Social Assessment

Belize Climate Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture Project (P172592)

Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security & Enterprise

GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE

FINAL

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List of Acronyms

BAHA	Belize Agricultural Health Authority
BAIMS	Belize Agricultural Information Management System
CCJ	Caribbean Court of Justice
CERC	Contingent Emergency Response Component
CMCC	Chiquibul Mountain Pine Ridge Caracol Complex
CRESAP	Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture Project
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
DFC	Development Finance Corporation
E & SS	Environmental & Social Specialists
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
GOB	Government of Belize
IP	Indigenous Peoples
IPPF	Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework
IPPs	Indigenoius Peoples Plans
JICC	Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center
MAFSE	Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security & Enterprise
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NMS	National Meteorological Service
O & M	Operations and Maintenance
PCB	Pesticides Control Board
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
SIF	Social Investment Fund
UB	Agricultural Department of the University of Belize

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1. Introduction

1.1. The CRESAP Project

The Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture Project (CRESAP) will be implemented by the Government of Belize (GOB) with funding from the World Bank in the amount of USD 25 Million. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security, & Enterprise (MAFSE) is the implementing agency during the life of the project.

Figure 1: Project Districts (Priority Districts in bright yellow)

The project will target as priority the four districts of the Northern region (Corozal, Orange Walk, Belize, and Cayo – depicted in the map in Figure 1). These four districts are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and climate variability which are expected to be stronger on the main agricultural value chains implemented by the targeted beneficiaries – sugar cane, maize, soybean, vegetables, livestock, and fruits. Some activities may also benefit value chains, such as the banana value chain, the citrus value chain, and farmers on the two other districts of the country (Stann Creek and Toledo).

The beneficiaries of this project would be members of farmers' organizations and others associated with the agriculture food systems in the project districts.

It is estimated that 2,500 producers will benefit directly from this funding with more benefiting indirectly.

The project will consist of four components:

Component 1: Institutional Strengthening (Total Cost, financed by IBRD: US$2.9375 million)
This component focuses on strengthening the capacity of key public institutions (government agencies and academic organizations) to support a more productive and

sustainable agricultural sector. The component will finance goods, small works, equipment, studies, training, consulting, and advisory services to:

- **Strengthen MAFSE's and NMS' agricultural and agro-meteorological management systems to be able to deliver relevant and timely advisory services.** CRESAP will support upgrading the Belize Agricultural Information Management System (BAIMS), to improve the management of geo referenced data and increase the ability to manage agro-climatic risks and build resistance to climate change. CRESAP will finance investments to: (i) improve the collection of relevant sectoral data to enhance the BAIMS system (on- and off-farm); (ii) strengthen MAFSE and the National Meteorological Service (NMS) remote sensing capacity to be able to monitor agricultural activities, generate aggregate information, and assess production losses; (iii) upgrade MAFSE's geo-location capacity, and promote access to regular weather and agrometeorological information to inform more targeted adaptation actions; (iv) support the NMS to improve its services through upgraded equipment at weather stations in agricultural production areas. MAFSE and NMS will receive technical support to conduct diagnostics to estimate the hazard exposure of key agricultural activities and assess the vulnerability of target crops, so as to inform ex-ante risk management decisions and increase the resilience of the sector; and (v) enhance NMS capacity to be able to improve the agro meteorological services offered. These activities will result in upgraded data processing capacities and reinforced Agro-Climatic Software tools, as well as a strengthened national weather station network in agricultural production areas and the technical capacity of NMS staff. Furthermore, CRESAP will develop a communication system to transmit regular NMS agro-meteorological information and products to end-users. At the same time, the Project will strengthen the capacity of MAFSE's extension service to provide high-quality guidance about CSA to farmers. Gender-sensitization training will be provided to staff of the public agricultural institutions as well as the Belize Marketing and Development Corporation (BMDC) to carry out their functions in CRESAP in ways that support achievement of project obje ctives with regard to gender.
- **Strengthen the capacity of the Pest Control Board (PCB) to promote sustainable, integrated pest management practices in agriculture.** The Project will equip PCB to ensure compliance with climate-smart, integrated pest management practices that are proven to be good practices–including to address the climate-induced spread of pests and diseases–and to train extension officers and farmers in these areas.
- **Strengthen the ability of the Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA) to monitor and enforce sanitary and phytosanitary standards (SPS) and regulations.**

The Project will strengthen BAHA's capacity to ensure compliance with SPS requirements and improve its surveillance capabilities (especially of zoonotic diseases), via equipment, training, and studies, to ensure food safety and quality, as well as its capacity to inspect animals and certify that they are free of disease. This is important as climate changes (including alternating droughts and deluges) are expected to induce the spread of diseases, requiring an enhanced inspection process as part of the adaptation to these changes. At the same time, improved regulation of the use of fertilizers for food safety and quality is expected to lead to climate change mitigation benefits.

- **Strengthen the integration of CSA approaches in training programs offered by the Agriculture Department of the University of Belize.** The Agriculture Department trains agronomists, engages in agri-food research in its labs, runs demonstration areas on its central farm and provides training directly to farmers and students. The Project will support the department to upgrade its research and training capacity in climate-smart agriculture.

I.

Component 2: Investments in Climate-Smart Agriculture (Total Cost: US$39.7 million, of which IBRD: US$19 million; commercial finance from Participating Financial Institutions (PFIs): US$18.2 million, and beneficiary farmers: US$2.5 million)

This component will finance three subcomponents: The three subcomponents are interrelated and complementary leading to the objective of strengthening the capacity of farmers and participating financial intermediaries engaging in climate-smart agricultural investments under the Project, as to be able to take advantage of the provision of financing to farmers (matching grants and loans from PFIs) to adopt CSA technologies and practices, and increasing their productivity, levels of income and resiliency to climate change and weather events.

2.1 Strengthening the capacity of PFIs, individual farmers and farmer organizations participating in the CRESAP matching grants program in support of CSA investments (IBRD US$1 million)

I. This subcomponent will finance training courses and advisory services for PFIs, such as Belize's Development Finance Corporation (DFC), the Belize Credit Union League and its member credit unions, commercial banks, and beneficiary farmers and farmer groups applying for grants under Subcomponent 2.2. In particular, Subcomponent 2.1 will: (i) build capacity among PFIs to develop and implement environmental and social management systems (ESMSs) that are consistent with the Bank's Environmental and Social requirements, evaluate climate change considerations in underwriting loans, and provide gender-sensitization training,

including on addressing and mitigating risks related to gender-based violence (GBV); (ii) support training courses on climate-smart agriculture approaches for PFIs; (iii) promote the matching grants program among targeted beneficiaries; (iv) strengthen the organizational and business capacities of farmer groups and organizations applying for matching grants under CRESAP; (v) provide specific TA to individual farmers via MAFSE's extension agents and/or service providers for the preparation of business plans and subproject proposals for financing via the matching grants subcomponent to promote the adoption of CSA approaches. The preparation of these business plans would constitute an important aspect of the capacity building for farmers and would address not only the adoption of CSA approaches in production, but also marketing strategies to strengthen commercial linkages for beneficiary farmers and ensuring improved market access; and (vi) tailor technical assistance and financial and business training to women's needs, including holding training events at convenient locations and times for women farmers.

2.2 Promotion of CSA technologies and practices via matching grants and leveraging of private capital (Total cost: US$ 36.7 million; of which IBRD: US$16 million, PFIs: US$18.2 million and beneficiary farmers: US$2.5 million).

This subcomponent will promote the adoption of tested and properly selected CSA technologies, approaches and practices. Agricultural technologies and practices are considered "climate smart" if they enhance food security while addressing at least one of three additional objectives: (1) sustainably increasing agricultural productivity and farmers' incomes, (2) adapting and building resilience to climate change, and (3) reducing and/or removing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Many CSA practices have potential to deliver "triple wins" by sustainably increasing productivity, enhancing resilience, and/or reducing GHG emissions. Examples that have been proven effective in Belize include crop rotation, intercropping, use of improved drought- and heat-tolerant varieties, integrated pest management, water harvesting, investment in drainage and irrigation infrastructure, integrated soil and land management, and agroforestry, among others. In the livestock sub-sector, CSA technologies and practices include the use of quality breeds, pasture improvement, use of forage banks, and adoption of conservation techniques for forage, silage, and hay. Many farmers in Belize are already practicing CSA to some degree, but more widespread adoption of CSA technologies has been hindered by a lack of information and technical knowledge, as well as by a lack of resources to pay for initial investment costs, as the economic benefits typically take several years to be realized. The Project will provide matching grants to partially finance CSA investment subprojects (the subprojects) promoting the uptake of CSA technologies and practices, which will be complemented by private loans from Participating Financial Intermediaries (PFIs) covering the financial

assistance needed for the implementation of the CSA investment subprojects. Respective responsibilities will be set forth in the PFI Agreements to be signed between BSIF and PFIs. The matching grants will be provided via two windows, targeting different groups of farmers, with 30 percent of grants targeted to women farmers:

Window 1: Smallholder farmers (IBRD: US$10 million; PFIs: US$6.6 million). The first window will provide matching grants to about 3,300 individual smallholder farmers who are transitioning to commercial production to enable them to adopt climate-smart approaches. These grants will cover up to 60 percent of the investment cost of each subproject financed, with a maximum limit of US$6,000 (corresponding to an investment of US$10,000). Based on estimated investment, operating, and TA costs for smallholder farmers' subprojects, the overall expected average investment would be around US$5,000 per subproject with an average matching grant of around US$3,000. The matching grants will leverage financing from PFIs, and may also leverage contributions from smallholder farmers, although the latter will not be mandatory (see Annex 3).

Window 2: Medium and Large Farmers and Farmers Organizations (IBRD: US$6 million; PFIs: US$11.6 million and beneficiary farmers: US$2.5 million). The second window will provide matching grants to medium and large commercial farmers and to groups of farmers (for a total of about 400 subprojects), with a view to supporting larger investments needed to adopt CSA approaches. These grants will cover up to 30 percent of the investment cost of each subproject, financed with a maximum limit of US$30,000 (corresponding to an investment of US$100,000). Based on estimated investment, operating, and TA costs for these types of subprojects, the overall expected average investment would be around US$67,000 per subproject with an average matching grant of around US$20,000. These matching grants made through the second window will leverage a larger financing share from PFIs and farmers, so the grant element will be reduced compared to Window 1, and beneficiary contributions will be required (see Annex 3 for a description of the matching grants mechanism).

a.

2.3: Provision of selected strategic collective assets to strengthen resilience (IBRD: US$2 million).

