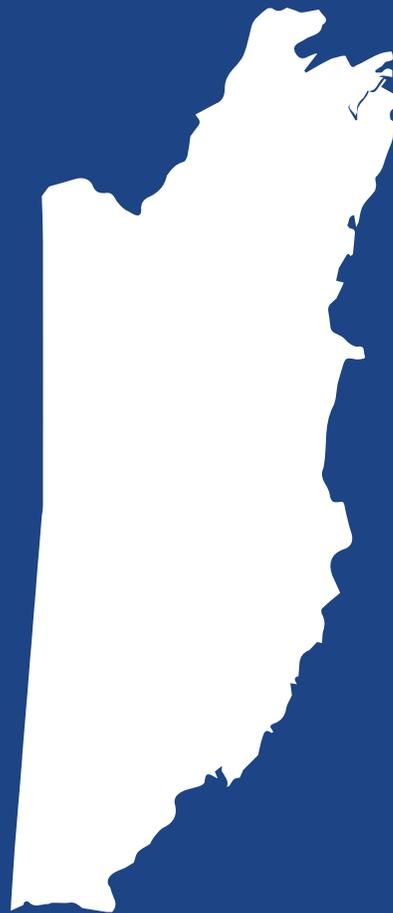


Canada

**CANADA CARIBBEAN DISASTER
RISK MANAGEMENT FUND**



Snapshot Document
Belize

About The CCDRMF

The Canada Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Fund (CCDRMF) is one component of Global Affairs Canada's larger regional Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Program. The CCDRMF is a competitive fund designed to support community-driven projects that enhance the resilience of communities and reduce risks from natural hazards (e.g. floods, droughts, tropical storms, hurricanes) and climate change.

Established in 2008 as a small grant facility, the CCDRMF finances projects ranging from CAD \$25,000 to CAD \$75,000, and up to CAD \$100,000 in exceptional cases. The target audience is community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations, civil-society organisations, and government agencies wishing to undertake community projects in the following beneficiary countries¹ : Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

For the purposes of the CCDRMF, a 'community' is defined as 'a group of people living in the same geographical area (such as a neighbourhood, district, city or town)' or 'a group of people

with similar interests (such as youth and women) or livelihoods (such as farmers or fishers)'.

Between 2008 and 2015, there have been nine (9) Calls for Proposals and in total, the Fund received 212 project applications. Only forty-three (43) projects, 20%, from thirteen (13) countries, met the criteria and were eligible for consideration.

Following a rigorous development process, the Fund has supported thirty-four (34) sub-projects in 11 countries valued at just over CAD\$2.2M. The projects have strengthened disaster risk management through improved emergency communication systems, shelter retrofits and safer building practices, flood mitigation and land stabilisation, water storage, food security and climate-smart agriculture, and mangrove restoration.

¹In addition, one small community project was approved for the British Virgin Islands



Belize
National Flag

Country Overview

Belize is located on the north-eastern or Caribbean coast of Central America, forming part of the Yucatán Peninsula. The total land area of Belize is 22,960 km², 95% of which is registered mainland and the remaining 5% distributed among more than 1,060 islands and cayes. The country's coastal area extends for 280 km and includes the Belize Barrier Reef Complex – the second largest in the world and the largest in the northern hemisphere.

Topographical features divide the landscape into two main regions. The first is mountainous, with the Maya Mountains and the Cockscomb Range dominating the central and western parts of the country. The second comprises the northern lowlands and the southern coastal plain. Approximately 67.4% of Belize remains under natural vegetation cover; and 34.9% of its terrestrial area is protected forest. The climate is tropical to subtropical, with temperatures from 21°C to 32°C and a marked wet and dry season.

Hurricanes and tropical storms are the principal hazards for Belize, with the country hit by a major storm on average every 3 years. Hurricane Hattie in 1961, a Category 5 system, remains the most memorable and devastating hurricane in the nation's history. Hattie was responsible for the death of hundreds, the

destruction of the former capital Belize City (which necessitated the establishment of a new administrative capital city, Belmopan, 80 km inland), and about US\$413 million in damages.

In 1998, Hurricane Mitch caused significant damage to the Belize Barrier Reef Complex, reducing coral recruitment by as much as 80%; and in 2010, Hurricane Richard, a Category 1, damaged some 410,000 acres (11%) of Belize's forest, as well as led to widespread flooding and extensive damage to infrastructure and the agricultural industry.

Belize also faces minor seismic and tsunami risk, particularly in the south-eastern region, away from the main population centres. Other natural hazards that can cause significant local damages, include lightning, storm surge flooding, inland floods, landslides, fires (started by natural causes), drought, and hail storms. Of course, Belize is also exposed to the impacts of climate change, including changes in temperature and precipitation, intensified hydro-meteorological events and associated hazards, and sea level rise.

