



DEVELOPMENT EMERGENCY MODALITY

Joint Programme 2022 Annual Progress Report

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UNCT/MCO: Belize

Reporting Period: 1 January - 31 December 2022

JP title: Strengthening Belize's evidence base and systems for crisis response

Thematic SDG Areas: Decent jobs & universal social protection; Digital transformation;

PUNOS: WFP, UNICEF, UNESCO, FAO

Stakeholder partner: National Government; Civil Society Organizations; Private sector;

Gender Marker: Gender-sensitive (for example, the JP acknowledged and aimed to address gender to enhance the policy/programme, such as undertaking gender analysis to ensure policies/programmes do no harm)

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Annual Progress

Overall JP self-assessment of 2022 progress:

On-track (expected annual results-achieved)

Overall Progress

Since the DEM JP officially commenced on 01 July, PUNOs have met with respective key GoB counterparts to discuss plans and timelines for each activity. PUNOs have deployed missions and consultations/workshops with relevant ministries and local actors to advance activities and discussions are ongoing with key Governments counterparts to finalize outputs.

The JP was granted a no-cost extension until 31 March 2023 in order to consolidate outputs and dialogue on post project plans with Government. All activities and outputs are ON TRACK to be delivered in time for the dissemination forum in March 2023. The forum will highlight specific recommendations and areas to strengthen Government's efforts to respond more effectively and, where possible mitigate the impacts of similar shocks in the future.

The final draft of the Belize country report of the Regional Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey with a focus on the ongoing food and energy crises in Belize, was reviewed by GoB and PUNOs and also shared with the Post Disaster Needs Assessment team (PDNA). The report included additional findings from focus group discussions and key informant interviews with agricultural communities, cooperatives, persons with disabilities and Indigenous groups.

A Market Price Monitoring report for Belize has been drafted. By mapping the primary market monitoring systems and dissecting the gaps, recommendations are provided on how to strengthen processes and maximize their value.

Preliminary findings on the effect of price Increase on food security and child nutrition in Belize, confirmed the lack of financial resources of households in the context of the global crisis, and the challenges to meet households' needs. The focus groups revealed feeding and health patterns, such as i) changes in behaviours observed as the result of the increase in prices (reduction of food portion, skipping meals to allow other members to eat...);

Cost-Analysis of Rice Fortification in Belize. The cost analysis also led to the development of a Cabinet Paper, with

recommendations for the development of an evidence – based initiative to locally test the effects of rice fortification, particularly in social protection programmes, in the first instance, before implementation of a scaled-up programme for commercialization on the local market.

Sensitization Session on Nutrition in Emergencies. The Ministry of Health and Wellness requested a one-day sensitization session on Nutrition in Emergencies (NIE) in addition to food security and nutrition crisis review and cross-analysis of rice fortification. The session will be implemented in February 2023.

Assessment of good practices in the use of industrial and municipal biodegradable waste. Recommendations were made to transfer the biological waste into fertilizers employing different. A training manual with recommendation for transformation of Municipal and Industrial biodegradable waste into fertilizers is being developed. The recommendations also include machinery and pre-processing practices.

WFP supported the Government in reviewing their Relief and Supply Management Committee (RSMC) tool deployed for household assessments in response to a shock. Improvements and recommendations were made to ensure relevant data is gathered for more efficient delivery of assistance, including considerations for digital payment solutions. These subsequent suggestions were deployed during the Hurricane Lisa Assistance Programme.

UNESCO developed and deployed a methodology for the collection of sex-disaggregated water data and information in the framework of the JP. Further capacity was built and knowledge transferred to Belizean governmental staff in view of the mapping of water access, usage, and management for food production by rural women farmers in Belize.

SDG Acceleration progress towards the SDGs, focusing on the main SDG targets

The JP supported accelerated progress towards the following SDG targets:

Target 2.C: by mapping of the market price monitoring system and processes and reviewing crisis in food and nutrition

SDG 2.by cost analysis for rice fortification which also led to the development of a Cabinet Paper, with recommendations for the development of an evidence

SDG 2.4: by assessment and recommendations for transfer the biological waste into fertilizers

Target 6.B: by building capacity and transferring knowledge mapping of water access, usage, and management for food production by rural women farmers in Belize

SDG 13.1: by accelerating the use of digital tools and initiating the development and a training manual with recommendation for transformation of Municipal and Industrial biodegradable waste into fertilizers

SDG 17.18: By stressing on the need for coordinated efforts in producing and sharing relevant and timely data so they can, in turn, inform timely policy action and the (collective) resources that need to be generated to realize these actions. For example, the need to coordinate or consolidate efforts in generating price data can facilitate either forecasting of price spikes and/or inform the Government's production calendar to mitigate these spikes.

