

Annual

Technical Report 2021

Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance



"Building a green future via Service, Innovation & Transformation!"



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Ministry Leadership



Hon. Michel Chebat, SC.
Minister of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance



Jose Urbina, Eng. MBA
CEO in The Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance

Message from the Minister

Greetings,

Through this technical report, I would like to provide you the people with a brief run-through of where our administration met this ministry, and where we hope to take it within the coming years. As the Minister of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics and E-Governance, I must make mention of the fact that though I have recently acquired this portfolio, I have had the pleasure of working alongside a team of professionals who have not only allowed me to know the challenges they have faced, but they have shared their ideas in terms of growth and improvement of their respective departments within the ministry.

As for the major strides our Ministry has made over the past year:

- The Energy Unit alongside various partners and stakeholders has launched a series of projects aimed at bringing forth and transforming existing systems into quality, affordable and sustainable energy.
- The Belize Postal Service has worked to set the wheels of transformation in motion to move from an archaic and outdated postal system into a modern, tech-friendly future which would not only benefit local transactions but would also elevate standards so that they may be up to par with international organizations.
- The newly established E-Governance Unit has worked tirelessly to transform Belize's future through technology which would not only assist in bringing the government closer to its people, but it would also remove all the unnecessary tedious steps that may have been necessary in a society solely based on paper files.

The future is bright. The future is green. The future is affordable. Most importantly, the future is sustainable.



Hon. Michel Chebat, SC.
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List of Abbreviations

ABBREVIATION	NAME
BPS	Belize Postal Service
BAHA	Belize Agricultural Health Authority
BELAPS	Belize Electronic License and Permits System
CDS	Customs Declaration System
COD	Cash on Delivery
DOE	Department of Environment
DPC	District Postal Centers
ETFC	Electronic Transfer of Funds Crime
HS code	Harmonized System Code
ICDF	International Cooperation and Development Fund
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
MPUELE	Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance
OPAL	Online Permits and Application System
SCU	Supplies Control Unit
UPU	Universal Postal Union
UNCITRAL	United Nations Commission on International Trade Law

Executive Summary

The purpose of the annotated Technical Report is to provide an elucidated synopsis of the affairs concerning The Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance. This administration, upon being elected in November 2020, made a commitment to be the caretakers of this beloved country we know and love. Under #PlanBelize, a vow of transparency and accountability was made by this government regarding the affairs of this country which is managed under the different governmental ministries and portfolios.

The Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance (MPUELE) is a rather new ministry. In this ministry, the different departments of public utilities, energy, logistics and E-Governance come together as one. Within this report the mission of the ministry is clearly stated, which is a testament of our unified commitment to the departments, partners and stakeholders who fall under our management. The main achievements throughout the past year are highlighted to shed light on the various projects, big and small, that have been initiated under MPUELE. While we celebrate our victories, through this report, we also reflect on the lessons that were learnt throughout the process. Keeping these lessons in mind, the future is upon us and work must be done; therefore, the action plan created encompasses the goals and visions of MPUELE along with staffing and financial considerations to ensure further progress.



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Chapter 1: Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a comprehensive overview of the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics and E-Governance as it relates to where we stand as of March of 2022 and how far we have come as a ministry since November of 2020.

To properly capture the essence of this ministry in its entirety, the following report is structured in a way that highlights the departments that fall under the umbrella of MPUELE.



Chapter 2: Mission Statement & Priorities

“The Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics and E-Governance is committed to empowering the service industry with green and innovative ICT solutions, while promoting strong legislative enhancements to effectively integrate in an easy and sustainable manner.”



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Main Achievements of the Ministry by Program

E-GOVERNANCE

Project #1: Belize's National Digital Agenda 2022- 2025: Towards a Digital Belize



As a first step in unleashing the power of ICT, the Unit, with the support of the Inter-American Development Bank led the establishment of Belize's first National Digital Agenda. The Digital Agenda is a unified transformation and modernization plan, representing the country's vision and priorities over the next four years to embrace digital government. It provides a clear strategy and implementation roadmap to address key issues to become a more open, efficient, and effective government. The National Digital Agenda builds on the Government's commitment to transform lives as highlighted in PlanBelize.

The Agenda seeks to create the enabling environment required to support the transformation of the public sector, from improved infrastructure and connectivity programs to digital skills and digital culture programs. Hence, this Digital Agenda must be understood as a strategic plan and a running framework for the Belizean Government to obtain inclusion and digitalization in public management and society itself. The transformation process will focus on extending the depth and breadth of digital technologies for improved service delivery, enhancing digital talent across society, and strengthening governance.



Therefore, this new vision seeks to break the silos and create a collaborative culture where digitalization is the enabling path to better lives:

- The Digital Agenda: Towards a Digital Belize's vision is to build trust in government services by providing reliable, inclusive, safe, and efficient digital solutions for citizens, businesses, and employees.
- The Digital Agenda: Towards a Digital Belize's mission is to create public value through simplifying procedures, improving service delivery, optimizing opportunities, and facilitating economic recovery through digitalization.

Project #2: Creating a Safe & Effective Digital Environment for All

The Unit, in partnership with the Economic Development Council under the Office of the Prime Minister the Inter-American Development Bank, supported the enactment of five key e-governance related legislations to protect, support, and facilitate our participation in the digital realm. These key pieces of legislation are:

- The Data Protection Act seeks to promote the protection of personal data processed by public and private bodies. It will provide a framework where the data rights of our citizens are protected. It will support our citizens right to privacy by providing compliance and accountability measures for organizations processing personal data and provide for legal recourse for unauthorized processing of an individual's data.
- The Public Service Data Sharing Act aims to facilitate the sharing of data between public sector agencies and to provide for the sharing of data between public sector agencies and other entities. While this Act will provide for expeditious sharing of government sector data between government agencies, it also sets parameters for data sharing to ensure continuous compliance with the requirements of data protection and privacy as set out in the Data Protection Act. This Act further recognizes the protection of privacy as an integral component of good governance. Facilitating data sharing amongst the public sector will support data-driven policymaking, program management and monitoring, and service planning and delivery.
- The Electronic Evidence Act aims to make provision for the admissibility of electronic evidence. For example, this Act will enable the use of emails, digital photographs, and even word processing as digital evidence, if relevant, in court cases. As such, it offers clarity and ease of use by the Court, legal practitioners, and other users. It will also address the issue within the current Electronic Evidence Act which provides for the need to prove that a computer was operating properly and other archaic requirements dealing with how to prove the admissibility of records.



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- The update of the Electronic Transaction Act will further strengthen the predictability of the legal environment by providing a legal framework to govern digital services such as e-commerce, electronic records, electronic signatures, time stamps and seals, and issues regarding authentication and UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Commerce, and the United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts. As we continue to live amid a global pandemic, it is vital that, as a government, we encourage and support businesses to transact electronically.
- The Electronic Transfer of Funds Crime Act sets out the rights, responsibilities, and liabilities of everyone including consumers when they are using electronic means of transferring money. Among other safeguards, the ETFC will restrict the liability of a cardholder resulting from a lost or stolen card. By providing for specific offenses for various criminal activities in electronic funds transfers, law enforcement will become more efficient thereby building user confidence in e-commerce and electronic transfers. In this context, this bill is fundamental for supporting e-governance in Belize.

Project #3: Belize Electronic Licenses and Permits System

The Belize Electronic License and Permits System (BELAPS) under the Supplies Control Unit (SCU) is an application to assist in the issuing of import and export licenses controlled by the SCU to facilitate business and trade in Belize. The system also provides modules for BAHA, Forest Department, Fisheries Department, and the Customs & Excise Department to conduct their processes which are part of the permitting process. The system was initially funded by ICDF and was initially launched in 2012.

