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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SIB BUILDS TECHNICAL EXPERTISE IN GIS TO ENHANCE STATISTICAL PROCESSES

Belmopan City, May 21, 2025 – The Statistical Institute of Belize (SIB), with financial support from the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and technical guidance from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), has commenced a week-long training aimed at strengthening the Institute's geospatial mapping and data integration capabilities. This initiative forms a core part of the KOICA-funded Enabling Belize's Statistical System (EBSS) project, which aims to expand and upgrade the national statistical system to deliver relevant, accurate, and timely data in support of evidence-based development planning and the monitoring of national programmes aligned with Belize's sustainable development frameworks.

The training is being held from May 19 to 23 at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conference room in Belmopan City and is facilitated by Mr. Luis De La Rua Rodriguez from UNFPA. Participants include technical staff from the SIB's Census, Surveys and Administrative Statistics, Data Dissemination, and Systems Development and Data Processing departments.

This capacity-building programme is designed to equip participants with practical tools and skills to support the full statistical cycle, from fieldwork planning to data dissemination. Staff will receive hands-on instruction in open-source tools such as QGIS and R to improve mapping and spatial data management for census and survey activities. Training modules will cover:

- Updating and maintaining the Enumeration District framework,
- Planning and monitoring field data collection,
- Producing interactive maps for data dissemination,
- Integrating spatial data collection into survey methodologies, and
- Leveraging new datasets and automated building detection tools.

Over the five-day training, participants will engage in exercises focused on mapping statistical data, designing and managing geospatial databases, automating map production, and using spatial data collection tools like QField and Survey Solutions. The program will conclude with sessions on assessing data quality, detecting errors, and recommending workflow improvements, which will serve as a foundation for advanced data integration across SIB's statistical outputs.

This initiative reflects SIB's commitment to innovation and the use of geospatial technologies as a driver of statistical modernization. With continued support from KOICA and UNFPA, the Institute remains focused on strengthening internal capacity to ensure the production of accessible, high-quality data to inform national development.

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