This subcomponent will finance technical studies, equipment and works to construct strategically selected infrastructure, collectively used, that will contribute to enhancing the climate-smart impacts of on-farm CSA investments. Examples include but are not limited to shared drainage infrastructure for low-lying, flood-prone areas (such as those commonly found in northern Belize); and small-scale, collective water-harvesting or land-use assets

(where communities are interested in sharing a collective pond, pasture, or similar asset). This collectively used infrastructure will be identified based on existing MAFSE plans and on proposals drawn from consultations with farmers, including women farmers. Investments will be prioritized based on criteria and on a transparent selection process established in the Project Operations Manual (POM), that will include the estimated Economic Internal Rates of Return and the number of farmers, including women farmers, who will benefit from the increased climate resilience generated by the investments.
Component 3: Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (Total Cost, financed by IBRD: US$3 million)
This component will finance incremental and operating costs, goods and equipment for the Project Implementation Unit (PIU). It will provide resources to enable the PIU to effectively carry out administrative, fiduciary management, planning, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and reporting functions; to provide training as needed to PIU staff; and to ensure compliance with all applicable environmental and social standards. This component will also finance external audits, as well as a baseline assessment, the mid-term evaluation, and the end-of-Project assessment to document the Project's results and evaluate its outcomes and impacts. Additionally, the Project will help carry out strategic studies to be able to identify current constraints and limitations being faced by agri-business seeking enhanced market access, as well as opportunities to strengthen competitiveness and improve exports. These will help to identify possible policy reforms and improvement in legal and regulatory frameworks, as well as to design mechanisms to support enhancing market access by private agri-business.
Component 4: Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) (US$0 million)
The CERC is a contingent financing mechanism which will permit Belize rapid access to World Bank support in the event of an eligible crisis or emergency. The mechanism for triggering the CERC will be established in the CERC Operations Manual, detailing the applicable fiduciary, environmental and social, monitoring, reporting, and other implementation arrangements required for implementing the activities to be financed. In case of an event triggering the CERC, funds will be reallocated to this component to finance emergency purchases and activities, including goods, works, and technical assistance to respond to the emergency. The implementation agency for the CERC will be determined in the CERC Manual.

1.2. Objectives of the Social Assessment

The specific objectives of this SA are (a) To carry out a socio-economic, cultural and political/institutional analysis to identify potential social impacts of the proposed project activities, and (b) To screen social development issues along in the project area of influence. Specifically, the SA:

1. Informs the SEP and support in identifying and analyzing the performance of formal and informal institutions that have stakes in the project to influence social development outcomes
2. Identifies potential social conflicts and dynamics in the project area of influence, including the presense of indigenous peoples.

1.3. National Regulation around Indigenous Populations

There is no specific law in Belize which explicitly addresses the protection of and prevention of discrimination and arbitrary deprivation of fundamental rights and freedoms for Indigenous People other than the Belize Constitution which applies to all Belizeans. This is unlike other Caribbean countries such as Guyana which passed the Amerindian Act in 2006 in recognition and protection of the collective rights of Amerindian Villages and Communities. The relevant sections of the Belize Constitution are highlighted in the table below.

Table 1 Summary of National Regulation and relevance to the project

Legislation and Section	Description	Relevance
Belize Constitution Section 3(d) and 17 in the Constitution	3.Whereas every person in Belize is entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, that is to say, the right, whatever his race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex, but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest, to each and all of the following, namely, (d) protection from arbitrary deprivation of property 17. No property of any description shall be compulsorily taken possession of and no interest in or right over property of any description shall be compulsorily acquired	Used in the 2007 Supreme Court ruling, declaring that Maya customary land tenure exists in all Maya villages in the Toledo District and where it exists, gives rise to collective and individual property rights
Belize Constitution – PREAMBLE (e)	The people of Belize require policies of state which protect and safeguard the unity, freedom, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Belize; which eliminate economic and social privilege and disparity among the citizens of Belize whether by race, ethnicity, colour, creed, disability or sex; which ensures gender equality; which protect the rights of the individual to life, liberty, basic education, basic health, the right to vote in elections, the right to work and the pursuit of happiness; which protect	Indigenous Peoples in Belize are duly recognized by the Belize Constitution and are guaranteed the same fundamental rights and freedoms as all other citizens.

	the identity, dignity and social and cultural values of Belizeans, **including Belize's Indigenous Peoples;** which preserve the right of the individual to the ownership of private property and the right to operate private businesses; which prohibit the exploitation of man by man or by the state; which ensure a just system of social security and welfare; which protect the environment; which promote international peace, security and cooperation among nations, the establishment of a just and equitable international economic and social order in the world with respect for international law and treaty obligations in the dealings among nations;	

1.3.1. Relevant International Agreements entered into by Belize

In addition to the Belize Constitution, Belize has subscribed to international conventions which have a bearing on the protection and well-being of Indigenous Peoples:

- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (signed September 2007)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ratified in 2015)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (ratified in 1996)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) (ratified 2001)
- Expressed support for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

1.4. World Bank Standard on Indigenous People

ESS7 has been triggered for this project due to the presence of Indigenous Peoples communities in the project area.

As such, an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) was developed, with the key purpose being to ensure that Indigenous People present in or with collective attachment to the project area are fully consulted about, and have opportunities to actively participate in, project design and the determination of project implementation arrangements. As indigenous populations are located within the general project area, the World Bank's Standard 7 on Indigenous Peoples in the Environmental and Social Framework calls for the development of an IPPF for the CRESAP. The IPPF sets out a framework for how the project will engage with indigenous communities for those communities in the project area of influence and address any grievances. The IPPF also sets out a mechanism for communication with indigenous groups and help guide activities that will be implemented for Indigenous Peoples groups.

This project-level social assessment therefore, in additional to general information on the project area, indented to provides a screening and assessment among those potential IP areas in the project area. However due to logistical issues and time only a limited review and screening was possible and as such this should not be considered a screening as per ESS7 requirements.

For the purpose of World Bank Policy, the term ''Indigenous Peoples'' is used in a generic sense to refer to a distinct, vulnerable, social and cultural group possessing the following characteristics in varying degrees:

a) **Self-identification** as members of a distinct indigenous social and cultural group and recognition of this identity by others; and
b) **Collective attachment** to geographically distinct habitats, ancestral territories, or areas of seasonal use or occupation, as well as to the natural resources in these areas; and
c) **Customary** cultural, economic, social, or political institutions that are distinct or separate from those of the mainstream society or culture; and
d) **Distinct** language or dialect, often different from the official language or languages of the country or region in which they reside.

A group that has lost ''collective attachment to geographically distinct habitats or ancestral territories in the project area''; because of forced severance is considered eligible;

The standard does not set an a priori minimum numerical threshold since groups of Indigenous Peoples may be very small in number and their size may make them more vulnerable. It is key to highlight the reference to ''group'' and not individuals.

Loss of ''Collective attachment'' refers to loss of collective attachment to geographically distinct habitats or ancestral territories occurring within the concerned group members' lifetime because of conflict, government re-settlement programs, dis-possession from their lands, natural calamities, or incorporation of such territories into an urban area. For purposes of the standard, ''urban area'' normally means a city or a large town, and takes into account all of the following characteristics, no single one of which is definitive:

a. The legal designation of the area as urban under domestic law;
b. High population density; and
c. High proportion of non-agricultural economic activities relative to agricultural activities.

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In accordance with consultation procedures outlined in the SEP and the IPPF, Indigenous People must be properly consulted in appropriate manner, including dedicated consultations with IPs on the IPPF and the IPPs. The screening for IPs in the Project area should be done at the time of the first consultation with a community or village. All project areas that have Indigenous Peoples communities will be visited by the BSIF PIU alongside relevant personnel, local authorities, or focal persons/experienced consultants that have experience working with IPs. These communities would be informed at least two week prior to the visit. They would be informed of the objective of the project, including to gather baseline data, and be encouraged to share their views on the project activities proposed, in a culturally appropriate manner as outlined in the SEP.

The assessment's depth should be proportionate to the nature and scale of the potential risks to and impact on, as well as vulnerability, of the IP. It is also key for the assessment to recognize the differentiated gender impacts of the project activities, especially and women and children may be more affected even within their own community.

2. Demographics – Ethnic groups

2.1. Ethnic groups in Belize

As the Social Assessment is done at the project-level, the analysis focuses broadly on the four priority districts that are part of the project. The communities that are likely to be a part of the project footprint, though, will tend towards the categorisation of rural communities.

Toldeo district, which is not a part of the priority project area, has established indigenous communities, in accordance with World Bank definitions outlined in the previous section, but Toledo is not part of this social assessment because the social assessment was done prior to Toledo being added to the project.

As seen in the table below with data taken from the 2010 Belize Census, the predominant ethnic group in the country is Mestizo/Spanish/Latino followed by the Creole.

Table 2: Population by Ethnic Group and District, Belize 2010*

		Districts					
Ethnic Group	Country Total	Corozal	Orange Walk	Belize	Cayo	Stann Creek	Toledo
Asian (Japanese, Chinese, Taiwanese)	**3,316**	317	374	1,464	746	315	100
Black/African	**1,626**	95	67	1,029	258	102	75
Caucasian/White	**4,015**	395	124	1,597	1,007	599	293
Creole	**83,460**	3,296	3,314	53,852	13,901	7,565	1,532
East Indian	**12,452**	1,779	339	5,144	1,540	1,724	1,926
Garifuna	**19,639**	377	381	6,110	1,466	9,435	1,870
Hindu	**727**	129	111	372	65	40	10
Lebanese	**453**	82	3	251	102	12	3
Maya Ketchi	**20,616**	399	254	1,118	1,904	1,852	15,089
Maya Mopan	**13,022**	169	297	926	2,371	3,910	5,349
Maya Yucatec	**2,869**	590	226	278	1,699	47	29
Menonnite	**11,574**	2,756	5,101	209	3,170	85	253
Mestizo/Spanish/Latino	**170,446**	32,543	36,596	32,898	50,646	11,632	6,131
Other	**1,204**	48	70	589	249	187	61
Not Reported	**845**	282	143	201	133	65	21

**Columns will not sum to district/population totals as some persons claim more than one ethnic group*

2.2. Indigenous People in Belize

2.2.1. Maya

The Maya in Belize are the direct descendants of the original indigenous inhabitants of the Yucatan Peninsula dating back to pre-Columbian times. The three Maya groups in Belize are the Mopan, Q'eqchi, and Ycucatec and are mainly subsistence farmers.[1]

The total Q'eqchi (Ketchi) population (Census 2010) was 20,616 of which 73 percent reside in the Toledo District with small clusters spread across the remaining five districts. The Mopan Maya population was 13,022 with the largest cluster residing in the Toledo District (5,349) followed by the Stann Creek District (3,910), and the Cayo District (2,371). There are much smaller clusters in the Belize, Orange Walk, and Corozal Districts.