Constraints that were encountered and any adjustments that were made to strengthen the relevance and effectiveness of the JP and the coherence and coordination of UN system support.

The JP is tackling high level topics in the context of a global crisis, which require more time for dialogue with Government stakeholders and even more time to see them into fruition. The JP looked at the food crisis from the water perspective, as a key driver in agriculture. The short time frame was a constraining factor for the generation of results and the associated recommendations to be realized and attributed to this JP.

Another constraining factor was Hurricane Lisa (Category 1 Hurricane) during the first week of November 2022. The damage and loss assessment of Hurricane Lisa is estimated at US\$65 million and US\$25.8 million respectively. The latter impacted constrained the participation and engagement of national authorities and local communities particularly in the districts of Belize, Cayo, Orange Walk and to a lesser extent the remainder of the country. The largest hit sectors were housing and agriculture.

Next steps, scaling and sustainability [up to half a page]

The recommendations coming out of the Belize Country Report and the Price Monitoring Assessment have been fully discussed and vetted by key Government partners who have committed to following-up on these recommendations.

A dissemination forum is planned in March 2023, to present and validate the outputs produced under the JP. The forum will highlight the work of the JP and specifically present recommendations on bridging the crisis response to long-term sustainable development plans and policies including more equitable and integrated food systems, as well, as leveraging financial resources towards the 2030 Agenda.

Strategic Partnerships and Communications

Explain how diverse stakeholders were engaged with the JP

The following partners were engaged through focus group discussions while also having counterparts from the line ministries in Agriculture, Health, Rural Development, Human Development and Natural Resources: Government (Ministries of Agriculture; Human Development; Statistics); civil society (farmers' cooperatives, association of persons with disabilities, association of indigenous and ethnic groups). Ministry of Health and Wellness, Ministry of Agriculture, Bureau of Standards, Belize Marketing & Development Corporation (BMDC), Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama (INCAP) Government of Belize: Rural Development Department, National Hydrological Service of the Ministry of Natural Resources, Rural Water Board, Ministry of Agriculture. Civil society (farmers' cooperatives)

Key meetings and events organized

JP steering committee/ programme board meeting	Strategic partners/ donors	Kick-off meeting event
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Priority Cross-cutting Issues

Cross-cutting results/issues

The Country Report for Belize on the Food Security & Livelihood impacts on cost-of-living crisis has specifically looked into the experiences of small farmers, ethnic groups, pregnant women and children and persons with disability and the inequities that either widened or highlighted by this global shock. It is envisioned that policy and strategic recommendations that will come out of the JP will ensure the principle of LNOB is adhered to.

The JP addressed crosscutting issues related to rural women and food security and the implications of global shocks at the community level. The JP also allowed for the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, sex-disaggregated water data, gender indicators and statistics which is vital in the formulation of policy recommendations that are gender sensitive, gender responsive and gender transformative, in line with SDG 5 and with the UNESCO Global priority for Gender Equality.

How did the JP apply the Gender Marker

The JP is Gender-sensitive (for example, the JP acknowledged and aimed to address gender to enhance the policy/programme, such as undertaking gender analysis to ensure policies/programmes do no harm). Evidence, data collection and analysis (e.g. gender assessments of programmes; policy briefs, costing for scale-up of social services); Policy dialogues, advocacy (e.g. direct inputs to national policies, strategies, laws, including women's and girls' rights groups in coordination mechanisms);

JP address the below cross-cutting issues and principles of leaving no one behind

Human Rights	Persons with disabilities	Youth	Environmental and social standards
No	Yes	No	No

Contribution to enhancing SDG Financing

Drafted a bill, strategy, and/or	Produced financing, costing, diagnostic and savings) in the	Improved efficiency (cost savings) in the	Improved effectiveness	Drafted policies/regulatory	Structured new financial
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approved a law increasing the fiscal space for the policy in focus	feasibility analyses as a basis to invest or increase spending on the SDGs	management of programmes/schemes	(value for money; i.e. social impact of \$1 spent) of spending	frameworks or developed tools to incentivize private sector investment on the SDGs	instruments (public, private or blended) to leverage additional funding
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Yes

How and in which area your JP contributed to enhancing SDG financing

By accelerating use of digital solutions and platforms, Government’s effectiveness in responding to similar crises or shocks is improved to assist the most vulnerable and heavily impacted. By facilitating generation of relevant and timely data, Government’s capacity is enhanced to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of similar shocks in the future.