BHIS, GBVSS) in the management of GBV cases to provide recommendations for a harmonized GBV surveillance system.	MHDFIPA	YES, WFSO, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, POWA, BFLA, Police Dept.
2 Build capacity in GBV case management, including the use of adequate case management software, for social workers and specifically for GBV case workers in both government and civil society agencies.	MHDFIPA, WFSO	YES, WFSO, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, House of Dorcas, POWA, BFLA, Police Dept.
3 Establish protocols for intra and inter-agency case management, including data access and data sharing agreements for use of case management software.	MHDFIPA, MOH and Police Dept.	YES, WFSO, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, House of Dorcas, POWA, BFLA, Police Dept.

Output 4.2.5 Psychological counselling and behaviour change programmes provided for perpetrators of gender-based violence through legal mandate as well as other referrals mechanisms.

1 Establish court-mandated and voluntary community-based Batterer Intervention Programmes including support services to address conflict management, anger management,	AG Ministry, Family and Magistrate Courts	NWC, NGGBVC, WFSO, UNFPA
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Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

Objectives		Lead Agency	Implementation Partners
	community mediation, and substance abuse, in each district.		
2	Implement behaviour change programmes for GBV perpetrators within the rehabilitation programmes at the Belize Central Prison, Belize Youth Hostel and Wagner's Youth Facility.	Prison, Youth Hostel, Wagner's Youth Facility	NWC, NGGBVC, NCFC, WFSD, UNICEF, UNFPA
3	Enforce mandatory individual psychological counselling for convicted GBV perpetrators.	Family and Magistrate Court	NWC, NGGBVC

Output 4.2.6 Victims/Survivors of gender based violence supported in becoming economically independent of their abusers.

1	Sponsor job training and entrepreneurship opportunities for GBV survivors (with stipends where needed) who lack financial independence.	WFSD	Beltraide, Min. of Labour
2	Provide job seeking support to GBV victims/survivors, including registration into the Employment Services System, resume preparation, interview preparation, etc.	WFSD	Beltraide, Min. of Labour
3	Assist victims/survivors in basic financial management and inclusion including opening savings accounts, domestic budgeting, etc.	WFSD	Beltraide, Credit Union League
4	Assist victims/survivors to become home and land owners, where appropriate.	WFSD	Min. of Housing, Min. of Natural Resources
5	Make referrals for GBV victims/survivors to access social safety net programmes, as needed.	WFSD	Min. of Housing, NHI

Output 4.2.7 Survivor advocacy support systems strengthened.

1	Strengthen community-based and civil society advocacy support systems.	NWC/ NGGBVC	BFLA, POWA, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, House of Dorcas, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam, PETAL, Our Circle, YES
2	Improve coordination between government and non-government advocacy support systems for GBV survivors.	NWC/ NGGBVC	BFLA, POWA, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, House

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
		of Dorcas, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam, PETAL, Our Circle, YES

Outcome 4.3. Increased access to justice for GBV survivors

Output 4.3.1 Capacity of the Judiciary strengthened to effectively manage GBV cases using rights-based, gender-sensitive, victim/survivor-centred approaches for GBV.

1	Provide training for magistrates, judges, and police officers in Belizean legislation, policies and national commitments regarding GBV.	NWC	Min. of Foreign Affairs, AG Ministry, Judiciary, Police Dept, NCFC, UNFPA, UNICEF,
2	Provide training for magistrates and judges in management of GBV cases using gender-sensitive, trauma-informed approaches.	NWC,	Judiciary, Police Dept, NCFC, MHA, UNFPA, UNICEF,
3	Provide training for magistrates and judges in gender equality protocols for judicial officers.		Judiciary, Police Dept, NCFC, MHA, UNFPA, UNICEF,
4	Re-engineer institutional processes to facilitate gender-sensitive, trauma-informed, and victim/survivor-centred family and magistrate court case management to GBV survivors countrywide. Review the law (3 days), review existing procedures on paper,(3), observe the processes in each court countrywide, interview victims, magistrates, MHD, lawyers, judges, social workers (5 days per district + 5 extra for Belize = 35; design (10 days) + validation (5) + training(5 days)).	NWC	Judiciary, Police Dept, NCFC, MHA, UNFPA, UNICEF,

Output 4.3.2 Rate of conviction improved in sexual and family violence cases.

1	<i>Gather timely, accurate and complete forensic evidence related to sexual and family violence, including forensic evidence for physical crime as well as cyber sexual crimes.</i>	<i>Police Dept.</i>	<i>MOH</i>
2	<i>Strengthen Police Department capacity in preparing cases for prosecution.</i>	<i>Police Dept.</i>	<i>DPP</i>
3	<i>Engage DPP in identifying areas for improvement to effect greater conviction rates</i>	<i>DPP</i>	<i>AG Ministry, Police Dept., WFSD, NWC</i>
4	<i>Retain an adequate cadre of skilled lawyers as public prosecutors.</i>	<i>DPP</i>	<i>AG Ministry, Police Dept.</i>

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

Objectives		Lead Agency	Implementation Partners
5	<i>Enforce performance standards for magistrates and judges to facilitate the timely disposal of cases.</i>	AG Ministry	<i>Family and Magistrate Courts</i>
Output 4.3.3 Electronic data management strengthened through improved evidence-based decision-making, intervention design, data analytics, and case management.			
1	Increase the quality and completeness of GBV data to allow for greater analysis based on gender, survivor and perpetrator profiles, motive, relationship between survivor and perpetrators, linkages to other crimes or criminal and behavioural factors.	MHDFIPA, WFSD	MOH, Police Dept, BFLA, POWA, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam, PETAL, Our Circle, YWCA
2	Establish a synchronized GBV surveillance system through multi-sectoral data management and information sharing across the social sector, security sector and judiciary to manage GBV-related data for improved decision-making and analysis.	NWC	MOH, Police Dept, Family and Magistrate Courts, BCO
3	Implement data sharing agreements between social sector, security sector and judiciary to facilitate integrated data management and reporting.	MHDFIPA, WFSD	MOH, Police Dept, BFLA, POWA, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam, PETAL, Our Circle, YWCA, BCO
4	Fully automate the court case management system incorporating GBV-related data fields and linkages to other databases in the criminal justice and social sectors.	AG Ministry	Family and Magistrate Courts
Output 4.3.4 Legislation strengthened to provide for greater penalties for GBV cases and mandatory rehabilitation interventions for behaviour change.			
1	Legally mandate specific protocols for data management and data sharing for GBV cases.	AG Ministry	NWC, NGGBVC, NCFC, UNFPA, UNICEF
2	Modernize Domestic Violence Act and the Sexual Harassment Act.	AG Ministry	NWC, NGGBVC, UNFPA, UNICEF
3	Advocate for the passage of the draft Equal Opportunities Bill.	NWC, NCFC	NAC, MHDFIPA UNIBAM
4	Develop regulations for the Criminal Code to operationalize the Sexual Offenders Registry	AG Ministry	NWC, NGGBVC, NCFC, UNFPA, UNICEF