However, the system required further enhancements to improve functionality and usability for citizens and public sector agencies. As such, in September 2021, the enhanced system was launched. The Unit led the enhancement of the systems which included additional security features, improved user interface, and updating of the HS code for applications. The relaunching of the system also included training by the SCU for users. Today, BELAPS is the single window application for all import and export licenses for supplied controlled commodities.

It supports applications for 417 business users. It allows for applications to be automatically distributed to the various government agencies (BAHA, Forest Department, Fisheries Department, and the Supplies Control Unit). These entities are responsible for the processing within a set period which aligns to a better service to our citizens. The approval status of these applications can be tracked online; in addition, everyone benefits from a secure, user-friendly web interface. No longer is there a need for multiple forms and repeated trips to several agencies. Transactions are now simultaneously conducted online, smoothly, and securely.

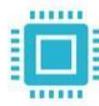
With this new system, the businesses, the brokers, and the public benefit from:



Increased transparency



Greater operational efficiency due to a paperless and user-friendly system



Access to real-time data, vital to support business transactions and investment decisions



Shorter time to process applications

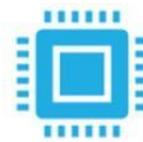
Ministries and Government Agencies benefit from:



Enhanced service delivery by automating the process which includes business process re-engineering



Development and adherence to standards within the Ministries and Agencies



Access to real-time and reliable data vital to support policy decision



Better delivery of services to the citizens



Enhanced communication, cooperation, and coordination amongst the different Government areas responsible for trade



Increased accountability due to transparency

Main screen <http://belaps.gov.bz/BELAPS/guest.action>



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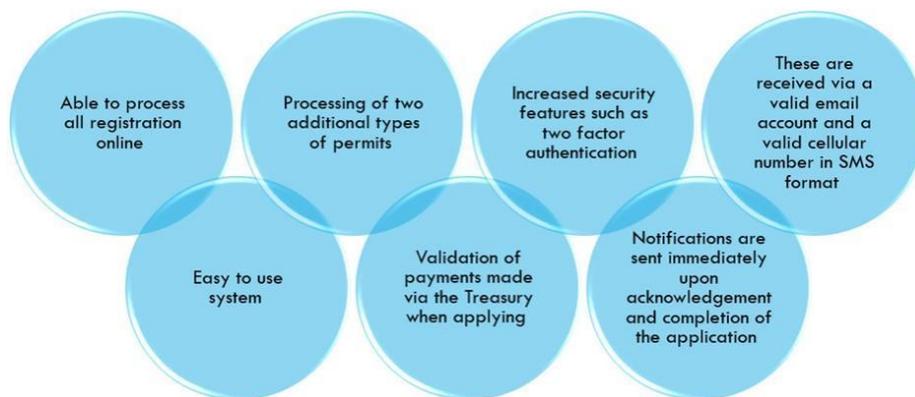
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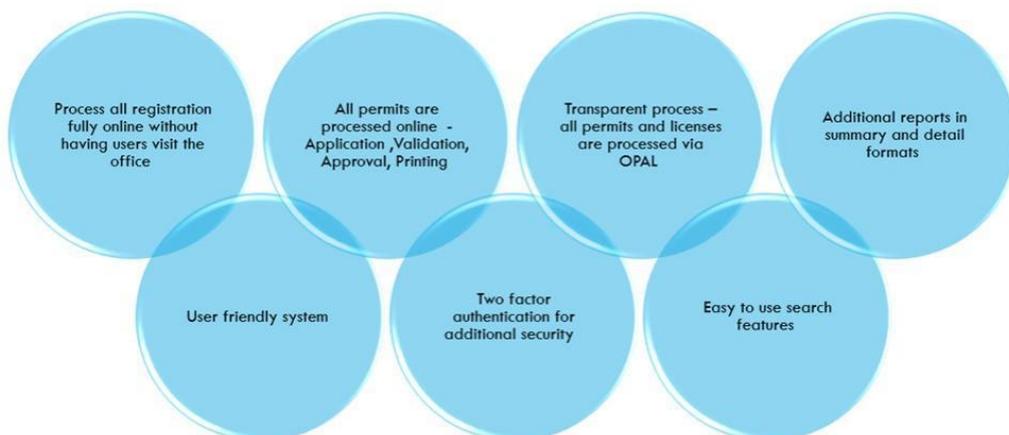
Project #4: Department of Environment's Online Permits and Application System

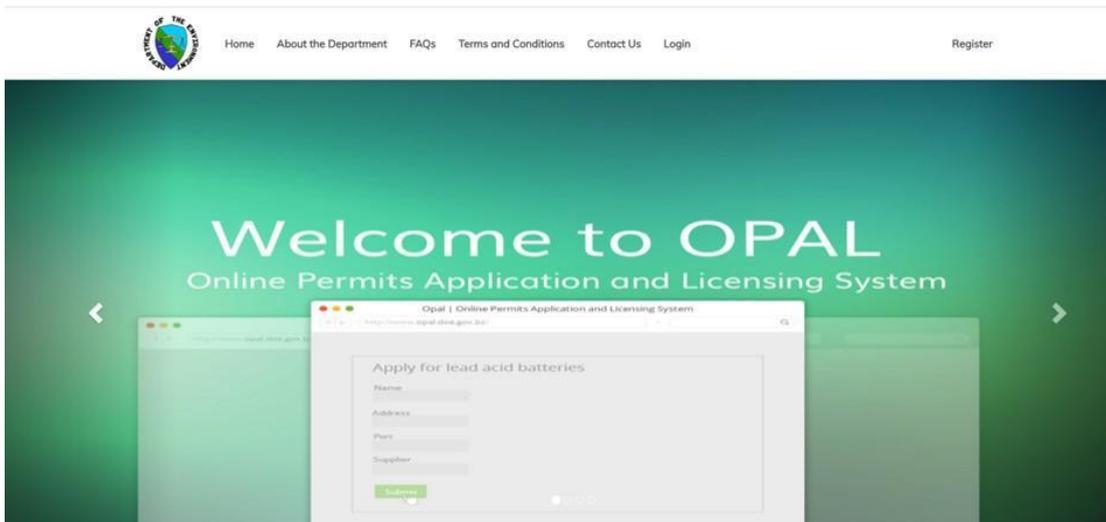
The Online Permits and Application System (OPAL) was launched by the Department of the Environment (DOE) for the issuance of permits issued by the Department under the Environment Protection Act and its subsidiary legislation. The system was designed to centralize management systems for permits and licenses, for the generation of reports and to allow for the ease of doing business by the citizens. Although the system was able to accomplish these objectives, there was a need to modify the system to improve its process and efficiency. Therefore, the Unit led the enhancement of the system to improve reporting, data analysis, and process flow. In addition, to accommodate new permits, two more permit modules were added to the system, Importation of Restricted and Prohibited Substances and Effluent Discharge permits. Furthermore, the system now includes a new functionality allowing for the online registration of traders.

