

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Ramiro López Ghio  
Representante de País en Belice, CID/CBL

**From:** Jorge Omar Samayoa  
Especialista Sectorial Senior, RND/CBL

**Subject:** BELICE. Intercambio de Conocimiento de Cadenas de Valor en Sistemas Agropecuarios Sostenibles y Resilientes. (BL-T1153)

**Date:** January 31, 2023

### I. Background

Agriculture is a major source of income for Belizeans, especially low-income households (Hersh et al, 2019). This sector plays a crucial role in fighting rural poverty, which is more acute than in urban areas (59% vs 43% – SIB, 2018). Most of the 19,0008 Belizean farmers are small to medium size landholders: 25% are working on farms with less than 2 Ha, and 57% with less than 8 Ha, mainly cultivating corn, beans, fruits and vegetables, plantains, and root crops. The sector faces several competitiveness challenges, including: (i) low productivity; (ii) high post-harvest losses; (iii) high production costs, due to, among other factors, overconsumption of costly synthetic inputs; (iv) low export diversification, limited to a set of commodities (sugar, banana, citrus represent 86% of total agricultural exports) produced by the biggest farmers, with low value-added, and increasingly vulnerable to price fluctuations; and (v) low levels of market standards, as farmers face increasing difficulties to meet a more sophisticated demand, including from the tourism industry where most of the food is imported.

To address this problem, the Bank's board of directors recently approved operation BL-L1041 Sustainable and Inclusive Belize, which seeks to improve the income of agricultural producers by improving competitiveness, climate resilience, and environmental sustainability.

To this end, the program will support the creation of a support platform with technical assistance, market information, climatic risks, etc., which will make it possible to address the barriers that limit the improvement of the sector, as well as financial support.

The region has important experiences of this type of platform with small producers who have been able to improve their competitiveness with organizational schemes that allow them to be resilient to climate change and other external shocks (market, etc.) under an environmental sustainability approach.

Through this cooperation, it is proposed to facilitate an exchange with experiences of producer organizations in Guatemala, with technical personnel from the Ministry of Agriculture and producers from Belize -MAFSE-.

## **II. Objective**

Intercambiar experiencias de cadenas de valor agropecuarias sostenibles y resilientes, entre Guatemala y Belice. El objetivo de la cooperación técnica es conocer experiencias de organizaciones privadas de productores agropecuarios de Guatemala, sobre cadenas de valor que pueden ser fortalecidas en Belice. Entre los casos a conocer se encuentran cadenas de cardamom, cacao, madera, ganadería sustentable, entre otros. The objective of the technical cooperation is to learn about experiences of private organizations of agricultural producers in Guatemala, on value chains that can be strengthened in Belize. Among the cases to be known are chains of cardamom, cocoa, wood, sustainable livestock, among others.

The financing request is consistent with the objectives and standards of the updated version of the Ordinary Capital Strategic Development Program for Countries (GN-2819-14, section I). The proposed activities are consistent with the eligible activities of the Program, which support technical assistance in "Priority agendas relating to complex institutional topics such as citizen security and justice." (GN-2819-14, section I, paragraph 1.4, subsection iii) and "Agendas that are central to the inclusive and sustainable growth of the region" (GN-2819-14, section I, paragraph 1.4, subsection iv). Additionally, the proposed activities are in keeping with one of the Program's core commitments. The activities also accord with the fifth Core Commitment "Intraregional Technical Cooperation" through which the Bank will "continue to expand access to intraregional experiences and advance the exchange of cooperative know-how.... by supporting knowledge sharing exchanges between public and/or private sector representatives" by financing knowledge sharing and dissemination activities (GN-2819-14, section 4, paragraph 4.18).

### **I. Concordance with the Country's Development Policies and Strategies**

This technical cooperation is aligned with the Country Strategy of Belize 2022-2025, in force (GN-3086), with pillar 2 "Private sector productivity and sustainable growth, with a focus on MSMEs", by promoting the exchange of knowledge in sustainable agricultural activities with MSMEs.

Likewise, the TC is consistent with the Update of the Institutional Strategy (UIS) 2010-2020 (AB-3008) since it is strategically aligned with the development challenges of: (i) social inclusion and equality, since the beneficiaries will be vulnerable populations that have been highly affected by the pandemics including small landholder farmers, MSMEs, female farmers, female entrepreneurs, indigenous communities, and migrants; (ii) productivity and innovation, as the operation will support the development of MSMEs, promoting higher productivity and market innovation, and (iii) economic integration, since the Project will promote linkages with markets, including export.

The operation is aligned with the cross-cutting themes of: (i) gender equality and diversity through knowledge exchange about (i) empowerment and full participation of women, indigenous and afro descendant populations; (ii) climate change and environmental sustainability, as it will support the adoption of climate smart and environmentally sustainable technologies and practices.

### **I. Conformity with the Bank's Norms and Conditions**

The Bank has received the required official no-objection communications from the Ministry of Economic Development and Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprises authorities.

The financing request is consistent with the objectives and regulations of the Strategic Program for the Development of Countries Financed with Ordinary Capital (GN-2819-1, Section II). The proposed activities are consistent with the eligible activities of the Program, among which are foreseen "Knowledge exchange and dissemination activities, or activities that strengthen dialogue and cooperation, with the participation of representatives of the public and private sectors." (GN-2819-1, Section II, paragraph 2.29, subsection 6).

### III. Participants

The selected participants would travel to Petén and Cobán Alta Verapaz, Guatemala for five days with the purpose of fulfilling the program of activities.

Lista de Participantes			
No.	Nombre	Cargo	Institución
1.	Melissa Balan	Extension Officer	MAFSE
2.	Edgar Celestino Yam	Productor	Corozal District
3.	Alexis Yuri Blanco	Productor	Orange Walk District
4.	Gorge Luis Celestino Choj	Productor	El Cayo District
5.	Densford Mangar	Extension Officer	MAFSE
6.	Julia Drysdale	Productora	Stann Creek District
7.	Juan Antonio Lopez	Productor	Belize District
8.	Orlando Cucul	Productor	Toledo District
9.	Armando Aban	Technical Support Extension	MAFSE
10.	Clifford Martinez	Director of Extension	MAFSE

### IV. Budget

The Bank will contribute to the costs of the operation in accordance with the following budget.

Presupuesto en US\$.					
Description	City/Country	Rate	Days	Amount	Total
Terrestrial transportation Belice-Guatemala-Belice	From Punta Gorda and Corozal, Belice to Cobán, Alta Verapaz, Guatemala	50	5	10	2,500.00
Per diem (Hotel, Meals and incidentals)	Cobán, Alta Verapaz; Flores, Peten	175	5	10	8,750.00
Interpretation	Cobán, Alta Verapaz; Flores, Peten	375	5	2	3,750.00
					US\$15,000.00

**V. Disbursement and Execution**

All the activities considered in this technical cooperation must be carried out within a period of 6 months, from the date of approval. This operation will be executed by the Bank.

**VI. Reports**

The achievements of the operation, focused on lessons learned and transfer of knowledge to the Bank's operating program, must be reported in the Bank's system within a period of 120 days from the financial closing of the operation.

**VII. Approval**

Pursuant to the provisions of Resolution DE-103/14 dated July 30, 2014 and the Memorandum dated December 16, 2014, the President has delegated to the Bank Representatives the authority to approve individual cooperation operations. non-reimbursable technical funds that are financed from the net income resources of the Bank's Ordinary Capital up to US\$750,000; therefore, taking into account that the amount proposed for this operation does not exceed US\$750,000, the Bank's Representative in Belize approves this technical cooperation operation for up to US\$15,000.00.