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MULTILATERAL EVALUATION MECHANISM (MEM)

*Evaluation Report on Drug Policies:
Institutional Strengthening; Research,
Information, Monitoring, and Evaluation;
and International Cooperation*

Belize

Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD)
Secretariat for Multidimensional Security (SMS)

2023



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Evaluation Report on Drug Policies:

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EIGHTH EVALUATION ROUND

2023

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PREFACE

The Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM), established by a mandate from the Second Summit of the Americas (Santiago, Chile - 1998), is a unique multilateral evaluation tool designed to measure the progress made and challenges faced by the member states of the Organization of American States (OAS) in implementing the Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs of the OAS Hemispheric Drug Strategy, currently in force.

The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) of the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security (SMS) is the OAS specialized agency in charge of implementing this Mechanism.

The current MEM round is based on the objectives of the Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs 2021-2025 of the Hemispheric Drug Strategy 2020 and their respective priority actions. These documents take into account the recommendations of the outcome document of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS 2016) and the United Nations 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, as well as cross-cutting issues, such as the gender perspective and human rights, cultural context, and social inclusion approaches, among others.

Seven evaluation rounds have been completed from 1998 to 2019 and, during 2020, the MEM Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG), composed of member state delegates, agreed on a new methodology for the eighth round, consisting of annual thematic evaluations with the support of independent technical consultants, as follows: 2021 – Measures for Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Support; 2022 – Measures to Control and Counter the Illicit Cultivation, Production, Trafficking, and Distribution of Drugs, and to Address their Causes and Consequences; 2023 – Institutional Strengthening; Research, Information, Monitoring, and Evaluation; International Cooperation; and 2024 – Comprehensive Evaluation based on updated information from all thematic areas.

MEM evaluations are carried out based on information provided by the member states' National Coordinating Entities (NCEs), which is analyzed by the MEM Governmental Expert Group (GEG), composed of experts designated by the countries, who do not participate in their own country's evaluation, thus ensuring the transparency and impartiality of the process. The GEG is always supported by the group of independent technical consultants and the MEM Unit. The eighth round represents a more rigorous evaluation process, in which countries are requested to provide valid means of verification to support the information submitted and ensure compliance of each priority action.

Specifically, the GEG's work for the thematic assessment for the areas of "Institutional Strengthening; Research, Information, Monitoring, and Evaluation; and International Cooperation" was conducted during 2023, and covers the 2019 to 2023 period (unless otherwise specified). This work was adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic with the use of

technology and virtual tools, as well as taking it into consideration in the evaluation assessments.

Finally, it should be noted that one of the main purposes of MEM evaluation reports is to serve as a useful diagnostic tool to identify opportunities for improvement in drug policies and strategies, both at the national and regional levels.

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

OBJECTIVE
1

ESTABLISH AND/OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL DRUG AUTHORITIES, PLACING THEM AT A HIGH POLITICAL LEVEL AND PROVIDING THEM WITH THE NECESSARY CAPABILITIES, RESOURCES, AND COMPETENCIES TO COORDINATE FORMULATION, IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION OF NATIONAL DRUG POLICIES.

Priority Action 1.1: Place national drug authorities at a high political level.

Belize has the National Drug Abuse Control Council (NDACC) as the national drug authority, which was established in 1998 and legally constituted in 1990 and is positioned in the Ministry of Health and Wellness within the government administrative structure.

Priority Action 1.2: Grant national drug policy entities the authority to guide and coordinate the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of national drug policies.

Belize’s national drug authority has a legal basis, through the Misuse of Drugs Act.

Priority Action 1.3: Allocate the necessary resources (material, financial, and human) for the effective functioning of the national drug authorities.

In Belize there is an annual budget for the national drug authority, which is integrated into the budget of the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

The amount of the annual budget of the national drug authority for the years 2019-2023 is listed below:

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Annual budget amount (US dollars)	\$529,308	\$542,673	\$475,602	\$584.233	\$771,993 (Proposed)

Priority Action 1.4: Design or optimize mechanisms to facilitate effective coordination and collaboration among government institutions for the formulation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and updating of evidence-based national drug policies and/or strategies.

Belize has an ongoing coordination and collaboration mechanism among agencies and other levels of government (national and sub-national) to formulate, implement, monitor, evaluate, and update national drug policies and/or strategies. In this sense, the NDACC has a National Central Office that deals with policy development, research, and administration. The NDACC has six district offices throughout the country that do local coordination and implementation of

demand reduction activities based on the National Strategic and Operational Plan of the National Drug Abuse Control Council.