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

<i>Objectives</i>		<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementation Partners</i>
	(including for offenders of cyber sexual crimes)and address other legislative gaps in sexual crimes.		
5	Review and amend the Evidence Act to offer better protection to victims and witnesses and to align it with pending anti-discrimination legislation.	AG Ministry	NWC, NGGBVC, NCFC, UNFPA, UNICEF
<i>Output 4.3.5 Legal support services are free or affordable for victims/survivors of gender-based violence.</i>			
1	Expand access to free legal services for geographic communities and population groups most vulnerable to GBV.	NWC	AG Ministry, Bar Association of Belize, BFLA, POWA, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam, PETAL, Our Circle, YWCA, YES
2	Provide continuous free community-based legal education on topics related to gender rights and GBV, targeting geographic communities and population groups most vulnerable to GBV.	NWC	AG Ministry, Bar Association of Belize, BFLA, POWA, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam, PETAL, Our Circle, YWCA, YES
3	Strengthen agencies that advocate for gender rights and human rights to expand legal support services to their client base.	NWC, NGGBVC	BFLA, POWA, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, UNIBAM, Tikkun Olam, PETAL, Our Circle, YWCA, YES

Priority Thematic Area 5: Women in Power & Decision Making

Goal: Advance the equitable participation of women in leadership and political governance.

	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementing Partners</i>
<i>Outcome 5.1 Increased political representation of women in the House of Representatives, Senate, Cabinet, Municipal Councils and Village Councils</i>			
<i>Output 5.1.1 Number of women holding political office increased through the legislation of special measures, including quotas and campaign finance reform.</i>			
1	Establish a multi-partisan technical working group charged with driving legislative reforms, policy and practice to increase women's political participation and representation, supported by government, NCFC, NGOs, private sector, civil society, faith-based organizations, political parties, the general public and especially a broad representative cross-section of women.	Attorney General, Ministry of Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform	Women's Groups, Political Parties, NWC, NCFC Policy and Legislation Sub-committee
2	Conduct communications campaign to build a constituency of support for legislative amendments to promote gender equality in political representation.	NWC	Women's Groups, Political Parties, NWC
3	Enact legislation to establish special measures to promote gender equality in politics, including quotas, selecting women candidates in winnable constituencies, and increased public exposure of women candidates, among others.	Attorney General, Ministry of Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform	NWC
4	Update existing recommendations relating to campaign finance reform with reference to new UN CAC recommendations, Political Reform Commission Report (2000) and the NWC's Situational Analysis of Gender and Politics in Belize (2012).	Attorney General, Ministry of Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform	
5	Enact legislation, amendments, and regulations needed to implement campaign financing reforms with particular attention to ensuring equitable allocation of campaign resources to women, including consideration of state-sponsored campaign financing for women.	Attorney General, Ministry of Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform	

Priority Thematic Area 5: Women in Power & Decision Making

Goal: Advance the equitable participation of women in leadership and political governance.

<i>Objectives</i>		<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementing Partners</i>
6	Conduct nationwide public education and training on the contents and implications of the new campaign financing bill.	NWC	United Nations, Good governance advocacy actors, Ministry of Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform, CiWIL
<i>Outcome 5.2 Increased representation of women in executive and middle-management positions in the public and private sectors</i>			
<i>Output 5.2.1 Professional membership organizations and private businesses committed to gender balance in private sector leadership.</i>			
1	Recruit more women into professional membership and business membership associations	NWC	Professional and business membership associations
2	Promote gender balance in selection of leadership positions in professional and business membership organizations	NWC	Professional and business membership associations
3	Engage with private sector to promote gender balance hiring and promotion practices, including promotion to middle and executive management	NWC	Women's advocacy groups Professional and business membership associations
4	Offer internationally recognized leadership training for women in the private sector and tertiary level institutions.	NWC	Academia, private sector
<i>Output 5.2.2 Women's appointments as Board Chairpersons, Chief Executive Officers and other leadership roles in public and quasi-government agencies increased.</i>			
1	Implement gender balance policies in appointments of high-level leadership positions (CEO's, Directors, Heads of Departments) for public sector and statutory boards.	NWC	CEO Caucus, Women's advocacy groups, Public Service Union
<i>Outcome 5.3 Women's capacity to advocate for, and participate in, power and decision-making strengthened.</i>			
<i>Output 5.3.1 New and existing women's advocacy groups established/strengthened with support from government, donors, private sector and civil society.</i>			
1	Support the establishment/strengthening of core advocacy groups comprised of a diverse, representative cross-section of women who will advocate for gender equality in power and decision making.	NWC, Women's advocacy groups	

Priority Thematic Area 5: Women in Power & Decision Making

Goal: Advance the equitable participation of women in leadership and political governance.

	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementing Partners</i>
2	Promote the establishment of a collaborative network of women's advocacy groups, including newly formed groups representing a diverse cross-section of women, to advocate for gender balance in power and decision making.	Women's advocacy groups	NWC, Women's caucuses
3	Recognize the essential role of women who have contributed to Belize's social, political, economic and cultural development	National Honours and Awards Advisory Committee	NWC Women's Advocacy Network NICH, CiWIL
<i>Output 5.3.2 Leadership programmes for women in the public and private sector strengthened.</i>			
1	Offer regular internationally recognized leadership training for women in public sector.	Ministry of Public Service	
2	Offer internationally recognized leadership training for women in the private sector and tertiary level institutions.	NWC	Academia, private sector
3	Implement the short-term action plan and a long term strategy, including a communication campaign, to advance women's participation at all tiers of government and decision-making with support from government, donor partners, private sector, civil society and faith-based organizations.	NWC, Women's advocacy groups	NWC, UN Spotlight
4	Conduct regular training for women, adolescents, and girls for participation in political life and leadership through the Women in Politics project and other opportunities.	NWC	Women's Advocacy Network, Dept of Youth Services, Municipal Councils (Child Advisory Boards)
5	Partner with academia and media to incorporate discussion series on topics relating to women, and other underrepresented groups, in politics and executive level decision-making leadership positions.	NWC	Belize Broadcasting Authority Media Houses Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education Institutions, ATLIB

**Priority Thematic Area 6: Organizational Systems
Strengthening**

Goal 6: Organizational systems are established and strengthened to support the coordination, advocacy, capacity building, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming and gender programming.

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementing Partners</i>	
Outcome 6.1 Increased national human and financial capacity for gender mainstreaming.			
Output 6.1.1 The National Women's Commission and Secretariat strengthened to support effective leadership in advancing gender equality with particular attention to gender mainstreaming.			
1	Enact legislation to establish the National Women's Commission as a body with an official mandate for coordination of gender mainstreaming and gender programming, including the National Gender Policy, National Gender-based Violence Action Plan and gender issues in the national arena.	NWC, NGGBVC	AG Ministry, Cabinet
2	Update the roles, functions, and Terms of Reference for the NWC commissioners, national gender and gender-based violence committee, district committees, and gender focal points, to support gender mainstreaming including the implementation of the NGP and NGBVAP within the context of the new law.	NWC, NGGBVC	MHDFIA.
3	Hire staff and consultants to ensure the full efficacy of the Secretariat in planning, inter-agency coordination, gender programming, communications/advocacy, resource mobilization, and monitoring and evaluation.	NWC, NGGBVC	MHDFIA.
4	Mobilize resources to fill posts and functions within the Secretariat to enable implementation of NWC's official mandate.	NWC, NGGBVC, UNDP	MHDFIA.
5	Conduct training to build capacity at all levels of the NWC, national and district committees to lead implementation of the NWC's official mandate, taking into consideration the geographic, demographic and cultural factors.	NWC, NGGBVC	MHDFIA.
Output 6.1.2 Multisectoral capacity for the coordination, advocacy, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender programming on new and emerging issues, strengthened.			
1	Conduct a countrywide multi-sectoral capacity needs assessment, on areas of inter-agency coordination, advocacy, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and gender mainstreaming.	NWC, NGGBVC	MoH, MoE, MoL, Beltraide, CSOs. UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP

**Priority Thematic Area 6: Organizational Systems
Strengthening**

Goal 6: Organizational systems are established and strengthened to support the coordination, advocacy, capacity building, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming and gender programming.