Some of the benefits the users enjoy are:



The DOE is now able to:



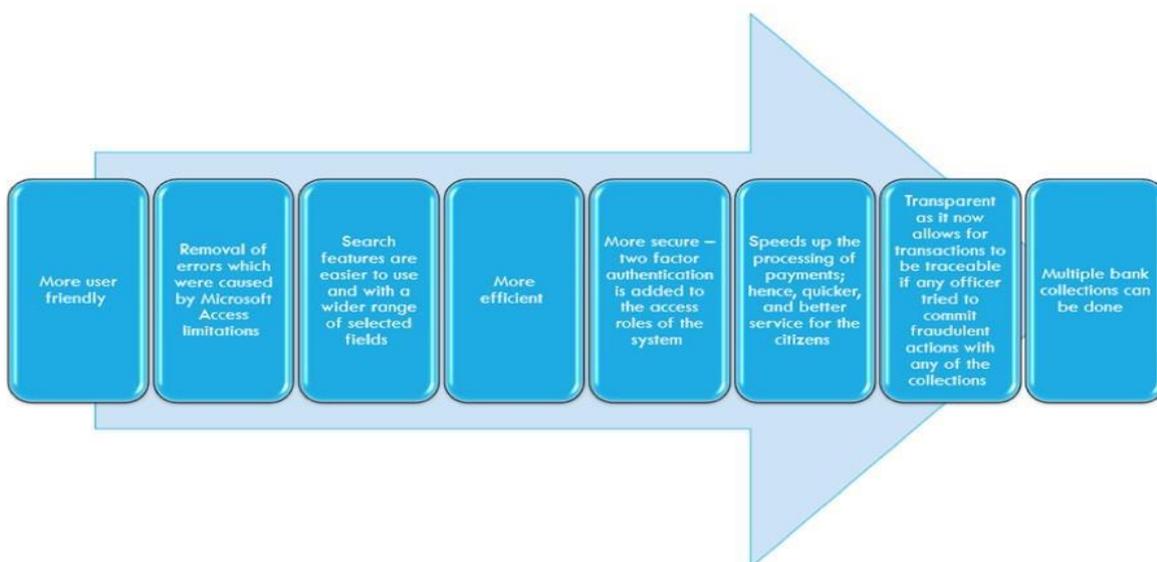


Main Screen <https://opal.doe.gov.bz/>

Project #5: Online Government Integrated Cashiering System

The Government Integrated Cashiering System (GICS), a revenue collection and receipt software system, is the Treasury Department's official cashiering system. It was originally developed using Microsoft Access which is now outdated and ineffective for the needs of the Treasury Department. Therefore, the Unit has further redesigned and developed the database and application into a web-based application using more up-to-date software.

The new GICS provides a more user-friendly cashiering interface, enables saving bank transaction automation, and improves data sharing with Smartstream, Government's application for finance, accounting, personnel,



Project #6: Online Insurance Reporting System

The Supervisor of Insurance is tasked with the administration of the Insurance Act, Act No. 11 of 2004 and the Insurance Regulations and the Motor Vehicle Insurance (Third Party Risks) Act, Chapter 231 of the Laws of Belize. It entails the annual licensing of insurance companies, association of underwriters, and insurance intermediaries. To support the annual relicensing process, the Unit redesigned and enhanced the online insurance reporting system to facilitate businesses' submission of financial statements, a prerequisite for the license. The enhanced system includes the following improvements:

- Re-engineering process flow to reduce the workflow for the submission of reports from 6 steps of validation to 3 steps and improved user interface
- Create additional functionalities such as create, view, update, delete for the insurance companies to manage their data



Main Achievements of the Ministry by Program

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BELIZE POSTAL SERVICES

Project #7: Kias App implementation

The Belize Postal Service was successful with the implementation of the Kias App that is used by the Universal Postal Union for increased data capturing for the Post Office.

Project #8: Updated standards to be up to par with international guidelines

- BPS has also updated all Procedures and Processes based on UPU standards that will enable increased data capturing both regionally and internationally.
- Likewise, the CDS system was implemented which is pivotal to sharing data internationally.
- The process of submitting a signed Data Sharing Agreement has also begun to track registered international mails.

Project #9: Cash on Delivery (COD) service was initiated

The Belize Postal Service saw an opportunity in the form of a 'Cash on Delivery' service. This opportunity was not only explored but it was also executed and is successfully in place based on customer demands.



Main Achievements of the Ministry by Program

ENERGY

Project #10: European Development Fund (EDF-11) Energy Program

Component 1: Energy Access

The Government of Belize, through the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics and E-Governance has been engaged with the European Union under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF-11) project since 2019 upon the signing of the financing agreement for a total of €13.5M. The EDF-11 project can be broken into three project components and component 1 is to increase energy access across the country.

The main objective of the EDF-11 Energy Access project is to create a National Rural Electrification Plan by identifying communities that are not connected to the national grid due to geographic and economic constraints. In total, thirty-six (36) communities were identified, and twenty-eight (28) communities were interested in receiving power to their communities.

Funds have been allocated to start electrifying some of the communities with the intention of seeking more funds to electrify the remaining communities. Belize Electricity Limited (BEL), on the behalf of the Government, has signed a grant agreement with the European Union, €4.5M and €0.5M co-financing from BEL, to electrify five (5) communities using renewable energy. The Energy Access program is set to be completed in 2024. These projects are energy sustainable projects since they will be operated and managed by BEL. This is in line with Plan Belize to improve the quality of life of the low-income population in the rural communities.

Component 2: Energy Efficiency

The Government of Belize has received funding from the European Union through the 11th European Development Fund and intends to apply a part of those funds towards the implementation of the project entitled “EDF11-Energy Efficiency in Buildings”



The main objective of the EDF11-Energy Efficiency in Buildings Project is the promotion of sustainable energy use in buildings through interventions that constitute energy efficiency applications within Belize. The Energy Efficiency in Buildings Project activities are intended to reduce electricity use by 20 per cent from the business as usual (BAU) scenario at the end of the project period in 2024.

The mainstreaming of sustainable energy use within the building sector in Belize has the potential to significantly reduce energy use. Some national benefits expected from this initiative include: (i) the delay or avoidance of new power generation infrastructure to match rising demand; (ii) reduction in electricity consumption by the commercial (including public) and residential building sectors; (iii) mitigation of the fiscal burden that is caused by the importation of expensive fossil fuels, with increased fiscal space and foreign exchange savings expected from the reduction in imports; (iv) enhanced energy security; and (v) carbon emissions reductions. Consequently, the Government of Belize is in the process of introducing renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency measures into the NEMO, Magistrate Court and Supreme Court Buildings.

Electric Mobility

In March 2021, the European Union (EU) Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance realized a pre-feasibility study on electric mobility in Belize. The study's result is a project proposal that introduces electric mobility in the national public transportation sector. The planned pilot project "Towards Low Carbon Transport: Piloting e-mobility within Belize's Public Transport System" was launched in February 2022 and will introduce the operation of electric buses within Belize's Public Transport Network, focusing on intercity travel within Belize's Western Corridor and intra-urban public transportation in Belize City.

The project supports the Government's commitment to the modernization of the transport sector and the implementation of Belize's raised ambition Nationally Determined Contributions to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and associated Low Emission Development Strategy (LEDS). In addition, the project aims to achieve long-term co-benefits and presents a good opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants related to road transport, deploy new and cleaner technologies, create new business opportunities, and introduce new jobs. Therefore, the decarbonization of the transport sector is critical to the success of transitioning to a low-carbon sustainable energy pathway.

The electric mobility project is funded by the European Union and will be administered by the UNDP Belize Country Office and values approximately 4.5 million Euros (approximately USD 5.3 Million).



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Component 3: Lait Up Belize Project Policy, Communication and Visibility:

The “LAIT UP BELIZE!” project has a clear mandate to undertake policy development, Communication and Visibility (C&V) activities to support the overall objectives of the Technical Assistance activities in addition to liaising and supporting the overall C&V activities. The objectives of the Communication and Visibility Plan for the LAIT UP BELIZE!

Project includes:

- Creating awareness and excitement to stakeholders, beneficiaries, and the Belizean populace about the LAIT UP BELIZE! project by providing proper and effective communication and visibility to develop a clear identity of the Project.
- Engaging in dialogue and Informing stakeholders about the aims, objectives, progress, outputs, activities, and outlook for the LAIT UP BELIZE! project
- Showing the impact of the project to the population by raising awareness related to energy efficiency and clean and productive energy use among villagers where new electrification is implemented by the project.
- Providing awareness of energy efficiency and energy access population.