The Yucatec Mayas (Mestizos) who are descendants of indigenous Maya and European Spaniards first came into Northern Belize from southern Yucatan, Mexico as refugees of the Caste War in Yucatan in 1848. The Caste War was a Maya uprising against the Spaniards but it eventually became a war against the Mestizos. The Mestizos, mixed Spanish and Maya (indigenous), were

[1] **"Minority Rights Group International, World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples – Belize:" Maya, 2017, available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/49749d532d.html (accessed 9 May 2021).**

allies of the Spaniards, and thus became targets of attacks by the Mayas. See Table 2 below: Indigenous Populations –Q'eqchi, Mopan, Yucatec Mayas.

The Mopan and Q'eqchi Maya in Belize practice a way of life that is distinct from mainstream society based on their own political, social, and agrarian institutions. Mopan Maya settlements are located in San Antonio Village in the Toledo District. The Q'eqchi live in lowland areas along rivers and streams across 30 small isolated villages throughout the Toledo District. Because of their isolation, Q'eqchi have remained the country's poorest and most neglected minority.

2.2.2. Garifuna

Garifuna, also known as Garinagu, are the descendants of an Afro-indigenous population from the Caribbean island of St. Vincent who were exiled to the Honduran coast in the eighteenth century and subsequently moved to Belize. The first settlement in Belize was established at Dangriga, which still holds the largest Garifuna population in the country with a large sub-population in the Belize District.

The Garifuna mainly live on the coast but are also very present in towns and villages in the Stann Creek and Toledo Districts. Garifuna communities live mainly on agriculture, fishing, and foreign remittances sent by relatives abroad. Some are involved in technical trades. Garifuna who live in the rural areas mainly pursue a subsistence lifestyle, while those in the urban areas pursue professional occupations.[2]

3. District Profiles

3.1. Corozal District

3.1.1. History

Once the home of nomadic Paleo/Archaic Maya who had grown weary of trekking from place to place in search of better topography and resources, Corozal was ultimately settled by pre-Classic Mayas who transformed this society dramatically.

Spectacular technological advances were achieved as this once nomadic populace settled their new home. Temple building, stele design and a sophisticated relationship with the cosmos

[2] **"Minority Rights Group International, World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples – Belize:" Maya, 2017, available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/49749d532d.html (accessed 9 May 2021).**

provided all manner of civilization to the people, as did an expansive agricultural movement that resulted in surpluses rarely enjoyed by their ancestors.

The Post-Classic period (900 to 1511 AD) saw an elevation of all things Mayan: religious practices, city-building and architectural innovation that prevailed until Spaniards arrived on the shores of Chetumal/Corozal. It took no time for these explorers to plunder and assume dominion over this lush green land located between the rivers Noh Ucum and Dzuluinicob, and along the coast of the pristine bay.

Further inland, the Spanish conquistadors found fertile soil, favorable weather and intensive agricultural practices that had allowed indigenous people to grow enough food to support a flourishing trading relationship in honey, salt and cacao beans, the source of chocolate. But Spanish harsh rule lead to unrest, which is how and why Corozal became an epicenter of resistance to these conquerors.

Spaniards brought with them disease and illnesses that had caused epidemics back home. Within a century, 90-percent of native populations throughout the region had been killed off by measles, smallpox and influenza. A Spanish Governor took control to oversee a search for gold and silver that never materialized, but logwood and dyewood plants proved to be just as valuable and access rights were stringently monitored by the governor.

During the 1500's, pirates operated with abandon throughout the Caribbean and Belize was not spared from their assaults by sea. According to historians, pirates plundered the area most heavily between 1638 and 1662. Enter a new conquering nation at this point: Spaniards were unable to repel a British fleet. To keep the peace, a portion of the Yucatan peninsula was ceded to the Commonwealth, affording legitimacy to England via the 1763 Treaty of Paris that granted British settlers exclusive rights to harvest hardwood.

Dominating the entire Yucatan peninsula, Spaniards aligned themselves with Mestizos, triggering the Caste War of Yucatan (1847 to 1901). Mestizos were concentrated about 30 miles north of Corozal Town where a massacre lead to an unprecedented exodus of an estimated 10,000 displaced refugees. In fact, what's now the northernmost town in Belize was officially founded by refugees surviving the Maya Indian uprising of 1848.

Ultimately, Mestizos took up residence Corozal where the unrest between them and indigenous Mayas became so contentious, by 1870, it had become a garrison town and resulted in the construction of Fort Barlee in 1870. Visitors can still see remnants of this fortress when they visit today.

By the time Corozal Town had been firmly established on an ancient past that included prosperity, rebellion, domination and extinction, the town was yet to suffer a final indignity: On September 27, 1955, Hurricane Janet barrelled through Grenada before hitting Corozal Town and turning it into flattened landscape that resembled the aftermath of a war zone. Only 10 houses were left standing.

Today, Corozal remains an epicentre of cultural history where Santa Rita, a pyramid site located atop the vestiges of a Maya city that had thrived for 2000 years, still reminds citizens and visitors of the region's rich past.

3.1.2. Demographics

The Corozal District registered a total population of 41,061 in the 2010 census with almost 1:1 male to female ratio. See Figure 2 below: Corozal Population

Figure 2: Corozal District Population - 2010 Census (SIB)

	Census 2000			Census 2010			Sex Ratios	
Area	**Total**	**Males**	**Females**	**Total**	**Males**	**Females**	**2000**	**2010**
Corozal	***33,894***	***17,053***	***16,841***	***41,061***	***20,521***	***20,540***	***101.3***	***99.9***
Corozal Town	7,986	3,880	4,106	10,287	4,932	5,355	94.5	92.1
Corozal Rural	25,908	13,173	12,735	30,774	15,589	15,185	103.4	102.7

The Corozal District has a larger rural population totalling 30,774 or 75% of the total population. This rural population is spread across 28 or more villages with San Narciso, Little Belize, and Sarteneja being the more largely populated villages.

The total number of households in the district is 9,258 and the average size of the households is 4.4 persons. See Figure 3 below - ''Corozal Population – Urban & Rural.''

Figure 3: Corozal District Urban/Rural Population 2010 Census

Corozal Population by CTV, Sex, Number of Households and Average Household Size, 2010					
City, Town or Village	Total	Males	Females	No. of HH	Avg. HH Size
Total	**41,061**	**20,521**	**20,540**	**9,258**	**4.4**
Corozal Town	10,287	4,932	5,355	2,696	3.8
Altamira	210	105	105	49	4.3
Buena Vista	495	254	241	106	4.7
Calcutta	846	425	421	188	4.5
Caledonia	1,400	729	671	272	5.1
Carolina	206	111	95	45	4.6
Chan Chen	715	370	345	166	4.3
Chunox	1,375	705	670	234	5.9
Concepción	1,257	613	644	257	4.9
Consejo	350	178	172	117	3.0
Copper Bank	470	237	233	104	4.5
Cristo Rey	869	433	436	175	5.0
Libertad	1,606	812	794	373	4.3
Little Belize	2,650	1,346	1,304	427	6.2
Louisville	880	454	426	176	5.0
Paraiso	1,007	523	484	254	4.0
Patchakán	1,374	693	681	281	4.9
Progreso	1,357	708	649	273	5.0
Ranchito	1,340	679	661	318	4.2
San Andrés	1,049	521	528	250	4.2
San Antonio	517	254	263	116	4.5
San Joaquín	1,470	715	755	355	4.1
San Narciso	2,422	1,198	1,224	517	4.7
San Pedro	519	260	259	123	4.2
San Román	884	423	461	183	4.8
San Victor	962	497	465	179	5.4
Santa Clara	862	455	407	176	4.9
Sarteneja	1,824	919	905	431	4.2
Xaibe	1,575	820	755	335	4.7
Other - Corozal	283	152	131	82	3.5

3.1.3. Economic

Belize's Corozal District has long had a focus on agricultural production and service provision to the nearby Mexican market. The agricultural sector provides the largest share of employment I the district (32%) followed by retail (23%) and personal services (13%). The agricultural sector has been primarily driven by sugar cane farming and milling, though other agro-processing activities including papaya canning have come and gone. The provision of tourism products to the Mexican market in Quintana Roo has decreased with the growth of Chetumal as a tourist destination in Mexico. Retail and wholesale shopping have been promoted through the Corozal Free Zone, located in the district.[3]

The region has significant economic and social development needs. Corozal has amongst the highest poverty rates in the country, with a poverty rate in excess of 46% (compared to a

[3] **"Regional Economic Development Master Plan for Corozal District;"** Report prepared for the Inter-American Development Bank (Draft report and action plan); VIVID ECONOMICS, March 2019

national average of 31%) which has more than doubled over the past twenty years (GOB/CDB, 2010). The economy in Corozal is in the midst of recovering from the Global Recession and has experienced growth of 4.3% from 2010-2014 (IDB, 2015).[4]

Consultation with government stakeholders has identified three specific economic objectives for the free zone going forward. Through interviews with a wide range of stakeholders in the public and private sectors, and a workshop with central government ministry representatives, a short list of economic development objectives for Corozal Free Zone have been developed. From a longer list drawn for the international literature of economic zones, three priority economic objectives were identified, including (in order of importance):[5]

- Foreign and domestic investment
- Export promotion
- employment

The development options to deliver economic objectives in Corozal and through the Corozal Free Zone include:[6]

Option 1 – strengthen current retail offer to free zone –driven growth

Option 2 – deliver a transformed zone structure offering incentivised activity in new sectors

Option 3 – draw down free zone activity and focus on economic activity in the broader district.

3.1.4. Language & Ethnicity

English is the most spoken language in Corozal, followed by Spanish. 80% speak English very well and 60% speak Spanish very well.[7] Corozal villages are divided by colour and language - Corozal Town, the main centre of the District, is peopled by a mix of races and cultures, most notably the Maya Mestizos. Spanish and English are the major languages spoken.

Calcutta, Estrella Village, Libertad, Ranchito, and San Antonio are populated by East Indian people and speak English and Spanish very well.

Chan Chen, Chunox, Cristo Rey, Louisville, Patchakan, San Pedro, San Victor Village, Xaibe, and Yo Chen are populated by Maya people and speak Spanish and Yucatec Maya language very well, along with some English.

[4] **- IBID -**
[5] **- IBID -**
[6] **- IBID -**
[7] ⓘ Corozal District is the northernmost district of the nation (google-info.org)

Buena Vista, Caledonia, Conception, San Narciso, San Roman, and Santa Clara are populated by people who speak Spanish, some English and few elders speaking Yucatec Maya. They are not obliged to learn English, because school teachers teach in Spanish but write in English and because at work the primary language is Spanish, so villagers are not exposed to English on a daily basis.

Progresso, San Andres, and Sarteneja Village are populated by Creole and Hispanic people, who share their cultures and languages in English and Spanish.

Little Belize is populated by Mennonites, who speak German.