Objectives		Lead Agency	Implementing Partners
2	Implement a multisectoral capacity building plan with technical and/or financial support from the Ministry of the Public Service, international development organizations and the private sector.	NWC, NGGBVC	Ministry of the Public Service, BCCI, UNDP
Output 6.1.3 Resources mobilized from government, donors and private sector to support gender programming including implementation of the NGP and NGBVAP.			
1	Prepare triennial budget and resource mobilization plans to support ongoing implementation of gender programming, including the NGP and NGBVAP.	NWC, NGGBVC	UNDP
2	Grant and loan proposals submitted to international and national donor partners and the private sector.	NWC, NGGBVC	UNDP
3	Relationships with funding partners actively developed and maintained.	NWC, NGGBVC	SIB
4	Increase budget allocations to fund gender programming priorities in annual public sector budgets of line ministries and quasi-government bodies	NWC, Min. of Finance	MHDFIA
Output 6.1.4 A national multi-sectoral gender mainstreaming coordination mechanism is strengthened.			
1	Establish practical and flexible mechanisms for collaborative multi-agency execution of implementation plans, operational coordination, monitoring, annual planning and adaptive management, including MoUs with implementing partners.	NWC, NGGBVC	Government Ministries, CSO partners, UN Agencies, ILO, IDB
2	Establish small, short-term task forces to undertake specific, discrete tasks with clearly defined outputs.	NWC, NGGBVC	Government Ministries, CSO partners, UN Agencies, ILO, IDB
3	Use virtual technologies to facilitate coordination, providing software licenses, equipment, internet connectivity, and training where needed.	NWC, NGGBVC	CITO
Outcome 6.2 Increased multisectoral government, civil society, private sector and public support for gender programming including the implementation of the NGP and NGBVAP.			
Output 6.2.1 A behaviour change communications strategy implemented to build support for gender programming, including the NGP and NGBVAP among multi-sectoral implementing agencies, international partners, the private sector, the media and the general public.			

**Priority Thematic Area 6: Organizational Systems
Strengthening**

Goal 6: Organizational systems are established and strengthened to support the coordination, advocacy, capacity building, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming and gender programming.

	Objectives	Lead Agency	Implementing Partners
1	Implement a behaviour change communications plan to build support for gender mainstreaming and the implementation of the NGP and NGBVAP.	NWC, NGGBVC	UNFPA
2	Maintain stakeholder participation and support through proactive, on-going engagement with line ministries, key government agencies and statutory bodies, NGO's/CBO's/FBO's, professional membership organizations, academia and the media.	NWC, NGGBVC	MHDFIA, media houses, schools, FBOs, CSOs
3	Engage high level and influential champions, both nationally and within sub-regions, to advocate for gender mainstreaming and the implementation of the NGP and NGBVAP.	NWC, NGGBVC	MHDFIA, Special Envoy for Women and Families

Output 6.2.2 Gender priorities reflected in national development plans and donor partners' country development strategies and funding opportunities for Belize.

1	Deliver high level presentations to the international donor partners on the NGP, NGBVAP and other emerging gender issues, such as climate change..	NWC, NGGBVC	MHDFIA, MoFA, MED, UN Agencies, IDB, ILO
2	Engage development partners in annual gender planning and monitoring.	NWC, NGGBVC	MHDFIA, MoFA, MED, UN Agencies, IDB, ILO
3	Integrate the NGP, NGBVAP and other emerging gender priorities into Belize's national medium term macroeconomic development strategies.	NWC, NGGBVC	MED

Output 6.2.3 Private sector and CSO organizations engaged to provide financial and/or in-kind support for gender programming.

1	Collaborate with the private sector in dialogue and planning to mobilize support for specific gender programming activities, including the NGP and NGBVAP Implementation Plans, with a focus on innovative ways to empower women in business and the labour force, such as the Gender and Diversity Seal.	NWC, NGGBVC	WFSD, BCCI, Professional Business Associations
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**Priority Thematic Area 6: Organizational Systems
Strengthening**

Goal 6: Organizational systems are established and strengthened to support the coordination, advocacy, capacity building, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming and gender programming.

	Objectives	Lead Agency	Implementing Partners
2	Collaborate with civil society in dialogue and planning to implement specific activities within the NGP and NGVAP Implementation Plans.	NWC, NGGBVC	CSOs (YES, BFLA, YWCA, Haven House, Hope Haven, BRC, Mary Open Doors, Cornerstone, UNIBAM, PETAL, Our Circle, POWA)
3	Collaborate with the private sector and civil society on joint advocacy on gender issues of national interest.	NWC, NGGBVC, NCFC	CSOs (YES, BFLA, YWCA, Haven House, Hope Haven, Mary Open Doors, BRC, Cornerstone, UNIBAM, PETAL, Our Circle, POWA, CiWIL)

Outcome 6.3 Increased evidence-based policy and decision-making and adaptive management in gender programming.

Output 6.3.1 A monitoring and evaluation framework implemented for the gender programming.

1	Establish multisectoral monitoring and evaluation working group to oversee and ensure the implementation of the M&E framework.	NWC, NGGBVC	SIB, Ministries' Planning Units, NCFC, Belize Crime Observatory
2	Implement data collection and sharing agreements with the Statistical institute of Belize, Ministry of Health, Education, Labour, Human Development & Indigenous affairs, academia and other key implementation partners to fulfil data tracking requirements of the M&E framework.	NWC, NGGBVC	MHDFIA, Government Ministries, SIB, CSOs, academia
3	Maintain the NWC website as an electronic information clearinghouse to track, manage, analyse, and provide public access to information and research products relating to gender equality and gender programming.	NWC, NGGBVC, SIB, NCFC	UNDP, UN Women, ECLAC

Output 6.3.2 Monitoring and evaluation reports produced on schedule to support increased gender equality.

1	Prepare periodic (quarterly, semi-annual or annual according to monitoring plan) monitoring reports on achievement of the NGP's programmatic outputs and outcomes and on implementation progress for broad dissemination to all stakeholders.	NWC, NGGBVC	MHDFIA, Government Ministries, SIB, CSOs
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***Priority Thematic Area 6: Organizational Systems
Strengthening***

Goal 6: Organizational systems are established and strengthened to support the coordination, advocacy, capacity building, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming and gender programming.