Energy Policy and Act:

As in the case of small countries worldwide - and particularly for Small Island Developing States - Belize faces profound development challenges. Inevitably and significantly, the role of energy services and the provision of energy services directly affect how the country faces and manages the challenges. The need for a clear and forward-looking energy policy and legislative framework for guiding and managing the energy services sector is increasingly evident as the environmental, social, and economic challenges mount. Fortuitously, innovations in the provision of energy services - in terms of technology, business models, financing, and partnerships - provide opportunities that invite proactive and visionary responses.

The Government of Belize, GOB, wishes to establish a national energy policy that reflects the national goals in terms of the national development objectives over the medium to long term while recognizing the prevailing constraints and opportunities. The current policy document is the National Energy Policy Framework that was last updated a decade ago in 2012.

Furthermore, GOB wishes to enact legislation in the form of an energy act of parliament that will establish the institutional and legislative basis for implementing the national energy policy. Project activities in 2021 included: The creation of the TOR for the Energy Policy and Energy act contactors. Also, the ideas and views of what the Policy and Act must achieve was discussed. Projected 2022 Goals: The creation of the Energy Act and updating of the Energy Policy.

Pre-feasibility Studies:

The Ministry in charge of energy is always planning and promoting the most sustainable generation and most efficient use of energy in the country. Thus, with this in mind the Ministry will be engaging in two pre-feasibility studies to support the renewable energy portion on the electricity grid. Major project activity in 2021: Dialogue with stakeholders. Project Goal 2022: Create terms of reference and implement the feasibility studies.

Energy Statistics and Knowledge Management:

A specific output of the Lait Up Belize Project is to improve Energy Governance through the strengthening of the Energy Unit for leading the strategic energy planning process, including improvements in sector governance, regulatory framework, data analysis, and capacity building. The Lait Up Belize Project aims to support the Energy Unit to enhance institutional capacities in energy information and knowledge management by means of improving access to reliable and time-sensitive information in Belize.

Project activities in 2021 included: support for the launch of Annual Energy Reports (through design, formatting, and printing), assistance with communication and visibility initiatives (dissemination mechanisms, social media posts, and press releases to engage various user groups) and design and production of infographics.

Energy Statistics:

Caribbean Energy Statistics Capacity Enhancement Project

The Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE) executed the Caribbean Energy Statistics Capacity Enhancement Project, with a main objective to enhance energy statistics planning and management capacity within five Caribbean countries for which Belize is a direct beneficiary. Through this project, OLADE seeks to increase the quality and optimize the dissemination of energy information in the region to promote the availability of harmonized energy statistics, with international standards to ensure that the management of data in the energy sector becomes one of the cornerstones that promote sustainable and inclusive development.

To achieve the objective of the project, a key feature included the training of officials in the management and planning of energy statistics and the development and implementation of a National Energy Information System (NEIS) in Belize. The development of the NEIS for Belize is an important element of a comprehensive energy management platform aimed at producing quality and consistent energy information.



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The Caribbean Energy Statistics Capacity Enhancement Project will directly benefit line ministers and public institutions by providing accessible energy data for decision-making and planning purposes. Furthermore, the private sector and broader Belizean population will indirectly benefit through enhanced energy data quality and availability, more skilled counterparts, and better management of Belize's energy resources. Funding for the project was provided by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Development Association (World Bank) and amounted to USD 0.50 million.

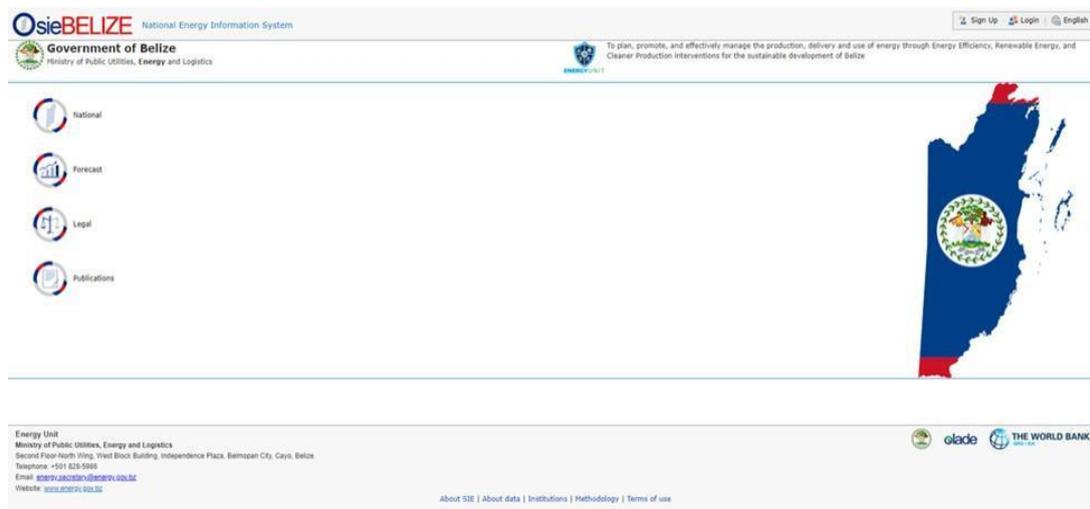


Figure: Photo of Belize's National Energy Information System homepage.

Energy Unit Statistical Outputs:

At the heart of the clean energy transition lies the need for high-quality and timely energy statistics and knowledge management mechanisms that will prioritize data-driven decision making. Building upon its Energy Information and Knowledge Management development objectives in 2021, the Energy Unit committed to improving access to reliable energy information in Belize through the publication of various statistical outputs. These included the official publication of Belize's Energy Balances, 2019 Annual Energy Report, 2020 Annual Energy Report, the release of the Unit's 2022 Statistical Calendar and the publication of Energy Indicators (KPIs) Infographics 1.

These activities are being supported by the European Union under the 11th European Development Fund financing agreement with the Government of Belize.

Environment and Climate Protection Nationally Determined Contributions:

Belize updated its national contributions under the Paris Climate Change Agreement. Belize submitted an updated version of these commitments for inclusion in the global stock take planned in conjunction with the 26th Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC which was held in November 2021. The Government of Belize's objective was to develop an updated and enhanced Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) document with clearer, more detailed, ambitious, practical, and implementable targets, medium to long term, while recognizing the prevailing constraints and opportunities. The current policy document is the National Energy Policy Framework that was last updated a decade ago in 2012.

The update process was conducted through a highly consultative process and included engagement with a technical group of sector leads across government, with the Energy Unit tasked to act as sector lead for the energy sector.

Belize's updated NDC document reflects sector targets and actions relevant to climate change mitigation and adaptation. They are an extension and application of the focus on climate change in Belize's key development plans. Key sector targets include: a 63% increase in GHG removals related to the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sector and an achievement of 75% renewable energy for grid connected electricity generation. Energy-related mitigation targets and actions submitted focused on energy efficiency, renewable energy and the transport subsector.

The overall NDC update process was executed by the NDC Partnership (Consortium of Technical Partners) and Belize's National Climate Change Office (NCCO).

Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP):

Through the NDC Partnership, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) provided support to Belize, specifically, the Energy Unit and the National Climate Change Office (NCCO), on data and statistics in the framework of the Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP). The Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP) is an initiative geared towards equipping Belize to enhance its NDCs, inclusive of raising ambition and fast-tracking the implementation of NDCs, via the provision of in-country technical expertise and capacity development.

