



PRESS RELEASE

SIGNING OF MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF BELIZE

The Government of Belize (GOB) entered into an agreement, dated November 30, 2018, with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for a loan and with the Green Climate Fund (GCF), for a loan and grant towards the implementation of the project “Resilient Rural Belize (Be-Resilient)” (RRB).

IFAD of the United Nations is the Accredited Entity for RRB. The RRB programme is managed by a Programme Management Unit (PMU), which is hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise, while the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment serves as the Lead Programme Agency.

RRB is a six (6) year programme (2018- 2024) and its overall goal is to increase farmers’ resilience and adaptation to climatic change. This goal is pursued through three main objectives. First, the project aims to introduce climate resilient agricultural practices, which allow smallholder farmers to operate sustainable production processes even under the stress of climate change and extreme climatic events. Second, RRB supports the development of value chains of smallholder farmers that are resilient and adapted to the effects of climate change and aim at strengthening producers’ organizations. Lastly, the project envisions upgrading public infrastructure such as roads, drainage, and information systems in order to improve market access. The target population are poor and vulnerable smallholder farmers in all six districts of Belize.

Evaluating the impact of development projects and programmes has gained importance in recent years. Impact Evaluation (IE) not only allows for increased transparency by measuring the effects of investments, but it also provides the opportunity to design and implement development projects more effectively. To contribute to this development, the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) manages the Learning-Oriented Real-Time Impact Assessment (LORTA) programme to be able to keep track of GCF projects in terms of performance and results, and to enhance learning within the GCF.

During its third year (2020), five GCF- funded projects and programmes were selected to enter the LORTA programme, among them the RRB project. The RRB project’s impact evaluation design intends to evaluate the matching grant fund (MGF) component that will introduce smallholder participation in selected value chains (tomatoes, sweet and hot peppers, cabbages, carrots, onions, pineapple and beekeeping products), support climate resilient production and value chain development investments with funding to producer organizations

(POs) through the implementation of business plans that will be tailored to the specific needs of the PO.

The RRB is looking to the Statistical Institute of Belize (SIB) to provide anonymized data for its treatment group (groups of farmers working with RRB) as well as for selected households (control group) from similar geographical locations which share similar characteristics (a similar propensity score) to the treatment group. The impact evaluation design will assess if the MGF component achieved its desired outcomes. As such a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) seeking access to an anonymized subset of selected variables from the 2022 Population and Housing Census for the analysis is the collaboration being formalized this 1st day of September 2022. This is an approach of the GOB for implementing the Programme in promoting collaboration between different public institutions. RRB is collaborating with the SIB, the beginning of a partnership that is a legal stipulation in the IFAD Loan Agreement and in the GCF Loan and Grant Agreement.

The signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA), was witnessed by representatives of the Ministry of Economic Development; the Statistical Institute of Belize (SIB) and RRB staff.

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