	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Implementing Partners</i>
2	Conduct triennial evaluation reports on programmatic outcomes to inform adaptive management.	NWC, NGGBVC	MHDFIA, Government Ministries, SIB, CSOs
3	Submit required reports on a timely basis to fulfil obligations under international treaties. (SDG, CEDAW, Beijing Protocol, Montevideo Convention, Belem do Para, CRC, ILO, UNDHR).	NWC, NGGBVC	MoFA, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, ILO

ANNEX 2: MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Priority Thematic Area 1: Health						
Goal: Secure access to quality affordable gender-responsive health care services throughout the life course.						
Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
Outcome 1.1 Reduced male and female morbidity and mortality from communicable and non-communicable diseases with high mortality rates, including COVID, using gender-responsive strategies.	% Change in mortality rates, disaggregated by cause of death, gender, age, district, urban/rural	% change from 2017 (calculated)	TBD	BHIS/ NSS	Annual	MoH
	Gender Responsiveness Index	Initial Evaluation of Gender Responsiveness	TBD	Gender Responsiveness Evaluation	Triennial	NWC
Output 1.1.1 Mortality rate from communicable and non-communicable diseases reduced, especially among youth, underserved populations and older persons.	*Mortality rate, disaggregated by gender, cause of death, age, COVID comorbidity, district, urban/rural	2018 Total Male: 5.49 Total Female: 3.99	% reduction in mortality rates TBD by MoH	BHIS/ NSS	Annual	MoH
	*Existence of gender analysis of differences in health seeking behaviour and health outcomes from communicable and non-communicable diseases.	Gender analysis does not exist	Gender analysis completed by December 2022	Gender analysis document	One time	MoH
Output 1.1.2 Transmission of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and cancers from STIs, decreased with particular attention to youth, underserved populations and older persons.	*Number of newly confirmed cases of HIV per 1,000 uninfected population by gender, risk group exposure category, age, district, urban/rural	2017: 225 new cases	TBD	BHIS	Annual	MoH
	*Number on non-HIV notifiable STIs	2018: Gonococcal Infection - 15 Syphilis - 132	TBD	BHIS	Annual	MoH

Priority Thematic Area 1: Health

Goal: Secure access to quality affordable gender-responsive health care services throughout the life course.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
	* Number of newly confirmed cases of cancers from STIs per 1,000 population by gender, risk group, age, district, urban/rural	N/A	TBD	BHIS	Annual	MoH
Outcome 1.2 Increased access to affordable, gender-responsive sexual and reproductive health information and services throughout the life course	*Adolescent birth rate (10-14; 15-19) per 1000	Most recent statistics on each indicator	*% decrease in adolescent birth rate by age group	BHIS	Annual	MoH MICS
	*Contraceptive prevalence among women of reproductive age by age group	2015: 51.4%	*% increase in contraceptive prevalence by age TBD by MoH	MICS Report	Every 5 years	SIB
	*STI prevalence by disease, gender, age	N/A	TBD	BHIS	Annual	MoH
	*Unmet need for contraception using modern methods by age group.	22.20%	TBD by MoH	MICS Report	Every 5 years	SIB
Output 1.2.1: Affordable comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and services provided for persons of reproductive age, including adolescents.	*Number of persons accessing SRH services by gender, age group, district, urban/rural, ethnicity, economic profile	Most recent statistics on each indicator	*% Increase TBD	BHIS MICS Report	Annual	MoH, NWC, SIB
	*Number of health centres and health posts offering SRH service providers available by district, urban/rural.	N/A	TBD	BHIS	Annual	MoH, NHI
	Knowledge about HIV prevention among young people by gender, age group	2016: Women - 41.4 2016: Men - 45.0	TBD	MICS Report	Every 4 years	MICS-SIB
	People who have been tested for HIV and know the results	2016: Women - 25.4 2016: Men - 21.8	TBD	MICS Report	Every 4 years	MICS-SIB
Output 1.2.2: Awareness and management of male and female sexual health information and services for older persons, increased.	*% increase in persons older than 49 accessing SRH health information and services disaggregated by gender, age group, district, urban/rural	N/A	TBD	BHIS	Annual	MoH, BFLA, NCA, NWC

Priority Thematic Area 1: Health

Goal: Secure access to quality affordable gender-responsive health care services throughout the life course.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
Outcome 1.3 Increased availability of gender responsive mental health and substance abuse treatment services to all persons, with particular attention adolescents, youth, underserved populations, and older persons.	Gender Responsiveness Index for Mental Health Care services	No analysis of gender sensitivity exists	Gender Analysis of Mental Health Services completed	Gender Analysis Document	One time	MoH
	Change in number of services available disaggregated by urban/rural, district, types of treatment/services offered, cost, client profiles, number of clients served	N/A	TBD	BHIS	Annual	MoH
Output 1.3.1 Gender sensitive approaches to mental health care provided to all persons, with particular attention to adolescents, youth, underserved populations, and older persons.	*Number and type of services available	*Catalogue of services available	TBD	Catalogue of Services and Service Providers	Every 2 years	Training Organizer
	*Number of frontline officers/first responders with certificate or higher training by service location.	*Zero baseline	TBD	Catalogue of Services and Service Providers	Annual	MoH, NWC
Output 1.3.2: Gender responsive residential, outpatient and community based substance abuse services made available and affordable to all persons, with particular attention to adolescents, youth, older persons and underserved populations.	Existence of Substance Abuse Gender Analysis	No Gender Analysis of Substance Abuse	Gender Analysis completed	Gender Analysis Report	One time	NWC, NDACC
	Existence of National Substance Abuse Policy	Draft National Substance Abuse Policy	Updated National Substance Abuse Policy adopted	Policy Document	One time	NDACC
	Establishment of National Substance Abuse Programme Protocols and Standards	No official National Protocols and Standards	National Protocols and Standards adopted	Official document confirming adoption of protocols & standards	One time	MoH, NDACC
	% of people age 15 - 49 who smoked cigarettes or used tobacco products during the last month	2016: Female - 2.1 Male - 16.4	TBD	MICS Report		SIB
	% of people age 15 - 49 who had at least 1 alcoholic drink during the last month	2016: Female - 29.3 Male - 53.7	TBD	MICS Report		SIB

Priority Thematic Area 1: Health

Goal: Secure access to quality affordable gender-responsive health care services throughout the life course.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
	Number and type of substance abuse programmes available	Listing of existing programmes available	Total number of services TBD At least one certified residential programme available in country.	Certification of programmes	Annual	MoH/ NDACC
	Proportion of service provider employees with certificate of higher training, disaggregated by type of training, sector, agency, beneficiary group.	N/A	TBD	Catalogue of Services and Service Providers	Biennially	NDACC/ MHA/ MoH

