

Stories of Impact

A series highlighting achievements in disaster risk management initiatives

Stakeholders Engage to Build Belize's Climate Resilience



RESULTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

- The National Climate Resilience Investment Plan (NCRIP) has been fully adopted by the Government of Belize, resulting for the first time in climate change-related impacts being integrated into national investment planning across all sectors and ministries.
- The \$1 million ACP-EU NDRR/GFDRR grant leveraged a \$30 million World Bank project, which led to the development of the \$520 million NCRIP.
- The project brought together several government agencies, non-governmental organizations, as well as the private sector to carry out a multi-criteria evaluation. It was this broad stakeholder engagement that enabled the integration of physical, social, environmental, and cultural factors to prioritize transportation investments.
- The plan identified four priority regions where investment in the transportation sector will help reduce economic losses, ensure continued connectivity during floods, and protect vulnerable communities.

REGION: LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

COUNTRY: BELIZE

FOCUS AREA: CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

With the increasing incidence of climate-related disasters, the Government of Belize is working to improve its resilience by transforming the country's approach to economic and social development with a national plan that cuts across all sectors of the economy. The highly participatory plan, which brought together a range of stakeholders, will integrate climate resilience and disaster risk management into all aspects of the country's development planning, ensuring sustainable growth throughout the country.

The project is funded by the European Union (EU) through the Africa Caribbean and Pacific (ACP)-EU Natural Disaster Risk Reduction Program, an initiative of the ACP Group managed by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR).

Context

In coastal, low-lying Belize, climate change poses an imminent socioeconomic threat. Communities and businesses face significant losses due to climate-related hazards such as floods, drought, salt water intrusion, and coastal erosion. Recurrent flooding affects the connectivity of roads and transport systems. This impacts all sectors of the economy, but particularly the agriculture and tourism industries, which account for more than 50% of the national economy. Recognizing these urgent needs, the Government of Belize developed the National Climate Resilience Investment Plan (NCRIP).

Approach

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development of Belize led a series of consultations with key stakeholders from the private and public sectors as well as civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), gathering inputs to develop the investment plan. The project is funded by the ACP-EU Natural Disaster Risk Reduction Program and managed by GFDRR.

NCRIP draws lessons from the Caribbean Region Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR) of the Climate Investment Funds, which used a participatory approach to develop technical and investment projects. Key elements of the plan include:

- **Technical Data and Knowledge Transfer:** NCRIP will help facilitate the collection of geospatial data and risk assessments, essential for developing effective land use planning investments to strengthen the country's critical roads and bridges.
- **Strengthen Drainage and Transport Networks:** A number of projects have been identified to physically upgrade Belize's drainage and transportation systems, for example, a national zoning plan that can provide guidance on disaster mitigation.
- **Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management:** In addition to physical factors, NCRIP identifies social, environmental, economic and cultural interventions to strengthen climate resilience.

LESSONS LEARNED

Strong analytic work and a transparent process are critical to building stakeholder consensus.

Analytical and technical support from the World Bank and GFDRR supported the NCRIP process to integrate data and information into decision-making. The use of technical assessments and risk information enabled key actors to remain engaged at each stage of the development process. This transparency was essential for the plan to be integrated in the medium-term national development strategy.

Developing national plans of this scale requires comprehensive and iterative processes. Development of the NCRIP involved a rigorous series of in-country consultations and keeping all parties informed and involved in the development process. The plan functions as a "living document" subject to ongoing review.

Next Steps

The National Plan is expected to be fully integrated into Belize's development strategy and is aligned with the Horizon 2030 Development Framework, a national set of development goals to be achieved by 2030. While Belize is raising substantial resources for the improvement of its public services, particularly in the transport sector, the government has identified a significant financial gap and is currently exploring ways to raise additional resources and reduce costs. The next steps will be to carry out recommendations set forth in the plan to reduce climate vulnerability in the transport sectors of four priority regions in Belize.

"We need to put in place a national policy and strategy, an action plan to deal with the realities of climate change. The government is looking at doing this across sectors, getting information from various entities in a nice integrated approach, and I applaud them for taking this very important step."

— Nadia Bood, Director, World Wildlife Fund, Belize

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*All figures in US Dollars