The national drug authority of Belize coordinates the areas of demand reduction, drug observatory, and international cooperation. However, it does not coordinate the areas of supply reduction, control measures, or program evaluation.

**OBJECTIVE
2**

FORMULATE, IMPLEMENT, EVALUATE, AND UPDATE COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL DRUG POLICIES AND/OR STRATEGIES THAT PROMOTE BALANCED, MULTIDISCIPLINARY, AND EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACHES, WHILE FULLY RESPECTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, UNDER THE PRINCIPLE OF COMMON AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITY, CONSISTENT WITH OBLIGATIONS OF PARTIES UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW, AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT GENDER, AGE, COMMUNITY, CULTURAL CONTEXT, AND SOCIALLY INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT.

Priority Action 2.1: Collect and use evidence as a basis for the formulation and updating of national drug policies and/or strategies.

Belize collects and uses evidence as a basis for formulating and updating national drug policies or strategies. In this sense, the Research and Information Unit of the National Drug Abuse Control Council (NDACC) collects monthly reports for the various district offices corresponding to drug prevention education sessions in schools and the community as well as the number of clients and substances used. This internal data collected is converted into quarterly reports, mid-year reports, and annual reports that are used in the revision and updating of the NDACC Strategic and Operation Plan.

Priority Action 2.2: Promote and establish collaborative relationships with the scientific community, public policy experts, community and/or civil society actors, and other relevant stakeholders, to contribute to the evidence-based development, implementation, evaluation, and updating of national drug policies.

In Belize, the following relevant actor from a priority area is involved in the development, implementation, evaluation, and updating of national drug policies and/or strategies:

Relevant actors	Development	Implementation	Evaluation	Update
Ministry of Health and Wellness	x	x	x	x
Interior Ministry				
Justice Ministry				
Education Ministry				
Regional and/or local governments				
Scientific community/academia				
Civil society				
Private sector				

In Belize, the Interior Ministry, Justice Ministry, Education Ministry, Regional and or local government, scientific community/academia, civil society, and the private sector are not involved in the development, implementation, evaluation or updating of national drug policies and /or strategies.

Priority Action 2.3: Promote sub-national/local management of drug policies and/or strategies through greater coordination and/or delegation of responsibilities, as appropriate, between sub-national/local and national agencies, taking into account the socio-cultural, demographic and other differences of each region.

Belize has not delegated responsibilities on drug issues to local or sub-national governments to implement concrete actions related to drug policies and strategies.

The national drug authority of Belize has, in its central structure, an office or operational unit which entails having six offices country wide that provide drug prevention education, outreach services, provide capacity building and training to local organizations and stakeholders on drug-related issues.

The national drug authority of the country has coordinators, offices, or representatives within the subnational/local territories, as part of a decentralized operational and coordination structure at the local level, to respond to the drug problem. In this sense, The NDACC has six offices countrywide that include drug educators/district coordinators and outreach caseworkers that provide drug prevention education, outreach services, capacity building and training to local organizations and stakeholders.

Belize does not have a specific and ongoing mechanism or program to transfer funds or finance drug initiatives or projects carried out by municipalities or local governments.

Priority Action 2.4: Engage private sector entities to develop innovative approaches to implementation of drug policy, including the exchange of information on emerging substances and new drug trafficking modalities that may affect the private sector, and best practices for denying criminals access to the private sector platforms and technologies that facilitate international trade.

Belize does not engage private sector entities to develop innovative approaches in the implementation of drug policies or exchange information and best practices.

Priority Action 2.5: Formulate or update national drug policies and/or strategies in line with the 2020 OAS Hemispheric Strategy on Drugs and this accompanying Plan of Action, taking into account the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Belize does not take into account the OAS 2020 Hemispheric Drug Strategy and its corresponding Plan of Action to formulate or update national drug policies and strategies.

The country's national drug policies and strategies do not take into account the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Priority Action 2.6: Integrate a human rights, gender, and social inclusion approach, particularly with respect to at-risk populations, in the process of formulating, implementing, and updating national drug policies and/or strategies.

Belize's national drug policies and strategies do not take into account the human rights approach.

The country's national drug policies and strategies do not take into account the gender perspective.

Belize's national drug policies and strategies do not take into account the social inclusion approach.

Priority Action 2.7: Provide adequate financial and other necessary resources for the implementation of drug policies and programs.

Belize does not have the necessary resources to implement drug policies and programs. In this sense, the budget of NDACC is limited to human resources emoluments and operational costs of the day-to-day running of the Council.

