



PR#086-22

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Inauguration of School Substitution Building for Santa Martha Government Preschool**

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A substitution school building for the Santa Martha Government Preschool in the Orange Walk District was officially inaugurated on March 23, 2022, by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology (MoECST) in collaboration with the Belize Social Investment Fund (SIF).

The new preschool building is a one-storey ferroconcrete structure that houses an open classroom space measuring 1,840 square feet, a fully furnished kitchenette, a male and female bathroom block and a storage room. The building is complemented with a fully accessible ramp for persons with disabilities, an outdoor playground and a security fence that encircles the compound. As part of the project, provisions were also made for tables and chairs, along with preschool toys and equipment. In addition, the teachers' and students' bathrooms were renovated. The project was made possible through funding from the Caribbean Development Bank's Basic Needs Trust Fund (9th Programme) and the Government of Belize at a total of BZ\$588,451.85.

In his remarks, Hon. Kevin Bernard, Minister of Health & Wellness and the Area Representative for Orange Walk East, spoke of the importance of the new school building for Santa Martha Village and the surrounding communities and expressed gratitude to SIF and the MoECST for delivering on the project. Ms. Yolanda Gongora, Chief Education Officer in the MoECST, in turn, highlighted the significance of the inauguration taking place during Child Stimulation Month and reiterated the commitment of the ministry to improving the quality of and access to early childhood education in Belize.

Also present at the ceremony were Mr Carlos Tun, Executive Director of SIF, and members of the education community of the Santa Martha Government Preschool.

#### **Ends**

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