A key component of the CAEP included the development of a mitigation measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) system for the energy sector. With the support of IRENA, an excel-based MRV tool for the energy sector was designed and built to support the monitoring of existing/planned mitigation and adaptation actions, and climate finance flows that collectively contribute to the pursuit of communicated NDC targets. The MRV tool was presented to a wide array of energy stakeholders in October 2021, with positive feedback. The CAEP activities have been instrumental in advancing inter-organizational partnerships within Belize's energy landscape.

Greenhouse Gas Inventory Process:

Belize has been building national capacity through participation in previous national communications, and it is expected that upcoming National Communications will advance that process as it seeks to institutionalize the greenhouse inventory process into the Government of Belize (GOB) through the National Climate Change Office (NCCO). This will foster continuity and sustainability of future reporting processes.



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Following the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, the activity sectors surveyed for these inventories include Energy; Industrial Processes and Product Use; Agriculture, Forestry and other Land Uses (AFOLU); and Waste. Within the framework of the National Greenhouse Inventory process, the Energy Unit has been assigned as the sector lead for the Energy Sector. In 2021, the Energy Unit prepared and submitted the Energy Sector Greenhouse Gas Inventory Summary report to the National Climate Change Office. This energy sector summary report will form a critical component of Belize's fifth GHG inventory report prepared for submission to UNFCCC as part of Belize's reporting obligations. This report which covers reference years 2018 and 2019 is the first sector specific inventory prepared directly by the Energy Unit, within the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics & E-Governance. Consequently, the GHG inventory development process has served as a platform for capacity development and supports decision-making processes. Therefore, the information provided is essential for enabling proper emission target setting and allows policymakers to have access to critical information necessary to monitor and evaluate the impacts of GHG mitigation actions within the energy sector.

Low Emission Development Strategy (LEDS):

Global climate change is one of the most serious threats to sustainable development in Belize. Thus, as a top priority, Belize is committed to contributing to global climate action and low-carbon development through the design, strengthening and implementation of sustainable development policies and strategies across its various sectors. In 2021, Belize finalized the development of a low emission development strategy (LEDS) and action plan for Belize.

The process to develop a Low Emission Development Strategy and Action Plan for Belize for 2020-2050 was organized in two phases: development of the Concept LEDS (Phase I) and construction of the Action Plan (Phase II). This complements the recent NDC work and provides pathways to achieve low emission development in Belize until 2050 under 'High Ambition' (HA) and 'Very High Ambition' (VHA) scenarios. These scenarios were elaborated for each sector, including forestry, and other land use (FOLU), electricity and other energy use; transport; agriculture, and waste.

Within the framework of the LEDS development process, the Energy Unit was designated as a principal lead for the energy sector and provided high-level input on the status, feasibility, and target ambition levels within the LEDS longer-term timeframes. Long-term Low Emissions Development Strategies (LEDS) are generally used to build forward-looking national economic development plans or strategies that encompass low-emission and/or climate-resilient economic growth that will benefit all Belizeans across all levels and sectors of society. The LEDS process, supported by the UNDP and NCCO, aims to set out Belize's long-term mitigation ambitions in line with a public commitment to a low emission development pathway.

The Energy Resilience for Climate Adaptation Project (ERCAP)

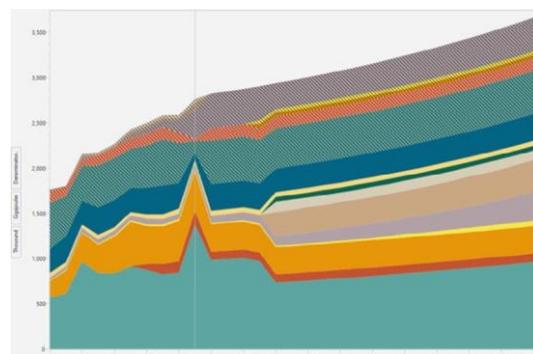
The Energy Resilience for Climate Adaptation Project (ERCAP), funded by the World Bank through the Global Environment Facility (GEF), is a sector-spanning program with operations within the National Meteorological Service (NMS) and Belize Electricity Limited (BEL), as well as the Energy Unit. MUSD 1.078 was allotted for Component 1: Long-Term Planning and Capacity Building for Adaptation, for which the stipulated goals were to address gaps in socioeconomic and energy data, developing a predictive model for the energy sector to test the impact of policies and investments, and strengthening capacity to periodically update and refine the model.

To that end, an energy specialist consultant was contracted to aid and train Energy Unit staff, with the end goal of producing a Long-term Energy Plan and to build capacity in energy planning, modelling, and forecasting. This process began in late 2020 and is scheduled for completion in mid-2022.

Our team, engineers from BEL, and the energy consultant have spent much of 2021 building a model of Belize's energy sector, developed with data from numerous sources: the Statistical Institute of Belize (SIB), Independent Power Providers, Belize Electricity Limited, fuel importers and internationally recognized resources such as the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL).

Encompassing details such as fossil fuel import prices, bagasse heat-and-power' cogeneration, and electricity demand curves, the model was constructed using the Low-Emissions Analysis Platform, formerly the Long-range Energy Alternatives Planning System, (LEAP). LEAP is a scenario-based modeling software created by the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI).

(This is an example of a LEAP-generated result: total energy generated over both historical and projected time)



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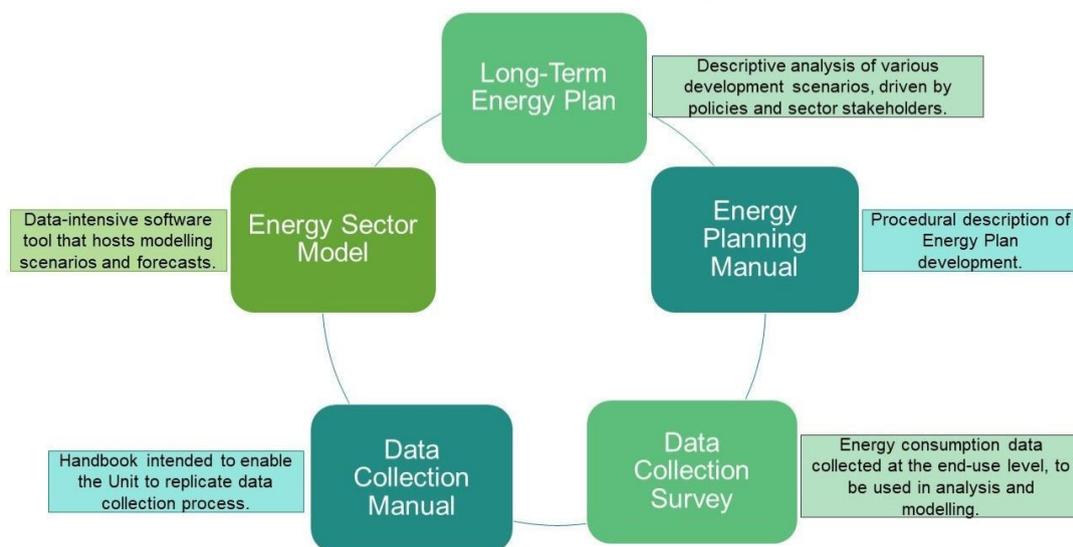
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As of 2021, the Unit's LEAP model spans ten years of historical data, twenty years of projections based on historical trends, as well as two additional scenarios that simulate the implementation of climatic mitigations stipulated in the Updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and the Low Emissions Development Strategy (LEDS), wherever those targets related to energy. Though the model is planned to be refined by 2022 survey collected data, it can be considered already functional.

Additionally, 2021 also saw the drafting of the Long-Term Energy Plan and the Energy Planning Manual, two documents that are stated deliverables under ERCAP. These drafts were created in conjunction with the consultant, with refinements towards the finished products continuing.