3.1.5. Gender Based Violence

The Belize Crime Observatory Report published in June 2019 documented a total of 2,274 reported cases of gender-based violence in the entire country. There were 2,061 reported cases of domestic violence, 143 cases of murder, and 70 cases of sexual violence. Of the total reported cases of domestic violence, Corozal accounted for 13.5% of these incidences, 10% of sexual violence, and 0% of murders.

According to village leaders, the main factors that contribute to gender-based violence are alcohol abuse and infidelity, which tend to occur when one starts to earn more income than usual.

3.1.6. Overall Crime

In Corozal, the incidences of crime reduced significantly in 2020 compared to 2019; this is attributable to the curfews and lockdowns imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, only 7% of total crimes committed in the country were carried out in Corozal. Burglary and robbery were the more frequently reported crimes.

Figure 4: Crime by Category - Overall & Corozal (Source: Belize Police Department, Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center)

	BELIZE		CAYO		COROZAL		ORANGE WALK		STANN CREEK		TOLEDO		TOTAL	
	JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC	
CRIMES	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**
Murder	76	59	25	12	4	7	8	3	13	14	8	7	**134**	**102**
Rape	10	5	6	4	5	3	6	2	3	10	0	1	**30**	**25**
Robbery	102	54	54	44	24	13	35	13	33	28	3	8	**251**	**160**
Burglary	239	163	159	110	63	32	99	58	111	91	22	25	**693**	**479**
Theft	41	28	16	10	4	4	8	9	17	13	3	3	**89**	**67**
Unlawful S.Int.	16	12	13	15	9	3	8	10	12	10	9	5	**67**	**55**
TOTAL	**484**	**321**	**273**	**195**	**109**	**62**	**164**	**95**	**189**	**166**	**45**	**49**	**1,264**	**888**
SHOOTING INC.	179	126	38	33	9	17	10	13	19	23	6	14	**261**	**226**

3.1.7. Community Assets

Table 3: Institution Mapping - Corozal[8]

Institution	Number
Denominational Churches/Schools	26
Hospitals/Clinics	9
Boutique/Clothing	1
Coffee Shops	5
Communications Providers	6
Computer	7
Concrete/Cement	3
Construction Companies	16
Consultants	2
Building Contractors	4
Counselling Services	1
Crafts	3
Credit Unions & Banks	3
Customs	1
Day Care	1
Decorations – Party/Events	4
Delis	6
Delivery Services	3
Dentists	3
Diabetes Association	1
Electrical Services/Technicians	5

Institution	Number
Electronics	4
Emergency Services	4
Radio Stations	5
Hair Salon	9
Farm Supplies	3
Fast Food Restaurants	35
Fertilizer Sales	1
Loan Services – Financial	1
Butane Fuel	4
Funeral Home	1
Furniture Sales, Design & Manufacturing	12
Gas Stations	3
Gift Shops	7
Glass Shops	3
Government Departments	13
Graphic Designs	3
Grills	4
Supermarkets & Grocery Stores	11
Guest Houses	8
Gyms	2
Hardware Store	6
Hotels	10

3.2. Orange Walk District

3.2.1. History

According to archaeologists working on a site named Cuello that is closest to Orange Walk, Belize, this land has been continually occupied by people undertaking sophisticated farming practices

[8] https://corozal.bz/

using primitive tools for centuries. Given the name Alcan (Land of the Canoe People), this thriving community farmed the land leaving little trace beside those primitive tools, yet ancestors provided the foundation for 600 years of Maya culture.[9]

Having a vibrant, peaceful existence, they were able to develop all manner of arts, science, innovation, and cultivation, yet despite being an epicentre of learning, architecture and the arts, this entire society literally vanished off the face of the earth around 925AD. Theories include everything from invaders from outer space to conquests by other tribes. For the moment, the mystery remains conjecture.

For the disappeared Maya and succeeding generations, farming and cultivation sustained people who were not exposed to outside influences until Spanish explorers arrived on the shores of Central America in the early 1500s. Indigenous peoples, some of whom were direct ancestors of early Mayas, were displaced as these outsiders brought with them subjugation, disease and African slaves.

Ultimately displaced by British conquering forces, Orange Walk came to be controlled by logwood cutters impressed by the wealth they could generate by harvesting and exporting hardwood from rainforests and jungles to England. This continued until the 1700s at which point, the battle for control between the Spanish and English was driven by the increasing demand for the woods that were being harvested in "the new world."

Orange Walk was most likely settled as a riverside logging camp thanks to its proximity to the New River that gave ships access to the Caribbean Sea. Historians believe the name Orange Walk was conferred upon the town by settlers enjoying the fruits of the orange trees that proliferated on the grounds of plantations owned by Europeans.

Conflict continued to ravage the region just as logging was destroying the ecosystem, but by the mid-1700s, the people had had enough of being subjugated and by 1798, revolutions at the site of St. George's Caye caused the Spanish to give up and return to Spain, leaving the people to pick up the pieces of society while continuing to contend with British occupation. Due to its proximity and value, Orange Walk continued to grow, surviving a War of Castes that brought refugees flocking there for safety as well as displaced Mexican, Maya and Africans brought as slaves to Central America.

[9] A Brief History of Orange Walk, Belize | Orange Walk History (belizehub.com)

By 1864, the British were so entrenched, Orange Walk became the site of occupying forces garrisons. By 1872, the village population was made up of 1,200 Creole and Mestizo people was brutally attacked by three waves of Indians. Orange Walk survived but was immediately fortified by building two fortresses constructed for the area's defence between 1874 and 1876.

As time passed, the British occupation become a fact of life and intermarriage furthered the integration of society as buildings were built, improvements made, industries flourished and grew and the Catholic Church became a prominent part of Orange Walk, as still seen in the churches, cathedrals and number of practicing Catholics living in the area. Declaring its independence as a district from Corozal in 1881, Orange Walk became an epicentre of chicle gathering, subsistence farming, cattle and sugar enterprises, and logging continued to produce revenues from exports to England as late as 1875.

By 1900, Orange Walk had grown large enough to warrant a highway connecting it to Belize City which was completed in 1925, but it was the river that continued to be the major driver of activity as steamboats imported by the British started moving merchandise at a faster clip than ever before. By 1939, the district had developed so unique a personality, even the ongoing wars and occupations that marked Orange Walk for so many centuries had become nothing more than a fascinating part of the area's history.

Today, Orange Walk is the 4th largest town in Belize with a population that exceeds the 13,400 person census taken in 2010. As the capital of Orange Walk District, it bears the distinction of having survived some of the most volatile battles ever waged within Belize, including the Caste War of Yucatán and Battle of Orange Walk in 1872.

Nicknamed "Sugar City," Orange Walk's leading industry is sugar cane agriculture, refining, and exports, though, like other hot spots in Belize, Orange Walk is enjoying a thriving tourism industry as well as becoming a popular retirement area for ex-pats.

3.2.2. Demographics

The Orange Walk District registered a total population of 45, 946 in the 2010 census with a male to female ratio of 96.4:1.00 in Urban Town and 104:6:1.00 in Rural Orange Walk. See Table 4 below:

Table 4: Orange Walk District Population - 2010 Census

Population by Major Administrative Area, Sex and Sex Ratio, Belize 2000 and 2010

	Census 2000			Census 2010			Sex Ratios	
Area	**Total**	**Males**	**Females**	**Total**	**Males**	**Females**	**2000**	**2010**
Orange Walk	***40,301***	***20,627***	***19,674***	***45,946***	***23,214***	***22,732***	***104.8***	***102.1***
Orange Walk Town	13,741	6,839	6,902	13,708	6,729	6,979	99.1	96.4
Orange Walk Rural	26,560	13,788	12,772	32,238	16,485	15,753	108.0	104.6

The Orange Walk District's rural population of 32,238 is more than twice that of the urban population of 13,708.

This rural population is spread across 30 or more villages with Trial Farm, Shipyard, and Guinea Grass being the three more largely populated villages.

The total number of households in the district is 10, 452 and the average size of the households is 4.4 persons. See Table 5 below: Orange Walk District Population – 2010 Census (SIB).

3.2.3. Economic

Table 5: Orange Walk District Urban/Rural Population - 2010

Orange Walk Population by CTV, Sex, Number of Households and Average Household Size, 2010

City, Town or Village	Total	Males	Females	No. of HH	Avg. HH Size
Total	**45,946**	**23,214**	**22,732**	**10,452**	**4.4**
Orange Walk Town	13,709	6,730	6,979	3,375	4.1
August Pine Ridge	1,794	914	880	400	4.5
Blue Creek	407	217	190	111	3.7
Carmelita	1,474	727	747	335	4.4
Chan Pine Ridge	446	235	211	104	4.3
Cuatro Leguas	154	79	75	32	4.8
Douglas	521	270	251	122	4.3
Guinea Grass	3,218	1,606	1,612	627	5.1
Indian Church	267	129	138	66	4.0
Indian Creek	904	468	436	150	6.0
San Antonio	402	212	190	119	3.4
San Carlos	138	74	64	29	4.8
San Estevan	1,661	839	822	385	4.3
San Felipe	1,499	770	729	332	4.5
San José	2,862	1,486	1,376	590	4.9
San José Palmar	1,355	699	656	305	4.4
San Juan	320	163	157	71	4.5
San Lázaro	1,051	533	518	233	4.5
San Lorenzo	404	188	216	110	3.7
San Luis	257	132	125	45	5.7
San Pablo	1,129	582	547	233	4.8
San Román	438	232	206	93	4.7
Santa Cruz	259	133	126	58	4.5
Santa Marta	601	336	265	136	4.4
Shipyard	3,345	1,706	1,639	621	5.4
Tower Hill	315	168	147	81	3.9
Tres Leguas	158	87	71	46	3.4
Trial Farm	4,264	2,153	2,111	1,008	4.2
Trinidad	570	286	284	145	3.9
Yo Creek	1,413	729	684	329	4.3
Other - Orange Walk	611	331	280	161	3.8

The district's main economic base is drawn from agriculture, with sugar cane being the primary crop. To reduce the dependency on sugar cane, which faces many market related challenges, the economy is diversifying into a combination of alternative crops such as potatoes, onions and soya beans. Orange Walk is also important for its production of dairy products, citrus fruits, beef and rum production. Another emerging industry is tourism due to healthy populations of tropical wildlife and the rich archaeological sites now coming to light. There are over 400 recorded bird species in the district, making Orange Walk a birdwatcher's paradise. Several settlements in the district are also home to German speaking Amish Mennonites. The district is also the home of two rivers, the Rio Hondo, which also forms part of the border with Mexico, and the New River, which has as its source Belize's largest body of water, the New River Lagoon.

