



**UNITED NATIONS
BELIZE**



JOINT SDG FUND
Building a resilient Belize
through universal, adaptive
and sustainable social
protection



JOINT PROGRAMME DOCUMENT

A. COVER PAGE

1. FUND NAME: Joint SDG Fund

2. MPTFO PROJECT REFERENCE NUMBER:

3. JOINT PROGRAMME TITLE: Building a resilient Belize through universal, adaptive, and sustainable social protection

4. SHORT TITLE: Resilient Belize

5. COUNTRY AND REGION: Belize, Latin America, and the Caribbean

6. RESIDENT COORDINATOR: Birgit Gerstenberg, El Salvador, and Belize

7. UN JOINT PROGRAMME FOCAL POINT: Alison Parker, UNICEF Representative

8. GOVERNMENT JOINT PROGRAMME FOCAL POINT: Osmond Martinez, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, and Investment

9. SHORT DESCRIPTION: This joint programme supports a stronger, coordinated, integrated, shock-responsive, and resilient social protection system in Belize that reaches the most vulnerable, women and children through the development and implementation of the National Social Protection Strategy, inclusive of the Social Protection Floor (SPF), and recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review (third cycle, 2018) and other human rights mechanisms to Belize. The main results are centered on two interconnected outcomes, both of which are articulated in *Plan Belize* and the Government's *Medium-Term Development Strategy Priority Areas*: Poverty reduction and Economic growth. In particular, the joint program will undertake to achieve the following three (3) transformative results, such that:

1. National partners will have increased capacities to design and implement social protection programs that are directly aligned and integrated with other relevant and supportive public policies, including in case of shocks;
2. Male and female entrepreneurs and heads of households whose incomes and livelihoods were further devastated by COVID-19 will have access to a strengthened environment for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and participate in income generation opportunities, job skills development and formalization, and sustainable financing, to reduce their vulnerability to shocks; and
3. The capacities of the partnering Government of Belize (GOB)'s ministries, will improve to address the core challenges of essential service deprivation and the inadequacy of social protection coverage as outlined in the National Plan and Medium-Term Strategy.

The synergies generated from the government's partnership with UNICEF, ILO, and WFP will strengthen the capacities of government agencies to respond to the rights of the most vulnerable population groups. At the

same time, these synergies will expand spaces for citizen participation and representation in social policy and social protection formulation and implementation.

10. KEYWORDS: Social Protection; Social Protection National Strategy; Social Protection Floor; Shock-Responsive Social Protection; Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises (MSMEs); skills; entrepreneurship; Economic and Social Rights; Social Security.

11. OVERVIEW OF BUDGET

Joint SDG Fund contribution	USD 718,400
Co-funding 1: United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)	USD 100,000
Co-funding 2: International Labour Organization (ILO)	USD 72,000
Co-funding 3: World Food Programme (WFP)	USD 100,000
TOTAL	USD 990,400

12. TIMEFRAME:

Start date	End date	Duration (in months)
01/01/2022	30/12/2024	24 months

13. GENDER MARKER: 2

14. TARGET GROUPS *(including groups left behind or at risk of being left behind)*

LIST OF MARGINALIZED AND VULNERABLE GROUPS	DIRECT INFLUENCE	INDIRECT INFLUENCE
Women	X	
Children	X	
Girls	X	
Youth	X	
Persons with disabilities	X	
Older persons		X
Minorities (incl. ethnic, religious, linguistic...)		X
Indigenous peoples	X	
Rural workers	X	

Human rights defenders (incl. NGOs, journalists, union leaders, whistle-blowers...)		X
Migrants		X

15. HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS RELATED TO THE JOINT PROGRAMME

Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

The recommendations to Belize based on the State’s UPR’s third cycle report submission included that Belize should further strengthen the national human rights protection framework and develop a comprehensive national human rights action plan. Relevant cross-cutting measures included the adoption of measures to fight all forms of discrimination, improvement of health services in rural areas and indigenous communities, ensuring access to primary health care, and reproductive health education and related services; strengthening the implementation of the policy framework on gender equality and combat all forms of violence against women; strengthening measures to guarantee access to civil registration services, including in rural areas; intensification of measures to combat child labor; strengthening the legislative framework on the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples and protection of Maya property, undertaking the revision of the migration and asylum legislation¹. For this latest UPR, Belize received the highest number of recommendations for four SDGs, specifically, the strengthening of peace and justice institutions (SDG 16), gender equality (SDG 5), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), and decent work (SDG 8); which are directly addressed by this joint program. Activities under the JP will contribute to these recommendations, by strengthening the social protection system and ensuring access to the social protection floor, improving the environment for business, and targeting the most vulnerable populations, including women and the youth at both national and local levels in the context of the COVID-19 recovery.

Human Rights Treaty Bodies

The joint programme aligns with recommendations from the following human rights mechanisms:

- Human Rights Committee: [Concluding observations \(2018\) CCPR/C/BLZ/CO/1/Add.1](#)
- Committee on Migrant Workers: [Concluding observations \(2014\) CMW/C/BLZ/CO/1](#)
- Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: [Concluding observations \(2007\) CEDAW/C/BLZ/CO/4](#)
- Committee on the Rights of the Child: [Concluding observations \(2005\) CRC/C/15/Add.252](#)

ILO Committees of Experts – International Labour Standards

- C102 - Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)
- R202 - Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202)
- R204 - Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204)
- R189 - Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Recommendation, 1998 (No. 189)

¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/BZindex.aspx>

16. PUNO AND PARTNERS:

16.1 PUNO


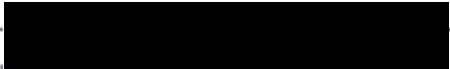

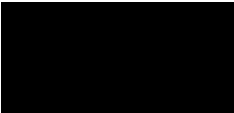
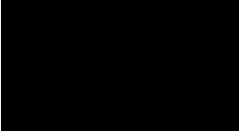
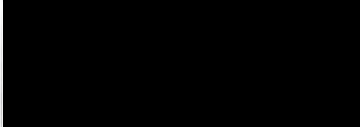
- **Convening Agency:**
 - UNICEF Belize: Alison Parker, Representative aparker@unicef.org; Social Policy Specialist (Vacant) and Paulette Wade, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist pwade@unicef.org
- **Other PUNO:**
 - International Labour Organization (ILO): Dennis Zulu, Representative zulu@ilo.org; Ariel Pino, Social Protection and Occupational Health and Safety Specialist: pino@ilo.org
 - World Food Programme (WFP): Regis Chapman, Representative regis.chapman@wfp.org; Riad Katkhoda Programme Policy Officer: riad.katkhoda@wfp.org

16.2 Partners

- **National Authorities:**
 - Office of Prime Minister. Dr. Marcelino Avila, Senior Policy Adviser, marcelinoavila46@yahoo.com; 501 635 7413;
 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Immigration. CEO Ambassador Amalia Mai; ceo@mfa.gov.bz;
 - Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, and Investment. Dr. Osmond Martinez, CEO, ceo@med.gov.bz; Duane E. Belisle, Director, Policy and Planning Unit Duane.Belisle@med.gov.bz
 - Ministry of Human Development, Families & Indigenous People's Affairs. Ms. Tanya Santos-Neal, CEO, ceo@humandev.gov.bz, Tel: + 501-822-2246; Jewel Crawford, Social Planner, social.planner@humandev.gov.bz;
 - Ministry of Youth, Sports & E-Governance. Mr. Jose Urbina, CEO; ceo@moysegov.gov.bz, Tel: 822-822/040;
 - Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development, Labour and Local Government Mr. Valentino Shal, CEO ceo@labour.gov.bz;
 - Belize Trade and Investment Development Service (BELTRAIDE): beltraide@belizeinvest.org.bz; +501 822 3737;
 - Development Finance Corporation (DFC): info@dfcbelize.org, +501-822-2360
 - Social Security Board (SSB). Mrs. Deborah Ruiz, CEO, druiz@socialsecurity.org.bz, Tel: +501-822-2163, Cell: +501-610-5552;

- National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) under the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change, and Disaster Risk Management. Sheldon Defour, National Emergency Coordinator, defour_shelton@yahoo.com, coordinem@nemo.org.bz, Tel: +501-822-2054/ 822-0995; Cell: +501-626-7127;
- Statistical Institute of Belize. Diana Castillo-Trejo, Acting Director General, dtrejo@mail.sib.org.bz; Tel: +501 822-2207;
- Municipal and village councils
- **Civil Society Organizations**
 - National Trade Union Congress of Belize (NTUCB), Mr. Luke Martinez, President, ntucb@btl.nt
- **Private Sector**
 - Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), Mrs. Kim Aikman, ceo@belize.org
- **IFIs**
- **Other Partners: Regional Bodies**
 - Caribbean Community (CARICOM),
 - Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CRIFF)

SIGNATURE PAGE

<p>Resident Coordinator  <u>Birgit Gerstenberg</u> UN Resident Coordinator in Belize Date: 09-09-2021</p>	<p> National Coordinating Authority  <u>Dr. Osmond Martinez,</u> Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Date: 13/09/21</p>
<p>Participating UN Organization (lead/ convening)  <u>Alison Parker</u> UNICEF Representative Date: 09-09-2021</p>	
<p>Participating UN Organization  <u>Dennis Zulu</u> ILO Representative Date: 09-09-2021</p>	
<p>Participating UN Organization  <u>Regis Chapman</u> WFP Representative Date: 09-09-2021</p>	

B. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

1. CALL FOR PROPOSAL

- Building Resilience and Ending Vulnerability in Small Island Developing States (3/2021)

2. RELEVANT JOINT SDG FUND OUTCOMES

- **Outcome 1:** Integrated multi-sectoral policies to accelerate SDG achievement implemented with greater scope and scale.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE JOINT PROGRAMME RESULTS

3.1 Outcomes

As per the draft “United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean 2022-2026”, the joint programme will contribute to two priority areas:

PRIORITY AREA 1: SHARED PROSPERITY AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Under the overall objective of enhancing economic resilience and increasing shared prosperity, the UN will contribute to two specific outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** more productive and competitive business ecosystem designed to improve people’s standards of living and well-being;
- **Outcome 2:** The Caribbean has fully transitioned to a more diversified and sustainable economy that supports inclusive and resilient economic growth.

PRIORITY AREA 2: EQUALITY, WELL-BEING, AND LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

Under the second priority area, the UN will contribute to two specific outcomes to boost equality, improve well-being, and remove the obstacles that prevent people in the Caribbean, particularly vulnerable groups, from living healthier, more empowered lives.

- **Outcome 3:** National governments and regional institutions use relevant data and information to guide and inform the design and adopt laws and policies to eliminate discrimination, address structural inequalities and ensure the advancement of those at risk of being left furthest behind;
- **Outcome 4:** People in the Caribbean equitably access and utilize universal, quality, and shock-responsive, social protection, education, health, and care services.

The Joint Programme aims to support the efforts of the GOB, UN, and partners to achieve the following results:

- **By 2024, strengthen the resilience of vulnerable and poor groups by establishing a responsive social protection strategy** that addresses the minimum living standards needs of people with disabilities, indigenous households, and workers in the informal sector (predominately women) by facilitating their access to, and benefits from, the Social Protection Floor.
- **By 2024, strengthen local economic development (LED) and livelihoods in targeted municipalities**, through a gender and youth sensitive value chain development approach to employment and decent work.

3.2 Outputs

- **Output 1.1:** The National Social Protection Strategy of Belize, overseen by a coordination mechanism that drives data generation and exchange, policy guidance, effective beneficiary targeting, financing pathways, gender responsiveness, and resilient social protection programmes, is validated by stakeholders and adopted by the GOB.
- **Output 1.2:** The technical and gender mainstreaming capacities of social protection institutions, local communities, and CSOs involved in social protection are strengthened to better design, finance, implement, monitor, and evaluate social protection programmes.
- **Output 1.3:** Government ministries and social protection actors are engaged in an integrated planning mechanism to ensure that adequate and sustainable financing systems for social protection, including for good financial governance are identified and operationalized.
- **Output 2.1:** A work plan to address priority issues in MSME development is established in consultation with local economic development actors (including women and youth) based on an analysis of barriers, bottlenecks, and opportunities for inclusive MSME development and employment in value chains.
- **Output 2.2:** Capacity and processes of targeted municipalities, representatives of youth and women and other key LED actors, are strengthened for effective participation in inclusive value chain development.
- **Output 2.3:** A programme with an integrated approach to support MSMEs and employment creation with a focus on youth and women in 2 target value chains is implemented and documented for scale-up.

4. SDG TARGETS DIRECTLY ADDRESSED BY THE JOINT PROGRAMME

3.1 List of targets

The joint programme is grounded in the GOB’s commitment to achieving sustainable development, notably the SDGs, which are part of the rights-based policy framework Agenda 2030. The joint programme addresses some of the causes of long-standing sustainable development and human rights challenges faced by groups of people left furthest behind due to the pandemic. It brings together the technical expertise of the UN on food security, economic rights, decent work, children’s rights, women’s empowerment, and social protection in direct support to national partners to advance

progress on the SDGs that are inclusive and non-discriminatory. In particular, this joint programme targets the following SDGs:

SDG 1: No poverty

- **Target 1.2** By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women, and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.
- **Target 1.3** Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.

SDG 5: Gender Equality

- **Target 5.1** End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

- **Target 8.3** Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

- **Target 10.2** By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or status

SDG 13: Climate Action

- **Target 13.1:** Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

SDG 16.6: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

- **Target 16.6:** Develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels.

3.2 Expected SDG impact

The UN will support the GOB in adopting a systematic approach focusing on a long-term vision to LNOB (SDG 10.2). On the first hand, the joint programme will create an enabling environment for a robust social protection system through the development of a social protection strategy that is informed by the contributions, participation, and inclusion of the identified vulnerable populations. The strategy will define the Social Protection Floor (SPF) for Belize and will identify the social protection programmes that should be implemented and/or reformed to extend social protection coverage and progressively achieve universality (SDG 1.3). By reinforcing human, financial, technical capacities, data collection, and analysis, the programme will foster the effective implementation of social policy and social protection interventions at national and subnational levels. The comprehensive approach of the joint programme builds on the participatory identification of root problems and better understand of vulnerabilities, including the challenges from climate change. It will support the effective and efficient identification of beneficiaries and administration of social protection programmes during shocks, therefore strengthening the resilience of institutions to adapt and operate in times of crisis (SDG 13.1).

The integrated approach to strengthen the social protection system and to create an enabling environment for business development and decent job creation also builds on the rights-based approach and addresses inequalities and discrimination, including gender, geographic, age-based, and ethnic discrimination (SDG 5.1) that forces individuals, families, and communities to face multiple vulnerabilities including those imposed by COVID-19 while contributing to addressing poverty (SDG 1.2). The joint programme will also implement a systematic approach to value chain development and implement a pilot programme that includes assessments, enabling environment analysis, entrepreneurship skills, formalization, access to social security, and the development of e-solutions for MSMEs to facilitate business operations (SDG 8.3). The contributions of MSMEs to the SDGs are critical due to their role in economic activity, in creating employment and incomes, especially among the poor and marginalized groups to enhance their standard of living in support of their economic and social rights. The programme will also address some of the barrier’s women, youth, and indigenous people face to start and run a business, e.g. lack of knowledge, lack of skills, low confidence, family expectations, and responsibilities, etc. Finally, the multidimensional approach of the joint programme is demand-driven and relies on local institutions and communities to identify needs, deliver social protection programmes, and support the development of businesses in an economic environment that is premised on transparency and accountability (SDG 16.6).

