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PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Rural Transformation Launches Official NRDS 2026-2030

Belmopan, January 23, 2026.

The Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development and Local Government (MRTCDLG) marked a historic milestone with the official launch of the National Rural Development Strategy (NRDS) 2026–2030. The ceremony, held at the Lord Ashcroft Centre in Belize City, establishes a coordinated, evidence-based framework to advance inclusive, resilient, and sustainable rural transformation across Belize.

This strategy constitutes a major milestone of a consultancy led by the MRTCDLG with support from the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI). The development of the NRDS was executed through a comprehensive three-stage process. Stage 1 focused on a Strategic Diagnosis, utilizing mixed research methods and over 40 expert interviews to identify 16 structural challenges across social, economic, and environmental dimensions. This was followed by Stage 2, which prioritized Participatory Design through eight community dialogues across all six districts, ensuring the strategy was informed by the voices of over 190 rural stakeholders. The process culminated in Stage 3, consisting of technical consultations and the final validation of a roadmap that identifies 14 lines of action and 32 flagship initiatives.

The ceremony was attended by the Prime Minister, Hon. John Briceño, who delivered the keynote remarks. Also present was Hon. Oscar Requena, Minister of Rural Transformation, Community Development and Local Government, Hon. Orlando Habet, Minister of Sustainable Development, Climate Change & Solid Waste Management, and Hon. Dr. Osmond Martinez, Minister of State in the Ministry of Economic Transformation, alongside officials from the MRTCDLG, various stakeholders, and representatives from Clio Consulting, who provided a technical overview of the strategy's vision and methodology.

The NRDS 2026–2030 defines a bold 2030 vision centered on four strategic axes: Partnership, Prosperity, People, and Places. By targeting these pillars, the strategy aims to overcome critical constraints currently hindering rural growth, including land insecurity, high financial costs, market failures, and infrastructure gaps in roads and basic services. The framework also integrates two transversal approaches: Inclusion (focusing on Gender, Youth, and Culture) and Climate Change Resilience, ensuring that development remains sustainable and equitable.

The launch of the NRDS 2026–2030 provides the Ministry and its partners with a structured framework to empower rural communities and ensure they remain at the forefront of Belize’s national development. The Ministry extends its appreciation to CABI, Clio Consulting, and the many community leaders and experts whose participation ensured a validated and inclusive strategy for the future of rural Belize.

For further information and digital access to the NRDS, visit <https://scan.page/z8DsdY> or scan the QR code below.

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