Unemployment is high in Orange Walk, a situation that is compounded by the challenges faced in the sugar industry. While a workforce is available, these are for the most part low-skilled

labourers for which there are not sufficient employment opportunities. In addition to this, the weakness of the Mexican peso results in a massive influx of Belizeans into Quintana Roo and Yucatan for various reasons but primarily for tourism and recreation, business, and medical purposes.[10]

The National Sustainable Tourism Master Plan identified the Orange Walk District as ''the destination hosting diversified cultural heritage, living traditions, and nature-based eco-tourism products with high involvement of local rural communities. The plan recommended that Orange Walk ''cater to a well-managed cruise visitors market while establishing a growing overnight sector.'' Orange Walk is identified as one of ''seven thriving unique tourism destinations that together converge in a cohesive offering o make Belize a distinctive and highly competitive destination.''[11]

3.2.4. Language & Ethnicity

In the Orange Walk District Spanish, Kriol and English are mostly spoken. The Mennonite which is around 37.5% of the district's population speaks primarily German. In many villages Yucatec Maya is still spoken by elders.

Nicknamed "Sugar City," Orange Walk is fast becoming a popular retirement area for ex-pats. The most notable Orange Walk distinction comes from the amalgam of cultures who remain today an example of diversity - Mestizos, Yucatec Mayas, Creoles, Mennonites, Chinese, Taiwanese, Indians, and other Central American cultures.

3.2.5. Gender Based Violence

The Belize Crime Observatory Report published in June 2019 documented a total of 2,274 reported cases of gender-based violence in the entire country. There were 2,061 reported cases of domestic violence, 143 cases of murder, and 70 cases of sexual violence. Of the total reported cases of domestic violence, Orange Walk accounted for 11.6% of these incidences, 13% of sexual violence, and 5% of murders.

The village leaders attribute incidences of gender based violence to high levels of frustration arising from unemployment. There are many incidences of domestic violence in the villages but

[10] **''Orange Walk Tourism Destination Development Plan;''** Belize Tourism Board (BTB); Praxi5 Advisory Group; 2019

[11] **- IBID -**

these mostly go unreported. According to the village leaders, these incidences will decline if there more jobs available and there are steady income streams.

3.2.6. Overall Crime

In Orange Walk, the incidences of crime reduced significantly in 2020 compared to 2019; this is attributable to the curfews and lockdowns imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, only 10% of total crimes committed in the country were carried out in Orange Walk. Burglary and robbery were the more frequently reported crimes.

Figure 5: Crime by Category – Overall & Orange Walk (Belize Police Department; JIIC)

	BELIZE		CAYO		COROZAL		ORANGE WALK		STANN CREEK		TOLEDO		TOTAL	
	JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC	
CRIMES	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**
Murder	76	59	25	12	4	7	8	3	13	14	8	7	**134**	**102**
Rape	10	5	6	4	5	3	6	2	3	10	0	1	**30**	**25**
Robbery	102	54	54	44	24	13	35	13	33	28	3	8	**251**	**160**
Burglary	239	163	159	110	63	32	99	58	111	91	22	25	**693**	**479**
Theft	41	28	16	10	4	4	8	9	17	13	3	3	**89**	**67**
Unlawful S.Int.	16	12	13	15	9	3	8	10	12	10	9	5	**67**	**55**
TOTAL	**484**	**321**	**273**	**195**	**109**	**62**	**164**	**95**	**189**	**166**	**45**	**49**	**1,264**	**888**
SHOOTING INC.	179	126	38	33	9	17	10	13	19	23	6	14	**261**	**226**

3.2.7. Community Assets

Table 6: Community Assets in Orange Walk[12]

Institution	Number
Denominational Churches/Schools	40
Hospitals/Clinics	13
Pharmacies	23
Parks/Playgrounds/Cultural Sites	11
Libraries	1
Markets	1
Credit Unions & Banks	7
Community Centres	0
Diabetes Association	1
Cultural Organizations	8
Fast Food/ Restaurants	113
Police Stations	1
Loan Services – Financial	22
Gas Stations	4
Government Departments	44
Supermarkets & Grocery Stores	298
Guest Houses	4
Hotels	9

3.3. Cayo District

3.3.1. History

San Ignacio and Santa Elena are towns in Western Belize. San Ignacio serves as the cultural economic hub of the Cayo District. It got its start from mahogany and chicle production during British colonization. Over time it attracted people from surrounding areas, which led to the diverse population of the town today. San Ignacio is the largest settlement in Cayo District and the second largest in the country, after Belize City.

The town was originally named El Cayo by the Spanish. On 19 October 1904, El Cayo was officially declared a town by the government of British Honduras. In the past, a creek ran between the Macal and the Mopan rivers one mile outside of San Ignacio towards Benque Viejo. This creek then fulfilled the definition of an area of land completely surrounded by water and thus became known as Cayo – ''Island.'' There was a large wooden bridge across the creek in the late 1940s, but since the creek eventually dried up, the area was filled with limestone gravel and today there remains no evidence of its existence. The demise of the creek, however, took away the distinction

[12] ***Source:*** Orange Walk Town Council; Alberto Guerra, Town Administrator

for the classification of a 'cayo' from the venerable western town of 'El Cayo' and returned it to a regular land mass.[13]

The area around San Ignacio is one of the most popular parts of the country for tourism. Nearby attractions include the ancient Maya ruins of Caracol, Xunantunich, Cahal Pech, and El Pilar, and caves such as Actun Tunichil Muknal, which includes skeletons, ceramics, and stoneware, and Barton Creek Cave.

3.3.2. Demographics

The Cayo District registered a total population of 75,046 in the 2020 Census with an overall male to female ratio of 99.6|1.00. The district comprises of the twin towns San Ignacio/Santa Elena, Benque Viejo Del Carmen, Belmopan City, and rural villages. See Table 7.

Table 7: Cayo District Population - 2010 Census (SIB)

Population by Major Administrative Area, Sex and Sex Ratio, Belize 2000 and 2010

	Census 2000			Census 2010			Sex Ratios	
Area	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	2000	2010
Cayo	***54,471***	***27,290***	***27,181***	***75,046***	***37,445***	***37,601***	***100.4***	***99.6***
San Ignacio/Santa Elena	13,542	6,640	6,902	17,878	8,751	9,127	96.2	95.9
Benque Viejo	5,420	2,657	2,763	6,140	3,053	3,087	96.2	98.9
Belmopan	5,088	2,429	2,659	13,939	6,779	7,160	91.4	94.7
Cayo Rural	30,421	15,564	14,857	37,089	18,862	18,227	104.8	103.5

The Cayo district is the second largest district in terms of population, second only to the Belize District.

A distinct characteristic about Cayo is the fact that this district has at least eight population clusters – Belmopan, Benque Viejo, San Ignacio, Santa Elena, Camalote, Bullet Tree Falls, Spanish Lookout, and Valley of Peace communities. The Spanish Lookout community is an agricultural and commercial centre inhabited by Mennonites who have their own leadership and administrative structure in place. The Valley of Peace community has a largely migrant population.

Belmopan City is the Capital of Belize and is the administrative centre.

There are roughly 30 other rural communities that make up the Cayo district.

[13] San Ignacio, Belize - Wikipedia

Table 8: Cayo District- Urban/Rural Population - 2010 Census

Cayo Population by CTV, Sex, Number of Households and Average Household Size, 2010

City, Town or Village	Total	Males	Females	No. of HH	Avg. HH Size
Total	**75,046**	**37,445**	**37,601**	**16,889**	**4.4**
Belmopan	13,931	6,775	7,156	3,463	4.0
Benque Viejo	6,148	3,057	3,091	1,416	4.3
San Ignacio	10,489	5,129	5,360	2,598	4.0
Santa Elena	7,389	3,622	3,767	1,753	4.2
Arenal	612	320	292	118	5.2
Armenia	1,395	723	672	278	5.0
Billy White	586	286	300	113	5.2
Blackman Eddy	534	287	247	110	4.9
Buena Vista	599	316	283	111	5.4
Bullet Tree Falls	2,124	1,058	1,066	426	5.0
Calla Creek	286	145	141	62	4.6
Camalote	2,562	1,276	1,286	560	4.6
Central Farm	205	99	106	38	5.4
Cotton Tree	1,572	792	780	317	5.0
Cristo Rey	873	441	432	212	4.1
Duck Run 1	663	333	330	127	5.2
Duck Run 2	371	180	191	79	4.7
Duck Run 3	400	190	210	76	5.3
Esperanza	1,262	641	621	286	4.4
Frank's Eddy	378	199	179	82	4.6
Georgeville	921	464	457	190	4.8
La Gracia	271	146	125	48	5.6
Los Tambos	357	191	166	55	6.5
Lower Barton Creek	193	110	83	30	6.4
More Tomorrow	154	96	58	28	5.5
Ontario	775	394	381	174	4.5
Paslow Falls	193	110	83	43	4.5
Ringtail	186	96	90	35	5.3
Roaring Creek	1,974	965	1,009	449	4.4
San Antonio	1,847	933	914	381	4.8
San José Succotz	2,322	1,142	1,180	472	4.9
Santa Familia	1,598	824	774	321	5.0
Santa Marta	1,136	614	522	249	4.6
Selena	201	109	92	40	5.0
Seven Miles	483	252	231	96	5.0
Spanish Lookout	2,253	1,151	1,102	482	4.7
Springfield	270	133	137	40	6.8
St. Matthews	1,153	564	589	253	4.6
Teakettle	1,747	887	860	359	4.9
Unitedville	971	476	495	213	4.6
Upper Barton Creek	380	201	179	54	7.0
Valley of Peace	2,112	1,091	1,021	401	5.3
Other - Cayo	1,170	627	543	251	4.7

3.3.3. Economic

The Cayo District is a delightful blend of diverse cultures, natural settings, and adventure destinations. The largest district in Belize, Cayo District is more than 2,000 square miles of pasture land, pristine rivers, verdant hills, tropical forest and a rich assortment of ancient Mayan Cities.[14]

[14] Cayo Belize | Guide to Cayo District Belize | Cayo District Belize (cahalpech.com)

Belize's capital Belmopan is located in Cayo District, the seat of the government and the terminus of the panoramic Hummingbird Highway. San Ignacio Town, the second-largest municipality in the country, is a mix of cultures, including Creole, Maya, Mestizos, Chinese, German-speaking Mennonites, East Indian immigrants and North American expatriates.

The agricultural heartland of Belize, Cayo District is where much of the country's bananas, mangos, orange, vegetables, and corn are grown. Ranching is also important in Cayo District, producing much of Belize's dairy and meat, including mouth-watering mozzarella cheese and savory pastrami. Mennonite farmers in tightly-knit communities like Spanish Lookout in Cayo District supply poultry and other home-grown products like peanuts to supply local farmers markets and shops.

The primary focus of Cayo District, however, is tourism, as more and more international visitors are learning to appreciate the many exciting destinations in the region. Cayo is known for its hills built on the remains of ancient coral reefs formed in what became the Caribbean Sea millions of years ago. The limestone remains of those reefs give Cayo District its signature geology, forming vast networks of sinkholes and caves that the ancient Maya used to perform their most sacred religious rites.