5. RELEVANT OBJECTIVE/S FROM THE NATIONAL SDG FRAMEWORK

The joint programme will contribute to addressing the national strategies as identified in **Plan Belize 2022-2026** (national development plan). As mentioned in the Plan, the impact of COVID-19 has brought to the fore fundamental structural challenges including poverty, a lack of diversification, and an inability to mobilize and manage capital productively (See Box below).

PLAN BELIZE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every Belizean should have an opportunity to go to school and be educated and trained with relevant skills. Personal success starts with a good education. • Every Belizean should have access to adequate healthcare including timely access to quality primary healthcare. Everyone must be healthy to produce and fend for oneself and family. • Every Belizean should have access to a piece of land. With land, one immediately has a valuable base to create opportunities for empowerment and personal growth. Every Belizean in rural areas needs lands to be productive, feed the family, and generate income. • Every Belizean should have access to employment. A job is a driving force for personal growth and development and a basis for developing self-esteem and promoting human dignity. • Every Belizean should have access to decent housing. A home breeds stability, family, and love, and is essential for nurturing and developing our children. • Embark on a “big push” approach for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME), family farming, women and youth, and marketing of products to stimulate activity in rural areas.

- The increasing gaps in income and productivity within urban and rural communities will be addressed through **well-coordinated programs of investment, skills enhancement, and enterprise development** specifically targeted to the pockets of poverty and unemployment.

Source: Government of Belize. #PlanBelize 2020

As a response, the **Government’s Medium-Term Development Strategy** highlights poverty reduction and economic transformation as key strategic goals to ensure equal opportunity for education and skills development, access to quality healthcare, secure growth, job creation, income generation, and prosperity in Belize. The joint programme will contribute to these goals and two specific targets:

Strategic Goal 1- Poverty reduction

- Reduce the poverty rate by 50%, from an estimated 50% to 25% of the population, in 10 years.
- Ensure food and nutrition security for the poor and those most in need across the country
- Ensure equal opportunity for education and skills development and quality healthcare

Strategic Goal 2- Economic transformation & growth

- Increase the employment of women, the youth, and those areas or communities staying behind, with an average unemployment rate below 5%, and create 50,000 jobs.

Additionally, the programme will contribute to National Children’s Agenda 2017-2030 goal 4 “Prioritize economic security and opportunity”.

To the regional level, the programme aligns with United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022 – 2026:

Strategic Area 1: Economic resilience and Shared prosperity:

- Outcome 2: The Caribbean has fully transitioned to a more diversified and sustainable economy that support inclusive and resilient economic growth

Strategic Area 2: Equity and Well-being:

- Outcome 4: People in the Caribbean equitably access and utilize universal, quality and shock-responsive, social protection, education, health, and care services

Strategic Area 3: Resilience to Climate Change and Natural Resources Management

- Outcome 5: Caribbean people, communities, and institutions have enhanced their adaptive capacity for inclusive, gender-responsive Disaster Risk Management and climate change adaptation and mitigation

6. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE THEORY OF CHANGE OF THE JOINT PROGRAMME

5.1 Summary:

Belize’s social protection system operates in a fragmented and isolated structure that has not built on the existing resources, shared technical capacities, and knowledge located across stakeholders which could be used to galvanize and fast-track the State’s commitment to addressing the rights and needs of the populations that are most vulnerable and left furthest behind. These populations – primarily, the urban poor, people living with disabilities, poor men, women, youth, and children who live in the rural areas - experience persistent poverty, marginalization, and social exclusion; in the context of COVID-19, their social and economic susceptibilities have been exacerbated. The joint programme offers that, **if** the government of Belize develops an integrated social protection strategy that is responsive to shocks and disasters and **if** this strategy is coordinated and jointly implemented among partner ministries who have increased capacities for strategy coordination, and improved competencies to enable a growth-based, gender-responsive MSME sector, **then** the most vulnerable groups will be better supported to access and benefit from the social protection system; **then** they will also engage in economic opportunities, decent jobs, and livelihood opportunities that will improve their standard of living, and **then** the government will advance its commitments to the SDGs, in particular, SDGs 5, 8, 10, 13 and 16.

5.2 List of main ToC assumptions to be monitored:

- The GOB, UN, and partners want to meet the basic rights of the most deprived within the recovery context of COVID-19, including children, youth, women, and families impacted by natural disasters.
- A strong commitment of GOB at national and sub-national levels, on the need to strengthen the social protection system and delivery; and MSME sector.
- The joint programme uses collaborative partnerships and inclusive participation; stakeholders work in collaboration and support the joint programme and integration with forthcoming social protection initiatives.
- High-quality evidence can be collected, analysed, and timely provided.
- A strong focus on the rights of the children, youth, and women, and their empowerment is a priority.
- A commitment by the government to execute and strengthen inter-governmental mechanisms and capacities to respond to the rights of those furthest behind.
- The Government will ensure the sustainability of the BOOST Programme.

7. TRANS-BOUNDARY AND/OR REGIONAL ISSUES

COVID-19.

The effects of COVID-19 are significant both nationally and regionally. By 2020, tourist arrivals dropped by 72% because of the pandemic. This downturn in arrivals had a large, direct impact on the economy since tourism accounts for 40% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Consequently, Belize’s GDP contracted by 14% in 2020.

The International Monetary Fund's predictions² expect a protracted recovery from the pandemic, with real GDP regaining its 2019 level only by 2025. The IMF noted that Belize is expected to experience a deep recession, particularly as the pandemic followed an economic recession resulting from drought and reduced tourist arrivals in the second half of 2019. According to the same report, all sectors of the economy will be impacted, since GDP per capita is estimated to have regressed to 2003 levels, negatively impacting SDGs progress. The poverty rate is reported at 52% in 2018, with increases in inequality and food insecurity, as well as reduced access to decent employment, and education with particular impact on vulnerable groups including, children, children, and adults with disabilities, rural and indigenous women as well as men and women in the informal sector. To date, the current debt/GDP ratio has reached 124%. Gains in health outcomes have been compromised and are now challenged by fiscal policy and possible budget cuts. At the same time, there is a need to assess the extent to which such cuts will affect the standard of living in households and among groups of men and women who are have been made even more vulnerable by the pandemic.

Geographical location and climate change

Belize is highly vulnerable to natural disasters and the effects of climate change and ranks 8th out of 167 countries for climate risk. While being on the Central American mainland, the country is highly exposed to hurricanes, storms, and associated flooding, wind damage, and storm surge, especially in coastal areas and Belize City. The country's low-lying terrain exacerbates the effects of flooding and sea-level rise. Belize is also at risk of extreme temperature events.³ The country incurs an estimated average loss of 4% of GDP with each natural disaster.⁴

Regional exchange and peer learning

As an active member of CARICOM and SICA, Belize has great potential for regional exchange and peer learning through regional events to share the lessons. The common vision on social protection by the PUNOs illustrated by successful results of similar joint interventions, for example, the SDG Fund joint programme "Universal Adaptive Social Protection to Enhance Resilience and Acceleration of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Eastern Caribbean, ensure that the necessary collaboration and expertise to achieve the expected change exist and can respond to the demands of the GOB and its key stakeholders.

² International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2021. Article IV. Available [here](#).

³ According to the Natural Disaster Hotspot study by the World Bank, Belize is the 61st highest exposed country for relative mortality risk from multiple hazards in the world. World Bank, [Climate Change Knowledge Portal](#).

⁴ UNICEF, 2019. Country Office Annual Report 2019.

C. JOINT PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

1. Baseline and Situation Analysis

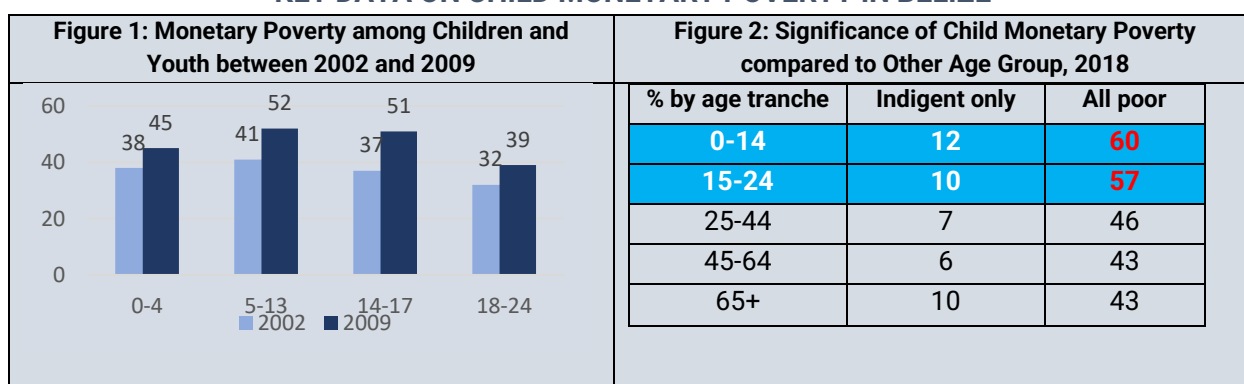
1.1 Problem statement

Poverty and COVID-19 Pandemic.

Belize has a current debt/GDP of approximately 123%.⁵ The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant social, economic, and political impacts and exacerbated poverty and inequality in an economy that was already experiencing decline prior to the onset of the global crisis. Prior to the pandemic, poverty was already high, at 41% in 2009, and is estimated at 52% prior to COVID-19, in 2018,⁶ with children being the most affected, as they constituted 60% of the 0-14 poor. Deprivations for children were also already high since 58% of children were estimated to live in multidimensional poverty. Geographical disparities were significant indicating that 70% of children in poverty and 42% in extreme poverty live in rural areas. Today, deprivations (in the sense of accessing basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing/shoes, education, health, electricity, and potable water) of Belizeans are exacerbated. However, there is currently no national definition of Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), nor Child-MPI in Belize. This has led to the lack of evidence-based planning and mobilization of resources to afford basic services in an economy that continues to show declining economic opportunities, a workforce with diminishing job prospects, and inappropriate skills for revenue-generating activities.

The effects of the pandemic continue to be socially and economically damaging for the country. Since March 2020, more than 100,000 children and adolescents have been affected by school closures, and violence against children has been on the rise. Overburdened health systems and school closures have threatened the ability to keep children healthy and well-nourished. Households indicated skipping meals or reducing their food intake, and food security appear to have deteriorated. The socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 are felt hardest by the most vulnerable who are currently not in school, unable to work, live in rural areas, and who also have caring responsibilities. It is estimated that 52% of Belize's population was already living in poverty prior to the pandemic and that they are also likely to plunge further into hardship.

KEY DATA ON CHILD MONETARY POVERTY IN BELIZE



Source: SIB, 2009 Country Poverty Assessment, 2010. Poverty Study, 2021.

⁵ IMF, 2021. Article IV.

⁶ Statistical Institute of Belize, 2021. Poverty Study

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic also brings to the fore the gendered nature of Belize's workforce. Men and women, male and female youth, tend to work in sectors and jobs that are traditionally and socially acceptable. For instance, women work mostly in the public service, in healthcare, and the tourism or service sector. Men, on the other hand, work principally in the primary sectors, such as in agriculture, fisheries, construction, and logging industries. The impact of COVID-19 has also displayed the different invulnerability that they experience. The loss of jobs in the tourism sector because of the downturn in tourist arrivals and owing to travel restrictions has directly impacted the earning capacity of women since they account for the bulk of the workers in this sector, especially in the lower, domestic-related positions. At the same time, men were more likely to lose their jobs because they constitute the bulk of the workforce. Consistently in Belize, men are three times more likely to be employed than women. Hence, men were also more likely to lose their jobs and incomes owing to the pandemic than women.

Economic position of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

In Belize, approximately 93% of businesses are Micro, Small, or Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).⁷ A Business Establishments Survey⁸ from 2020 highlights the impacts of COVID-19 on business, at the staffing, revenue, and operation levels. Evidence shows that 61% of establishments reported a significantly decreased demand for their products and services. Similarly, 64% indicated being highly impacted by reduced revenues (as compared to the onset of the pandemic in March 2020), and over 46% have been highly impacted by the cancellation of contracts. As a result of the crisis, a recent UNDP report⁹ recognizes the need to support the private sector. The sector accounts for the majority of employment in Belize and is a significant source of government revenue. In 2014, MSMEs were reported to generate at least 70% of private-sector employment and incomes.¹⁰

In this context, it is also important to address some of the inherent inequalities and exclusion faced by certain populations who are actively engaged in MSMEs. For instance, women are less likely to benefit from financial packages and services from banks and the Development Finance Corporation. One challenge here is that land tenure and ownership among females is still low because of the social and traditional practices that support the transfer of land within families to mostly male children and relatives. In the absence of land ownership, women and youth often do not have the collateral needed to access financing to either start or grow their businesses. In the agriculture sector, mostly male extension officers conduct outreach and support services and they may not address the unique challenges that women face in this sector. Of note, in the central region, there is just one (1) female extension officer from a team of 10 officers assigned to this region. Unpacking the underlying causes of marginalization and exclusion of certain groups who are involved in MSMEs is also the aim of the proposed work packages. In this regard, the joint programme will conduct a comprehensive situational analysis and use this participatory process to uncover the barriers and bottlenecks that men, women, and youth experience when starting and growing their micro-enterprises. The findings from this analysis will inform policy development, program formulation, and partnerships for systematization across agencies and ministries to address these gaps.

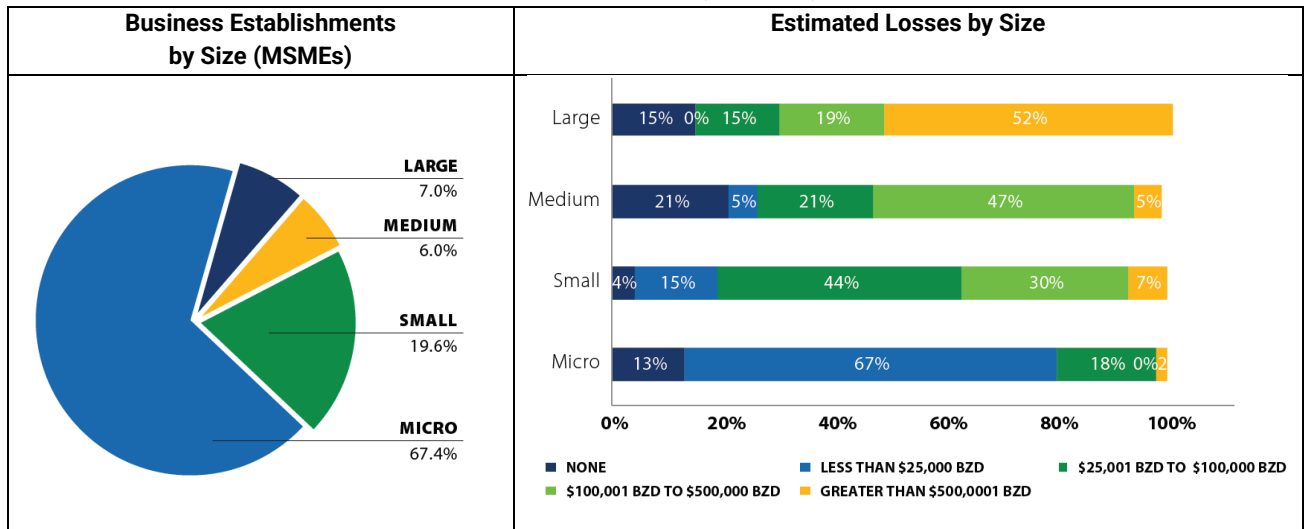
⁷ UNDP, 2020. COVID-19 Socioeconomic Impact Assessment.