Priority Thematic Area: Education for Life and Lifelong Learning

Goal 2: Eliminate Gender-Based Discrimination in Education

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
Outcome 2.1: Increased girls and women's enrolment in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and other non-traditional educational programs.	Gender parity index in enrolment ratios in STEM and non-traditional education by gender, age, secondary/tertiary/vocational, major	2019: To be calculated from existing data.	TBD	BEMIS	Annual	MoE
Output 2.1.1. STEM concepts incorporated into the primary education curriculum.	Analysis of Gender Bias in Primary Education Curriculum exists	No Analysis of Gender Bias exists	Analysis of Gender bias in Primary School Education Curriculum	Gender Analysis Document	One time	MoE
	Catalogue of curriculum changes	Revised Primary Education Curriculum at Dec 2021	Revised gender sensitive Primary Education Curriculum completed by Dec 2022	Revised Primary Education Curriculum	One time	MoE
Output 2.1.2 Gender balance achieved in enrolment in STEM programmes and other non-traditional education programs (at the secondary school level, ITVET and tertiary education level)	Ratio of girls and women to boys and men in STEM and non-traditional education programmes	2019: TVET - 0.3 : 1 Secondary level: N/A Tertiary level: N/A	TBD	BEMIS	Annual	MoE

Priority Thematic Area: Education for Life and Lifelong Learning

Goal 2: Eliminate Gender-Based Discrimination in Education						
Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
Outcome 2.2: Increased male achievement and completion of primary, secondary and tertiary education.	% increase in male completion rates in secondary and tertiary education	2019: Male secondary school completion rate - 63.6 Male TVET completion rate - N/A Male tertiary completion rate - N/A	TBD	BEMIS	Annual	MoE
Output 2.2.1. Post-primary education advancement and completion rate of boys increased.	Secondary and post-secondary transition rates	2019/20: Male transition rate from primary to secondary - 84.0% Male transition rate from secondary to post-secondary: N/A	TBD	BEMIS	Annual	MoE
	Secondary repetition rates	2019/20: Male repetition rate - 7.4%	TBD	BEMIS	Annual	MoE
	Secondary and post-secondary completion rates	2019/20: Male secondary completion rate - 63.6 TVET completion rate: N/A Tertiary completion rate: N/A	TBD	BEMIS	Annual	MoE
Outcome 2.3: Increased girls' and women's participation in arts, physical education, and sports.	Gender parity index for participation in national and regional sports competitions by sport, competition level, age group	N/A	TBD	National Sports Council Reports	Annual	National Sports Council
Output 2.3.1 Gender responsive arts and physical education programmes implemented at all primary and secondary schools.	% of primary and secondary schools reporting implementation of the minimum number of physical education minutes for boys and girls	N/A	TBD	Administrative records	Annual	MoE

Priority Thematic Area: Education for Life and Lifelong Learning

Goal 2: Eliminate Gender-Based Discrimination in Education						
Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
	Whether or not Education Sector Strategies address gender barriers to participation in sports and arts.	Baseline Assessment	TBD	Education Sector Strategy and Annual Plans	One time	MoE
Output 2.3.2 Girls and women's participation in sports at all levels, including the elite level, increased with support from Sports Federations.	% of national sporting organizations' and government budgets allocated to girls'/women's participation	N/A	TBD	Annual Budgets of GoB and Sporting Organizations	Annual	National Sports Council
	Whether or not National Sports Strategies incorporate strategies to address gender barriers to girls'/women's participation in sports at all levels	Baseline assessment	TBD	Govt and non-govt Sports Policies and Plans	Triennial	National Sports Council
Outcome 2.4: Increased legal protection for all persons from gender-based discrimination in the education system.	Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of gender	Assessment of current legal framework	Legal framework in place by 2025	Laws of Belize	Annual	MoE
	Ratio of # of cases of gender discrimination in the education system taken to court to # of cases reported	Ratio of reported cases taken to court in school year ending June 2021 (N/A)	TBD	Court records	Triennial	MoE
Output 2.4.1 Rights-based protections against gender-based discrimination incorporated into anti-discrimination laws, Education Rules and primary and secondary school policies.	Reduction in number of cases of gender-based discrimination in the education system reported	Number of cases reported in school years from June 2016 to June 2021 (N/A)	TBD	MoE records	Annual	MoE
	Whether or not Education Rules offer protections against discrimination on the basis of gender	Assessment of Education Rules	Education Rules revised to offer protection against gender-based discrimination by 2025	Revised Education Rules		MoE
	% of schools adopting school policies that protect against gender-based discrimination by education level, management, district	N/A	TBD	Primary and secondary school policies	Annual	MoE

Priority Thematic Area: Education for Life and Lifelong Learning

Goal 2: Eliminate Gender-Based Discrimination in Education						
Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
Output 2.4.2. Legal representation for victims of gender-based discrimination in the education system increased.	Availability of free or affordable legal services for victims of gender-based discrimination in the education system	Baseline assessment	TBD	Annual assessment of legal aid services available	Annual	NWC

Priority Thematic Area 3: Wealth and Employment Creation

Goal: Empower women through creation of economic opportunities in urban and rural areas.						
Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
Outcome 3.1 Increased employment rate of women in urban and rural areas.	% change in women's labour force participation rate disaggregated by occupation, age group, ethnicity, district, urban/rural	Sept 2020: 42.4	TBD	Labour Force Survey	Bi-annual	SIB
	% change in women's employment disaggregated by occupation, age group, ethnicity, district, urban/rural	Sept 2020: 38.2%	TBD	Labour Force Survey	Bi-annual	SIB
Output 3.1.1 Investment in viable industries developed/expanded to provide gender responsive employment opportunities for women.	Barriers to Women's Employment identified	No analysis exists	Analysis of Barriers to Women's Employment completed by date TBD	Analysis Document	One time	Beltraide SIB
	Net job creation for women by industry	N/A	TBD	Labour Force Survey	Annual	MEDI SIB
Output 3.1.2 Women's access to job opportunities increased.	Net job creation by gender, age group, sector, municipality, district, income bracket, level of education	N/A	TBD	Labour Force Survey	Annual	SIB, MoL
Outcome 3.2 Increased women's entrepreneurship.	Net creation of women-owned MSME's by sector, age group, urban/rural	N/A	TBD	NSS	Annual	SIB
	% increase in number of women-owned public companies	2019: 16,949	TBD	NSS	Annual	SIB

Priority Thematic Area 3: Wealth and Employment Creation						
Goal: Empower women through creation of economic opportunities in urban and rural areas.						
Output 3.2.1 Women's access to local and/or international markets for their business products and services increased.	Barriers to Women's Entrepreneurship identified	No analysis exists	Analysis of Barriers to Women's Employment completed by date TBD	Analysis Document	One time	Beltraide SIB
Output 3.2.2 Financial inclusion/participation of women through credit unions or banks increased.	% change in number of women with accounts by lending institution, type of accounts, municipality, district, income bracket, marital status.	N/A	TBD	Abstract of Statistics	Annual	SIB
	% change in number of women with loans by type of lending institutions, loan term, type and size of loan.	N/A	TBD	Abstract of Statistics		
	Number of women receiving grants for micro and small business start-ups.	Zero baseline	TBD			Central Bank of Belize
	* Number of women accessing development finance opportunities by sector, type and size of loan, municipality/village, district.	To be compiled from existing data sources	TBD			Central Bank of Belize
Output 3.2.3 Increased success rate of businesses owned by women.	% change in total count of establishments by industry and age of business disaggregated by gender of owner	N/A disaggregated by gender of owner	TBD	Business Establishment Surveys	Biennial	SIB
Outcome 3.3 Increased women's ownership of land and housing.	% increase in land titles, land leases, and housing owned or co-owned by women, disaggregated by status of ownership, age, marital status, district, urban/rural	N/A	TBD	Land Information System Reports	Biennial	Ministries of Natural Resources and Housing
Output 3.3.1 Access to affordable and government-subsidized land and quality standard housing by women increased.	Proportion of new land leases, land titles and government subsidized house granted to women owners.	N/A	By 2025, 50% of new land leases, land titles and government subsidized housing granted to women	Land Information System Reports	Biennial	Ministries of Natural Resources and Housing