Some of the most intriguing ruins of Maya cities are located in Cayo District. Xunantunich features an enormous pyramid temple soaring high above the jungle floor. The ruins of Cahal Pech, once the home to Maya elites, lies on a gorgeous setting overlooking the Macal River just a few miles outside of San Ignacio Town. Further out, the ruins of Caracol are situated at higher altitudes in the Mountain Pine Ridge area of the Chiquibul National Park, a city measuring more than 55 square miles.

Against the backdrop of ''increasing pressure on many of Belize's pristine natural assets from unsustainable use and external factors, including climate change and illegal incursions,'' the government views as critical, ''the sustainable development and effective governance of Belize's largest remaining contiguous bioregion block, the Chiquibul-Mountain Pine Ridge-Caracol Complex (CMCC).'' Thus, the Government of Belize, with support from InterAmerican (IDB), has engaged in an innovative process to design a Sustainable Development Plan (SDP) for Chiquibul-Mountain Pine Ridge-Caracol Complex. The fundamental goal of the Sustainable Development Plan is to facilitate the improved management of ecosystems in the CMCC so as to maintain their integrity while ensuring the delivery of ecosystem service benefits for present and future generations of Belizeans and the global community.

3.3.4. Language & Ethnicity

The Cayo District, much like the ''old capital'' Belize City is a vibrant mix of cultures and languages, including Creole, Maya, Mestizos, Chinese, German-speaking Mennonites, East Indian immigrants and North American expatriates.

3.3.5. Gender Based Violence

The Belize Crime Observatory Report published in June 2019 documented a total of 2,274 reported cases of gender-based violence in the entire country. There were 2,061 reported cases of domestic violence, 143 cases of murder, and 70 cases of sexual violence. Of the total reported cases of domestic violence, Cayo accounted for 19.5% of these incidences, 25.73% of sexual violence, and 5.2% of murders.

The village leaders indicate that having jobs and steady incomes will reduce frustrations in the home and mitigate the incidences of domestic violence.

3.3.6. Overall Crime

In Cayo, the incidences of crime reduced significantly in 2020 compared to 2019; this is attributable to the curfews and lockdowns imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Still, the Cayo district accounted for over 20% of total crimes committed in the country. Robbery and burglary are the more frequent crimes perpetrated against the community.

Figure 6: Crime by Category - Overall & Cayo (Source: Belize Police Department, JICC)

	BELIZE		CAYO		COROZAL		ORANGE WALK		STANN CREEK		TOLEDO		TOTAL	
	JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC	
CRIMES	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**
Murder	76	59	25	12	4	7	8	3	13	14	8	7	**134**	**102**
Rape	10	5	6	4	5	3	6	2	3	10	0	1	**30**	**25**
Robbery	102	54	54	44	24	13	35	13	33	28	3	8	**251**	**160**
Burglary	239	163	159	110	63	32	99	58	111	91	22	25	**693**	**479**
Theft	41	28	16	10	4	4	8	9	17	13	3	3	**89**	**67**
Unlawful S.Int.	16	12	13	15	9	3	8	10	12	10	9	5	**67**	**55**
TOTAL	**484**	**321**	**273**	**195**	**109**	**62**	**164**	**95**	**189**	**166**	**45**	**49**	**1,264**	**888**
SHOOTING INC.	179	126	38	33	9	17	10	13	19	23	6	14	**261**	**226**

3.3.7. Community Assets

Table 9: Community Assets - Cayo District[15]

Institution	Number
Denominational Churches/Schools	12
Hospitals/Clinics	13
Pharmacies	8
Parks/Playgrounds/Cultural Sites	16
Libraries	3
Markets	2
Credit Unions & Banks	6
Community Centres	10
Diabetes Association	1
Cultural Organizations	3
Fast Food/ Restaurants	51
Police Stations	3
Loan Services – Financial	3
Gas Stations	20
Government Departments	8
Supermarkets & Grocery Stores	28
Guest Houses	6
Hotels	33

3.4. Belize District

3.4.1. History

The Belize District is commonly referred to as the ''commercial capital'' and has the largest urban population when compared to all other municipalities. The ''old capital'' as it is also called, served as the country's main administrative hub up until the time that Belmopan became the new capital.

The economy was built on commerce (import-export), retail trade, manufacturing and processing, shipping, and financial. The cooperative movement featured prominently in seafood processing (fishing cooperatives) and credit unions. In the pre-independence era, people were employed in the public service and private sector.

In the post-independence era, the economy began to diversify into tourism and the financial sector became more robust with innovations in offshore financial services.

[15] ***Source:*** San Ignacio-Santa Elena Town Council; Nazlie Hulse – Finance Director

3.4.2. Demographics

The Belize district population as per the 2010 census totalled 95,291. Sixty percent of the population lived in the city with the other forty percent distributed in rural Belize – North, South and Central. See Table 10 below: Belize District Population.

Table 10: Belize District Population - Census 2010

Population by Major Administrative Area, Sex and Sex Ratio, Belize 2000 and 2010

	Census 2000			Census 2010			Sex Ratios	
Area	**Total**	**Males**	**Females**	**Total**	**Males**	**Females**	**2000**	**2010**
Belize	***70,670***	***34,739***	***35,931***	***95,291***	***46,872***	***48,419***	***96.7***	***96.8***
Belize City	51,085	24,805	26,280	57,169	27,655	29,514	94.4	93.7
San Pedro Town	4,267	2,186	2,081	11,767	6,052	5,715	105.0	105.9
Belize Rural	15,318	7,748	7,570	26,355	13,165	13,190	102.4	99.8

As stated earlier, the Belize District has the largest urban population in the country. The rural population is split between inland villages and the islands – San Pedro and Caye Caulker primarily. The inland rural population is spread over 25 villages situated in Belize rural North and South.

The villages with the larger populations include (in order of size) – Ladyville, Lord's Bank, Hattieville, Burrell Boom, and Sandhill.

Table 11: Belize District Population - Urban & Rural

Belize Population by CTV, Sex, Number of Households and Average Household Size, 2010					
City, Town or Village	Total	Males	Females	No. of HH	Avg. HH Size
Total	**95,292**	**46,872**	**48,420**	**27,282**	**3.5**
Belize City	57,169	27,655	29,514	16,162	3.5
San Pedro Town	11,765	6,051	5,714	3,769	3.1
Bermudian Landing	183	87	96	43	4.3
Biscayne	517	274	243	130	4.0
Boston	127	66	61	39	3.3
Burrell Boom	2,218	1,128	1,090	617	3.6
Caye Caulker	1,763	875	888	555	3.2
Crooked Tree	805	418	387	224	3.6
Double Head Cabbage	406	206	200	102	4.0
Flowers Bank	121	67	54	31	3.9
Gales Point	296	152	144	72	4.1
Gardenia	303	162	141	78	3.9
Gracie Rock	255	142	113	69	3.7
Hattieville	2,344	1,104	1,240	628	3.7
Isabella Bank	143	82	61	37	3.9
La Democracia	353	191	162	109	3.2
Ladyville	5,458	2,672	2,786	1,527	3.6
Lemonal	169	82	87	41	4.1
Lord's Bank	3,140	1,517	1,623	884	3.6
Lucky Strike	244	126	118	60	4.1
Mahogany Heights	1,063	502	561	288	3.7
Maskall	803	418	385	216	3.7
Rancho Dolores	217	109	108	48	4.5
Rock Stone Pond	154	85	69	39	3.9
Sand Hill	1,843	912	931	508	3.6
Santana	104	56	48	29	3.6
Scotland Halfmoon	259	128	131	70	3.7
St. Georges Caye	656	319	337	204	3.2
St. Paul's Bank	153	79	74	37	4.1
Western Paradise/West Lake/8 Miles	1,258	599	659	348	3.6
Willows Bank	185	97	88	46	4.0
Other - Belize	818	511	307	272	3.0

3.4.3. Economic

The drivers of the Belize district economy include commerce – import/export distribution including retail and wholesale, manufacturing (beverages, flour, seafood, chemicals), financial (banks, credit unions, loan services), offshore financial services, legal and professional, small business enterprise, IT and electronics, telecommunications, electricity and water, transportation, and basic and essential services including shipping, medical, and utilities.

Tourism – cruise and overnight - is the largest single employment sector with San Pedro and Caye Caulker being the traditionally more popular tourist destinations because of diving, snorkelling, fishing, and other sea activities.

3.4.4. Language & Ethnicity

The Belize district is indeed a ''melting pot'' of cultures. Ethnic groups include Creoles, Mestizos (nationals and migrants), Mayas, Garifunas, Chinese, Hindu, Lebanese, and Expatriates (American, Canadian, and European). English is the official first language with Spanish being a second language, Creole is a recognized dialect and is commonly practiced in every day interactions. Different ethnic groups speak their own language when in cultural settings.

3.4.5. Gender Based Violence

The Belize Crime Observatory Report published in June 2019 documented a total of 2,274 reported cases of gender-based violence in the entire country. There were 2,061 reported cases of domestic violence, 143 cases of murder, and 70 cases of sexual violence. Of the total reported cases of domestic violence, the Belize District accounted for 42.8% of these incidences, 28.6% of sexual violence, and 57.8% of murders.

Most incidences of domestic violence occur within common-law relationships but do not exclude married couples.

The main drivers of domestic violence appear to be poverty caused by high unemployment but the main factors that contribute to violence include alcohol abuse, jealousy, dysfunctional relationships.

3.4.6. Overall Crime

In the Belize District, the incidences of crime reduced in 2020 compared to 2019; this is attributable to the curfews and lockdowns imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Still, the Belize district accounted for over one third (36%) of total crimes committed in the country. Robbery and burglary are the more frequent crimes perpetrated against the community although murder incidences have sharply increased in 2021.