⁸ Statistical Institute of Belize (SIB), 2020. Impact of COVID-19 on Business Establishments Survey. The survey was conducted on a 2,500 randomly selected businesses across the country and across all main industry groups, to collect data on the impact of COVID-19 on operations and staffing.

⁹ UNDP, 2020. COVID-19 Socioeconomic Impact Assessment.

¹⁰ Inter-American Development Bank, 2014. Private Sector Assessment of Belize.

MICRO, SMALL OR MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSMEs) AND IMPACT OF COVID-19



Source: UNDP, 2020. COVID-19 Socioeconomic Impact Assessment.

Climate Change and Natural Disasters

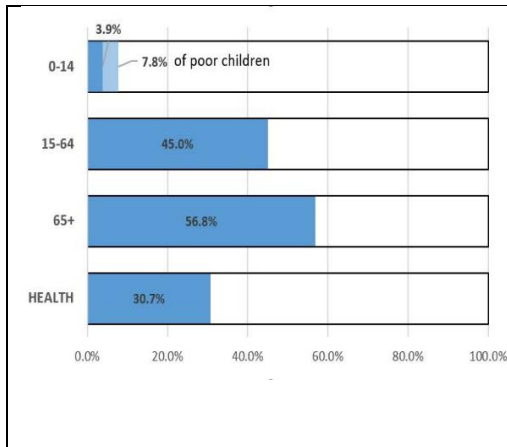
Belize is highly vulnerable to natural disasters. The hurricane season officially runs from June to November each year, with a peak season in September, and tropical storms and hurricanes often threaten to hit Belize. In the past few years, major hurricanes have caused extensive damage and casualties: Hurricane Earl (August 4, 2016); Hurricane Franklin (August 8, 2017); and more recently Hurricane Nana (September 1, 2020); Hurricane ETA (November 4, 2020); and Hurricane IOTA (November 16, 2020). Almost two in five Belizeans live in coastal areas including the islands, where the risks of flooding are higher.¹¹ Hurricanes Nana, Eta, and Iota resulted in anomalous levels of floodwaters, and tens of thousands of families have been impacted. Such hazards are a major challenge to sustainable development and the survival and well-being of communities, and particularly children, children with disabilities. Within this context, the relevance and need for adequate social protection / shock-responsive social protection (SRSP), and economic opportunities have been reinforced.

Social Protection System

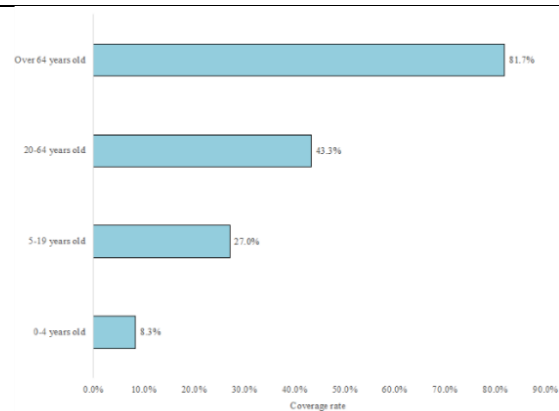
Social protection coverage, which was already low before the COVID-19 pandemic, remains a challenge in Belize. In 2018, 43% of the population received social protection benefits. Looking at children, only 3.9% of the children’s population was covered (by the main social protection programme for children - Building Opportunities for Our Social Transformation) prior to the crisis. Further, less than 10 percent of the children 0-4 years old in Belize had health coverage.

¹¹ UNICEF, 2016.

SOCIAL PROTECTION COVERAGE RATES THROUGHOUT THE LIFE CYCLE



NHI COVERAGE RATES BY AGE GROUP, 2018



Source: GOB, 2020. SPER

The vision, mission, and objectives of the social protection (SP) system are not defined allowing for uncertainty about its social, economic, and political sustainability: it remains fragmented, with non-contributory schemes providing low coverage to vulnerable groups. As of today, there is no formal SP Strategy and the current social protection programmes lack coordination. Further, social protection spending is insufficient to provide adequate coverage and universality; and national capacities to administer SP programmes, including human resources and access to modern technology, are limited and restrict the scope of the response, particularly in times of shocks.

A mapping of SP programmes conducted in Belize in 2017 identified a total of 48 service delivery activities. There exists a variety of cash transfer, unemployment programmes, food distribution, distance and online learning, and technical assistance, including recent programmes implemented over the past year in order to mitigate the socio-economic impacts on children and families. These programmes are generally developed on an ad-hoc basis and are not the result of an integrated planning process. In addition, the temporary and debt-based nature of the recently implemented programmes makes it difficult to sustain.

SELECTION OF SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES IN BELIZE

- **COVID-19 Food Assistance Program.** Up to September 2020, 39,129 households were assisted countrywide with up to four food baskets, delivered through a network of over 200 shops that extend to the rural areas. This network has delivered over 150,000 food baskets and created economic stimulation and employment locally.
- **Belize COVID-19 Cash Transfer Program (BCCAT).** Launched in February 2021, BCCAT is a supplementary short-term emergency cash program, that benefits 21,000 households. Beneficiaries receive 3 payments of BZD 300 every two months for a 6-month period. Beneficiaries are notified of their payment via SMS.
- **Humanitarian relief after ETA and IOTA.** In November 2020, a Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) grant was issued, targeting 1,000 households for 4 months. Half of the households received multi-purpose cash assistance through Visa debit cards. The value of the grant was USD 285 (BZD 570), disbursed in one single payment, reflecting the minimum wage, transportation, and fees. The second half received non-food items.
- **Unemployment Relief Program.** The program provides financial assistance (BZD 150 every two weeks for a 12-week period) to workers who have been laid off and self-employed persons who have lost their jobs/ income due

to COVID-19.¹² There were some 49,000 beneficiaries in phase 1 and 42,000 in phase 2. This programme is part of the government's Economic Relief Programme, which includes the Unemployment Relief Programme and the MSMEs Support programme.

- **Micro Small and Medium Enterprise (MSMEs) Support Program:** provides financial relief to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to help safeguard and promote employee retention, as well as assist MSMEs as they transition and adapt to the economic challenges presented by the COVID-19. The programme provides cash to MSMEs who have suffered revenue loss. Under the programme, micro-enterprises are eligible for \$2,500; and MSMEs are eligible for BZD 15,000 and BZD 20,000 loans, respectively.¹³

According to the UNICEF 2016 BOOST Evaluation Report (2016), 52% of recipients of the cash transfers were women. Since the health crisis, the government has instituted a system of emergency cash transfers to aid households and businesses that have been severely impacted by the pandemic. However, there are no preliminary assessments to indicate the impact or changes that these newer social assistance programme has had on the livelihoods of men and women and the living standards of male and female heads of households and their children. Hence, while women and children benefitted significantly from the BOOST programme, it is critical that the previous gains to support women's care workers are not eroded by the pandemic. In the context of COVID-19, it is also important that the care work performed mostly by women, young girls, and men are valued and supported within the household. At the same time, building back better from COVID-19 will require that those who provide care assistance are not excluded from accessing economic opportunities and resources because of these responsibilities. Strengthening joint planning, data generation, and knowledge sharing among government ministries and agencies will enhance gender targeting for social protection and economic support equitably.

Within this context, the joint programme aims to support the progressive development of the universal, adequate and resilient social protection system through the development and implementation of the **National Social Protection Strategy and related Action Plan**, including the Social Protection Floor (SPF), effective administration of social protection programmes, and integration with other public policies, including access to income opportunities, skills development and formalization, and sustainable financing, including in cases of shocks. Strengthening data generation and analysis as well as gender-based planning by government, agencies will improve the capacities of ministries to implementing the Social Protection Strategy in a targeted and responsive manner. Doing so will meet the needs of women and men for improved access to, and participation and inclusion in services and engagement with MSME support mechanisms.

Recognizing the key role that MSMEs play in the Belizean economy, the impact that they have had during the pandemic and the challenge to recover from it, the joint programme seeks to **support the growth, transformation, and formalization of MSMEs**. The joint programme will implement a systematic approach to value chain development and implement a pilot programme that includes assessments, enabling environment analysis, entrepreneurship skills, formalization, access to social security coverage, and the development of solutions for MSMEs to facilitate business operations. The joint programme will also address some of the barrier's women face in starting and running a business including knowledge base, specialist skills, technical competencies, family expectations, care responsibilities, and inclusion in financial products and resources.

¹² <https://www.covid19.bz/the-covid-19-unemployment-relief-program/>

¹³ UNDP, 2020. COVID-19 Socioeconomic Impact Assessment.

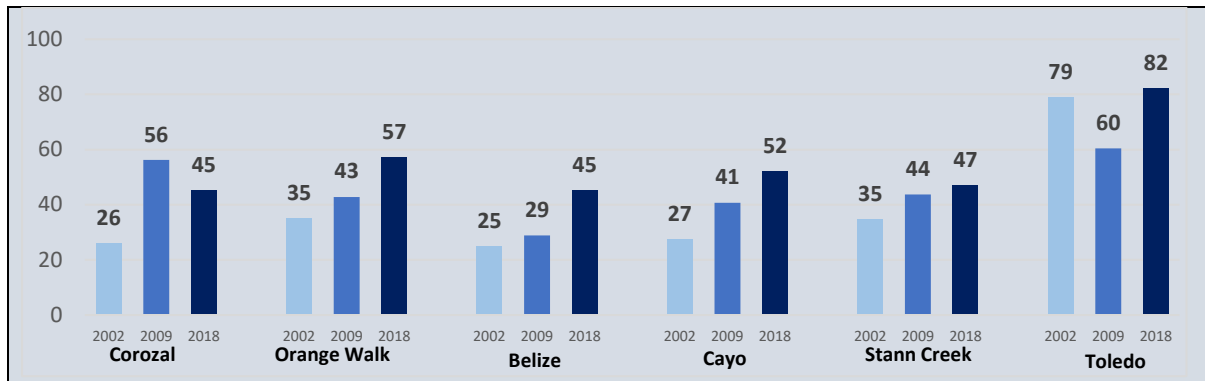
The programme will be guided by the **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030** with regards to risk-based approach and preparedness activities to prevent and reduce existing and new disaster risks. The programme aligns with the **Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs)**, which are UNICEF's central humanitarian policy to uphold the rights of children affected by humanitarian crises. Further, UNICEF's Regional and Belize's Protocols for Integrated Protection for Children and Adolescents during Disasters are the guiding principles for emergency response.

1.2 Target groups

Interventions of the joint programme will have an impact at national and sub-national levels and will directly support households of poor and vulnerable groups who have inadequate or no coverage by existing social protection programmes in Belize. The comprehensive approach of the joint programme - ranging from the inclusive and participatory identification of root problems to the responsive delivery of social protection benefits that integrates social, and economic dimensions of shocks – addresses inequalities and discrimination, including gender and ethnic discrimination, that prevents individuals, families, and whole communities from overcoming the impact of multiple vulnerabilities. This focus ensures that a rights-based approach will enable the voices of those left behind to engage in policy dialogue, aid in the crafting of decent work opportunities, and participate in the formulation of social protection pillars that afford a decent standard of living in times of crises.

People living and at risk of living in poverty. People living in poverty, indigenous people, and those being at risk of falling into poverty will be targeted by the joint programme. Over the past years, poverty has significantly increased especially within the COVID-19 context. Monetary poverty levels increased from 34% (2002) to 42% (2009) to 52% (2018), especially in Toledo and Orange Walk (See Box Below). People who were not poor but classified as 'vulnerable' before the COVID-19 (11% of the national population) are expected to have fallen into poverty as a result of the pandemic. In addition, the COVID-19 has exacerbated deprivations due to movement and social gathering restrictions. Other factors of vulnerability include the persistence of COVID-19 and natural disasters, which have multiplier effects on levels of monetary and multidimensional poverty. Special attention will be placed on the gender dimensions of poverty. Data on poverty, employment, and care responsibilities will be collected and disaggregated to show the burden of the care and other responsibilities placed on men and women and which preclude them from earning a living and maintaining their livelihoods. According to the Labour Force Statistics (SIB, 2020), adults of working age were opting out of the labor force because of care responsibilities. This joint programme will advance social protection assistance including childcare and other caring assistance that can enable women and men to exercise their rights to earn a living and maintain a decent standard of living.

EVOLUTION OF MONETARY POVERTY IN BELIZE, BETWEEN 2002 AND 2018.



Source: SIB, 2009 Country Poverty Assessment, 2010. Poverty Study, 2021.

Children. Children in Belize, who are the future growth and prosperity of the country, are amongst the most deprived. Before the pandemic, the level of poverty for children was very high: in 2011, 58% of children were identified as living in multidimensional poverty. Later in 2018, a poverty report shows that 60% of children aged 0-14 were living in monetary poverty. This situation has worsened with the COVID-19 pandemic, with children losing access to their essential services due to school closure and disruption of services, and loss of livelihood at the household level. As a result, one of the main beneficiaries will be children, who will benefit from a more inclusive, efficient, and sustainable social protection system, reflecting the needs of boys and girls and the most vulnerable who currently are not covered by any type of social. These beneficiaries will include minorities, such as include migrant families or children with disabilities. It is however difficult to quantify as disaggregated data is unavailable.

Women and women-headed households will be particularly targeted not only to reduce the structural problems leading to poverty, deprivation, and vulnerability but also to address the additional challenges their livelihood imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Women are particularly affected by poverty and deprivation. Some households headed by women are more likely to be in poverty and female-headed households are likely to be vulnerable to shocks differently due to social norms and more limited economic opportunities and income. Analyses of the existing social protection environment will also be conducted to establish the extent to which this promotes the empowerment of women and fosters gender equality. Findings from this analysis will allow for corrective measures to be undertaken to reduce the social and economic marginalization, especially of women.

MSMEs and workers in the informal economy will be directly targeted to promote entrepreneurship and the extension of social protection floor coverage, including the self-employed, which will be progressive. Based on discussions with the GOB and organizations representing workers in the informal economy, actions could focus on rural and urban areas and agriculture and service sectors. A participatory approach will be implemented to select areas and sectors. Women in the informal economy will be prioritized because of the severe impact on livelihoods that informality creates.

1.3 SDG targets

The UN is the guarantor of rights-based approaches to LNOB based on international treaties and standards. It supports the GOB in adopting and implementing a systems approach focusing on a long-term vision to LNOB,

in alignment with the SDGs. In setting out a shared framework for support and achievement of the SDGs, the UNCT institutionalizes its commitment to equality and LNOB. Within the framework of the SDGs and based on the need to address LNOB, the joint programme addresses multiple forms of deprivation, disadvantage, and discrimination that engender inequality and inequity, through improved access and appropriateness of integrated social protection programmes; increased capacities and coordination mechanisms by engaging at the upstream level through the provision of technical assistance and guidance to government authorities.

The programme and related strategies are particularly relevant as they address key causes of long-standing development and human rights challenges, and the growing vulnerability of people left even further behind due to the pandemic. The following SDG targets are directly and indirectly linked to the proposed joint programme:

SDG 1: No poverty

Target 1.2: By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women, and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions

Indicator 1.2.1: Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age.