**OBJECTIVE
3**

DESIGN AND COORDINATE NATIONAL DRUG POLICIES, THAT CAN BE HARMONIZED ACROSS RELATED GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND/OR STRATEGIES, THAT ADDRESS THE FUNDAMENTAL CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE DRUG PROBLEM.

Priority Action 3.1: Establish and/or strengthen interagency and multisectoral policy and technical coordination mechanisms, to achieve a comprehensive, balanced, and multi-disciplinary approach to the drug problem, including its causes and consequences.

Belize does not have interagency or multisectoral policy and technical coordination mechanisms to address the drug problem in a comprehensive, balanced, and multidisciplinary approach, including its causes and consequences.

Priority Action 3.2: Design, implement, and evaluate multisectoral plans and programs based on the principles of human rights, public health, and development, to address and counter the socioeconomic causes and the consequences of the drug problem.

Belize does not have concrete multisectoral plans or programs to address the causes and socioeconomic consequences of the drug problem.

Priority Action 3.3: Participate in international cooperation programs at the bilateral and multilateral levels to strengthen policies, programs, institutions, and their internal processes.

Belize does not participate in international cooperation programs at the bilateral and multilateral levels to strengthen policies, programs, and institutions and their internal processes.

Priority Action 3.4: Promote comprehensive and cross-cutting public policies to reduce and prevent crime, violence, social exclusion, and corruption.

Belize does not promote comprehensive and cross-cutting public policies to reduce and prevent crime, violence, social exclusion, and corruption.

Priority Action 3.5: Implement measures that promote equal access to justice and due process, taking into account gender, age, community, and cultural context.

Belize does not implement measures that promote equal access to justice and due process, taking into account gender, age, community, and cultural context approaches.

Priority Action 3.6: Implement measures that foster citizen participation in crime prevention, build community cohesion, increase public safety, and emphasize social inclusion.

Belize implements measures that foster citizen participation in crime prevention, build community cohesion, increase public safety, and emphasize social inclusion. In this sense, the Police Department has programs such as Citizen Neighborhood Watch, and Community Policing that are implemented country-wide both in rural and urban communities.

OBJECTIVE

4

DESIGN, ADOPT, AND IMPLEMENT ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION FOR MINOR OR NON-VIOLENT DRUG OR DRUG-RELATED OFFENSES, WHILE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT NATIONAL, CONSTITUTIONAL, LEGAL, AND ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS.

Priority Action 4.1: Adopt alternative measures to incarceration for minor or non-violent drug-related offenses, where appropriate, while safeguarding the sovereignty of states, and ensuring individual accountability, respecting human rights and the gender perspective.

The laws of Belize do not provide for alternative measures to incarceration for minor drug-related offenses.

Priority Action 4.2: Develop mechanisms to monitor and evaluate alternative measures to incarceration for minor or non-violent drug-related offenses, in collaboration with academic and research institutions, as well as civil society.

In Belize, there are no legislative reform initiatives that take into account the implementation of alternative measures to incarceration for minor drug-related offenses.

Priority Action 4.3: Promote common understanding of national legal norms, regulations, and internal procedures for the implementation of alternatives to incarceration.

Belize does not promote a common understanding of national legal norms, regulations, or internal procedures for the implementation of alternatives to incarceration.

**OBJECTIVE
5****PROMOTE AND IMPLEMENT, AS APPROPRIATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLICIES, LAWS AND NEEDS OF EACH COUNTRY, COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS THAT PROMOTE SOCIAL INCLUSION, ESPECIALLY TO THOSE AT-RISK POPULATIONS.**

Priority Action 5.1: Design and implement, in accordance with the characteristics, interests, and needs of each country, inter-agency and multisectoral programs that promote the social inclusion of individuals, families, and communities affected by the drug problem, taking into account the specific needs of at-risk populations.

Belize has inter-agency and multisectoral programs that promote the social inclusion of individuals, families, and communities affected by the drug problem, taking into account the specific needs of at-risk populations. In this sense, through the outreach program, the National Drug Abuse Control Council (NDACC) collaborates with the Department of Human Services, the Women's Department, and Social Services to guarantee social inclusion for individuals, families, and communities affected by the drug problem. Additionally, an interagency program that is being facilitated by the Government of Belize through the Department of Human Services will be able to provide shelter to homeless, and the homeless that are substance misusers will be channeled to an outreach service for assessment, brief intervention, and referrals.

Priority Action 5.2: Disseminate best practices and lessons learned to improve institutional responses to the needs of at-risk populations.

Belize does not disseminate best practices or lessons learned to improve institutional responses to the needs of people in at-risk situations, such as mechanisms, programs, and interventions, through publications, meetings, workshops, among others.