Figure 7: Crime by Category – Overall & Belize District (Belize Police Department, JIIC)

	BELIZE		CAYO		COROZAL		ORANGE WALK		STANN CREEK		TOLEDO		TOTAL	
	JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC		JAN - DEC	
CRIMES	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**
Murder	76	59	25	12	4	7	8	3	13	14	8	7	**134**	**102**
Rape	10	5	6	4	5	3	6	2	3	10	0	1	**30**	**25**
Robbery	102	54	54	44	24	13	35	13	33	28	3	8	**251**	**160**
Burglary	239	163	159	110	63	32	99	58	111	91	22	25	**693**	**479**
Theft	41	28	16	10	4	4	8	9	17	13	3	3	**89**	**67**
Unlawful S.Int.	16	12	13	15	9	3	8	10	12	10	9	5	**67**	**55**
TOTAL	**484**	**321**	**273**	**195**	**109**	**62**	**164**	**95**	**189**	**166**	**45**	**49**	**1,264**	**888**
SHOOTING INC.	179	126	38	33	9	17	10	13	19	23	6	14	**261**	**226**

3.4.7. Community Assets

Table 12: Belize District Community Assets[16]

Institution	Number
Denominational Churches/Schools	96
Hospitals/Clinics	30
Pharmacies	32
Parks/Playgrounds/Cultural Sites	25
Libraries	6
Markets	3
Credit Unions & Banks	17
Community Centres	12
Diabetes Association	1
Cultural Organizations	14
Fast Food/ Restaurants	311
Police Stations	12
Loan Services – Financial	13
Gas Stations	19
Government Departments	35
Supermarkets & Grocery Stores	305
Guest Houses	19
Hotels	40

4. Consultations with Indigenous Communities

4.1. Consultation Process

In accordance with the consultation procedures outlined in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Indigenous People must be properly consulted in a culturally appropriate manner,

[16] ***Source:*** Belize City Council – Valuation Department

including dedicated consultations with IPs on the IPPF and the IPPs. The screening was done at the time of the first consultation with a community or village. All project areas that have Indigenous Peoples communities were visited by the BSIF PIU alongside relevant personnel, local authorities, or focal persons/experienced consultants that have experience working with IPs. These communities were informed at least two week prior to the visit and provided with draft documents, including the IPPF in the first instance. Additionally, they were informed of the objective of the project, including to gather baseline data, and encouraged to share their views on the project activities proposed, in a culturally appropriate manner as outlined in the SEP.

4.2. Project Sensitization

During the period from 9th to 18th October, 2021, the MAFSE team carried out a series of consultative sessions with national and community level stakeholders as part of its project sensitization campaign. A session with "Vulnerable: IP communities/rural communities" was carried out on 10th October (see Table 8: Summary of Initial Consultations During Project Design in Annex 4 in the SEP).

The main objectives of the consultations were to:

- Provide background information on the project
- Outline the ESS documents that were prepared before project implementation
- Obtain feedback from national and community level stakeholders in particular as it relates to potential impacts on or opportunities for communities

5. Screening for Indigenous Peoples

During the period 15th October to 3rd November, a series of meetings were held with leaders from various rural communities in the project area (see screening locations in Table 13). The communities were selected on the basis of having Indigenous Peoples as residents, therefore the meetings involved a screening to determine if those communities fell within the World Bank's definition of Indigenous Peoples, however because the screening was not able to be as through or as wide in scope to be considered adequate under ESS7 for an IP screening, this information is not presented here. Furthermore, the conclusions presented in this report should be considered in this light. Nothetheless the last Census was conducted over ten years ago, and provided data on IP populations, it was important to conduct the screening to ensure communities that may identify as indigenous were not overlooked due to lack of recent data.

Dashboard of Screening Locations

Table 13: Screening Locations

Village	Leader	Role
COROZAL:		
Patchakan	Miguel Medina	Chairman
	Anastacio Pott	Vice-Chariman
Libertad	Oderr Bautista	Chairman
Chan Chen	Marilu Hall	Chairlady
Caledonia	David Howe	Chairman
	Patricio Bol	Vice-Chariman
ORANGE WALK:		
San Lazaro	Hugo Carillo Cocom	Chairman
San Jose Palmar	Orlando Ayuso	Chairman
	Adolfo Kantun	Village Leader
Chan Pine Ridge	Cornelio Torres	Chairman
Guinea Grass	Alexis Carillo	Village Council
August Pine Ridge	Herminia Chi	Chairlady
	Jovita Torres	Village Leader
San Jose	Edilbertha Rodriguez	Chairlady
	Faustino Juchim Chuc	Village Leader
CAYO:		
San Antonio:	Danny Mai	Chairman
	Maria Garcia	Itzama Society
	Delmer Tzib	Village Leader
	Abdias Mesh	Sayab Farm
	Timothea Mesh	SA Women's Group
	Sonia Rosales	Environmental Youth Group/Youth Maya Script
Bullet Tree Falls	Sabino Pinelo	Chairman
San Jose Succotz	Alfredo Manzanero	Chairman
Cristo Rey	Elmer M. Suarez	Chairman
BELIZE: CBS-WCG*		
Scotland Half Moon		
Flowers Bank		
Isabella Bank		
Willows Bank	Conway Young	CBS-WCG Administative & Programme Manager
Bermudian Landing		
Double Head Cabbage		
St. Paul's Bank		

* CBS-WCG – Community Babboon Sanctuary Women's Conservation Group, Belize River Valley

5.1. Discussion on Screening Results

5.1.1. Corozal District

Of the 28 villages and one town in the Corozal District, four villages were screened for Indigenous Peoples. There is broad consensus among the six village leaders that their ancestry traces back to the original Yucatec Maya who migrated to Belize during the Caste War. However, there is also broad consensus that over the years, the Maya heritage did not pass from generation to

generation so that today, only a minority of the original Yucatec Mayas, mostly the elders, self-identify as the Indigenous Maya.

There was general agreement that the vast majority of the village populations identify as Mestizos and that the Maya language and traditions are no longer practised, especially among the younger generation. The languages mostly spoken are English and Spanish with high prevalence of Creole.

There are no collective attachments to land and in terms of customary, cultural, economic and political systems, and all the four villages operate within the national system of governance (democracy) at the village council level. Sugar cane farming is done on a much larger scale while subsistence farming is more common across households.

5.1.2. Orange Walk District

Of the 29 villages and one town in Orange Walk District, six villages were screened for Indigenous Peoples. Some Village leaders acknowledge their Mayan ancestry but at the same time, say that the population does not self-identify as Indigenous Mayas. They do agree that some of their ''*habits are based on bloodline descendants but most of these people have moved away from their culture and integrated into multi-cultural status.''* According to one village chairman, *''there is some level of animosity in saying 'I am not a Mestizo or I am not a Maya.'''* In his words, ''*the people have totally alienated from Maya cultural traditions.''*

Village leaders agreed that they had no collective attachment to geographically distinct habitats or ancestral territories although, and in the case of San Jose Palmar, there was at one time, communal land. The land was called ''Tabacal.'' However, this land has since been sub-divided into private lots.

All the villages fall within the national system of democracy and operate at the village council level and are part of the mainstream. There are no distinct dialects spoken except among a very small minority of elders. The languages spoken are Creole, Spanish, and English.

5.1.3. Cayo District

Of the 38 villages, three towns and one city in the Cayo District, four villages were screened for Indigenous Peoples, although all the villages in this district identify as pre-dominantly Mestizo. The exception is San Antonio Village where there is a strong Maya tradition. According to a prominent leader – *''San Antonio is mostly Maya Yucatecan and we still speak the language. We*

have about ten to fifteen percent of other groups like Mopan Maya and migrants from Guatemala, El Salvador, and other countries from Central America.'' According to this village leader, the Maya Yucatecan still practice the culture – language, diet, ceremonies, and medicinal plants. However, other leaders from within the same community indicate that, the strong Maya influence notwithstanding, San Anonio Village does not operate outside of the mainstream system of government.

People obtain land from the Government through land leases and licenses. Again, San Antonio village is an exception because there is the National Park including the Elijio Panti Herbal National Park which belongs to the indigenous people. According to the leaders of San Antonio, *''The National Park is part of the heritage.''*

Between the areas of San Antonio, Cristo Rey, and 7 miles, the farmers have land (leases) where they practice sustainable farming by leaving some of the forest untouched so as to reduce the effects of green-house emissions. However, there are occasions when the Government of Belize cuts down forest to facilitate development.

With respect to customary, cultural, social, and political practises, all the villages fall within the national governance system of democracy. There are no Alcalde systems and all villages operate at village council level. With the growth of the tourism sector, farming actitvities declined particularly among the younger population; the reason for this is that many youth are unemployed during the off season so they look for jobs in tourism services.

Largely, none of the villages have a distinct dialect, although in San Antonio, the population over aged 30 consistenly speak Maya Yucatec in everyday interactions. The younger generation speak creole, English and Spanish. The Itzamna Society and the Environmental Youth Group are actively promoting a return to Maya roots by offering cultural workshops around Maya language, history, and traditions. One group also offers Glyphs (Mayan Writing) workshops; recently and on the occasion of Belize's 40th Independence anniversary, the group erected a Stella at the NICH grounds in Belmopan. There are also efforts to restore and promote the Maya heritage through the oral tradition.

5.1.4. Belize District (Belize River Valley Communities)

Of the 29 villages, one town and one city in the Belize District, one area (comprising 7 villages) was visited. According to Mr. Conway Young (the only person interviewed), son of one of the original founders of the Community Babboon Sanctuary, the seven villages that make up the Community Baboon Sanctuary-Women Conservation Group (CGS-WCG), also know as the BelRiv

Communities, do not self-identify as an indigenous group The BelRiv communities fall within the national system of democratic governance and are linked through village councils. The distinct dialect spoken within the communities is the Creole language although this is also spoken across the entire country.

In terms of collective attachment, the villages are where the ancestors originally settled; the villages were first used as landing camps with all their names derived from the original settlers.

The problem over the years is that there have been incursions by people who live outside the community. Although the communities agreed that as a preservation measure, they would refrain from fishing in the Mossul Creek area, outsiders come in and defy this agreement and at the same time create conflict with villagers. Because of the large scale logging that has taken place over the years, wildlife have been displaced thus making it more difficult for villagers to live off the land.

Large scale land acquisition of land – 500 to 1,000 acres and up to 2,000 acres – has occurred. In the Big Falls area, near the St. Paul's Bank Village, 30,000 acres of the total 40,000 acres was sold to a conservation group (Wildlife Conservation Society) in 2022, so residents of the BelRiv communities can no longer access this land for sustainable livelihood activities.

6. Main Findings: Social Impacts

Social impacts can be defined as the consequences to people of any proposed action that changes the way they live, work, relate to one another, organize themselves and function as individuals and members of society. This definition includes social-psychological changes, for example to people's values, attitudes and perceptions of themselves and their community and environment.

As outlined in the ESMF, **the CRESAP will not be financing high risk projects** i.e., those with significant adverse environmental and social risks; long term, permanent and/or irreversible adverse impacts; and/or may give rise to significant social conflict. Even substantial risk project will require Bank approval and is not guaranteed to proceed.

These positive and negative social impacts are as identified by communities in the project area, with particular focus on rural IP communities that participated in the screening. These finding largely complement the outlined impacts in the CRESAP Envrionmental and Social Management Framework. The list does not provide a list of all potential impacts but rather attempts to highlight the most likely and main impacts as identified by those in the project area. The impacts are shown by multiple social factors which are broken down into several variables.

6.1. Positive Impacts

These positive social impacts outlined in Table 14 were identified by those individuals involved in the screening and are not necessarily expected to occur, but there is a risk or concern that they might.