Priority Thematic Area 3: Wealth and Employment Creation						
Goal: Empower women through creation of economic opportunities in urban and rural areas.						
Outcome 3.4 Legislative framework to support women's economic empowerment strengthened.	Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to guarantee women's labour rights.	Assessment of current legal framework	TBD	Labour policies Laws of Belize	Triennial	NWC
Output 3.4.1 Legislative framework expanded to account for economic contribution of unpaid labour.	Analysis of the economic contribution of women's unpaid work exists	Analysis does not exist	Economic Analysis completed by Dec 2025	Analysis Document	One time	MHD
	Legislation exists to assign fair value to women's unpaid labour	No legislation exists	Legislation drafted by Dec 2026	Draft legislation	One time	MHD
Output 3.4.2 Legislative framework strengthened to achieve equality for women in employment.	Enactment of OSH, EOB, and Equal Pay bills	Current status of OSH, EOB, and Equal Pay Bills	Target enactment dates TBD	Laws of Belize	Annual	MHD

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence						
Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.						
Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	MoV	Frequency	Responsible
Outcome 4.1 Reduced incidence of all forms of gender-based violence (sexual violence, commercial sexual exploitation, human trafficking, domestic or family violence).	Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner, in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age	BPD Statistics at Sept 2021	TBD	BPD Statistics	Annually	BPD
	Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner, in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence	MHD (FAMCare)	TBD	MHD (FAMCare)	Annually	MHD

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	MoV	Frequency	Responsible
	Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18	MICS 2015-2016	TBD	MICS	Every 5 years	MICS-SIB
Output 4.1.1 Public education and behaviour change communications campaign implemented, tailored to different target groups including victims/survivors, adolescents, youth, media, service providers and the general public.	Percentage of people age 15-49 years who state that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife in at least one of the following circumstances: (1) she goes out without telling him, (2) she neglects the children, (3) she argues with him, (4) she refuses sex with him, (5) she burns the food by sex, level of education and geographic area.	MICS 2015-2016		MICS	Every 5 years	MICS-SIB
Output 4.1.2 GBV victims/survivors empowered to report on, seek care for, and leave violent situations.	Existence of gender-sensitive, trauma-informed, survivor/victim-centred 24-hour countrywide GBV hotline service.	Current status of 24-hour GBV hotline service.	Gender-sensitive, trauma-informed, survivor/victim-centred 24-hour countrywide GBV hotline service exists by 2023.	Countrywide Hotline Number. Operational standards and protocols document.	Annually	NWC

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	MoV	Frequency	Responsible
Output 4.1.3 Education on gender awareness, gender equality, positive role models, and positive family interaction delivered through HFLE, Positive Youth Development, and parenting education and services.	Percent of children age 1-14 years by child discipline methods during the last one month. Percentage of respondents to the child discipline module who believe that physical punishment is needed to bring up, raise or educate a child properly by sex, relationship to child, respondent's education and geographic region. Percentage of people age 15-49 years who state that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife in at least one of the following circumstances: (1) she goes out without telling him, (2) she neglects the children, (3) she argues with him, (4) she refuses sex with him, (5) she burns the food by sex, level of education and geographic area.	MICS 2015-2016	% reduction TBD	MICS	Every 5 years	MICS-SIB
Outcome 4.2 Increased access to gender-sensitive, trauma-informed, and victim/survivor-centred care and support services for victims/survivors of all forms of gender-based violence.	% of GBV victims/survivors from underserved populations who report receiving gender-sensitive, trauma-informed and victim/survivor-centred care and support services	N/A TBD	% increase TBD	CSO Human Rights Observatory Report	Annually	UNIBAM/BA PDA
Output 4.2.1 Multi-sectoral protocols and essential package of services implemented for the management of GBV cases.	Whether or not gender sensitive, trauma-informed, and victim/survivor centred protocols exist for coordinated multisectoral response to GBV cases.	No national protocols exist.	National Protocols for Management of GBV cases exist by Dec 2023.	National Protocols Document	Dec-23	MHD
	Level of multisectoral compliance with protocols and essential package of services.		Minimum compliance standards maintained after adoption..	Compliance Assessments of agencies involved in GBV case management.	Annually after protocols established.	MHD

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	MoV	Frequency	Responsible
Output 4.2.2 Number of emergency shelters and transition homes for victims/survivors of gender-based violence and their children increased.	Number of certified emergency shelters and transitions homes for GBV victims/survivors.	Current number of certified emergency shelters and transition homes for GBV victims/survivors.	At least one certified government or non-government emergency shelter in 3 districts by 2025, in 6 districts by 2030. At least one certified government or non-government transition home exists countrywide with accommodations for families, adult women and adolescents by 2023 and two countrywide by 2025.	Certifications of shelters	Annually	MHD
	Standard of Care Index.	No Standard of Care Index exists.	Standard of Care Index created by Dec 2022	Approved Standards of Care Document		MHD
Output 4.2.3 Professional, free or affordable, trauma-informed, gender-sensitive, and victim/survivor-centred psychological counselling services made accessible to victims/survivors of gender-based violence and their children.	Number of victims/survivors and their families who access trauma-informed, gender-sensitive, and victim/survivor-centred psychological counselling services	TBD	% increase TBD	CSO Human Rights Observatory Report		UNIBAM/BA PDA
Output 4.2.4. Effective case management for GBV survivors implemented countrywide.	Existence of effective, inter-agency case management system and protocols for GBV cases	FAMCare System Evaluation for effectiveness and multi-agency accessibility.	Effective case management system and protocols exist, supported by electronic information system and accessed by all GBV service providers by 2023.	System documentation; Annual Analysis of System Usage	Annually	NWC/MHD

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	MoV	Frequency	Responsible
Output 4.2.5 Psychological counselling and behaviour change programmes provided for perpetrators of gender-based violence through legal mandate as well as other referral mechanisms.	Whether or not legal framework is in place to mandate counselling for GBV perpetrators	No legal mandate exists	Legal Framework exists by 2023	Laws of Belize	Annually	NWC
	Availability of voluntary counselling and behaviour change programmes for perpetrators	No compendium of available counselling programmes and services exists	At least one voluntary programme available per district by 2025	MOH/MHDFIPA/MHA Administrative data	Triennially	NWC
Output 4.2.6 Victims/survivors of gender based violence supported in becoming economically independent of their abusers.	% of GBV victims/survivors who gain economic independence from their abusers.	Zero baseline	30% of victims/survivors are economically independent of their abusers by 2025; 70% by 2030.	WFSD records (FAMCare)	Annually	MHD
Output 4.2.7 Survivor advocacy support systems strengthened.	Number of GBV victims/survivors satisfactorily assisted	Client Satisfaction Survey	% increase in clients satisfactorily assisted.	Agency summary reports on support provided	Annually	NWC
Outcome 4.3. Increased access to justice for GBV survivors	Implementation of GBV case management standards for Criminal Justice System	No case management standards specifically for GBV cases exist within the Criminal Justice System	Case management systems exist and are operational	Judiciary Reports	Biennially	NWC
	% improvement in conviction rate for GBV cases	Trend in conviction rates from 2015	TBD	Judiciary Reports	Annually	NWC