OBJECTIVE
6

PROMOTE PROPORTIONATE SENTENCING FOR DRUG-RELATED CRIMES THAT PROVIDES FOR PENALTIES COMMENSURATE WITH THE RELATIVE SERIOUSNESS OF OFFENSES, IN LINE WITH THE INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONVENTIONS AND RESPECTING THE PRINCIPLES OF DUE PROCESS, WITH GENDER PERSPECTIVE, AGE, COMMUNITY, AND A HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH.

Priority Action 6.1: Promote proportional legal sentencing for minor drug-related offenses in accordance with domestic law.

Belize promotes the Criminal Code and Misuse of Drugs Act, which provides for proportional legal sentencing for minor drug-related offences, in accordance with domestic law.

The country does not have special courts or tribunals for minor drug-related offenses.

Priority Action 6.2: Promote legal reforms as needed, to promote proportional sentencing for minor drug-related offenses.

Belize does not promote legal reforms regarding proportional sentencing for minor drug-related offenses.

RESEARCH, INFORMATION, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION

OBJECTIVE
1

ESTABLISH OR STRENGTHEN NATIONAL OBSERVATORIES ON DRUGS, OR SIMILAR TECHNICAL OFFICES, STRENGTHENING NATIONAL DRUG INFORMATION SYSTEMS, AND FOSTER SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH TO GENERATE, COLLECT, ORGANIZE, ANALYZE, AND DISSEMINATE INFORMATION TO INFORM THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED DRUG POLICIES AND STRATEGIES.

Priority Action 1.1: Develop and strengthen national drug observatories (NDO) or similar technical offices ensuring they have adequate human and financial resources.

Belize does not have a national drug observatory (NDO) or similar technical office.

Priority Action 1.2: Strengthen ties to academic and research institutions, as well as specialized non-governmental organizations, to foster scientific research and studies on the various aspects of the drug phenomenon.

Belize has not established or maintained working relationships with universities or specialized research centers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or other academic or research institutions.

The country has not carried out studies on the drug problem through universities or specialized research centers, NGOs or other academic or research institutions.

Priority Action 1.3: Develop and adopt quantitative and qualitative methodologies and information-gathering mechanisms that allow for the comparison of data among countries.

Belize has not developed or adopted quantitative and qualitative methodologies or information-gathering mechanisms that allow for the comparison of data among countries.

The country has not carried out studies using methods that are non-representative of the population or qualitative methodologies to obtain information on drugs that can be shared with other countries that have carried out studies with similar methodologies.

Priority Action 1.4: Establish and strengthen national drug information networks (DINs) to carry out long-term monitoring and early warning systems (EWS), including the use of a broad range of research methods and information sources, to develop rapid responses to emerging threats.

Priority Action 1.5: Contribute to the Early Warning System of the Americas (Spanish acronym SATA) to gather the available national alerts and disseminate them to member states, so that member states can respond in the shortest possible time to new threats.

Priority Action 1.6: Publish updates annually, when possible, on drug supply and drug demand utilizing the information provided on the national drug situation by using information from the national DINs.

Belize does not have an early warning system (EWS) to identify new psychoactive substances (NPS) or other emerging drug-related threats.

Priority Action 1.7: Build capacity among relevant stakeholders to enhance the collection, management, and dissemination of drug related information.

Not applicable.

Priority Action 1.8: Establish or strengthen forums at which drug researchers can present their findings to policymakers, and encourage their participation in CICAD experts groups.

Belize has not established forums that allow drug researchers to present their findings to policymakers.

Priority Action 1.9: Foster and disseminate best practices and the exchange of successful experiences in research among member states.

Not applicable.

**OBJECTIVE
2**

EXPAND ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON DRUG USE AND RELATED ISSUES THROUGH THE USE OF SOUND, SYSTEMATIC DATA COLLECTION PRACTICES, SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, AND STANDARDIZED METHODOLOGIES, ENSURING THAT COUNTRIES HAVE THE INFORMATION NECESSARY TO DEVELOP SOUND DEMAND REDUCTION PROGRAMS AND POLICIES.

Priority Action 2.1: Generate information on the incidence, prevalence, and modes of drug use and health impacts of drug use (e.g. non-fatal overdose, fatal overdose, infectious disease transmission), as well as drug use and health impact trends over time using sound, systematic data collection practices, scientific research, and standardized methodologies to monitor use across the general public and in key populations, whenever possible utilizing the Inter-American Drug Use Data System (SIDUC) as the standard methodology for epidemiological surveillance.

