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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BELIZE COUNTRY DIAGNOSTIC CASE STUDY

Belize is a country on the northeast coast of Central America, sharing a border with Mexico to the north, Guatemala to the south and west, and the Caribbean Sea to the east. The agri-food sector is a major contributor to the country's economy, at 14% of the GDP and employs a significant share of the population. Belize has undergone significant economic transformation over the last two decades, mainly due to the growing tourism industry and oil extraction.

The Climate Resilient Food System (CRFS) Alliance launched country diagnostics in 2022, with the first batch of countries comprising Ethiopia, Fiji, Belize, and The Gambia. These reports aim to facilitate resource mobilization and the exchange of best practices amongst countries. These case studies consider the country's Nationally Determined Contributions, National Adaptation Plans, Food System Pathways, and other relevant national strategies relating to food and climate change.

Belize Country Diagnostic Report 2022 examines the country's food systems by tracing each step from production, through distribution, to consumption. It sheds light on the country's national circumstances, food systems, climate risks, and agricultural policies in Belize as of December 2022. Crops such as sugarcane, bananas, and citrus dominate exports alongside seafood products such as lobster, conch, and shrimp. Despite producing most staple cereals, Belize imports 40% of its food, making it vulnerable to external shocks. Limited access to affordable, nutritious foods has resulted in undernutrition and obesity.

Belize is highly exposed to climate risks such as hurricanes, storms, and associated flooding, wind damage, and storm surge, especially in Belize City. The country's low-lying terrain exacerbates the effects of flooding and sea level rise. In the agriculture sector, a projected loss of production within the range of 10-20% and approximately USD 12.5 million annually by the year 2100. Land degradation, deforestation, and unsustainable practices such as overfishing exacerbate vulnerability, while poverty and inequality deepen food insecurity.



The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security, and Enterprise is the main governmental agency responsible for driving the transformation of the country's food systems. Under Plan Belize (2020–2025), the Government is committed to promoting transformative changes to make the agriculture sector highly productive. The National Agriculture and Food Policy (2015–2030) emphasizes productivity, competitiveness, market access for family farmers, and resilience to shocks. Policies and institutions such as the National Food and Nutrition Security Commission promote nutrition, school feeding, and multi-sectoral coordination. Belize has developed several frameworks, plans, and policies to address the impacts of climate change. Key among these are the National Climate Change Policy, Strategy and Action Plan (NCCSPSAP 2015–2020), and the country's Nationally Determined Contributions 2021.

Belize has identified several priorities to strengthen its food systems and climate resilience. Priority 1 focuses on building resilient agri-food systems through innovation, while Priority 2 emphasizes agribusiness development led by youth and women to enhance inclusivity and economic opportunities. Under its NDC targets, the country has committed to Priority 3, strengthening the resilience of coastal communities by developing a storm surge early warning system, and Priority 4, establishing an enhanced early warning system for drought and extreme weather events to support farmers in adapting to climate change by 2025. Finally, Priority 5 aims to explore income diversification opportunities within the fisheries sector to safeguard livelihoods and strengthen resilience.

The proposed entry points for the CRFS Alliance include finalizing and implementing national food system transformation pathways, strengthening multi-hazard early warning systems for farmers, fishers, and coastal communities, and expanding risk transfer mechanisms such as parametric insurance alongside shock-responsive social protection. Other priorities are promoting nutrition education and local agribusiness to improve health and consumption of domestic products, advancing ecosystem restoration in inland and coastal areas, including coral reef conservation to safeguard communities and natural capital, and contributing to the #123 Food Loss and Waste Pledge through innovative agribusiness solutions led by women and youth.