**National Consultation**

**Sustainable Recovery and Resilience towards the Sustainable Development Goals in Belize**

**Date: Wednesday April 20, 2022**

**1 pm to 4 pm**

**Agenda**

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| **Welcome and opening (15:00 Minutes)**  **Moderated by Sami Areikat, UNDESA**  Remarks by (Government and UN Agencies)   * Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (CEO or Mr. Victor Alegria, Director) * UNDESA (Mr. Amson Sibanda, Chief, NSCBB/DSDG) * ECLAC (Mr. Abdullahi O. Abdulkadri, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean) |
| **Session 1 (40 Minutes): Assessment of the Social and Economic Impact of COVID-19 in Belize**  Moderated by Sami Areikat  Presentation by Elizabeth Emanuel  **Brief Description**  The session will include a brief presentation by UNDESA on the main findings of the research paper,  “Impact of COVID-19 on 5 Caribbean SIDS… *Evaluating Progress in Recovery Planning, Emerging Policy Options, Best Practices and Lessons Learned”*, with specific reference to Belize and focussed on the impacts of COVID-19 on the country.  This will be followed by inputs from key stakeholders from the public sector, private sector, academia, youth and civil society organizations sharing the main impacts, including data on a single sector based on the guiding questions below that they are most engaged in. *Participants could also include responses to the questions in the Zoom chat that will be available throughout the consultation.*  **Guiding Questions for Stakeholders**  What has been the experience and impact of COVID 19 in Belize:   * 1. Impacts on the Economy   2. Impacts on the Labour Market   3. Impacts on Education   4. Impacts on Employment   5. Impacts on Population Health (outside of COVID-19 but with focus on NCDs, HIV/AIDS and other diseases)   6. Impacts on Tourism and MSMEs   7. Impacts on Livelihoods, Food Security and Access to Markets   8. Impacts on Indigenous Peoples   9. Impacts on Women and Girls (any stark differences to the impact on men and boys?), including gender-based violence   10. Changes in waste management (increase in medical waste for example)   11. Other Socio-Economic Impacts |
| **Session 2 (40 Minutes): Stakeholders’ Engagement and Capacities to Implement Recovery Plans Post COVID-19:**  **Moderated and presented by Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management and Ministry of** Finance**, Economic Development** and Investment  **Brief Description**  This session will explore the importance and role of stakeholder involvement and engagement, political commitment and building consensus and ownership for recovery planning post COVID-19. The session also will explore the importance of policy coherence and policy coordination mechanisms. The session will begin with a brief presentation from the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, and address the following questions:   * How has the COVID-19 affected or influenced the development of the country’s new medium-term strategy? * How has COVID-19 affected the progress towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Belize? * What was some of the immediate actions taken by the Government to reduce the overall socio-economic impacts on the population and the economy with specific emphasis on vulnerable groups, children and the most vulnerable? * What steps are being taken to involve stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of Recovery Plans?   **Guiding Questions for Stakeholders –** (Using a scale of 1 – 5, with 5 being the best possible outcome and 1 being the least favourable outcome).   * How effective do you think the Government’s immediate actions were in reducing the overall socio-economic impacts of the pandemic on people, vulnerable groups, indigenous peoples and economic sectors? * How important do you believe robust and inclusive stakeholder engagement is for a sustainable recovery process? * How much of a role do you see for national stakeholders – public and private sectors, civil society organizations and academia in the recovery planning process and implementation efforts? * How important is political commitment to the sustainable recovery? * How strong do you believe current policy coherence and policy coherence mechanisms are in place in Belize?   *Participants would include responses to the questions in Mentimetre – participants will be asked to go menti.com either from their computers, iPad or smart phones – put in code and then respond to the questions based on the scale of 1 to 5. The results will be shared on screen as participants input their responses. All responses are anonymous.* |
| **Session 3 (40 Minutes): Building Forward Stronger Post COVID-19… The Road to a Resilient Recovery…Selected Options for Consideration in Belize**  **Moderated by Elizabeth Emanuel**  **Presentation: Sami Areikat**  **Brief Description**  This session will begin with a short presentation from UN DESA on Proposed Strategies and Transformative Initiatives for Consideration in Building Back Better, Building Forward Stronger, Fairer and Equal Post COVID-19. These initiatives are aligned to the Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (MSDCF) and the SDGs and which emerged from the research paper, “Impact of COVID-19 on 5 Caribbean SIDS… *Evaluating Progress in Recovery Planning, Emerging Policy Options, Best Practices and Lessons Learned”* will be presented*.* Following this presentation, participants will engage in a brainstorming exercise.  **Brainstorming Exercise**  Participants will be asked to brainstorm using *Polling* to assess how they view each of the proposed initiatives presented. Using Polling, each participant will review the proposed initiatives and vote for the top 3 they believe are most critical for Belize to build forward stronger or equal. The responses will then be collated across all participant responses and the top 5 priority areas for Belize, based on the consensus of all groups.  *Participants would vote via Mentimetre – participants will be asked to go menti.com either from their computers, iPad or smart phones – put in code and then respond to the questions based on the scale of 1 to 5. The results will be shared on screen as participants input their responses. All responses are anonymous.* |
| **Session 4: (35 Minutes): Financing for Sustainable Recovery and Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond**  **Moderated by Abdullahi O. Abdulkadri**  **Brief Description**  The session will take the form of a panel discussion involving UN and Regional Organization counterparts involved in the recovery process in Belize and the wider Caribbean. Panellists will share via 2-minute presentations on financing for development beyond COVID-19; and innovating financing instruments/tools and other resources available for advancing onto the road to a resilient recovery. This session will therefore take stock of the financial resources required and progress made so far to take the Caribbean Region and more specifically Belize from vulnerability to resilient development and sustainable recovery and dynamic growth, all within the thrust of ‘leaving no one behind’. Potential of addressing Belize debt restructuring through Blue Bonds Transaction ….. Panellists will address the following:   * What are the COVID-19 related debt and liquidity challenges facing the Caribbean Region and Belize and possible measures to address them? * How to mitigate the collapse of key economic sectors, including sectors such as MSMEs * How to engage private creditors, international and regional development banks and access concessional funding, with debt cancellation * What are the non-traditional forms of financing that could be explored (e.g. international philanthropic organizations, foundations, public-private partnerships, new financing vehicles for areas such as women’s economic empowerment etc.) * How to promote economic diversification and green and blue investments for resilience building in the Caribbean Region? * What are some of the innovative financing tools available to Caribbean countries and how they can be applied (e.g. blended financing, debt swaps, green and blue bonds etc.) * How can countries capitalize on the Addis Ababa Financing for Development Agenda which adopted a renewed global financing architecture to support the Sustainable Development Goals? * What is the role of UN agencies to support countries in their thrust to building back better and equal?   **Proposed Speakers**   * Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, and Investment (TBC) * UNDP * ECLAC * CDB |
| **Closing Remarks and Next Steps (15:00 Minutes)**  Government of Belize  UN Agencies |