Baseline: 2018: 52% (Poverty Study for 2018, 2021, Statistical Institute of Belize)

Target 1.3: Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable

Indicator 1.3.1: Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims, and the poor and the vulnerable

Baseline: Proportion of poor population receiving social assistance cash benefit, by sex (%): 2020: 7.4% (UNDP SDG Database)

SDG 5: Gender Equality

Target 5.1: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

Indicator 5.1.1: Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination based on sex

Baseline: National/and/or sub-national evidence-based, cost, and funded action plans and M&E frameworks on VAWG are in place that responds to the rights of all women and girls and is developed in a participatory manner: 4 out of 6 (6 being the best possible score)

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Target 8.3: Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services

Indicator 8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex

Baseline: 2021: 42.1 % of all employed persons were in informal employment (Labour Force Survey 2021, SIB)

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

Target 10.2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or status

Indicator 10.2.1: Proportion of people living below 50 percent of median income, by sex, age, and persons with disabilities

Baseline: 2018: GINI Index: 0.49 (Poverty Study for the year 2018, 2021, SIB)

SDG 13 Climate Action

Target 13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries

Indicator 13.1.1: Number of deaths, missing persons, and persons affected by disaster per 100,000 people

Baseline: 2010: 4991.66 (UNDP SDG Database)

SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels

Indicator 16.6.1: Primary government expenditures as a proportion of the original approved budget, by sector (or by budget codes or similar)

Baseline: 2020: Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget (%): 102.7941

1.4 Stakeholder mapping

Office of the Prime Minister. Primarily responsible for Inter-Ministerial Coordination and Parliamentary Matters, delivery, and accountability for #PlanBelize, aside from the oversight of various departments and statutory bodies.

- ➔ High level of interest. Strategic guidance will be provided by the CEO and the Senior Policy Advisor.
- ➔ Will inform, consult, approve

Ministry of Economic Development. MED is an integral partner in the economic and social development of Belize by providing efficient and timely advice on and coordinating development initiatives to improve the general wellbeing of all Belizeans. Its mission includes a leadership role in formulating and recommending national development policies, strategies, and programmes to promote macroeconomic stability, sustainable socio-economic development, and the reduction of poverty.

- ➔ Will lead the implementation joint programme support will be provided by the CEO.,
- ➔ Will inform, consult, approve

Ministry of Human Development, Families & Indigenous People’s Affairs (MHD) is at the heart of the programmes, projects, and activities with the objective of “helping people to help themselves” to lead the development of citizens to positively contribute to social transformation within communities, including poverty alleviation. The MHD is leading the social protection agenda in Belize and is responsible for the provision of disaster relief supplies within the broader disaster preparedness system.¹⁴ The Women and Family Support Department aims to promote gender equality and equity thereby enabling women and men to be actively involved in and enjoy all benefits of development. It strives to facilitate economic development and empowerment of women, to minimize the incidence of gender-based violence to contribute to creating a protective environment, and to advocate for gender-sensitive policies, plans, programmes, and projects. Recently, the UN system presented the Social Protection Expenditure Review (SPER) to the Ministry of Human Development. It is expected to present the SPER to the new inter-ministerial high-level technical Caucus and to prepare a Cabinet Paper for the establishment of a social protection Strategy.

- ➔ Social Protection technical leadership will be provided by the CEO.
- ➔ Will inform, consult, approve

Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development, Labour and Local Government. The Department of Local Government is committed to strengthening local authorities to empower communities to address their development needs through policy development, guidance, and support, to reduce social, economic, and environmental inequities. The Rural Development Department is committed to empowering rural communities in addressing their development needs, strengthening local governance, and adopting sustainable development practices, thus improving their overall quality of life.

- ➔ Community and enterprise development in rural communities, to be led and implemented by the CEO.
- ➔ Will inform, consult, approve

Ministry of Youth, Sports & E-Governance. The Ministry brings development to the country with a focus on the younger generation, sports, and technology.

Social Security Board The Social Security Board (SSB) of Belize, established in 1981, has the mandate to serve the needs of the greater Belizean population through the provision of contributory social insurance services, non-contributory pension, and health insurance through the National Health Insurance Programme (NHI). Offers include Social insurance for employed persons aged 14 to 64. Coverage Includes:

- Short Term Benefits: Sickness; Maternity (Allowance/ Grant).
- Long Term Benefits: Funeral Grant; Retirement (Pension/Grant); Invalidity (Pension/Grant); Survivor’s (Pension/Grant).
- Employment Injury Benefits: Injury; Medical care; Disablement (Pension - Constant Attendance/ Grant; Funeral Grant; Death (Pension)
- Non-Contributory Pension (NCP).
- NHI administration.
- Social Assistance Programmes through the SSDA.

National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) was established to preserve life and property in Belize in the event of an emergency, threatened or real, and to mitigate the impact on the country and its people. The National Disaster Office NEMO has representations in municipalities (City Emergency Management

¹⁴ WFP, 2020. Shock-Responsive Social Protection in the Caribbean, Belize Case Study.

Organization, CEMO) and intervenes in collaboration with the GOB (Ministry of Health and Human Development).

Belize Red Cross. Belize Red Cross Society supports main activities in areas of disaster risk management, emergency response, public health, and social services, providing a variety of humanitarian services, and contributing to public health and social services.

BELTRAIDE. BELTRAIDE is a statutory body under the Ministry with responsibility for Investment, Trade, and Commerce that enhances Belize's prosperity by fostering investor confidence, entrepreneurship, business growth, and innovation. It also enables a dynamic and competitive business environment for Belize's socio-economic development.

Development Finance Corporation. DCF is Belize's only Development Bank that has the purpose to support the strengthening and expansion of Belize's economy by providing developmental financing on an economically sustainable and environmentally acceptable basis to individuals, businesses, and organizations. The Corporation accesses financing from larger regional and international lending institutions at attractive rates for lending to Belizeans Citizens, Residents, companies, cooperatives, and other bodies with Belizean majority share Interest.

National Committee for Families and Children (NCFC): The NCFC was established as one of those entities that work upstream. While there must be direct services that children must receive (i.e. the "life preservers") there must also be a body responsible for the overall protection of children and their families (i.e. ensuring as many as is possible not fall in the river in the first place.) While departments and organizations are tasked with the everyday work that must continue to provide both the response to the violation of children's rights and also work on preventative approaches, the NCFC functions as a special advocate with policy and monitoring and evaluation responsibilities. It monitors the long-term strategies that must be implemented to improve the lives of children and their families.

2. Programme Strategy

2.1. Overall strategy

The existing strategic partnership on social protection between the UN System and the GOB has been reinforced with recent concrete commitments from both parties and provides an enabling environment for the effective implementation of the joint programme. The joint programme will use a transformational approach to target groups and respond to the needs of the people left behind and at risk of being left behind.

Based on the above perspective, the joint protection will build an integrated and sustainable social protection system to support the most vulnerable, including in shock-responsive settings. The joint programme will use an intervention model based on the following strategies:

System strengthening and coordination

The programme will establish a strong working relationship and platform for dialogue with all relevant stakeholders, including relevant ministries and departments like MED and key line ministries, the National Statistical Institute of Belize, and actors involved in disaster preparedness and response, including the national emergency agency (NEMO), and implementing partner like Belize Red Cross. This will be a crucial element for the success of the joint programme.

Capacity building

The joint programme will build essential capacities of the government institutions and human resources that will enable them to improve their performance and achieve their development objectives, especially in the context of recovery, and beyond the programme intervention. Efforts will be put forward to strengthen capacity to enhance the coverage and access to basic social services. A key element of the joint programme will be to strengthen the capacity of the local government institutions. As part of this element of strategy, and given the recent establishment of a new administration, a new series of social protection conferences will be developed, using the lesson learned from the previous cycle. The objective will be to sensitize new parliamentarians, CEOs on the need for the SPF and unified M&E of the social protection programmes. The full engagement - though the social protection conferences in 2018-2019 - had contributed to shaping the work initiated by the government and allowed for due consideration of capacities and needs, creating an enabling environment of social dialogue with full participation and consensus.

Local Economic Development (LED)

Communities, cities, and governments increasingly turn to LED strategies in response to the challenges of globalization and the drive for decentralization. LED means more than just economic growth. It is promoting participation and local dialogue, connecting people and their resources for better delivery of social services, employment creation, and ensuring a higher quality of life for both men and women. LED strategies are also deployed to address shocks to increase the coherence and effectiveness between national policy packages and local realities. LED interventions to include the use of private sector development approaches and tools such as value chain development, linkages with microfinance institutions, skills development, institutional capacity-building, and green jobs.

Communication, Advocacy, and Policy

Appropriate communication channels will be developed and implemented to increase awareness for the most vulnerable communities. Changes will be brought through training programmes, public awareness and engagement, and innovative interventions. In addition, the programme will emphasize the participation and empowerment of individuals, households, communities, and key local influencers, and make sure that the voices of the most vulnerable, left behind, or at risk of being left behind are heard and translated into programmes and interventions.

Evidence generation, analysis data

Evidence and knowledge are instrumental to understand the situation of the most vulnerable, as well as to support the formulation of adequate policies and implementation of programmes and initiatives, M&E activities, and knowledge sharing/ learning. The disaggregation of data ensures a strong equity focus and enhances the gender-sensitive nature of programmes and policies by mainstreaming the needs of girls and boys in the different sectors. Evidence is collected by various development agencies with respective government offices (MICS), and data collection mechanisms are in place, notably the Statistical Institute of Belize (Labour Force Survey, Census, Household budget survey, poverty survey, Country Poverty Assessment), and administrative data from the government. As such, the government's department will be able to assist in generating new evidence in the areas of the joint programme, and collaboration will be continued with SIB to obtain up-to-date data on the current status. Additional collaboration with academia could also be envisioned. One key objective is to ensure that all data generated is disaggregated by sex and used to transform planning and programming within government organizations. This data will also inform the evidence-based targeting of men and women who are furthest behind to access and participate in social programmes. The absence of a systematic approach to data collection, analysis, and decision-making for social protection has led to fragmented policies and interventions that are developed in an ad hoc manner and are not sufficiently streamlined, sustainable, and people centered. Through participatory processes and consultation, the joint programme will seek to take stock of the situation and develop a strategy for data collection and knowledge coordination and management.

Transformation and sustainability

The joint programme will capitalize on the achievements of several projects and initiatives conducted over the past years in the area of social protection, including the Comprehensive Review of Belize's Social Protection System (2016, MHD, UNICEF, PNUD), the Social Projection Conference Series (2018-2019, MHD and partners), the findings and recommendations of the Social Protection Expenditure Review (SPER) (2020, ILO and UNICEF), the Case Study on Shock-Responsive Social Protection (2020, WFP).

2.2 Theory of Change

Summary

Belize's social protection system operates in a fragmented and isolated structure that has not built on the existing resources, shared technical capacities, and knowledge located across stakeholders which could be used to galvanize and fast-track the State's commitment to addressing the rights and needs of the populations that are most vulnerable and left furthest behind. These populations – primarily, the urban poor, people living with disabilities, poor men, women, youth, and children who live in the rural areas - experience persistent poverty, marginalization, and social exclusion; in the context of COVID-19, their social and economic susceptibilities have been exacerbated. The joint programme offers that, **if** the government of Belize develops

an integrated social protection strategy that is responsive to shocks and disasters and **if** this strategy is coordinated and jointly implemented among partner ministries who have increased capacities for strategy coordination, and improved competencies to enable a growth-based, gender-responsive MSME sector, **then** the most vulnerable groups will be better supported to access and benefit from the social protection system; **then** they will also engage in economic opportunities, decent jobs, and livelihood opportunities that will improve their standard of living, and then the government will advance its commitments to the SDGs, in particular, SDGs 5, 8, 10, 13 and 16.

Main ToC assumptions.

- The GOB, UN, and partners want to meet the basic rights of the most deprived within the recovery context of COVID-19, including children, youth, women, and families impacted by natural disasters.
- A strong commitment of GOB at national and sub-national levels, on the need to strengthen the social protection system and delivery; and MSME sector.
- The joint programme uses collaborative partnerships and inclusive participation; stakeholders work in collaboration and support the joint programme and integration with forthcoming social protection initiatives.
- High-quality evidence can be collected, analysed, and timely provided.
- A strong focus on the rights of the children, youth, and women, and their empowerment is a priority.
- The Government ensures the sustainability of the BOOST programme.

ToC narrative.

Through the successful delivery of this joint programme, the national social protection system will be strengthened to allow for greater integrated policy and monitoring, coordinated interventions, and better responsiveness to shocks and disasters. The ToC asserts that:

If the Belizean social protection system is organized around a National Social Protection Strategy providing for the Social Protection Floor; overseen by a steering committee and integrated with other public policies; **if** the government has financial, human, and material capacity to support the social protection agenda; **if** an adequate and sustainable financing system is identified, including in times of shocks; and **if** these activities are effective, the government will have gained improved capacity to efficiently manage the social protection system; **then** the social protection system of Belize will have enhanced capacities to better administer and deliver social protection programmes and poised to progressively achieve universal, adequate, sustainable and responsive social protection. **Then**, the most vulnerable and left behind, including children, youth, women, and their families will benefit from adequate social protection programmes and be empowered to enjoy their rights.

Additionally, if data generated from participatory processes at the local level allows for needs and priority sector identification that can positively impact the living standards for vulnerable populations in the short and medium-term; and **if** a pilot programme is drafted from the findings of these processes; so that **if** business development and environment for MSMEs are strengthened and simplified; and if vulnerable men, youth and women, some of whom will be in the informal sector will access the pilot programme and get support through economic empowerment actions; **Then** the foundations for a robust business environment will have been strengthened, from which decent jobs opportunities will be facilitated and livelihoods enhanced; **then** the MSME sector will be reinvigorated, and the strain on the social protection programmes will be alleviated.

Then, as a result of the above, joint attention to social protection and local economic development environment will contribute to improved livelihoods, resilience, and access to integrated social protection for vulnerable and poor groups in times of shocks.

The joint programme functions on the premise that social protection is the most powerful public policy tool to LNOB and to respond to shocks. Furthermore, its potential to support inclusive and sustainable development is improved if social protection is combined with other public policies, such as skills development and entrepreneurship, and doing business through MSMEs. Getting interventions closer to people and their needs implies the full involvement of local communities in the design and implementation of policies. The underlying assumption of this ToC is that political will to implement strategic reform exists and will translate into a more coordinated social protection system relying on local actors that protect and empower the most vulnerable.

