



PR#020-26

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **CABEI Funds Feasibility Study for Modernization of Northern Regional and Punta Gorda Community Hospitals**

*Belmopan, January 23, 2026.*

Under the leadership of Hon. John Briceño, Prime Minister, and with support from the Ministry of Economic Transformation and the Ministry of Health and Wellness, the government has advanced a major healthcare infrastructure initiative through non-reimbursable financing from the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI). The funding supports a Feasibility Study and Design for the construction and equipping of the Northern Regional Hospital in Orange Walk Town and the Punta Gorda Community Hospital in Toledo District.

The 12-month study is designed to lay the groundwork for modern, resilient, and well-equipped healthcare facilities that respond to the evolving needs of Belizean communities. It will assess existing services and infrastructure at both hospitals, identify critical gaps, and propose strategic improvements aimed at enhancing service delivery, patient care, and operational efficiency.

This preparatory phase represents a critical step in strengthening Belize's healthcare sector, ensuring that future investments are evidence-based and aligned with international standards and best practices. The study will also guide decisions related to facility design, medical equipment needs, and long-term functionality to support improved health outcomes in northern and southern Belize.

The consultancy contract has been awarded to a consortium comprising BIAS Architects and VIELCA Ingenieros, firms with proven expertise in healthcare infrastructure planning and design. As part of the initial phase of the assignment, the consortium conducted a mission to Belize from January 21 to 23, 2026.

The initial trip began on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, when the consultants met with Hon. Kevin Bernard, Minister of Health and Wellness, and Mr. Ladrick Sheppard, Mayor of Orange Walk Town, at the Northern Regional Hospital to do a tour of the hospital.

On Thursday, January 22, 2026, the consultants met with Hon. Kevin Bernard, Minister of Health and Wellness, Hon. Oscar Requena, Minister of Rural Transformation, Community Development, and Local Government, Hon. Osmond Martinez, Minister of State at the Ministry of Economic Transformation, and Mr. Carlos Galvez, Mayor of Punta Gorda Town, at the Punta Gorda Hospital.

The site visits allowed consultants and leaders to engage directly with hospital administrators and technical personnel to gather key information that will inform the study and design process.

This CABEL-funded initiative underscores MET's continued commitment to driving sustainable development through strategic investments that improve access to quality healthcare services and enhance the wellbeing of Belizeans across the country.

## **Ends**

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