

PRESS RELEASE

Belize Joins the High E-Government Development Index Group

Belmopan. November 10th, 2022.

The E-Governance and Digitalization Unit under the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics, and **E-Governance**, celebrates, alongside its partners in development, Belize’s recent **increase in its rating** within the **United Nations 2022 E-Government Development Index (EGDI) survey**.

In 2020, Belize was ranked 136 out of 193 countries, demonstrating slow progress and initially placing the nation within the Middle EGDI group of countries. As of 2022, through the advancement of Belize’s National Digital Agenda and sector initiatives, Belize’s position has now improved to a ranking of **133** out of 193 countries, being one of only three countries within the Americas region to advance due to significant progress in E-Governance implementation. Belize’s increased ranking firmly establishes the country’s new placement within the High EGDI group for the first time in history, now sitting alongside countries like Mexico, South Africa, and Egypt.

The United Nations E-Government Development Index assesses and ranks countries at the national level against three main factors. These factors include Telecommunications Infrastructure, Human Capital, and Online services. Belize’s ranking improved due to national progress in delivering online services and other key achievements relating to:

- The launch of Belize's first National Digital Agenda and Action Plan in 2021 supported by the Inter-American Development Bank Group.
- The execution of sector transformation projects and technology adoption such as:
 - The Strengthening of Tax Administration Project led by the Belize Tax Service
 - The Belize Electronic Licenses and Permits System (BELAPS) led by the Supplies Control Unit and the E-Governance and Digitalization Unit
 - The Department of Environment Online Permitting Application led by the Department of the Environment and the E-Governance and Digitalization Unit
 - The Temporary Employment Permit Application led by the Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development, Labor, and Local Government.
- The successful enactment of six (6) E-Governance-related legislations, making Belize a pioneer in digital law in CARICOM: (i) Digital Government Act, (ii) Data Protection Act, (iii) Public Sector Data Sharing Act, (iv) Electronic Transaction Act, (v) Electronic Funds Transfer Crime Act, and (vi) Electronic Evidence Act. The Compete Caribbean Partnership Facility, the Economic Development Council, and the United Nations Development Programme supported the development of these legislations.

- The launch of online payment for government services using mobile wallets (Temporary Employment Permit Pilot) in partnership with the Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development, Labor, and Local Government.
- In partnership with the Attorney General's Ministry, the launch of the Strengthening Civil Registry Programme to support the modernization of the Vital Statistics Unit.
- The initiation of the National Digital Inclusion Program which seeks to provide Digital Access and Digital Training to citizens. This program is supported by the United Nations Development Programme Belize and ICDF-Taiwan.
- The launch of the National Identification Project to design and pilot a National Identification Management Strategy. This is set to be a strategic accelerated action plan that will guide the development of Belize's National ID system and pilot a digital ID for online services by 2025.
- Development of an online Government Integrated Cashiering System.
- Modification and upgrade to the Office of the Supervisor of Insurance online application.

These efforts are supported by our partner ministries and development partners such as the Inter-American Development Bank Group, the United Nations Development Programme, and ICDF-Taiwan.

Beyond Belize's progress in E-Governance projects and programs, the country is recognized as only one out of four countries in the Americas to have a female in E-Governance leadership. Today, women account for only 11.01% of E-Government leaders globally. Belize's achievements reinforce not only our dedication to creating public value but also our commitment to do so inclusively.

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For more information: Contact the E-Governance and Digitalization Unit under the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics, & E-Governance at 828 9061 or info@egov.gov.bz.