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	MoV	Frequency	Responsible
Output 4.3.1 Capacity of the Judiciary strengthened to effectively manage GBV cases using rights-based, gender-sensitive, survivor/victim-centred approaches for GBV.	% of judges, magistrates, and police officers knowledgeable on rights-based, gender-sensitive, survivor/victim-centre protocols and practices for GBV cases.	Baseline	At least 75% of judges, magistrates and police officers attend training sessions on rights-based, gender responsive, survivor-centered protocols and practices	Training Reports	Annually	NWC
	Reports of discrimination and rights violations in the handling of GBV cases.	N/A	TBD	CSO Human Rights Observatory Report	Annually	UNIBAM/BA PDA
Output 4.3.2 Rate of conviction improved in sexual and family violence cases.	Rate of conviction	Rate of Conviction at Sept 2021	TBD	Judiciary Reports	Annually	Judiciary
Output 4.3.3 Electronic data management strengthened through improved evidence-based decision-making, intervention design, data analytics, and case management.	Existence and adequacy of electronic information systems that can support evidence-based situational assessments, decision making and intervention design.	Baseline rapid assessment of existing electronic data management	GBV surveillance system fully operational by December 2022 Court Case management of GBV cases automated by December 2023	GBVSS Functional and operational Assessments of electronic data management of GBV cases	Annually	NWC Judiciary
Output 4.3.4 Legislation strengthened to provide for greater penalties for GBV cases and mandatory rehabilitation interventions for behaviour change.	Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to provide adequate penalties and mandatory rehabilitation for GBV offences	Current status of legislative framework	Legislative framework exists by Dec 2023	Laws of Belize	At Dec 2023	NWC

Priority Thematic Area 4: Gender-based Violence

Goal 4: Strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of victims/survivors of gender based violence.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	MoV	Frequency	Responsible
Output 4.3.5 Legal support services are free or affordable for survivors of gender-based violence.	Number of Formal Agreements with the BAR Association and other legal service providers for affordable services to survivors of gender-based violence.	Baseline 0	At least 1 Memoranda of Agreements signed and in operation in each district.	Memoranda of Agreements	Annually	NWC

Priority 5: Women in Power & Decision Making

Goal: Advance the equitable participation of women in leadership and political governance.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	MoV	Frequency	Responsible
Outcome 5.1 Increased political representation of women in the House of Representatives, Senate, Cabinet, Municipal Councils and Village Councils	Proportion of women who are members of the House of Representatives, Senate, Cabinet, Municipal Councils and Village Councils disaggregated by age, level of government representation, geographic location, political constituency, and political party.	Baseline 2020 data	TBD	Elections and Boundaries Reports	After every election	NWC
Output 5.1.1 Number of women holding political office increased through the legislation of special measures, including quotas and campaign finance reform.	Legislative framework to support gender equality in political representation.	Assessment of current legislative framework with recommendations for change.	Special Measures to increase women's political participation passed into law. Campaign finance reform enacted into law by 2023.	Laws of Belize Election & Boundaries Records & Statistics	Annual	NWC

Priority 5: Women in Power & Decision Making

Goal: Advance the equitable participation of women in leadership and political governance.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	MoV	Frequency	Responsible
Outcome 5.2 Increased representation of women in executive and middle-management positions in the public and private sectors	Percentage of top managers in Parliament, government, private sector, etc. who are women disaggregated by age, level of government representation, geographic location, political constituency	Baseline year 2020	TBD	National Statistical System	Annual	SIB
Output 5.2.1 Professional membership organizations and private businesses committed to gender balance in private sector leadership.	Women's share of membership in professional and business membership associations. Women's share of managerial positions in private sector.	Baseline Survey of businesses	TBD	Records of professional and business membership associations	Annual	NWC
Output 5.2.2 Women's appointments as Board Chairpersons, Chief Executive Officers and other leadership roles in public and quasi-government agencies increased.	Percentage of top managers in Parliament, government, private sector, etc. who are women	Compilation of baseline data from public service records	TBD	Public Service Records, Quasi-government agency records	Annual	NWC
Outcome 5.3 Women's capacity to advocate for, and participate in, power and decision-making strengthened.	Number and size of women's advocacy groups in existence. Diversity of population groups represented. Institutional stability of women's groups.	Baseline survey by NWC's M&E Officer to establish directory at start of policy implementation.	Robust network of women's advocacy groups, representative of Belize's diverse population groups, including the most marginalized and excluded populations, established by 2025.	NWC directory of agencies.	Annual	NWC

Priority 5: Women in Power & Decision Making

Goal: Advance the equitable participation of women in leadership and political governance.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	MoV	Frequency	Responsible
Output 5.3.1 New and existing women's advocacy groups established/strengthened with support from government, donor partners, private sector and civil society.	Spotlight Output Indicator 6.2.1 Indicator description: Number of supported women's rights groups and relevant CSOs using the appropriate accountability mechanisms for advocacy around VAWG within the last year.					
Output 5.3.2 Leadership programmes for women in the public and private sector strengthened.	Existence of National 10-year Women in Power & Decision-Making Strategy and 3-year Action Plan. Appointment of Woman as a National Hero.	None exists	At least 500 women, adolescents and girls trained in political participation by 2025, distributed proportionately by district. At least one woman appointed as a National Hero by 2030.	Certificates of Completion.	Annual	NWC

Priority Thematic Area 6: Organizational Systems Strengthening

Goal 6: Organizational systems are established and strengthened to support the coordination, advocacy, capacity building, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation of the gender mainstreaming and gender programming.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
Outcome 6.1 Increased national human and financial capacity for gender mainstreaming.	Level of progress with NGP implementation	Zero baseline	40% of NGP Policy outcomes achieved by Dec 2025 80% of NGP Policy outcomes achieved by Dec 2030	Policy Evaluations	At 2025 and At 2030	NWC

