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## PRESS RELEASE

### **MRT and UNICEF Inaugurate WASH Project at the Bella Vista Polyclinic**

*Belmopan, February 27, 2026.*

The Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development, and Local Government, in collaboration with UNICEF, officially inaugurated a Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (W.A.S.H.) Project today at the Bella Vista Polyclinic. This joint effort is a key component of UNICEF's mission to provide access to clean water and reliable sanitation, while promoting basic hygiene practices that protect children from infectious diseases. This inauguration also marks a vital step in the Ministry's ongoing commitment to improving public health infrastructure within the Toledo District.

The W.A.S.H. Project at the Bella Vista Polyclinic includes installing two (2) 10,000-liter water tanks, constructing a robust elevated concrete stand, and building a new laundry room. A primary objective of this infrastructure is to provide a critical backup water source, ensuring that in the event of a primary water system failure or local supply interruption, the polyclinic remains fully operational. By securing this backup supply and enhanced laundry facilities, the Ministry is ensuring that healthcare providers can continue their essential medical work without interruption, always maintaining a safe and sanitary environment for patients.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Hon. Oscar Requena, Minister of Rural Transformation, Community Development, and Local Government; Dr. Hon. Osmond Martinez, Area Representative for Toledo East; and Dr. Olusola Oladeji, the Health and Nutrition Specialist for UNICEF. They were joined by Mr. Valentino Shal, Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry, along with the chairpersons and members of the Bella Vista Village Council and Water Board, and the medical personnel of the Bella Vista Polyclinic.

By strengthening the technical and sanitary capabilities of the Bella Vista Polyclinic, the Ministry is ensuring that rural communities have access to the same level of dependable health and sanitation services found across Belize. This investment highlights the government's dedication to sustainable development, disaster resilience, and the well-being of all citizens through strategic partnerships and infrastructure enhancement.

**Ends**