CCDRM Fund Projects in Belize

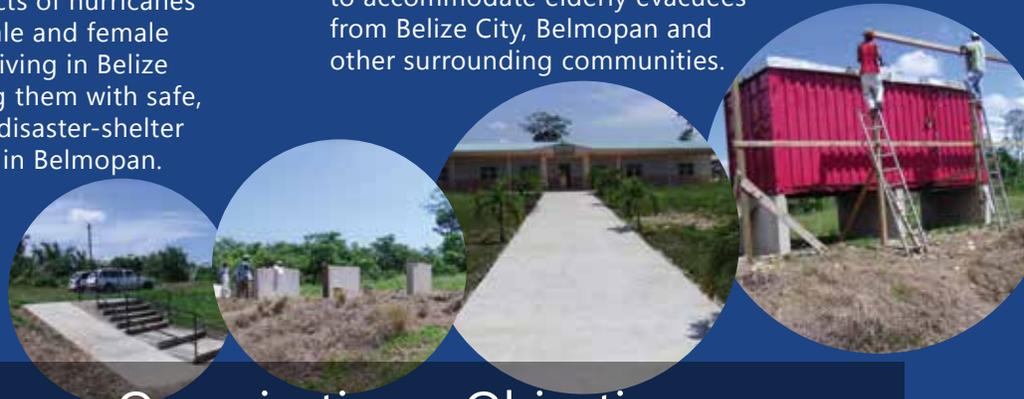
The CCDRMF has received sixteen (16) project applications from Belize. Of these, three (3) community-based projects were approved and successfully implemented. These projects supported disaster risk management through renovated disaster shelters, enhanced emergency communication systems, and capacity building.

HelpAge Belize Disaster Preparedness Project

Belize City lies at, and in some areas below, sea level and is extremely vulnerable to hurricane generated storm surges. In such conditions, elderly persons are highly vulnerable because of a range of factors including their frailty, limited mobility, health status and sensitivity. The project aimed to reduce vulnerability to the adverse effects of hurricanes for up to 200 male and female elderly persons living in Belize City by providing them with safe, elderly-friendly, disaster-shelter accommodation in Belmopan.

With support from the project, a ramp, two paved walkways, and a water storage tank were constructed at the Hazel Hutchinson Centre. In addition, a perimeter security fence was erected at the Sister Cecilia Home and a container was procured to store relief supplies.

Through the project, Belmopan has been able to secure perhaps its only hurricane shelter with the capacity to accommodate elderly evacuees from Belize City, Belmopan and other surrounding communities.



Project	Organisation	Objectives
HelpAge Belize Disaster Preparedness Project	HelpAge Belize	To reduce vulnerability to the adverse effects of hurricanes for up to 200 elderly persons living in Belize City by providing them with safe, elderly-friendly, disaster-shelter accommodation in Belmopan.
Project Period 2011	GAC Contribution \$21,178.00	Total Project Cost \$23,297.00

Belize River Valley Community Disaster Mitigation Project

Given the topography and hydrology of the valley, Belize cannot reduce the likelihood of floods occurring in the Belize River Valley, and with climate change, flood risks will increase in the future. Permanent relocation of residents in flood prone areas to other communities is not viable given existing dependence on local resources and more than three centuries of community development. The project aimed to strengthen the resilience and self-reliance of four flood-prone communities in the Belize River valley by helping improve their infrastructure for the protection of vulnerable residents, including reducing or preventing illness, injuries or other losses associated with floods and other disasters.

With support from the project, shelters were repaired and strengthened (roofs and washroom facilities) and storage facilities constructed in the communities

of Flower Bank, Lemonal and Rancho Dolores. Emergency water supply was also improved in the villages of Flowers Bank, Lemonal, May Pen and Rancho Dolores. The project partnered with the Belize Red Cross to enhance emergency communications in Flowers Bank and May Pen.

This project has inspired the villagers to take on additional projects benefitting their communities including the construction of computer centers. The National Association of Village Councils and the District Association of Village Councils have indicated that as a result of this experience, they will seek out similar projects across Belize.



Project	Organisation	Objectives
Belize River Valley Community Disaster Mitigation Project	National Association of Village Councils (NAVCO)	To strengthen the resilience and self-reliance of four flood-prone communities by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing support to communities to repair, upgrade and maintain their emergency shelters to provide safe, sufficient and comfortable options for village members for during disasters. 2. Providing support to villages to enhance their self-sufficiency in access to potable water, communications, medical supplies and other needs during disasters. 3. Building on and strengthening linkages between the national government and community agencies in community-capacity building with respect to community-based disaster management.
Project Period 2011-2014	GAC Contribution \$90,137.35	Total Project Cost \$134,922.35

Emergency Radio Communications to Enhance Disaster Management among Rural Indigenous Communities in Southern Belize

Several indigenous communities in the Toledo district of Southern Belize are remote and do not have any means of communicating with NEMO or state agencies when they become isolated by flood waters. The remoteness of the villages leaves them unable to reliably receive public radio broadcasts, leaving villagers vulnerable to rapid-onset flood events that may have their origins as far away as neighbouring Guatemala. The project aimed to improve communication through the addition of a radio repeater tower and expanded VHF radio system. The improved communication capabilities

would also act as an early warning system for potential disasters in the target area. With support from the project, radio tower equipment was procured, the tower was constructed in Santa Teresa Village and community rangers were trained on the use of the equipment and communications protocols during emergencies.

This project has allowed for the construction of a tower in one remote community which opens the opportunity for the communities to also get access to cellphone signals or better signal from the national/ local radio station if space on the tower is rented by these companies/ organizations.



Project

Emergency Radio Communications to Enhance Disaster Management among Rural Indigenous Communities in Southern Belize

Organisation

Sarstoon Temash Institute for Indigenous Management (SATIIM)

Objectives

To enhance the communication capabilities among five (5) rural indigenous communities, the National and District Emergency Management Organizations (NEMO & DEMO), and SATIIM to facilitate communication, especially with regard to disaster mitigation, preparation, response and recovery.

Project Period
2012

GAC Contribution
\$75,000.00

Total Project Cost
\$153,850.00



References

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