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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **GOB Launches the Digital Literacy Training to Citizens Initiative**

*Belmopan, February 16, 2026.*

On February 13, 2026, the Government of Belize, through the Ministry of E-Governance, in partnership with the University of Belize (UB) and with support from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), officially soft-launched the Digital Literacy Training to Citizens initiative. This program represents a significant step in advancing digital inclusion, strengthening cybersecurity awareness, and ensuring that all Belizeans, regardless of age, background, or location, have the skills needed to navigate an increasingly digital world.

During the launch ceremony, speakers emphasized the urgent need to improve digital literacy and broaden inclusion across every sector of Belizean society. They highlighted that, as government services and national systems evolve, it is essential not only to modernize technology, but also to equip individuals with the knowledge and confidence to use digital tools safely and effectively.

Dr. Vincent Palacio, President of the University of Belize, spoke to the importance of collaboration in this effort. He underscored UB's commitment to tailored training approaches designed to reach Belize's diverse demographics. Dr. Palacio highlighted the innovative Digital Buddies program, an initiative in which UB students will bring training directly to rural villages and their own communities, helping citizens learn through peer support and community-based teaching.

Mr. Jose Urbina, Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry of E-Governance, emphasized the value of unity in this national transformation. He noted

that the partnership between the Ministry of E-Governance, UB, and IDB has created a meaningful opportunity to uplift citizens by strengthening their digital skills. This initiative is aligned with the vision of connecting people to the E-Governance Academy and National ID platform. He reminded attendees that, at the heart of digital transformation, the people remain the priority: “All people.”

Mr. Tremett Perriott, Change Management Manager in the Ministry of E-Governance, highlighted the importance of reaching Belizeans in all corners of the country. He reiterated that Belize’s internal development is a collective responsibility, one that impacts families, communities, and future generations. He stressed that Belizeans are not just recipients of change but active contributors to national progress: “We are a part of this change, and together we will make this program work for our country.”

All speakers echoed a shared message: in today’s rapidly evolving technological landscape, knowing how to manoeuvre online is essential. Adaptation is key. Growth is necessary. And working together to build digital strength is how Belize moves forward.

Key Benefits of the Digital Literacy Training Initiative include:

- **Increased Digital Inclusion:** Training designed to reach citizens of all ages, backgrounds, and regions, including rural communities through UB’s Digital Buddies model.
- **Cybersecurity Awareness:** Education on safe browsing practices, recognizing phishing attempts, and protecting personal information online.
- **Confidence Building:** Hands-on learning that empowers citizens to comfortably navigate government digital services and essential online platforms.
- **Community-Based Learning:** Leveraging UB students as local trainers to ensure sustainability, cultural relevance, and ongoing community support.

This initiative supports the Government's commitment to promoting digital readiness, strengthening social inclusion, and ensuring that every Belizean has the tools to thrive in the digital era. Through collaboration, training, and community engagement, Belize continues to advance toward a more connected and digitally empowered society.

## **Ends**

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