2.3 Expected results and impact

Outcome 1		
By 2024, strengthen the resilience of vulnerable and poor groups by establishing a responsive social protection strategy that addresses the minimum living standards needs of people with disabilities, indigenous households, and workers in the informal sector (predominately women) by facilitating their access to, and benefits from, the Social Protection Floor.		
Output 1	Key Activities	Accountable PUNO
The National Social Protection Strategy, overseen by a coordination mechanism that drives data generation and exchange, policy guidance, effective beneficiary targeting, financing pathways, gender responsiveness, and resilient social protection programmes, is validated by stakeholders and adopted by the GOB	Development and endorsement of the Social Protection Strategy of Belize, which includes the SPF and shock-responsiveness,	UNICEF supported by ILO, WFP
	A national action plan that creates synergies with other national policies	UNICEF supported by ILO, WFP
	Establishment of a national human development commission with strong involvement of local communities that provides policy guidance, oversee institutional coordination, and conduct monitoring and evaluation	UNICEF
	Actuarial assessment to define the cost and sustainability for the implementation of unemployment insurance.	ILO
	Develop shock responsive social protection protocols that help guide registration, targeting, and delivery mechanisms of social protection programmes.	WFP
	Conduct integrated gender-sensitive vulnerability, poverty, and livelihood assessments/analyses, including primary data collection as needed.	WFP
Output 2	Key Activities	Accountable PUNO
The technical and gender mainstreaming capacities of social protection institutions,	Four trainings in key areas of social protection (include. M&E, programme management, social budgeting, introduction to SP for the poor, MPI)	UNICEF, support of ILO and WFP in key areas

local communities, and CSO involved in social protection are strengthened to better design, programme, finance, implement, monitor, and evaluate social protection programmes.	Annual Social Protection Conferences And One children and Youth conference	UNICEF, ILO, WFP
	Broaden and integrate information management across social protection systems in increasing responsiveness and inclusiveness of interventions.	UNICEF
	Strengthen analytical processes/capacities informed by the consultative process with key stakeholders, to enable an effective response to shocks and disasters at national and sub-national levels.	WFP
Output 3	Key Activities	Accountable PUNO
Government ministries and social protection actors are engaged in an integrated planning mechanism to ensure that adequate, gender-sensitive, and sustainable financing systems for social protection, including for good financial governance are identified and operationalized.	Costing the SPF and the Social Protection Strategy for Belize and identify fiscal space to finance SP	UNICEF, ILO
	Analyze and develop disaster risk financing options linked to the provision of support via social protection systems in response to disasters	WFP
Outcome 2 By 2024, strengthen local economic development (LED) and livelihoods in targeted municipalities, through a gender and youth sensitive value chain development approach to employment and decent work.		
Output 2.1	Key Activities	Accountable PUNO
A work plan to address priority issues in MSME development is established in consultation with local economic development actors (including women and youth) based on an analysis of barriers, bottlenecks, and opportunities for inclusive MSME development and employment in value chains.	Carry out a participatory and evidence-based sector selection and subsequent value chain analysis of 2 strategic value chains for economic growth and employment creation (e.g., agriculture, tourism) with a special focus on the inclusion of women and youth.	ILO
	Develop a work plan of measures and interventions at the local/municipal level, including women and youth, to strengthen support functions, rules and regulations, and cultural norms around the 2/3 value chains prioritized for inclusive growth.	ILO
Output 2.2	Key Activities	Accountable PUNO
Capacity and processes of targeted municipalities, representatives of youth and women and other key LED actors	Map, identify and carry out a capacity-building needs assessment of municipal actors, structures, and processes for decision making on inclusive local economic development strategies	ILO

are strengthened for effective participation in inclusive value chain development.	Capacity building of municipal representatives and other local economic actors (employer and worker representatives, NGOs, associations, youth and women groups and associations) to value chain development thinking, planning, and implementation including aspects linked to pathways to decent work (formalization, freedom of association, social dialogue) and inclusivity of women and youth	ILO
Output 2.3	Key Activities	Accountable PUNO
A programme with an integrated approach to support MSMEs and employment creation with a focus on youth and women in 2 target value chains is implemented and documented for scale-up.	Based on the outcomes of the gender and youth sensitive value chain analysis, design market-led intervention models to achieve greater MSME creation and growth with a special focus on women and youth	ILO
	Identify service providers and LED actors with sufficient capacities (technical, human, financial) and incentives to support the implementation of innovative and inclusive intervention models for MSME development and pathways to decent work	ILO
	Based on the results of the VCA and interventions models, support service providers in the design and introduction of innovative products, (e.g., business and formalization training, coaching, access to seed funding, business plan competitions, etc.)	ILO
	Facilitate market linkages between value chain actors (including youth, women, and MSMEs) and local business development service providers	ILO
	Document the interventions-models and organize a knowledge-sharing event with municipalities, LED actors including women and youth representatives, government, and large companies to present success cases, lessons learned and offer a platform for exchanges partnership building	ILO

Outcome 1: By 2024, strengthen the resilience of vulnerable and poor groups by establishing a responsive social protection strategy that addresses the minimum living standards needs of people with disabilities, indigenous households, and workers in the informal sector (predominately women) by facilitating their access to, and benefits from, the Social Protection Floor.

Output 1.1: The National Social Protection Strategy of Belize, overseen by a coordination mechanism that drives data generation and exchange, policy guidance, effective beneficiary targeting, financing pathways, gender responsiveness, and resilient social protection programmes, is validated by stakeholders and adopted by the GOB.

This component will focus on the establishment of the foundation for a more integrated and sustainable social protection system. In the context of #PLanBelize, a national SP strategy and programme of work will be crafted to address the urgent and prioritized felt needs of the most vulnerable and those left behind, following a demand-driven approach at the household and community levels. The Social Protection Strategy of Belize will include the definition of the SPF (See Box below) and shock-responsiveness; will include an action plan and

create synergies with other national policies. The development and implementation of the Strategy and related action plan will require the establishment of a national coordination mechanism (human development commission) that will provide policy guidance, oversee institutional coordination, and conduct monitoring and evaluation. As part of this process, the social protection environment will be reassessed based on previous works and initiatives (See Annex 1) and recent developments.

SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOOR

An SPF, following the ILO definition, consists of four nationally defined basic social security guarantees that members should establish by law, and—in accordance with their existing international obligations— provide to all residents and children. A national SPF should comprise the following four social security guarantees:

1. Access to a nationally defined set of goods and services constituting essential healthcare -including maternity care- which meets the criteria of availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality
2. Basic income security for children at a nationally defined minimum level, which provides access to nutrition, education, care, and any other necessary goods and services
3. Basic income security at a nationally defined minimum level for persons of active age who are unable to earn sufficient income, particularly in cases of sickness, unemployment, maternity, and disability
4. Basic income security at a nationally defined minimum level for older persons

Source: ILO

The vulnerabilities of workers in the informal economy, where women are highly represented, will be addressed through reforms to the existing social security schemes to provide income security during unemployment.

Output 1.2: The technical and gender mainstreaming capacities of social protection institutions, local communities, and CSO involved in social protection are strengthened to better design, programme, finance, implement, monitor, and evaluate social protection programmes.

The reinforcement of administrative capacities to deliver SP is critical to ensure coherence and better integration of intervention among SP programmes. As the use of modern ICT is crucial to administer SP programmes, particularly in times of shocks, the JP will support the broadening and integration of information management across social protection systems in order to increase responsiveness and inclusiveness of interventions, coupled with data collection and analysis of the capacity building to inform and support SP reform and create more responsive institutions that can effectively operate during shocks. The reinforcement of capacities of public and non-governmental institutions involved in the design and implementation of the social protection programmes will occur at the national and sub-national level, through the strengthening of the Management Information System, including in times of shocks, drawing on the existing system (including the expansion of FAMCare, and increased IT software capacity).

Additionally, this will support the development and strengthening of information management procedures for households assessed/assisted in the event of a shock or an emergency response by the government and others, in order to enable tracking, follow-up, and linkages to future recovery efforts and/or social protection. Drawing on previous consultations and research on shock-responsive social protection, priority areas will be

identified to strengthen social protection programmes and systems underpinning them to be better prepared to respond to shocks (data management, targeting, delivery, coordination).

This component will also include a series of trainings and conferences: given the recent appointments of Ministers of Government, new SP conferences, in the form of annual events will be planned to sensitize parliamentarians, CEOs on the need for the SPF and unified M&E of the SP programmes, and to pursue the development of the national/ child Multidimensional Poverty Index which will be a key element in the identification of the most vulnerable and creation of linkages with SP programmes. Based on lessons learned, the full engagement - through the SP conferences in 2018-2019 - had contributed to shaping the work initiated by the GOB and allowed for due consideration of capacities and needs, creating an enabling environment of social dialogue with full participation and consensus. An additional online conference will be organized through Nex'Us to create space for children and collect their views and perceptions around poverty, social protection, and economic resilience.

Output 1.3: Government ministries and social protection actors are engaged in an integrated planning mechanism to ensure that adequate, gender-sensitive, and sustainable financing systems for social protection, including for good financial governance are identified and operationalized.

This component will focus on the financial and governance component of social protection. The purpose will be to conduct financial analysis and costing of the implementation of the SPF and the Social Protection Strategy for Belize and identify fiscal space to finance SP. Considering the impact of recent shocks, and the vulnerability of Belize with regards to natural disasters, the JP will develop disaster risk financing strategies with a risk layered approach which includes access to innovative financing mechanisms to make SP shock-responsive and protect the most vulnerable populations.

Outcome 2: By 2024, strengthen local economic development (LED) and livelihoods in targeted municipalities, through a gender and youth sensitive value chain development approach to employment and decent work.

Output 2.1: A work plan to address priority issues in MSME development is established in consultation with local economic development actors (including women and youth) based on an analysis of barriers, bottlenecks, and opportunities for inclusive MSME development and employment in value chains.

Understanding how sectors and value chain actors operate to detect barriers and bottlenecks is crucial to identify and prescribe actions that can support MSME creation, growth, and transformation on a sustainable basis, within specific value chains and a local economic development perspective. After a rapid sector analysis of key sectors (e.g. agriculture, fishers, banana, sugar) that include particular attention to women and youth constraints and opportunities, the project will deep dive into analyzing specific value chains that are of special interest to the government and targeted municipalities for economic growth. The output will allow local economic development actors to better know and understand the barriers, bottlenecks, and opportunities for strengthening supporting functions, rules and regulations, and cultural norms that favor inclusive MSME development within targeted value chains. The output will also help better map and understand the different actors working for and around the value chains and the potential partners for implementation in the project, including those supporting formalization. Additionally, this output will directly involve women, youth, and other key stakeholders to directly address their needs.

Output 2.2: Capacity and processes of targeted municipalities, representatives of youth and women and other key LED actors, are strengthened for effective participation in inclusive value chain development.

Participation and local dialogue that helps connect people and their resources to improved opportunities for economic growth is an important premise for LED. Very often structures exist at the local/municipal level but where information is lacking or capacities and skills are low for discussing, deciding, and supporting MSME development at the local level which in turn impacts the opportunities for women and men to be employed, start business, and formalize them or achieve a decent level of living. This output will support the strengthening of existing or new structures at the local level where local economic opportunities and challenges are to be discussed and decided upon based on evidence and technical assessments (output 2.1). The capacity building will include local governments and key stakeholders, such as representatives of civil society, faith-based organizations, informal economy, workers, and employers. The capacities of these actors and the structures already existing will be reinforced to introduce a gender-sensitive approach and better link the needs of communities and key groups with concrete responses. Participatory processes at the community level will be a key element in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the pilot programme of Output 2.3. Women and youth representation in the community structures will be considered.

Output 2.3: A programme with an integrated approach to support MSMEs and employment creation with a focus on youth and women in 2 target value chains is implemented and documented for scale-up.

The implementation of a pilot programme focused on an integrated approach to support MSMEs, value chains, and sectors prioritized by targeted local structures will be a core piece to this overall outcome. While the exact interventions will be identified based on assessments and priorities of local actors, the programme would seek to address bottlenecks and gaps in the supporting functions of value chains, and if needed in influencing the rules, regulations, and cultural norms that may also be hindering or impacting the employment and MSME development potential within specific value chains.

Some of the possible areas for intervention could include:

- Supporting entrepreneurship development, particularly among the youth and women, and enhance access to financial education, business development services, digital skills, and tools will be considered. For that, both the demand and supply of financial and non-financial service provision particularly within the identified value chains will be looked on and capacity building activities planned.
- Building the capacity of service providers to (i) offer high quality and relevant entrepreneurship training, (ii) provide coaching, (iii) implement programmes for demystifying formalization and showcasing the advantages (including easier access to social security and social protection), and (iv) identify enterprises and own-account workers that may have better capacity and willingness to formalize and hence increasing the success rate of formalization efforts (e.g. through a “formalization potential assessment tool”),
- Centralizing formalization information in one-stop shops and/or online platforms and supporting the simplification of key procedures,

- Facilitating access to markets through advocating for public procurement or local supply from larger companies etc.

During the final quarter of the project, lessons learned, interventions, and success stories would be documented from this pilot programme to then be presented, discussed, and shared with other municipalities and actors at the national level for possible scale-up.

2.4 Financing

Value for Money. The joint programme provides value for money due to its pooling of a relatively limited amount of funding in integrated outcomes, with the mix of activities that will serve both immediate quick wins while establishing the basis for medium-term and long-term results. As a result, the country will benefit from improved social protection and reinforced key actors of the economy within the context of recovery, by contributing to improved access to employment, additional income generation, cost-saving, and efficient use of public resources.

SDG Accelerator. The joint programme will act to accelerate the achievement of the SDG goals set out above by combining the strengths and comparative advantage of each agency, the strategic guidance from a high level, while contributing to addressing the main challenges and strategies of the government-linked to SDGs. As such, the programme invests in SDG acceleration, and especially SDGs 1, 5, 8, 10, 13, and 16. The added value of the programme lays in a combination of expertise and resources allowing to design quality interventions. The SDG acceleration action would not occur through individual existing programmes of agencies as these are focused on addressing selected SDGs only in silos in the relevant sectors. The same resources invested in separate agency programmes or different programmes would not be in the capacity of reaching such a scope of people and beneficiaries. Further, the upstream effect, as well as political support from high-level authorities such as the Prime Minister's senior adviser would not necessarily be available in the context of scattered interventions and programmes.

Strengthening a social protection system requires resources and time. As a result, the joint programme intends to use a two-pronged approach through activities that will serve long-term results, with the establishment of foundations of a strengthened sector while serving immediate results. In addition, the programme will enhance the government's effort to produce evidence and demonstrate the impact of social protection, thereby improving efforts to advocate for an increased budget. The emphasis and strengthening of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will facilitate the planning process and decision-making on budgetary allocations/projections for social protection, ensuring a multiplier effect and long impact of this 24-month investment.

The joint programme will build upon key enablers and integrate them into an existing discussion on social protection. There is a window of opportunity as the government has engaged in moving the social protection agenda forward. In 2021, the recommendations of the Social Protection Expenditure Review (SPER) were presented to the Ministry of Human Development, Families & Indigenous Peoples' Affairs (MHD) in anticipation of a formal endorsement. Due to COVID-19, the process of endorsement of the SPER was suddenly suspended in 2020. As a result of this discussion, the UN agencies were invited to a CEO Caucus Meeting to present the SPER to the new administration. Another key outcome of the meeting was the development of a Cabinet Paper for the establishment of a National Social Protection Strategy, including the establishment of the Social

Protection Floor, including the recent developments with regards to social protection, objectives, and recommendations for the establishment of a Social Protection Strategy and Social Protection Floor.

Leveraging broader financing. The joint programme will act as a catalyst to generate additional resources, both from the national budget and from donors. The programme is primarily geared towards the government making additional national budgets and other funding available for enhanced social protection in the context of COVID-19 recovery. The programme may leverage further external financing through engagement with development partners including bilateral donors.

2.5 Partnerships and stakeholder engagement

Leadership. The leadership and technical coherence of the joint programme implementation will be led by the government. In preparing the joint programme, consultations were held with the GOB, including the Senior Policy Advisor to Prime Ministry's Office, Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Immigration, Ministry of Human Development, Ministry of Labour, and other relevant line ministries. The GOB will co-lead the implementation of the joint programme through the Ministry of Economic Development, with guidance from the Prime Minister's Office, in collaboration with the lead agency (UNICEF) and partnership with the office of the Resident Coordinator (RCO).

Unique contribution of PUNO and broader UNCT

The three participating agencies will provide their unique contribution to the joint programme. The comparative advantage of **UNICEF** lies in its knowledge and contribution to social policy and poverty reduction, development of human capital at national and sub-national levels, as well as its role in coordinating and convening, especially around the social protection agenda, data generation as well as monitoring & evaluation. UNICEF is the lead agency based in Belize and as such, well-positioned as a long-term and trusted partner with national actors. These include the government, donors, UN agencies, NGOs, and civil society. Given the Government's openness to dialogue with UNICEF to advance in this area, UNICEF is in an excellent position to contribute to high-level policy discussions, provide technical assistance and evidence.

