

BELIZE



Country Overview

- Population: 349,728
 - 174,865 males / 174,863 females
 - 70% of population under age 35 (Children and adolescents 44% of population)
 - 54.9% Rural / 45.1% Urban
- Land Area: 22,960 km²
 - Population Density: 12.3 per km²
 - Forest Cover: 61.1%
 - 22.6% of all national territory protected (36% of terrestrial territory)
- Economy: Small, open, natural resource based economy
 - Ratio of exports to GDP: 66%
 - Projected GDP Growth for period 2010- 2017 : 2.5%
 - Debt: 77.6% of GDP
- Poverty/ Inequality:
 - 43% of population poor/ 16% indigent
 - Unemployment rate: 12.1% (women 3x more likely to be unemployed than men)
 - GINI Coefficient: 59.6



Moving Towards Integration

- No formal sustainable development framework yet in place, impacting primarily the connectivity of national programmes
- In the absence of a formalized national framework for SD, country has adopted a long term vision for the country, Horizon 2030, as the basis for national development planning, and has identified its development priorities and challenges in a number of planning instruments
- Individual sectors have compensated for the absence of a national SD policy by elaborating sector specific policies which make strong linkages between the country's natural capital and the potential for national growth.
- Theme specific coordination mechanisms set in place to facilitate planning and coordination (e.g. NREPS, NPAC, NCCC)



Moving Towards Integration

- National structures in many cases are supported by non state networks (e.g. APAMO)
- In many ways the MDGs have served to sharpen the focus of national sustainable development goals (e.g. acceleration of water and sanitation targets)
- In March 2012 the Government of Belize demonstrated strong political commitment to sustainable development and to the cross sector integration required for sustainable development initiatives to be successful through the creation of a specialist SD Ministry
- New ministry tasked with the facilitation of integrated planning, policy and coordination for exemplary governance for sustainable development



Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement



Successes

- Defined coordination mechanisms provide platform for cross sectoral, state/ non state dialogue
- In certain thematic areas, the expansion of capacities/ critical mass to advance development agenda has been attained through inclusive engagement (e.g. NGO participation in PA management)

Challenges

- Engagement outside of a defined SD framework creates perception of ad hoc planning
- The need for the creation of heightened awareness which captures all the dimensions of sustainable development by policy makers
- Insufficient capacities/ resources in the public sector to lead on and advance national SD agenda

Looking Ahead

- Framework Structure for Sustainable Development.
 - New specialized Ministry (Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development) was created within the national structure
 - Structure to be further augmented through the elaboration of strategies and policies for implementation through GoB/ UN partnerships
 - Ministry is contributing to the defining of a national SD agenda and ensure its incorporation into new national planning processes
 - Ministry is a member of a special development sub-committee of Cabinet tasked with reviewing development projects within the context of national sustainable development priorities



Looking Ahead

- Country in new planning cycle.
 - Multiple planning instruments (Medium Term Development Plans and Poverty Reduction Strategy) expected to be replaced by single planning instrument - Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy
 - New GPRS to be prepared in consultation with the relevant stakeholders, and broad-based institutional mechanisms around national themes to be folded into a coherent national sustainable human and economic development strategy.
 - GPRS to be informed by MDG stocktaking and consider post 2015 SD goals being formulated by the Government of Belize



THANK YOU