Priority Thematic Area 6: Organizational Systems Strengthening

Goal 6: Organizational systems are established and strengthened to support the coordination, advocacy, capacity building, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation of the gender mainstreaming and gender programming.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
Output 6.1.1 The National Women’s Commission and Secretariat strengthened to support effective leadership in advancing gender equality with particular attention to gender mainstreaming.	Existence of legal mandate to empower NWC including ToRs for NWC Commissioners, NGGBVC, District Committees and Gender Focal Points.	No legal mandate for NWC exists.	NWC's authority, role and functions enacted into law by Dec 2022.	Laws of Belize	At Dec 2022	NWC
	Adequacy of staffing to implement NGP	1 Executive Director 1 Programme Officer 1 Administrative Staff	M&E Officer hired by Dec 2021. IEC Officer hired by June 2022. Gender Specialist hired by Dec 2022.	Administrative records	At Dec 2021, June 2022, Dec 2022	NWC
Output 6.1.2 Multisectoral capacity for the coordination, advocacy, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender programming on current and emerging issues, including the National Gender Policy and the National GBV Action Plan strengthened.	Existence of a Capacity Needs Assessment and Capacity Building Plan for Effective Gender Programming.	No Capacity Needs Assessment and Capacity Building Plan exists	Capacity Needs Assessment and Capacity Building Plan completed by June 2022	Capacity Needs Assessment Documents for 2022, 2025	Triennial	NWC
	National human resource capacity to support gender programming	To be compiled from Public Service Records	% of Capacity Building Plan targets achieved by June 2025 (TBD) and by Dec 2030 (TBD)	Administrative records of implementing partners	Biennial	NWC
Output 6.1.3 Resources mobilized from government, donor partners and private sector to support gender programming including implementation of the NGP and NGBVAP.	Existence of Triennial Budget and Resource Mobilisation Plan for National Gender Programming	No plan exists	Budget and Plan developed by June 2022	Triennial Budget and Resource Mobilization Plans	Annual Update	NWC
	% of National Gender Programming Budget funded disaggregated by source and activity area	Zero baseline	TBD	Budget Reports	Annual	NWC, MoF, MED

Priority Thematic Area 6: Organizational Systems Strengthening

Goal 6: Organizational systems are established and strengthened to support the coordination, advocacy, capacity building, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation of the gender mainstreaming and gender programming.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
Output 6.1.4 A national multi-sectoral gender mainstreaming coordination mechanism is strengthened.	Existence of functioning multi-agency coordination mechanisms	Baseline assessment of National Gender Policy coordination mechanisms	Effective coordination mechanisms involving key implementation partners operationalized by Mar 2022	Documentation of MoUs, Coordination Protocols, Activities, and Membership	At March 2022	NWC
	% of scheduled meetings conducted disaggregated by coordination body	Zero baseline	TBD	Administrative records	Annual	NWC
	Number of gender programming activities implemented jointly by type, partner	Zero baseline	At least 75% of planned joint activities implemented	Administrative records	Annual	NWC
Outcome 6.2 Increased multisectoral government, civil society, private sector and public support for gender programming, including the implementation of the NGP and NGBVAP.	Level of high-level political and executive support for gender programming by sector and rank (Criteria to be developed)	Baseline assessment	Donors and high level decision makers and technical leaders are conversant with and supportive of the NGP and NGBVAP	Key informant interviews	At June 2022 Annual	NWC
	Level of support for gender programming from CSOs and private sector (Criteria to be developed)	Baseline assessment	CSOs and private sector are conversant with and supportive of the NGP and NGBVAP	Key informant interviews	Annual	NWC
Output 6.2.1 A behaviour change communications strategy implemented to build support for gender programming, including the NGP and NGBVAP among multi-sectoral implementing agencies, international partners, the private sector, the media and the general public.	Level of dissemination of the NGP and NGBVAP by sector	Zero baseline	NGP and NGBVAP published by Dec 2021 Broadly disseminated (TBD) by Jun 2022	Administrative records	At Dec 2022	NWC
	Level and frequency of multi-sectoral engagement by sector, type of engagement	Zero baseline	TBD	Administrative records	Annual	NWC
Output 6.2.2 Gender priorities reflected in national development plans and donor partners' country development strategies and funding opportunities for Belize.	Degree to which gender-responsive programming is reflected in the national budget and strategic and operational plans of line ministries	Baseline assessment of the national budget and strategic and operational plans of line ministries	TBD	National Strategic Plans, Ministry Operational Plans, National Budget	Annual	NWC

Priority Thematic Area 6: Organizational Systems Strengthening

Goal 6: Organizational systems are established and strengthened to support the coordination, advocacy, capacity building, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation of the gender mainstreaming and gender programming.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
	Donor partners' country development strategies and financing support NGP implementation	Baseline assessment of donor support for gender programming, NGP, and NGBVAP.	Country development strategies from UN Agencies, CDB, IDB, WB and other key donor partners include support for gender programming and NGP and NGBVAP implementation	Country development strategy and funding opportunity documents	Annual	NWC
Output 6.2.3 Private sector and CSO organizations engaged to provide financial and/or in-kind support for gender programming, including implementation of the National Gender Policy and NGBVAP.	% of annual resource needs for NGP implementation mobilized through private sector and CSO partners	Zero baseline	TBD	Administrative records	Annual	NWC
Outcome 6.3 Increased evidence-based policy and decision-making and adaptive management in gender programming.	Use of M&E system for decision making	Zero baseline	TBD	NSS, BHIS, BEMIS	Annual	SIB
Output 6.3.1 A monitoring and evaluation framework implemented for gender programming.	Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for NGP and NGBVAP developed	Monitoring Framework exists	Monitoring and Evaluation Plan developed by Mar 2022	M&E Plan Document	One time	NWC
	Existence of M&E Working group	No M&E Working Group exists	Working group established by Dec 2021	M&E Plan	One time	NWC
	Existence of Gender Equality and Gender Responsiveness Indices	Baseline assessment of existing indices and recommendations for new ones	Data collection plans for gender equality and gender responsiveness indices implemented by Dec 2022	Definition of Gender Equality and Gender Responsiveness Indices, Data collection Plan	One time	NWC, MoH, MoE, MHD, SIB
	National monitoring systems facilitate gender analysis.	Assessment of recommended modifications to existing datasets definitions or reporting formats	Schedule of changes TBD	NSS, BHIS, BEMIS	Annual	NWC, MoH, MoE, MHD, SIB

Priority Thematic Area 6: Organizational Systems Strengthening

Goal 6: Organizational systems are established and strengthened to support the coordination, advocacy, capacity building, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation of the gender mainstreaming and gender programming.

Hierarchy of Objectives	Key Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible
	Existence of public Gender Information Clearinghouse	None exists	Web-based clearinghouse established by Jun 2022	Functional website	One time	NWC
Output 6.3.2 Monitoring and evaluation reports produced on schedule to support increased gender equality.	Submission of national reports under UN conventions.	List of outstanding reports	All reports submitted on time.	Report Documents	As specified by UN conventions	MHD
	Annual Monitoring Reports Periodic Evaluation Reports	No monitoring reports exist NGP & NGBVAP Evaluation 2021	Monitoring reports completed annually Evaluation reports completed triennially	Report Documents	Annual Triennial	NWC

Annex 3: Organizations Consulted

Government Agencies
Ministry of Human Development, Family and Indigenous People's Affairs
National Women's Commission National Gender and Gender Based Violence Committee
National Women's Commission District Gender and Gender Based Violence Committees
Department of Women and Family Services
Department of Human Services
National Council on Older Persons
Community Parent Empowerment Programme
National Committee for Families and Children
Department of Labour
BELTRAIDE
Ministry of Health
National Health Insurance (NHI)
National Drug Abuse Council
Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology
Police Department
Ministry of Economic Development
Sustainable Development Unit
Civil Society Organizations
Belize Family Life Association
Caribbean Women's in Leadership (Belize)
PETAL
Our Circle
UNIBAM
Tikkun Olam
POWA
Youth Enhancement Services
Mental Health Association
Belize Association of Persons with Diverse Abilities
Haven House
Cayo Center for Education and Training
United Nations Agencies
UNDP
UNFPA
Spotlight Coherence Officer