WFP focuses on emergency preparedness and strengthening social protection systems so that they are better prepared to support vulnerable people impacted by disasters and shocks. This comes with extensive experience in supporting social protection programmes and disaster risk management policies to allow for more innovative social protection delivery systems and sustainable livelihoods programmes that are scalable and replicable. Additionally, WFP is experienced in strengthening the institutional processes based on lessons learned in the region and best practices to allow for better vulnerability and gender analysis and strengthening data collection tools and systems to allow them to be used in an integrated, cross-sectional manner.

ILO is a key player in the area of social protection and employment, providing funding and technical assistance in the creation of decent jobs and the development of the National Social Protection Strategy, including the Social Protection Floor, and shock-responsiveness with a strong emphasis on the informal sector and female-headed households. The **combination of the three agencies is a unique set of expertise** contributing towards better access to essential service delivery (social sectors, road, electricity, water, housing), human development, and economic development.

Strategic contributions from other partners:

Other partners will contribute to the successful implementation of the programme by providing critical inputs and knowledge in key areas of work. These are key local actors in implementing interventions with a thorough understanding of the field experience and expertise in specific areas: NEMO: disaster management, Belize Red Cross: HCT implementation; line ministries in their area of expertise, SIB: data generation, SSB: social security, BELTRAIDE and DCF for MSME.

3. Programme implementation

3.1 GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The agencies participating in the joint programme will include UNICEF, ILO, and WFP. The participating UN agencies will have the ultimate responsibilities for the achievement of results of the joint activities conducted through the programme, with several coordination and accountability mechanisms:

- The RC will have ultimate accountability for the joint programme and provide leadership and oversight as may be required. In this regard, the RC will convene, as needed, a joint programme review with the lead PUNO's HOA to review progress and inform adjustments as needed in the exercise of her oversight and accountability to the SDG Fund for joint programme results.
- A Joint Programme Steering Committee will be established to ensure coordination and information sharing with key external stakeholders and partners. The Steering Committee will be responsible for policy advocacy and mainstreaming, horizontal coordination, as well as joint planning, implementation, monitoring, and learning. It will be chaired by MED and co-chaired by UNICEF as the lead UN Agency. Its membership shall include the Heads of Agencies (UNICEF, WFP, ILO) and Ministries: Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Immigration, Ministry of Human Development, Families & Indigenous People's Affairs (MHD), Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development, Labour and Local Government, Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development, Labour and Local Government.
- Responsibilities of the Steering Committee include:
 - Reviews and adopts the terms of reference and rules of procedures.
 - Prepares the strategic directions for the implementation of the joint programme within the operational framework.
 - Approves the documented arrangements for management and coordination.
 - Reviews the annual work plans and budgets as well as making the necessary adjustments to attain anticipated outcomes.
 - Reviews the consolidated joint programme report, providing strategic comments and decisions.
 - Suggests or recommends corrective action to emerge strategic and implementation problems.
 - Approves the communication and public information plans.
- Similarly, a technical working group, comprising the focal persons and staff from line ministries and PUNOs, respectively, will support increased coherence and efficiency in the planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and communications related to the joint programme. This will also be coordinated by the joint programme coordinator.
- The joint programme coordinator will be recruited during the first year of implementation and will conduct both programme coordination and support to programmatic activities. To further strengthen

national capacity for effective implementation and monitoring of the joint programme, technical officers will also be recruited in key participating ministries.

3.2 MONITORING, REPORTING, AND EVALUATION

Reporting on the Joint SDG Fund will be results-oriented, and evidence-based. Each PUNO will provide the Convening/Lead Agent with the following narrative reports prepared in accordance with instructions and templates developed by the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat:

- Annual narrative progress reports, to be provided no later than one (1) month (31 January) after the end of the calendar year, and must include the result matrix, updated risk log, and anticipated expenditures and results for the next 12-month funding period;
- Mid-term progress review report to be submitted halfway through the implementation of Joint Programme¹⁵; and
- A final consolidated narrative report, after the completion of the joint programme, is to be provided no later than two (2) months after the operational closure of the activities of the joint programme.

The Convening/Lead Agent will compile the narrative reports of PUNOs and submit a consolidated report to the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat, through the Resident Coordinator.

The Resident Coordinator will be required to monitor the implementation of the joint programme, with the involvement of the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat to which it must submit data and information when requested. As a minimum, joint programmes will prepare, and submit to the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat, 6-month monitoring updates. Additional insights (such as policy papers, value for money analysis, case studies, infographics, blogs) might need to be provided, per request of the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat. The joint programme will adequately allocate resources for monitoring and evaluation in the budget.

Data for all indicators of the results framework will be shared with the Fund Secretariat on a regular basis, in order to allow the Fund Secretariat to aggregate results at the global level and integrate findings into reporting on progress of the Joint SDG Fund.

PUNOs will be required to include information on complementary funding received from other sources (both UN cost-sharing and external sources of funding) for the activities supported by the Fund, including in-kind contributions and/or South-South Cooperation initiatives, in the reporting done throughout the year.

PUNOs at the Headquarters level shall provide the Administrative Agent with the following statements and reports prepared in accordance with its accounting and reporting procedures, consolidate the financial reports, as follows:

- Annual financial reports as of 31st December each year with respect to the funds disbursed to it from the Joint SDG Fund Account, to be provided no later than four months after the end of the applicable reporting period; and

¹⁵ This will be the basis for release of funding for the second year of implementation.

- A final financial report, after the completion of the activities financed by the Joint SDG Fund and including the final year of the activities, is to be provided no later than 30 April of the year following the operational closing of the project activities.

In addition, regular updates on financial delivery might need to be provided, per the request of the Fund Secretariat.

After the completion of a joint programme, a final, *independent and gender-responsive*¹⁶ evaluation will be organized by the Resident Coordinator. The cost needs to be budgeted, and in case there are no remaining funds at the end of the joint programme, it will be the responsibility of PUNOs to pay for the final, independent evaluation from their resources.

The programme will be subject to a joint final independent evaluation with an established arrangement for managing the joint evaluation. The final evaluation will be managed jointly by the PUNOs as per the established process for independent evaluations, including the use of a joint evaluation steering group and dedicated evaluation managers not involved in the implementation of the joint programme. The evaluations will follow the United Nations Evaluation Group's (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System, using the guidance on Joint Evaluation and relevant UNDG guidance on evaluations. The management and implementation of the joint evaluation will have due regard to the evaluation policies of the PUNOs to ensure the requirements of those policies are met and with the use of appropriate guidance from PUNOs on joint evaluation. The evaluation process will be participative and will involve all relevant programme's stakeholders and partners. Evaluation results will be disseminated amongst governments, donors, academic institutions, and stakeholders of civil society (including workers' and employers' organizations) and a joint management response will be produced upon completion of the evaluation process to be made publicly available on the evaluation platforms or similar of the PUNOs and through the UNEG database.

3.3 ACCOUNTABILITY, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

The Joint Programme will be using a pass-through fund management modality where UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office will act as the Administrative Agent (AA) under which the funds will be channelled for the Joint Programme through the AA. Each Participating UN Organization receiving funds through the pass-through has signed a standard Memorandum of Understanding with the AA.

Each Participating UN Organization (PUNO) shall assume full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent of the Joint SDG Fund (Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office). Such funds will be administered by each UN Agency, Fund, and Programme in accordance with its regulations, rules, directives, and procedures. Each PUNO shall establish a separate ledger account for the receipt and administration of the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent.

Indirect costs of the Participating Organizations recovered through programme support costs will be 7%. All other costs incurred by each PUNO in carrying out the activities for which it is responsible under the Fund will be recovered as direct costs.

¹⁶ [How to manage a gender responsive evaluation, Evaluation handbook](#), UN Women, 2015

Funding by the Joint SDG Fund will be provided on annual basis, upon successful performance of the joint programme.

Procedures on financial transfers, extensions, financial and operational closure, and related administrative issues are stipulated in the Operational Guidance of the Joint SDG Fund.

PUNOs and partners must comply with Joint SDG Fund brand guidelines, which include information on donor visibility requirements.

Each PUNO will take appropriate measures to publicize the Joint SDG Fund and give due credit to the other PUNOs. All related publicity material, official notices, reports, and publications, provided to the press or Fund beneficiaries, will acknowledge the role of the host Government, donors, PUNOs, the Administrative Agent, and any other relevant entities. In particular, the Administrative Agent will include and ensure due to recognition of the role of each Participating Organization and partners in all external communications related to the Joint SDG Fund.

3.4 LEGAL CONTEXT

Agency name: United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

Agreement title: Basic Cooperation Agreement (BCA) concluded between the Government of Belize and UNICEF

Agreement date: 5 September 1990.

Agency name: World Food Programme (WFP)

Agreement title: Basic Agreement concerning assistance from the WFP

Agreement date: 16 December 1994

Agency name: International Labour Organization (ILO)

Agreement title: Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA) through UNDP

Agreement date: 7 June 1982; Belize has been a member of the ILO since November 17, 1981

D. ANNEXES

Annex 1. List of related initiatives

NAME OF INITIATIVE/PROJECT	KEY EXPECTED RESULTS	LINKS TO THE JOINT PROGRAMME	LEAD ORGANIZATION	OTHER PARTNERS	BUDGET AND FUNDING SOURCE	CONTRACT PERSON
UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF)	Overcome the health and development crisis caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic; targets the most vulnerable to economic hardship and social disruption. Components include Risk Communication and Community Engagement	Response to COVID-19. Linked to Outcome 1 (Social protection) and Outcome 2 (employment and MSMEs)	PAHO	UN agencies, RCO office	MPTF	RCO
MHD-ILO-UNICEF Draft Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Review (SPER), 2020	As part of the approach towards the development and implementation of the Social Protection Floor (SPF), the SPER provides an analysis of the financing arrangements for social protection, looking at incomes, expenditures, and returns on social protection programmes and services.	Recent information on Social protection analysis in Belize. Linked to Outcome 1 (Social protection)	UNICEF, ILO	Ministry of Human Development, Technical partner, and strategic guidance Social Security Board (SSB) National Health Insurance		ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean and UNICEF Belize
ILO-UNICEF Social protection Conference Initiative 2018-2019 (4 conferences)	Increase the knowledge of national and civil society partners on key areas of social protection, and generate commitments on strengthening the Social Protection System: 1/ From Flaws to Floors, 2/ Role of Labour in Social Protection, 3/ Multidimensional Poverty Index, 4/ Social Protection Response to Emergencies	Lessons learned for replication with new administration and incorporation of new challenges. Linked to Outcome 1 (Social protection) and will inform outcome 2 (employment and MSMEs)	UNICEF, ILO	GOB, WFP		ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean and UNICEF Belize
Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Belize, 2020	Examine the opportunities to expand effective ways to respond to disasters, and exploring the linkages between social protection	Recent information on shock-responsive social protection. Linked to Outcome 1 (social protection)	World Food Programme	Oxford Policy Management	EU, USAID, Cooperación Española, AMEXCID, CANADA, UKAid	Barbados Office for Emergency Preparedness and Response in the Caribbean

	and disaster risk management (DRM) in Belize: how social protection programmes that provide assistance to households and the systems that underpin these programmes, may play a role in preparing, responding, and mitigating the impacts of major shocks ("shock-responsive social protection)					
WFP, 2020. Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey, BELIZE	impacts of COVID-19 food security & livelihoods impacts	Recent information on social protection and COVID-19 Linked to Outcome 1 (social protection)	CARICOM and WFP	FAO and CDEMA		Barbados Office
Advancing Disaster Risk Finance in Belize	Analyse and provide recommendations for the GoB for the formulation of a country-specific comprehensive disaster risk finance (DRF) strategy, based on the assessment of the legislative, financial management, fiscal, and insurance market environment in Belize	Linked to Outcome 1 (social protection)	The World Bank	Ministry of Finance, Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility Segregated Portfolio Company (CCRIF SPC)	Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR).	World Bank
Redefinition of the health financing mechanism and national dialogue to include the expanded roll-out of the National Health Insurance (NHI) system to ensure equitable access to health services across Belize.	fiscal space study was conducted to identify areas of real budgetary opportunity and to find innovative and sustainable ways of funding the health sector, to enhance coverage and reduce equity gaps at the national and sub-national levels. Costing study that identified options for extension of NHI coverage based on a package of services to be covered (primary, secondary, and other locally available health services). Based on the model of care presently being	Linked to Outcome 1 (social protection)	PAHO/WHO	Ministry of Health and Wellness Social Security Board		PAHO/WHO Belize country office

	implemented and what is envisioned for the future.					
Development of payment mechanism system to support integrated health service delivery networks (IHSDN).	a study that analyzes the existing payment mechanism system in the Belizean health system, including the National Health Insurance, and evaluates its impact in promoting equity and efficiency. The study will identify different scenarios on the changes needed in the context of a potential roll-out of the NHI and in accordance with the objectives of the Belizean health system	Linked to Outcome 1 (social protection)	PAHO/WHO	Ministry of Health and Wellness Social Security Board		PAHO/WHO Belize country office

Annex 2. Overall Results Framework

2.1. TARGETS FOR JOINT SDG FUND RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Joint SDG Fund Outcome 1: Integrated multi-sectoral policies to accelerate SDG achievement implemented with greater scope and scale

Indicators	Targets	
	2022	2023
1.1: integrated multi-sectoral policies have accelerated SDG progress in terms of scope ¹⁷	yes	yes
1.2: integrated multi-sectoral policies have accelerated SDG progress in terms of scale ¹⁸	yes	yes

Joint SDG Fund Output 3: Integrated policy solutions for accelerating SDG progress implemented

Indicators	Targets	
	2022	2023
3.1: # of innovative solutions that were tested ¹⁹ (disaggregated by % successful-unsuccessful)	1	2
3.2: # of integrated policy solutions that have been implemented with the national partners in the lead	1	2

Joint SDG Fund Operational Performance Indicators

- Level of coherence of UN in implementing programme country²⁰
- Reduced transaction costs for the participating UN agencies in interaction with national/regional and local authorities and/or public entities compared to other joint programmes in the country in question
- Annual % of financial delivery
- Joint programme operationally closed within the original end date
- Joint programme financially closed 18 months after their operational closure
- Joint programme facilitated engagement with diverse stakeholders (e.g., parliamentarians, civil society, IFIs, bilateral/multilateral actors, private sector).
- Joint programme included addressing inequalities and the principle of “Leaving No One Behind”.
- Joint programme featured gender results at the outcome level.

¹⁷Scope=substantive expansion: additional thematic areas/components added, or mechanisms/systems replicated.

¹⁸Scale=geographical expansion: local solutions adopted at the regional and national level or a national solution adopted in one or more countries.

¹⁹Each Joint programme in the Implementation phase will test at least 2 approaches.

²⁰ Annual survey will provide qualitative information towards this indicator.

- Joint programme undertook or draw upon relevant human rights analysis and have developed or implemented a strategy to address human rights issues.
- Joint programme planned for and can demonstrate positive results/effects for youth.
- Joint programme considered the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Joint programme made use of risk analysis in programme planning.
- Joint programme conducted do-no-harm / due diligence and was designed to take into consideration opportunities in the areas of the environment and climate change.