Therefore, 2021 has marked notable progress towards three of the main deliverables of ERCAP: the Energy Sector Model, the Long-Term Energy Plan, and the Energy Planning Manual.

Main Deliverables of ERCAP:



The completion of ERCAP will benefit the country as whole by providing tools that will be instrumental in charting the way forward for Belize' Energy Sector going forward. Integrating the impacts of policies and the influences of key stakeholders are significant components of energy planning and have implications for national spending, infrastructure, green development, energy access and energy prices. It dovetails completely into SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy for All, as well as the principles of Plan Belize: the development of alternative green energy generation.

Energy Access Project Name – emPOWER Rural Electrification Project (UAE) Context:

There are about 30 villages in the country that do not have access to electricity as it is not feasible to connect these villages to the national grid currently. The United Arab Emirates has provided grant funding in the amount of \$2.3M USD for the construction of a generating plant for a microgrid. Thus, the Ministry in collaboration with the Belize Electricity Limited are implementing a microgrid to electrify Indian Creek, Golden Stream and Medina Bank.

Objectives:

Provide renewable energy solutions to assist Belize in achieving universal energy access, installation of 403 kW of solar PV and battery storage in rural villages of Indian Creek, Golden Stream, and Medina Bank - that currently do not have access to the national grid.

Proposed External financing:

- Donors - United Arab Emirates, United Nation Development Program (UNDP)
- Partners - Belize Electricity Limited, Ministry of Rural Transformation
- Financing Type – Grant, totaling: \$5,331,970 BZD

Key Activities:

- Install solar panels, batteries, and diesel generators.
- Install electricity network in all three villages.
- Install service entrances and wiring for some buildings in the three villages.

Key Outputs:

- Provide electricity to the three villages.
- Provide opportunities for improvement of life.

Status of the project (February 2022):

The project has enclosed the area of the generation site, where the batteries and transformer have been installed. The Belize Electricity Limited has also installed the distribution system in the three villages and implemented 100 service entrance and basic home wiring.

Project Name – Corazon Creek Context:

There are about 30 villages in the country that do not have access to electricity due to economic constraints to connect these villages to the national grid currently. CDW Stiftung has provided grant financing to build a generating plant in the village of Corazon Creek. Thus, the Ministry in collaboration with the Belize Electricity Limited and along with our project donor are taking another step to bring energy access to all by implementing a micro grid in this village.



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Objective:

Installation of 69.5 kWp PV battery storage with LPG back-up generator in the rural village of Corazon Creek, Toledo District. This directly provides renewable energy solutions to assist Belize in achieving universal energy access to one of thirteen rural communities that provide High School Education; Corazon Creek does not have access to the national grid.

External financing:

Donor – CDW Foundation-Stiftung in Germany.

Financing Type – Grant, totaling: 1,033,350 BZD

Partners: Belize Electricity Limited, Public Utilities Commission

Key Activities:

- Install solar panels, batteries, and LP generator (60kW).
- Install electricity network in all villages.
- Install service entrances and wiring for all houses in the village.

Key Outputs:

- Provide electricity to the village including the high school.
- In line with Plan Belize to improve the quality of the low-income rural population: internet access will be enabled for the village and the quality of education will improve.

Status of the project (February 2022):

- The Readiness Assessment has been completed and the draft report was developed and reviewed.
- The Investment Pipeline has also been completed.
- The Adaptation of IUS commenced in November 2021 with the Utility and work is still ongoing.

Smart Batteries Project (La Gracia Village) Context:

The energy access project that the Ministry and BEL with assistance from the Ministry of Rural Transformation is conducting will supply electricity to villages that do not currently have access to electricity. Nevertheless, the ministry is aware that sometimes the grid might not be able to reach all the homes in a village thus a solution is required. Hence the pilot project being undertaken that is known as the smart battery project will verify how feasible it is to provide electricity to those homes.

Objectives:

The overarching objective is to verify the technical and financial feasibility of using second hand car batteries to provide electricity to rural homes.

External Financing:

Donor - REPIC (Renewable Energy, Energy and Resource Efficiency Promotion in International Cooperation), Private sector

Financing Type - (Blended)

Partners: Belize Electricity Limited, Solar Energy Solution Belize

Key Activities:

- Erect solar Photovoltaic system to charge batteries.
- Create a team and processes to provide service.

Key Outputs:

Report on pilot project.

Status of the project (February 2022):

- The project has imported most of the items needed.
- The Ministry is deciding on the land for the solar PV system and the participants of the pilot



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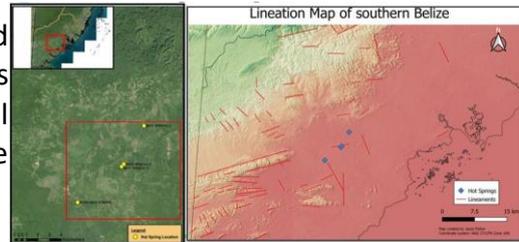
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Geothermal:

Belize is an active member of SICA. We are bordered in the East by the Caribbean Sea, north by Mexico and in the west by Guatemala. In this position, we are not linked directly to the Pacific Ocean and so are outliers to its Ring of Fire. Notably, we have no present active volcanic activity. Since geothermal studies in 2007 with the IDB, no further detailed studies of geothermal resources have been undertaken. In 2019, within the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy and Logistics and through its participation in the Technical Group of Geosciences GTG of the UCE-SICA, the Energy Unit resumed exploration of suspected warm body waters Southern Belize. Four sites of geothermal manifestations have been identified having surface temperatures between 77°F and 95°F (**Map 1**).



Map 1: Sources of hydrothermal manifestations
(Southern Belize with lineation)

To date, no manifestations with a higher degree of temperature have been identified. These low temperature surface manifestations indicate the potential for direct use of hot water. This however, requires further studies and so through the assistance and guidance from the Costa Rican Electricity Institute (ICE) with funding and support from the BGR through the Yacimientos II project, Belize is encouraged to proceed with reconnaissance exercise in country.

The objective of the Yacimientos II Project is to build the capacity of technical staff in the identification, classification and basic inventory of any geothermal source discovered in the country. The priority is to conduct a reconnaissance of hydrothermal manifestations to assess the application potential of geothermal energy for selected uses.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY LABELING SCHEME PROGRAM

In 2012, the National Sustainable Energy Strategy was developed by the Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology, and Public Utilities and includes several programs and activities to support the development of non-renewable and renewable energy resources and improve energy efficiency and conservation in Belize.

The strategy highlights the importance of creating a national culture for energy efficiency. In collaboration with the Belize Bureau of Standards, the Energy Unit within the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics, and E-Governance is supporting the implementation of the Energy Efficiency Labeling Scheme Program (EELS). This program seeks to affix energy labels on electricity consuming household appliances, particularly refrigerators, air conditioners and lamps. The energy labels will serve as a tool for consumers to access information of that appliance that speaks to its energy performance and cost savings potential. In 2019, under the Energy for Sustainable Development Program, The Energy Unit procured 67,000 energy efficiency labels. These labels are a protection for consumers whereas appliances must meet the Minimum Energy Performance Standards. The Energy Unit and the Belize Bureau of Standards have actively participated in the Regional Technical Committee with responsibility to develop the Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) for these appliances to ensure that best practices are applied in Belize and throughout CARICOM member states.

The implementation of the scheme has identified the direct synergy between the roles of three agencies namely, the Belize Bureau of Standards, the Energy Unit and the Customs and Excise Department. The implementation of the EELS in Belize will be voluntary in this first instance. The Energy Unit continues to engage proactively with the Belize Bureau of Standards to support the successful implementation of the EELS Program.



