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RESULTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

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 in 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.

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NCRIP

Developing national plans of this scale requires comprehensive and iterative processes.

NCRIP

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