2.2. JOINT PROGRAMME RESULTS FRAMEWORK

RESULT/ INDICATORS	BASELINE	2022 TARGET	2023 TARGET	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	RESPONSIBLE PARTNER
Outcome 1: By 2024, strengthen the resilience of vulnerable and poor groups by establishing a responsive social protection strategy that addresses the minimum living standards needs of people with disabilities, indigenous households, and workers in the informal sector (predominately women) by facilitating their access to, and benefits from, the Social Protection Floor.					
Indicator 1.1: Existence of valid national social protection policy that addresses the needs of the most vulnerable, developed using a participatory and gender-balanced methodology	0	1 policy is drafted, Participatory consultations organized with men, women, boys, and girls (from rural/urban, parity, people with disabilities)	1 policy is final and endorsed by the GOB	Draft and completed Reports (Policy), JP reporting	Relevant PUNOs, Senior Advisor to Prime Ministry; MED, MHD, social protection actors.
Indicator 1.2: Number of households reached by cash transfer benefits	BOOST/BOOST+: 2,847 (2021)	4000	5000	Administrative Data, JP reporting	Relevant PUNOs, MHD
Number of children reached by at least one social protection programme	BOOST/BOOST+/Roving Care: 20,000 (2019)	30,000	50,000	Administrative Data, JP reporting	Relevant PUNOs, MHD
Output 1.1: The National Social Protection Strategy of Belize, overseen by a coordination mechanism that drives data generation and exchange, policy guidance, effective beneficiary targeting, financing pathways, gender responsiveness, and resilient social protection programs, is validated by stakeholders and adopted by the GOB					

Indicator 1.1.1: Existence of valid action plan for the national social protection policy, developed as part of a participatory and gender-balanced process	No	0 (developed once the strategy is prepared)	1 operational action plan; Participatory consultations organized with men, women, boys, and girls (from rural/urban, parity, people with disabilities)	Report (Action Plan), JP reporting	Relevant PUNOs, MED, MHD, JP Coordinator
Indicator 1.1.2: Existence of coordination mechanisms for social protection/ social policy system	No	Human Development Commission is created inclusive of gender parity: an MOU is signed	Human Development Commission is functional	Human Development Commission, MOU	Relevant PUNOs, MED, MHD, JP Coordinator
Output 1.2: The technical and gender mainstreaming capacities of social protection institutions, local communities, and CSO involved in social protection are strengthened to better design, programme, finance, implement, monitor, and evaluate social protection programmes.					
Indicator 1.2.1: Number of trainings in key areas of social protection (to be further determined: M&E, programme management, social budgeting, introduction to SP for the poor, MPI)	N/a	2 trainings organized, including at least 30% women and young people	2 trainings organized, including at least 30% women and young people	Certificates in key social protection areas distributed, JP reporting	Relevant PUNOs, MHD, Academia, Social Protection Actors, JP Coordinator
Indicator 1.2.2: Number of social protection conferences convened	N/a	1 (Mid-Year, First Year of the JP), including at least 20% young people and ensuring gender parity	1 (Mid-Year, second Year of the JP) including at least 20% young people and ensuring gender parity	Conference Report; Increased awareness/ advocacy on SP of participants measured by pre- and post-assessment; JP reporting	Relevant PUNOs, MHD, Social protection actors, JP Coordinator
Output 1.3: Government ministries and social protection actors are engaged in an integrated planning mechanism to ensure that adequate, gender-sensitive, and sustainable financing systems for social protection, including for good financial governance are identified and operationalized.					
Indicator 1.3.1: Public resources are available for social protection sectors	Not available	Yes (TBD)	Yes (TBD)	Reports, incl. Budget and fiscal space analysis; JP reporting	Relevant PUNOs, MED, MHD, JP Coordinator
Outcome 2: By 2024, strengthen local economic development (LED) and livelihoods in targeted municipalities, through a gender and youth sensitive value chain development approach to employment and decent work.					

Indicator 2.1: Existence of value chain approaches to MSME development within a VCD approach	No (0)	Yes (1)	Yes (2)	JP reporting Technical reports	JP Coordinator and relevant PUNOs; Relevant national and local institutions
Output 2.1: Work plan to address priority issues in MSME development established in consultation with local economic development actors (including women and youth) based on an analysis of barriers, bottlenecks, and opportunities for inclusive MSME development and employment in value chains.					
Indicator 2.1.1: Number of Value chains identified and analysed	0	2	0 (Concluded in 2022)	JP reporting Technical reports	JP Coordinator and relevant PUNOs
Indicator 2.1.2: Work plan developed and validated by LED actors	0	1	0 (Concluded in 2022)	JP reporting Technical reports	JP Coordinator and relevant PUNOs
Output 2.2: Capacity and processes of targeted municipalities, representatives of youth and women and other key LED actors, strengthened for effective participation in inclusive value chain development.					
Indicator 2.2.1: LED structures strengthened to improve administration and follow up of decisions taken and programmes implemented	0	2	0 (Concluded in 2022)	JP reporting Technical reports	JP Coordinator and relevant PUNOs
Indicator 2.2.2: Percentage of women and youth members of LED actors/structures that received training on entrepreneurship, formalization, or value chain development	0	30 (30% women and youth)	30 (30% women and youth)	JP reporting Training reports	JP Coordinator and relevant PUNOs
Indicator 2.2.3: Number of LED actors/structures conducted capacity needs assessments on institutional formalization support	0	1	1	JP reporting Technical reports	JP Coordinator and relevant PUNOs

Output 2.3: A programme with an integrated approach to support MSMEs and employment creation with a focus on youth and women in 2 target value chains is implemented and documented for scale-up.					
Indicator 2.3.1: pilot programme designed, implemented, and evaluated	0	1	0 (Concluded in 2022)	JP reporting Technical reports Description of the pilot programme	JP Coordinator and relevant PUNOs
Indicator 2.3.2: Number of financial and non-financial service providers and other relevant LED actors trained or supported	0	2	4	JP reporting Technical reports Description of the pilot programme	
Indicator 2.3.3: Number of women, youth, and men sensitized/trained/coached or supported for enterprise creation or formalization	0	100 (40% women and youth)	200 (40% women and youth)	JP reporting Training reports	JP Coordinator and relevant PUNOs
Indicator 2.3.4: Number of existing self-employed and owners of micro/small businesses who state a perceived improvement in their economic situation or outlook after the programme	0	10	40	JP reporting Technical reports Focus group discussions	JP Coordinator and relevant PUNOs

Annex 3. Theory Of Change Graphic

IMPACTS							
OUTCOMES	<p>By 2024, strengthen the resilience of vulnerable and poor groups by establishing a responsive social protection strategy that addresses the minimum living standards needs of people with disabilities, indigenous households, and workers in the informal sector (predominately women) by facilitating their access to, and benefits from, the Social Protection Floor.</p>			<p>By 2024, strengthen local economic development (LED) and livelihoods in targeted municipalities, through a gender and youth sensitive value chain development approach to employment and decent work.</p>			
OUTPUTS	<p>Output 1.1: The National SP Strategy of Belize, overseen by a coordination mechanism that drives data generation and exchange, policy guidance, effective beneficiary targeting, financing pathways, gender responsiveness and resilient SP programs, is validated by stakeholders and adopted by GOB</p>	<p>Output 1.2: The technical and gender mainstreaming capacities of social protection institutions, local communities and CSO involved in social protection are strengthened to better design, programme, finance, implement, monitor, and evaluate social protection programmes.</p>	<p>Output 1.3: Government ministries and social protection actors are engaged in an integrated planning mechanism to ensure that adequate and sustainable financing systems for social protection, including for good financial governance are identified and operationalized.</p>	<p>Output 2.1 Work plan to address priority issues in MSME development is established in consultation with local economic development actors (including women and youth) based on an analysis of barriers, bottlenecks, and opportunities for inclusive MSME development and employment in value chains.</p>	<p>Output 2.2 Capacity and processes of targeted municipalities, representatives of youth and women and other key LED actors are strengthened for effective participation in inclusive value chain development.</p>	<p>Output 2.3 A programme with an integrated approach to support MSMEs and employment creation with a focus on youth and women in 2 target value chains is implemented and documented for scale up.</p>	
ACTIVITIES	<p>Output 1.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and endorsement of the SP Strategy of Belize, National action plan that creates synergies with other national policies Establishment of a national human development commission Actuarial assessment to define the cost/ sustainability for the implementation of the unemployment insurance. SRSP protocols that help guide registration, targeting, and delivery mechanisms of SP programmes. Integrated gender-sensitive vulnerability, poverty, and livelihood assessments/analyses, including primary data collection as needed <p>Output 1.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trainings in key areas of SP; Annual SP Conferences Broaden and integrate information management across SP system in increase responsiveness and inclusiveness of interventions. Strengthen analytical processes/capacities to enable more effective response to shocks and disasters. <p>Output 1.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costing the SPF and SP Strategy and identify fiscal space to finance SP Analyse and develop disaster risk financing options linked to the provision of support via SP systems in response to disasters 			<p>Output 2.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value chain analysis for economic growth and employment creation with a focus on women and youth. Work plan of measures and interventions at local/municipal level, including women and youth <p>Output 2.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building needs assessment of municipal actors, structures and processes for decision making on inclusive LED strategies Capacity building of municipal representatives/ other local economic actors to value chain development thinking, planning and implementation including aspects linked to pathways to decent work and inclusivity of women and youth <p>Output 2.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design market-led intervention models to achieve greater MSME creation and growth with special focus on women and youth Identify service providers and LED actors with sufficient capacities and incentives to support the implementation of innovative and inclusive intervention models for MSME development and pathways to decent work Support service providers in the design and introduction of innovative products, (e.g. business and formalization training, coaching, access to seed funding, business plan competitions, etc.) Facilitate market linkages between value chain actors (including youth, women and MSMEs) and local business development service providers Document the interventions-models and organize a knowledge sharing event with municipalities, LED actors including women and youth representatives, government and large companies to present success cases, lessons learned and offer a platform for exchanges 			
STRATEGIES	SYSTEM STRENGTHENING AND COORDINATION		CAPACITY BUILDING	LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (LED)	COMMUNICATION, ADVOCACY AND POLIC	EVIDENCE GENERATION, ANALYSIS DATA	TRANSFORMATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Assumptions:

- **A strong commitment of GOB at national and sub-national levels, on the need to strengthen the social protection system and delivery; and MSME sector;**
- **The joint programme uses collaborative partnerships and inclusive participation; stakeholders work in collaboration and support the joint programme and integration with forthcoming social protection initiatives; High quality evidence can be collected, analyzed and timely provided;**
- **A strong focus on the rights of the children, youth and women and their empowerment is a priority;**
- **A commitment by the government to execute and strengthen inter-governmental mechanisms and capacities to respond to the rights of those furthest behind.**
- **The Government will ensure sustainability of the BOOST Programme.**

Annex 4. Gender Marker Matrix

INDICATOR		SCORE	FINDINGS AND EXPLANATION	EVIDENCE OR MEANS OF VERIFICATION
N°	FORMULATION			
1.1	Context analysis integrates gender analysis	1	The joint program identifies that there are existing inequalities between men and women in accessing social protection programs and economic opportunities. Some of these differences are highlighted throughout the proposed joint program document but more data is needed to unpack the full implications of these points of inequality on the standard of living and economic empowerment as experienced by men and women. Data from the situational analysis will also inform the implementation of specific activities in the joint program. In this regard, additional context analysis will be enabled during implementation.	Situational Analysis Sex disaggregated data
1.2	Gender Equality mainstreamed in proposed outputs	2	All the proposed outputs make explicit reference to gender equality.	Technical Reports Training and Consultation Reports
1.3	Programme output indicators measure changes in gender equality	2	At least 33 percent of the indicators drafted measure changes in gender equality. The technical reports from government ministries, implementing and partner agencies will provide detailed information and analysis on the indicators for which they are responsible to meet. These reports will include data disaggregated by sex.	Technical Reports
2.1	PUNO collaborate and engage with the Government on gender equality and the empowerment of women	2	The PUNO has consulted with the Ministry of Human Development, Families, and Indigenous People's Affairs, which is the lead ministry for women's empowerment and gender equality. The feedback from these consultations has informed the inclusion of gender in the program outcomes, outputs, and activities.	Technical and monitoring reports (government ministries and implementing partners)

			<p>While this is the lead gender and women’s empowerment ministry, representatives in the joint program will actively engage with partner ministries to advance gender considerations and mainstreaming across the activities and outputs.</p> <p>The JP will also engage with the National Women’s Commission, which falls under the Ministry of Human Development, Families, and Indigenous People’s Affairs.</p>	
2.2	PUNO collaborates and engages with women’s/gender equality CSOs	2	The JP will consult and engage with POWA (Progressive Organization for Women in Action) and YES (Youth Enhancement Services) and PETAL (Promoting Empowerment Through Awareness for Les/Bi Women as part of the development of Social Protection Activities.	AWPs, technical and monitoring reports
3.1	Program proposes a gender-responsive budget	2	49% of the budget is allocated to gender-responsive deliverables. This is inclusive of the Social Policy and Social Protection Floor formulation processes, training and workshop participants, beneficiaries of cash transfer, participants in MSME development, and staffing support to ministries.	Budget, allocation to SDG Target 5.1 particularly, for activities that target men, women, and youth.
Total scoring		2.2		

Annex 5. Budget and Work Plan

5.1 Budget per UNSDG categories

UNDG BUDGET CATEGORIES	UNICEF		ILO		WFP		TOTAL	
	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)
1. Staff and other personnel	24,000	100,000	44,016	72,000	36,834	100,000	104,850	272,000
2. Supplies, Commodities, Materials	2,700		0		0		2,700	
3. Equipment, Vehicles, and Furniture (including Depreciation)	0		0		4,400		4,400	
4. Contractual services	118,500		142,000		60,159		320,659	
5. Travel	5,586		19,000		27,991		52,577	
6. Transfers and Grants to Counterparts	78,600		70,000		30,000		178,600	
7. General Operating and other Direct Costs	0		0		8,400		8,400	
Total Direct Costs	229,386		275,016		167,784		672,186	
8. Indirect Support Costs (Max. 7%)	16,057		19,251		10,906		46,214	
TOTAL Costs	245,443		294,267		178,690		718,400	272,000
<i>1st year</i>			176,560				176,560	0
<i>2nd year</i>			117,707				117,707	0

5.2 Budget per SDG targets

4.2 Budget per SDG Targets			
SDG TARGETS	%	USD	
Target 1.2	5%	40,776	
Target 1.3	23%	195,859	
Target 5.1	10%	85,678	
Target 8.3	28%	240,043	
Target 10.2	6%	51,643	
Target 13.1	12%	106,500	
Target 16.6	16%	139,903	
TOTAL (Outcome 1 + Outcome 2)*	100%	860,402	
*SDG Fund + PUNO contribution, excluding indirect costs and programme management			

The distribution of budget according to SDG targets reflect the nature of the project, including two components contributing to human development and economic recovery, with a strong overall emphasis on poverty reduction in the context of COVID-19 recovery.