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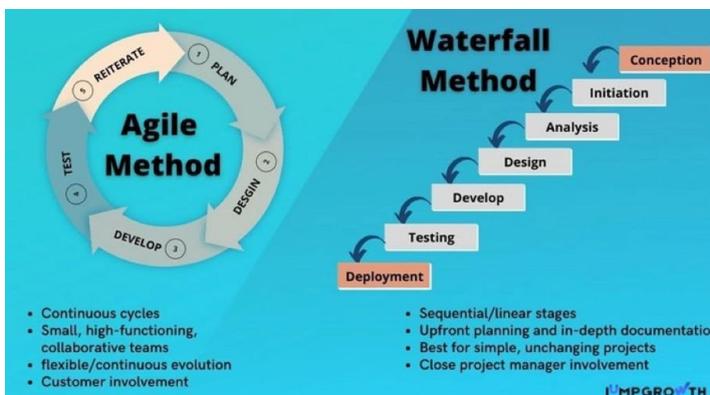
Chapter 4: Lessons learnt

Program 1: E-Governance

The following are major lessons learned for the Unit:

1 *Learning how to work Agile*

Agile methodology is a type of incremental approach to software development based on principles that focuses more on people, results, collaboration, and flexible responses to change. With the waterfall method, the team focused on compiling all system requirements before commencing the project and conducting a few user interactions. This led to a rigid structure allowing few changes, poor customer satisfaction, and long execution timelines. By adopting the Agile method, the Team seeks to take a customer-focused approach, resulting in increased customer satisfaction, adaptability to changes, empowering teams, promoting efficient communication, and fast-tracking software development. To support this new approach, the Team has been undergoing coaching over the last 6-months as it continues to transition itself into a more agile team and culture. This transition will significantly enhance the Unit's effectiveness in delivering better services and applications.



2. *Upskilling Human Resources*

The implementation of E-Governance requires a diverse pool of talent in project management, user design, business analysis, change management, and information security. E-Governance design requires a holistic understanding of public administration and project management. Regardless of the area, most E-Governance work is project-based. As such, the Team must build its skills in project management to effectively implement projects within scope, cost, and quality. In the past, limited project management skills have led to significant delays in project execution, poor project planning, poor communication, and overall, customer dissatisfaction.

Therefore, the Team has undergone training in project management. It provided a wide range of understanding of the steps and processes in project management. Additionally, it provided insights on how to maximize the use of Microsoft projects for project execution and monitoring. It also strengthened the Unit's ability to do program management and monitoring of various projects simultaneously. At an individual level, it has helped to maximize time management skills as well as personal goals for improving efficiency in the project output.

3. *Non-technical aspects are important*

Given that the Team primarily utilized the traditional waterfall approach for software development, there was no consideration for change management and consistent customer engagements. The impact at the end of the project was greater resistance and less adaptation of the IT solution by the users. Therefore, by utilizing both project management tools and agile methods, the Team is now providing greater customer input through customer journey mapping exercises, stakeholder engagements, and capacity building. In addition, the Team avoids working in silos by using the Kanban board to help visualize work, drive collaboration and communication, and maximize efficiency.

Program 2: Belize Postal Service

The Belize Postal Service has had plenty of learning lessons throughout the past year. Some of which included the need for innovation.

We are living in a fast-paced world where everything is ever changing. The service industry especially changes often, and Belize is forced to keep up with the demands of the outside world. It is because of this the Belize Postal Service identifies the importance of innovation to propel the industry forward.

Program 3: Energy

In regard to projects in the area of rural electrification, there have been many lessons learned such as an awareness that financing for the projects must not only include the cost of the generating site and infrastructure but also the cost of wiring, lighting and connecting homes to the grid. These projects must also be done in conjunction with BEL to ensure sustainability of the project.

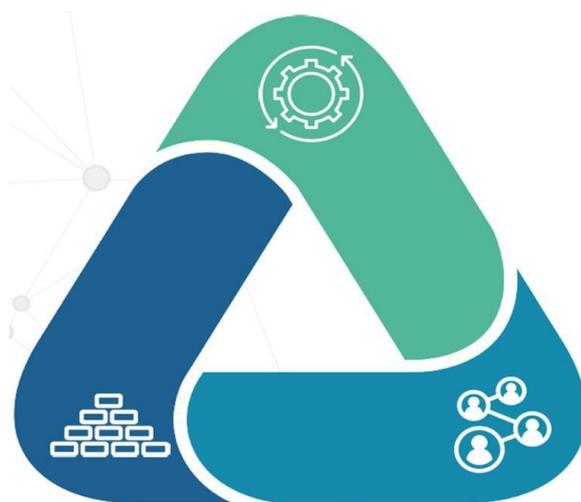
The energy sector needs to be benchmarked against regional countries with similar geological and socio-economic status as Belize. This includes the hydrocarbon sector, as this will indicate how competitive Belize is in attracting new investments.

Chapter 5: Future Priorities and Plans

Program 1: E-Governance

If the COVID-19 pandemic has not taught us anything else, it has clearly shown us the need for a more technologically inclined environment in Belize. This would narrow the gap between the citizens and the services the government has to offer them. Besides the leveraging of technology to optimize the means of connecting people to government, government to business, and business to business; technology will also fortify governance and transparency within the Government of Belize and by extension will build the confidence of businesses and the citizens in the government. Hence, this is where Belize's first National Digital Agenda comes into effect.

The Belize Digital Agenda is based on three main pillars: Digital Government, ICT and Technology Enablers, and Digitalization for Recovery. Each has a set of programs for the next four years which will support the achievement of three high-level strategic goals as seen below:



TRANSFORMING THE WAY GOVERNMENT OPERATES

The digitalization of services will result in reduced bureaucracy, increased efficiencies, and a new culture in public service. Simple, transparent, secure, and easy-to-access digital services will aid an interconnected, open, and inclusive government. By creating a more interconnected government, the silo culture will transform into a more synergetic government that appreciates the value of data-driven decision-making. The government will revise its processes to meet citizens' expectations and user needs.

DEVELOPING A DIGITAL CULTURE AND SOCIETY

The government will establish a supportive ecosystem in Belize to promote innovation, equip public servants and citizens with digital skills, and generate job opportunities for everyone. This ecosystem will permit collaboration and support the private sector's business transformation for economic recovery.

BUILDING THE FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Ameliorating digital infrastructure will facilitate access and connectivity for every Belizean while providing for the utilization of shared ICT platforms for the delivery of services. It will sustain the government's reliability, accessibility, and resiliency through a robust government ICT architecture. The government's technological capabilities will be broadened to include cloud computing and the big data concept.

Below are some key programs to be implemented by the Unit:

ICT AND TECHNOLOGY ENABLERS	DIGITAL GOVERNMENT	DIGITALIZATION FOR RECOVERY
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GOB ICT Architecture 2. Cloud Service Strategy 3. Pilot Digital Labs 4. Horizontal Platforms developed by the e-Governance Unit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ eService Toolkit ✓ Content Management System (CMS – Unified Platform) ✓ ERMS (Electronic Record Management System) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regulatory Improvement for Digital Government Sustainability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ IT Procurement ✓ Digital Law for simplification of procedures ✓ ICT Guides and Standards ✓ Digital Maturity Model 2. Catalogue of e-Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mapping and simplification of public services 3. National Identity Solution 4. National Data Governance and Strategy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Digital Literacy and Skills Programme for public servants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Digital Skills Labs and Centres

One of the first milestones in achieving the objectives of the three pillars above was the enactment of the Public Sector Data Sharing Act. This set the standard for how data will be shared between the various government agencies. Along with the Data Governance Strategy, it will guide the establishment of the interoperability framework, a platform for the seamless sharing of data between systems. This platform will support the development of Belize's single window e-Services portal for all Government services to citizens, businesses, and employees. This will work hand in hand with the envisioned development of a payment gateway solution. The e-Services portal will grant businesses and citizens the availability of government services at the click of a mouse, rather than having to visit government offices to access these services. This will drastically reduce the turnaround time for the execution of these services. The payment gateway solution will facilitate ease of online payments using various methods of payment for these services.