Table 14: Positive Social Impacts Associated with CRESAP

Variable	Positive Impact
Population Change	• The impact of COVID on employment within the tourism sector is causing young people to return to their villages to resume farming as a means of sustainable livelihood; the project will encourage more families to become engaged (re-engaged) in farming especially the younger generation and reduce the level of intra-migration linked to job seeking. • In the BelRiv communities there will be an increase in population resulting from the Government of Belize sub-dividing and issuing leases to first time land owners who will practice backyard farming.(although not connected to the project)
Ethnic & Racial Distribution	• None
Income & Livelihood	• The new sugarcane varieties that will improve quality combined with higher yield will result in expansion of sugar cane cultivation and increased income. • The project will encourage the younger generation to become active in traditional family farming activities and should result in more jobs and incomes. • The project will create more spaces for women to become involved in agriculture and to generate their own income thus empowering them. Some small enterprise ventures may include – composting, medicinal herbs, poultry and pig.
Land & Other Properties	• The project will encourage farmers to expand land cultivation; presently farmers are not cultivating all their lands because of high cost of chemicals, fertilizers, and herbicides including fuel and vehicle parts. Improved quality and yield in sugar should result in better prices for sugar cane. • Increase yields – bigger harvest using the same amount of land but with improved farming techniques. • Reduced need for farmers to sell off their lands.
Gender Relations	• The project may open up opportunities for women to engage in small agro-processing enterprises – pepper sauce, jams, sauces, etc. • Women involvement in farming activities and income generation will strengthen relations in the home.
Risk, Safety & Security	• The project will complement training given by Fair Trade and should re-inforce the need for farmers to apply best practices when handling or herbicides. • The improvement in farming infrastructure – irrigation systems and water management shoud mitigate or eliminate effects of drought.
Psycho-Social & Well-being	• The project should foster a sense of improved well-being associated with increased income generation and more involvement on the part of younger generation.
Trust in Political & Social Institutions	• None

Leadership Capability & Characteristics	• Participation in the project will build capacity and leadership skills especially among women engaging in vegetable farming.
Community Infrastructure	• None
Gender-based Violence	• Increased income will reduce frustrations in the home and reduce incidences of domestic abuse. • If women become more involved in farming activities they will become more independent and can contribute more financially to the household. • Women involvement in farming activities will improve their self-esteem and men will look at them more as partners in the household.

6.2. Negative Impacts

These negative social impacts outlined in Table 15 were identified by those individuals involved in the screening and are not necessarily expected to occur, but there is a risk or concern that they might.

Table 15: Negative Social Impacts Associated with CRESAP

Variable	Negative Impact
Land & Other Properties	• The new influx of land owners into the BelRiv communities may result in conflict with villagers. This influx is not tied to the CRESAP.
Income & Livelihood	• Training farmers and communities to increase production without providing supporting market infrastructure – small manufacturing, processing, and distribution channels, and markets will result in loss to farmers. • In the BelRiv communities other ethnic groups will be coming into the area but they are benefiting from the logging consessions and immigrants are now fishing on the land and using resources. The logging is not connected to the project.
Risk, Safety & Security	• If there is no oversight control or monitoring of the distribution of banned chemicals (i.e. Gramoxone and Round-up) farmers will continue to have access to these harmful chemicals which will limit success of the project.
Psycho-Social Well-being	• Farmers will be making loans for expanded agricultural activities and the idea of having to pay back these loans even in the face of natural disasters or climate events – drought, flood, disease, etc. creates anxiety.
Trust in Political & Social Institutions	• Fear that the selection of beneficiaries will be based on political affiliation rather than merit or a transparent process. • Farmers may not have the information or technical support necessary to effectively implement new farming techniques or apply for loans from financial institutions especiall if the process is online.
Leadership Capability & Characteristics	• There are many instances where grants have not been properly managed and the project is disrupted as soon as the money runs out. • It the project implementation is not participatory especially at the farmer level, and as it relates to traditional Maya farming practices and women involvement, there might be conflicts which may undermine the project goals.

Community Infrastructure	• The present poor conditions of sugar roads in many villges which make it impossible for vehicles to access canefields will limit the success of the project since farmers will be prevented from applying new technologies to ther crops.

7. Annex

7.1. Supporting information regarding primary data collection

7.1.1. Letter of Invitation

Mr. Javier Sabido, President of NAVCO, supported in the organisation of the various meetings across the project area. The letter shown below was used by him to request attendance for all other sessions.

Kristin Marin
Environmental and Social Consultant
Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise

13 October 2021

Mr. Sabido
National Association of Village Councils (NAVCO)

Dear Mr. Sabido,

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise is embarking on a new project, titled *Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture Project*. The project aims to support the agricultural sector in Corozal, Orange Walk, Cayo, and Belize to better equip the farmer communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

As indicated at the consultation that you participated in on Sunday, Oct. 10th, a key aspect of Indigenous People's Planning Framework is the Social Assessment. This assessment provides through background research on the participating project areas as well as ensures the voice of such communities are represented. The first step of the assessment is to conduct a Screening, which is the purpose of the meeting we are requesting with you and your community members.

We request your attendance as well as the attendance of key community leaders and indigenous persons in identified villages in Corozal to attend the Screening meeting on Tuesday, October 19th at 9:00am (Group 1) and at 1:00pm (Group 2).

Kindly confirm whether you and your colleagues are able to attend. We look forward to speaking then.

Sincerely,

Kristin Marin

7.1.2. Attendance sheets

List of Persons who Participated in Screening & Social Assessment
Corozal District
Location: Rural Development Office

Date	Village	Invited	Attended	Comments
19/10/21 (AM)	Libertad San Joaquin Patchakan Xaibe	Oder Bautista Florencio Martinez Angelita Magana Miguel Medina Anastacio Pott Edilfonzo Alcoser Genera Cano	Oder Bautista Florencio Martinez Angelita Magana Miguel Medina Anastacio Pott Edilfonzo Alcoser Genera Cano	The leaders were present for the session which had to be postponed because the facilitator experienced vehicular malfunctions on the road and had to return to Belize City; An informal discussion was held with Mr. Christian Loza, the Rural Development Officer for Corozal. (See notes attached: Corozal Sessions 1 & 2
19/10/2021 (PM)	Chunox Yo Chen Chan Chen Caledonia	Jose Luis Reyes Emerio Patt Erli Chan Marilu Hall David Howe Patricio Bol		The afternoon session was postponed for reasons cited above. A follow-up session was scheduled for 28 October, 2021 at the NAVCO Rural Development Office in Corozal Town.
28/20/21	Libertad San Joaquin Patchakan Xaibe	Oderr Bautista Florencio Martinez Angelita Magana Miguel Medina Anastacio Pott Edilfonzo Alcoser Genera Cano	Marilu Hall David Howe Patricio Bol	With respect to the reschedule of the consultative sessions for Corozal District, all village leaders were once more invited to attend the session scheduled for 28 October, 2021. However, those representatives from Libertad, San Joaquin, Patchakan, and Xaibe, indicated that they could not make the meeting. Only three representatives from Chan Chen and Caledonia attended. Mr. Christian Loza, Rural Development Officer for Corozal District provided anectdotal inputs based on his informal discussion held with the other village leaders on the 19 October, 2021. (See notes attached: Corozal Sessions 1 & 2)
	Chunox Yo Chen Chan Chen Caledonia	Jose Luis Reyes Emerio Patt Erli Chan Marilu Hall David Howe Patricio Bol		
2/11/21 (PM ZOOM)	Patchakan	Miguel Medina Anastacio Pott Oderr Bautista	Miguel Medina Anastacio Pott Oderr Bautista	A follow-up ZOOM session was held with representatives from Patchakan and Libertad villages to augment the previous two sessions held.

List of Persons who Participated in Screening & Social Assessment
Orange Walk District
Location: Youth Development Office

Date	Village	Invited	Attended	Comments
15/10/21 (AM)	San Lazaro San Jose Palmar Trinidad Chan Pine Ridge Guinea Grass NAVCO	Hugo Carillo Orlando Ayuso Adolfo Kantun Sergio Tillett Cornelio Torres Alexis Carillo Javier Sabido Kurt Gideon	Hugo Carillo Orlando Ayuso Adolfo Kantun Cornelio Torres Alexis Carillo Javier Sabido Kurt Gideon	Mr. Sergio Tillet was unable to attend because he had to attend the Food Fair event being held that day in Orange Walk.
15/10/21 (PM)	San Pablo San Jose Yo Creek San Antonio Augustine Pine Ridge NAVCO	Andy Chuc Edilbertha Rodriguez Faustino Juchim Chuc Abel Sosa Martir Perraza Herminia Chi Jovita Torres Javier Sabido Kurt Gideon	Andy Chuc Edilbertha Rodriguez Faustino Juchim Chuc Martir Perraza Herminia Chi Jovita Torres Javier Sabido Kurt Gideon	Mr. Abel Sosa was unable to attend because he had to attend the Food Fair event being held that day in Orange Walk.

List of Persons who Participated in Screening & Social Assessment
Belize District: Belize River Valley (BelRiv Communities)
Location: Community Baboon Sanctuary Conference Room

Date	Village	Invited	Attended	Comments
01/11/2021	Scotland Half Moon Flowers Bank Isabella Bank Willows Bank Bermudian Landing Double Head Cabbage St. Paul's Bank	Board Members of Community Baboon Sanctuary Women Conservation Group (CBS-WCG)	Mr. Conway Young	The first date set for the meeting was Saturday, 30 October but the CBS-WCG, in confirming the meeting, gave the date as Monday, 1 November 2021. This error was discovered when the facilitator showed up on Monday (1/11/21) and was told that the Board had been waiting on Saturday. As a result, the consultation was held with Mr. Conway Young, Programme & Administrative Officer.

List of Persons who Participated in Screening & Social Assessment
Cayo District
Location: Entirely virtual Zoom meeting

Date	Village	Invited	Attended	Comments
31/10/21 (AM)	San Antonio	Danny Mai Itzamna Society - Maria Garcia Itzamna Society - Abdon Tzib SA Women's Group - Timothea Mesh Beautiful Day in San Antonio - Delmer Tzib Youth Maya Script - Frank Tzib Oxmul Bakery - Lourdes Tzib Agriculture Group - Heronimo Carillo Green House Group - Abdias Mesh Sabino Pinelo	Danny Mai Maria Garcia Abdon Tzib Timothea Mesh Delmer Tzib Frank Tzib Lourdes Tzib Heronimo Carillo Abdias Mesh Sabino Pinelo	None
	Bullet Tree	Jaime Garcia		
	San Jose Succotz	Alfredo Manzanero Esbin Barrera	Alfredo Manzanero	
	Calla Creek	Jorge Mario Ramos	Jorge Mario Ramos Elmer Mauricio Juarez	
	Cristo Rey	Elmer Mauricio Juarez		