5.3 Work plan

List of activities	Budget Category	Time frame								Overall budget description	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contributions (USD)	Total Cost (USD)	PUNO/s Involved	Implementing partner/s Involved	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4							
OUTCOME 1: By 2024, strengthen the resilience of vulnerable and poor groups by establishing a responsive social protection strategy that addresses the minimum living standards needs of people with disabilities, indigenous households and workers in the informal sector (predominately women) by facilitating their access to, and benefits from, the Social Protection Floor.																
Output 1.1: The National Social Protection Strategy of Belize, overseen by a coordination mechanism that drives data generation and exchange, policy guidance, effective beneficiary targeting, financing pathways, gender responsiveness and resilient social protection programs, is validated by stakeholders and adopted by the GOB	1.1.1 Development and endorsement of the Social Protection Strategy of Belize, which includes the SPF and shock-responsiveness	Contractual services									International Consultant contracted to coordinate the consultations and to draft and implement the Social Protection Strategy for Belize.	5,500	13,000.00	18,500	UNICEF	MED, MHD, SSB, social protection actors.
		Transfers and Grants to Counterparts									National consultations for the drafting of the strategic plan, managed by national counterparts (MHD)	9,400	5,000.00	14,400	UNICEF	MHD
	1.1.2 National action plan that creates synergies with other national policies	Contractual services									International Consultant contracted to coordinate the consultations and to draft and implement the SP National Action Plan for Belize.	5,500	-	5,500	UNICEF	
		Transfers and Grants to Counterparts									Consultations for the development and dissemination of the National Action Plan, managed by counterparts.	16,400	5,500.00	21,900	UNICEF	MED, MHD, SSB, social protection actors.
	1.1.3 Establishment of a national human development commission with strong involvement of local communities that provides policy guidance, oversee institutional coordination and conduct monitoring and evaluation	Transfers and Grants to Counterparts									A fully functional national SP coordination unit with MHD, established through a MOU	5,600	6,500.00	12,100	UNICEF	Senior Advisor to Prime Ministry, MED, MHD, social protection actors.
		Transfers and Grants to Counterparts									SP Officer in MHD to support the SP agenda and support the coordination/ focal point at ministry level	24,000	-	24,000	UNICEF	MHD
	1.1.4 Actual assessment to define the cost and sustainability for the implementation of the unemployment insurance.	Contractual services									Consultant hired to develop the costing and sustainability assessment	16,000	14,800.00	30,800	ILO	MHD, SSB
	1.1.5 Shock responsive social protection protocols that help guide registration, targeting, and delivery mechanisms of social protection programmes.	Contractual services									Develop SRSP protocols jointly with MHD to inform registration, targeting and delivery mechanisms of social protection programmes. including staff time, international consultant's time, and travel.	37,784	25,000.00	62,784	WFP	MHD, Belize Red Cross, NEMO
	1.1.6 Integrated gender-sensitive vulnerability, poverty and livelihood assessments/analyses, including primary data collection as needed	Contractual services									Assessments and analysis of vulnerability, poverty and livelihoods including staff's time, international consultant's time, grants to counterparts to cover enumeration costs, and travel.	50,000	40,000.00	90,000	WFP	MHD, Belize Red Cross, NEMO
	Output 1.2: The technical and gender mainstreaming capacities of social protection institutions, local communities and CSO involved in social protection are strengthened to better design, programme, finance, implement, monitor and evaluate social protection programmes.	1.2.1 Four trainings in key areas of social protection (include. M&E, programme management, social budgeting, introduction to SP for the poor, MPI)	Contractual services								Capacity building activities to equip 40 national personnel with knowledge products, skills and tools to contribute to the development of the MPI for Belize. International firm (DPHI) contracted to support MPI.	20,000	9,000.00	29,000	UNICEF	MHD, Academia, Social Protection Actors
Contractual services										Capacity building activity that will involve the travel, accommodation and compensation of subject matter experts on SRSP to train 40 national personnel as part of the training on social protection.	20,000	10,000.00	30,000	WFP	MHD, Academia, Social Protection Actors	
Contractual services										International Consultant contracted to support the development and implementation of training, in collaboration with MHD.	4,000	-	4,000	UNICEF		
1.2.2 Annual Social Protection Conferences and children conference		Contractual services									Annual advocacy 2-day event for 50 persons to communicate on SP and children conference event to collect perceptions and ideas of children on social protection	22,100	13,500.00	35,600	UNICEF	Senior Advisor to Prime Ministry, MED, MHD, social protection actors
		Contractual services									International Consultant and services contracted to support the development and implementation of conference, in collaboration with MHD.	8,000	-	8,000	UNICEF	
1.2.3 Broaden and integrate information management across social protection system in increase responsiveness and inclusiveness of interventions.		Transfers and Grants to Counterparts									Strengthening of the ICT infrastructure at national level including the expansion of FAMCare, managed by national counterparts	14,300	-	14,300	UNICEF	MHD
1.2.4 Strengthen analytical processes/capacities informed by a consultative process with key stakeholders, to enable more effective response to shocks and disasters.		Transfers and Grants to Counterparts									strengthening analytical processes will involve staff's time, transfer to government counterparts for potential systems strengthening, international consultant's time and travel.	35,000	15,000.00	50,000	WFP	MHD, Belize Red Cross, NEMO
Output 1.3: Government ministries and social protection actors are engaged in an integrated planning mechanism to ensure that adequate and sustainable financing systems for social protection, including for good financial governance are identified and operationalized.	1.3.1 Costing the SPF and the Social Protection Strategy for Belize and identify fiscal space to finance social protection	Contractual services								International PFM/ public finance specialist consultant contracted to develop the costing of SPF and fiscal space analysis, hybrid approach with one short mission in country	11,586	35,000.00	46,586	UNICEF	MED, MHD, Ministry of Finance, SSB, social protection actors	
		Contractual services								International Consultant contracted to support the development of the costing analysis	4,500	-	4,500	UNICEF	N/A	
	Contractual services									Consultations/ key technical meetings for the drafting of the SPF costing and fiscal space analysis, and editing implemented by national counterparts	4,000	4,000.00	8,000	UNICEF	MED, MHD, Ministry of Finance, SSB, social protection actors	
	1.3.2 Analyse and develop disaster risk financing options linked to the provision of support via social protection systems in response to disasters	Contractual services									Analysis for disaster risk finance options will include staff's time, consultants time to conduct the analysis and travel.	25,000	10,000.00	35,000	WFP	Ministry of finance, MHD, and social protection actors

OUTCOME 2: By 2024, strengthen local economic development (LED) and livelihoods in targeted municipalities, through a gender and youth sensitive value chain development approach to employment and decent work											PUNO/s involved	Implementing partner/s involved				
Output	List of activities	Budget Category	Time frame				PLANNED BUDGET									
			Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4			Overall budget description	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contributions (USD)	Total Cost (USD)
Output 2.1: Work plan to address priority issues in MSME development established in consultation with local economic development actors (including women and youth) based on an analysis of barriers, bottlenecks and opportunities for inclusive MSME development and employment in value chains.	2.1.1 Carry out a participatory and evidence-based sector selection and subsequent value chain analysis of 2 strategic value chains for economic growth and employment creation (e.g. agriculture, tourism) with a special focus on the inclusion of women and youth	Transfers and Grants to Counterparts									Budget to be used for contracts, workshops, travel and staff	37,000	3,700.00	40,700	ILO	MED, MRTCOLLG, MHD, BELTRADE, DCF
	2.1.2 Develop work plan of measures and interventions at local/municipal level, including women and youth, to strengthen support functions, rules and regulations and cultural norms around the 2/3 value chains prioritized for inclusive growth	Contractual services									Budget to be used for contracts, workshops and staff	20,000	7,400.00	27,400	ILO	MED, MRTCOLLG, MHD, BELTRADE, DCF
Output 2.2: Capacity and processes of targeted municipalities, representatives of youth and women and other key LED actors, strengthened for effective participation in inclusive value chain development	2.2.1 Map, identify and carry out capacity building needs assessment of municipal actors, structures and processes for decision making on inclusive local economic development strategies	Contractual services									Budget to be used for contracts, workshops	15,000	7,400.00	22,400	ILO	MED, MRTCOLLG, MHD, BELTRADE, DCF
	2.2.2 Capacity building of municipal representatives and other local economic actors (employer and worker representatives, NGOs, associations, youth and women groups and associations) to value chain development thinking, planning and implementation including aspects linked to pathways to decent work (formalization, freedom of association, social dialogue) and inclusivity of women and youth	Contractual services									Budget to be used for training, travel and staff	55,000	11,100.00	66,100	ILO	MED, MRTCOLLG, MHD, BELTRADE, DCF
Output 2.3: A programme with an integrated approach to support MSMEs and employment creation with a focus on youth and women in 2 target value chains is implemented and documented for scale up	Activity 2.3.1 Based on the outcomes of the gender and youth sensitive value chain analysis, design market-led intervention models to achieve greater MSME creation and growth with special focus on women and youth	Contractual services									Budget to be used for contracts, workshops, travel and staff	19,016	7,400.00	26,416	ILO	MED, MRTCOLLG, MHD, BELTRADE, DCF
	Activity 2.3.2 Identify service providers and LED actors with sufficient capacities (technical, human, financial) and incentives to support the implementation of innovative and inclusive intervention models for MSME development and pathways to decent work	Contractual services									Budget to be used for contracts, workshops and staff	8,000	-	8,000	ILO	MED, MRTCOLLG, MHD, BELTRADE, DCF
	Activity 2.3.3 Based on the results of the VCA and interventions models, support service providers in the design and introduction of innovative products, (e.g. business and formalization training, coaching, access to seed funding, business plan competitions, etc.)	Contractual services									Budget to be used for contracts, workshops, travel, transfers to communities and staff	55,000	10,000.00	65,000	ILO	MED, MRTCOLLG, MHD, BELTRADE, DCF
	Activity 2.3.4 Facilitate market linkages between value chain actors (including youth, women and MSMEs) and local business development service providers	Contractual services									Budget to be used for contracts, workshops, travel, transfers to communities and staff	33,000	7,000.00	40,000	ILO	MED, MRTCOLLG, MHD, BELTRADE, DCF
	Activity 2.3.5 Document the interventions-models and organize a knowledge sharing event with municipalities, LED actors including women and youth representatives, government and large companies to present success cases, lessons learned and offer a platform for exchanges partnership building	Contractual services									Budget to be used for contracts, workshops and staff	17,000	3,200.00	20,200	ILO	MED, MRTCOLLG, MHD, BELTRADE, DCF
Joint programme management	List of activities	Budget Category	Time frame				PLANNED BUDGET				PUNO/s involved	Implementing partner/s involved				
Coordination	International consultant-Programme coordinator/technical coherence (International consultancy broken down 50:50 between programme management and support to programmatic activities, one year)	Contractual services											Budget to be used for contracts, travel	38,000	-	38,000
	Coordination, annual/quarterly meetings	General Operating and other Direct Costs									Budget to be used for logistics, snacks	1,500	-	1,500	UNICEF	JP actors
Monitoring and Evaluation	Conducting regular monitoring of project's activities	Travel									Consultant/ Staff costs/services	-	3,500.00	3,500	UNICEF	JP actors
	Commission an independent evaluation of the joint programme, as per UNEG norms and standards	Contractual services										30,000	-	30,000	UNICEF	independent
Communication	launch, production of knowledge products, digital products	Supplies/Commodities/Materials										5,000	5,000.00	10,000	UNICEF	JP actors

Monitoring and reporting

- Annual and quarterly reporting will be facilitated by the programme coordinator, who will be in charge of conducting regular monitoring of the joint project's activities.
- A summative independent evaluation will be commissioned towards the end of the programme, as per UNEG norms and standards

Communication Plan: PUNOs will rely on internal communication structures to conduct awareness/ advocacy and external communication activities. The overall narrative will be as follows:

- Poverty remains a challenge in Belize and has become direr in the context of COVID-19.
- Poverty is more pronounced in rural areas in regions vulnerable prone to natural disasters. Households in these areas include women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, indigenous people.
- The protracted recovery from COVID-19 is expected to exert pressure on economic and social sectors.
- Investment in human capital is key to economic recovery, resilience, and development.
- GOB and partners recognize the potential of social protection and MSMEs to be agents of transformational change as articulated in national frameworks and strategic goal areas (poverty reduction and economic recovery).
- The joint programme will ensure that the Belizean people, especially the most vulnerable, have access to essential social protection coverage, especially in situations of shocks to address poverty; and revigorated business environment to contribute to poverty reduction and economic recovery.

Activities will include:

- **Visibility and Promotion:** including factsheets, infographics to communicate about the programme and the role of social protection in poverty alleviation and overall resilience of vulnerable persons.
- **Media engagement:** media launch for programme starts.
- **Outreach and advocacy:** The event will be organized to communicate the vision of the joint programme, achieve outreach and advocacy goals.
- **Community engagement** to better understand drivers, needs, and perceptions among vulnerable communities to inform programme efficiency and effectiveness.

Annex 6. Risk Management Plan

The main risks which may reduce the impact of the joint programme include

Change of administration - Post-2020 general elections transition from the previous to the new administration. Even though social protection had high importance in the campaign manifesto and that the new authorities in charge of social protection expressed their full commitment to it, there will be a transition period in which advocacy and capacity building should be conducted. New relationships are being developed with the personnel from the MHD, and other relevant ministries.

Macroeconomic situation - the IMF has expressed concerns about Belize's public finances and external debt. Moreover, it stated that its pre-pandemic GDP level will be reached by 2025, the public debt would remain at 123% of GDP in 2021, and external financing is expected to gradually decline over time. Strong mitigation measures, such as the proposed SP coordination mechanism and mainstreaming SP in the discussions with the International Financial Institutions, will therefore be implemented to avoid the risks that affect the achievement of the results of the joint programme.

COVID-19 - The pandemic halted lives to a large extent. The emergency created an unprecedented situation and put all agencies in a uniquely challenging environment. A year and a half after the onset of the pandemic, there are still possibilities of restrictions and lockdowns, which might impact the implementation of the joint program. If so, having face-to-face meetings with implementing government partners might still not be feasible. As a result, the joint plans on alternative hybrid communication engagement (both digital and presential) to keep the coordination process uninterrupted.

Based on the context and the objectives of the joint program, the main risks were identified and scored. A mitigation plan was developed accordingly, using different strategies to respond to the risk:

RISKS	RISK LEVEL	LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT	MITIGATING MEASURES	RESPONSIBLE ORG./PERSON
Contextual risks					
Global COVID-19 pandemic and limited mobility due to lockdown	Medium to High	4	3	Close monitoring; Alternative communication channels like ZOOM/ conference calls and video conferencing	RC, PUNOs, JP coordinator
Natural/ anthropogenic risks: i/ - Hurricanes, storms, floods; ii/ Economic deterioration (price increases/ income losses)	Medium to High	3	4	The attention of the Joint Programme could be diverted towards immediate humanitarian relief but also build on the proposed tools by the Joint Programme that will support national SP systems to be shock responsive. The UN will continue to advocate for ensuring social sector budget and greater efficiency in national budget management in the context of respective countries' macro-economic priorities.	UNICEF, WFP, and JP coordinator
Staff turnover at the government level	Low	2	3	The new administration is in place. The JP occurs at a strategic moment as it is being developed and will be implemented under the same administration. Close monitoring	PUNOs and JP coordinator
Programmatic risks					
Implementation and results monitoring	Low	1	2	The Joint Programme steering committee together will have quarterly meetings to ensure timely implementation and monitor against the Joint Programme results framework.	The steering committee, and JP programme coordinator

Programme implementation: partnership management/ value for money	Low	2	1	Partners will follow internal procedures for partnership management and procurement.	RC, PUNOs, JP programme coordinator
Institutional risks					
Weak coordination among PUNOs working on the joint programme	Medium	3	3	Regular consultation among PUNOs, implementing staff to be advised about their interagency role. JP coordinator will facilitate coordination and information sharing, supported by RC.	RC, PUNOs, JP coordinator
Governance & Accountability	Medium	3	2	Senior-level participation among the UN HoAs and Government senior-level partners will ensure an effective, multi-sectoral coordination mechanism, joint monitoring, and reporting on the planned results of the Joint Programme.	RC, PUNOs
Fiduciary risks					
Availability and allocation of resources: The achievement of joint programme results might be hindered by an already constrained fiscal space.	Medium	2	3	<p>The UN will mitigate this risk through supporting ongoing budget analysis and fiscal space studies to ensure efficient allocation and use of available resources.</p> <p>The UN will advocate with other development partners to influence the investment of development finance in areas that advance inclusive social protection, based on the LNOB principle.</p>	RC, PUNOs