Other projects to come include working with telecom providers to expand their coverage to more areas while providing internet services that are more affordable, additionally seeking out ways to lower the cost of connectivity devices, all with the aim of increasing internet access to more people. Without a device or internet, citizens in some rural areas will be unable to access the e-services. To create a more digital-friendly environment in Belize, there will be a need to provide cyber safety education and training to strengthen the technological capacity of the Belizean citizenry. Last but certainly not least, another major project will be the development of a National ID for the citizens of Belize.

Program 2: Belize Postal Service

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Belize Postal Service (BPS) core aim surrounds a Strategic objective that clearly outlines the outcomes derived from its Mission and Vision Statement. Our Post office uses this context, to provide a detailed structure, clarity as well as support to the direction it is heading. The Belize Postal Service aims to fulfill these objectives using a road map with strategic timelines. Belize Postal Services will focus on six main objectives, that are designed to transform it from its traditional business model to that of an operational model inclusive of digital adaptation.

The six strategic objectives identified for the Strategic Plan are:

1. Improvement of Processes and Efficient Systems
2. Embrace Innovation and Advancement of Infrastructure
3. Provision of New Products and Services
4. Forming Strategic Alliance with Business Partners
5. Creating a Culture of Excellence
6. Creating a great and Friendly Working Environment

To accomplish these 6 objectives, the Belize Postal Services will be adopting three of four principles designed by the Universal Postal Union (UPU) for Postal Development.

BELIZE POSTAL SERVICE'S PRIORITIES IN THE COMING YEAR ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Rebranding of the Post Office - Currently, BPS owns less than 10% of the market share and is not in a financially sustainable position. Therefore, rebranding will bring a different look and feel to customers. The expected result will be regaining back our market share.
2. Online Shopping Center - will be another priority for BPS. This will allow both domestic and international customers to purchase items from our online store. Philatelic stamp lovers will be able to purchase from our website. This will result in increased revenues for the Post office.
3. Digital Delivery Platform is another priority for the post office. Customers will be able to track their local packages online from either an app or a website. This will be a competitive advantage for BPS and will allow us to gain more customers, increase both revenues and market share.
4. Providing same-day delivery countrywide will be another benefit for using the post office. Customers prefer same-day delivery at a low cost. This will again result in the increase of both revenues and market share.
5. Additional DPCs will be rolled out to various parts of the country to serve the underserved communities, where mails are not easily accessible.
6. Strengthen Policy and Legislative Framework of the Post Office.
7. Training and Certification of our employees.
8. Strengthen the institutional capacity of designated postal operators to place Post on a sustainable and development growth path.
9. Strengthen and broaden cooperation and interaction among the stakeholders in the postal sector.
10. Improve Post's market performance in the traditional areas.
11. Improve Post's market performance, especially in Trade Facilitation with respect to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).
12. Improve succession planning at the Post Office.

Program 3: Energy

The energy sector is striving for energy security that consists of 75% production of electricity from resources.

Chapter 6: Staffing and Financial considerations

Program 1: E-Governance

The Unit is located on the 2nd floor of the Belmopan Post Office and is governed by a Director, with support staff including a Senior ICT Officer, System Analyst, four Software Developers, and a technician. Over the next four years, the Unit will be focusing on design, developing, and executing over 40 projects in a phased approach. To capture the benefits of a digitally enabled society, the Unit's Team profiles will need to be modified to include expertise in digital transformation, identity management, enterprise architecture, agile project management, change management, business analysis, information security, law, content management, user design, communication, interoperability, quality assurance among others.

Furthermore, based on a self-assessment tool, the following are three key challenges for the Unit to achieve the implementation of e-Governance:

- Limited financial resources to implement projects.
- No capacity in change management, user experience, information security, enterprise architecture, content management, and communications.
- No legal mandate to support its role in overall implementation and coordination of the National Digital Agenda.

The need for enhanced capacity building for staff to perform efficiently and effectively was identified and is slowly being addressed through several mediums including the adoption of Agile Culture which aids in the structure and method to achieve project goals and impact. While some advances have been made in the development of the team, since the establishment of the Unit, no new staff members have been added with the required expertise to support the increase in workload. This significantly impacts project implementation. Therefore, to enhance the performance of the Unit, it is recommended that several positions be created and tendered for suitable applicants. The Unit has an operating budget of \$1.05 million. However, from the current budget, only 11% (\$118,352) is available for projects. Therefore, it is envisaged that additional budgetary support will be required to execute the Unit's project portfolio (see above). Based on preliminary cost estimates, a total of \$20M capital investment will be required over the next four years to execute the over 30 critical projects by the Unit. These projects will focus on four key areas, e-governance, capacity building, infrastructure and shared services, and delivery of strategic plans. In 2022-2023, it is estimated that a total of 6.091 million capital investment would be required to implement 17 critical projects including national payment solution, national ID system, digital skills program, electronic records management system, content management system, e-services portal, and regulatory reforms.

Program2: Belize Postal Service

Belize Postal Service currently has less than 10% of its market share. Most of the prices for its services have not been changed for numerous years. The Postal Service is currently utilizing two vans to facilitate its day-to-day operations, and other mediums to reach other locations. Most of our processes are manual and very time-consuming, no data systems exist, except for data capturing that is required for international tracking. We have 16 office spaces countrywide, and 130 employees.

STRENGTHS:

- We have an unmatched geographical coverage, being in all district locations.
- We provide the lowest cost in the market.
- We are equipped with most human resources.
- Postmen are long serving within the Postal Industry and know the community very well.

WEAKNESS:

- We don't have the resources, to easily move packages from one point to the next to provide same-day delivery for our customers.
- Our staff are not skilled to provide the best experiences to our customers.
- Technology is limited to none since most processes are manual.
- Limited in the services we offer.

BPS will require both additional human resources and financial resources for the execution of its priorities: -

HUMAN RESOURCES

Belize Postal Service currently has 130 Staff Members, however, in order to become competitive, we need to have trained and up-skilled employees. We want to increase in our market share, and be visible publicly, therefore we will require a Marketing and Sales Team.

 Positions	Actual 2021/22
Managerial/Executive	2
Technical/Front Line Services	87
Administrative Support	18
Non-Established	23
Statutory Appointments	0
Total Staffing	130

- We plan on conducting a huge marketing campaign, therefore will require a Marketing Representative to promote our products and services.
- We will need a Sales representative to reach out to all SMEs countrywide to accommodate E-Commerce.
- Once business increases, we will need more Postmen.
- We will need a communication representative to monitor all social media sites and respond to all customer complaints and queries.

Financial Resources

Belize Postal Services has been operating in a deficit in the past years. Our annual loss amounts to almost three million dollars, which is very unsustainable for the Post. As we move forward, we want to rebrand and change the face of the Post. We want to compete and provide our customers with the best end-to-end experience as we try to recapture the market.

We want to provide Prepaid Envelopes to our small business customers, whereby both their small business logo and the Post office logo will be visible. It will provide a personal touch and serve as an advertisement for those small businesses. Therefore, financing will be required for advertisement, as well as purchasing of materials to provide these services.

We plan to do a rebranding, changing our mission and vision. Therefore, the entire rebranding will be costly.

We will train and upskill our staff to ensure customers get the best experience.

Implementation of E-marketplace integration, to purchase systems and apps.

The Post needs additional vans to serve our customers and compete better. We want to provide same-day delivery, provide prompt and efficient services.