Belize has not carried out demand reduction studies within the evaluation period (2019-2023).

Priority Action 2.2: Develop drug treatment information systems that record the number of patients treated, diagnoses, clinical history, and available information on treatment outcomes.

Belize has a national system for the collection of data on the number of patients treated, diagnoses, clinical history, and available information on treatment outcomes.

The national system on treatment data includes the following modalities and interventions:

Modalities and interventions	Yes	No
Community-based service	X	
Screening, Brief Interventions, and Referral to Treatment	X	
Medication-Assisted Treatment		X
Short-Term In-Patient or Residential Treatment	X	
Outpatient Treatment	X	
Long-term Residential Treatment		X
Recovery Management		X

Data on treated patients is collected from the following institutions:

Institution	Yes	No
Public health system		X
Private institutions	X	
Non-governmental organizations		X
Religious institutions		X

Other: - National Drug Abuse Control Council - NDACC Outreach Service Data	X	
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Priority Action 2.3: Evaluate and monitor the impact and the results of treatment and prevention programs using scientific methodologies and make recommendations to update programs based on findings.

Belize has not carried out studies to evaluate treatment and prevention programs or interventions.

The country has not carried out process or intermediate outcome evaluations of prevention and treatment programs.

Belize has not carried out impact evaluations of its prevention or treatment programs.

The country does not have mechanisms to continually monitor and evaluate the results of care, treatment, rehabilitation, or recovery and social integration programs and services in the public health or social protection network.

OBJECTIVE
3

EXPAND AND ENHANCE THE COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ON ILLICIT DRUG PRODUCTION, TRAFFICKING, AND RELATED ISSUES, THROUGH THE USE OF SOUND, SYSTEMATIC DATA COLLECTION PRACTICES, SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, AND STANDARDIZED METHODOLOGIES.

Priority Action 3.1: Generate information on illicit drug production, trafficking, drug markets, and related issues, using systematic data collection practices, scientific research, and wherever possible applying comparable methodologies.

Belize has mechanisms to collect and analyze information related to the illicit supply of drugs. The Belize Police Department participates in these mechanisms.

The country has the following information related to supply reduction, trafficking, and related crimes:

Supply reduction, trafficking, and related crimes			
Information	Available information		Year of most recent information
	Yes	No	
Quantification of illicit crop cultivation including crops grown indoors	X		2021
Number of seizures of illicit drugs and raw materials for their production	X		2022
Quantities of illicit drugs and raw materials for their production seized	X		2022
Number of seizures of controlled chemical substances (precursors)		X	
Quantities of seized controlled chemical substances (precursors)		X	
Number of seizures of pharmaceutical products		X	
Quantities of seized pharmaceutical products		X	
Number of persons formally charged with drug use, possession, and trafficking	X		2022
Number of persons convicted of drug use, possession, and trafficking		X	
Number of laboratories producing illicit plant-based drugs detected and dismantled		X	
Number of laboratories producing illicit drugs of synthetic origin detected and dismantled		X	
Chemical composition of seized drugs		X	
Sale price of drugs (for consumers)		X	
Number of persons formally charged with money laundering		X	

Supply reduction, trafficking, and related crimes			
Information	Available information		Year of most recent information
	Number of persons convicted of money laundering		
Number of persons formally charged with trafficking in firearms, explosives, ammunition, and related materials	X		2022
Number of persons convicted of trafficking in firearms, explosives, ammunition, and related materials		X	
Number of persons formally charged with diversion of chemical substances	X		2022
Number of persons convicted of diversion of chemical substances		X	

Belize does not carry out periodic studies and research on the illicit drug market.

The country does not carry out studies on the medical and scientific use and other legal uses of narcotics or psychotropic substances, subject to international control systems.

Priority Action 3.2: Conduct studies on the price, purity or concentration, and chemical profile of drugs.

Belize does not collect information for the development of studies on the purity or concentration, or chemical profile of drugs.

The country does not conduct chemical characterizations or purity tests of substances that may or may not be subject to international control.

Priority Action 3.3: Establish and strengthen the relationship between the NDOs, or similar technical offices, and national, and when applicable, local, or sub-national forensic laboratories to bolster the collection of data on the chemical composition of substances and precursors seized.

In Belize, the National Forensic Services is responsible for analyzing chemical substances, precursors, and pharmaceutical products, including new psychoactive substances (NPS).

The country implements and participates in the following periodic training programs for personnel involved in the analysis of chemical substances, precursors, and pharmaceutical products, including NPS:

Implements or participates in the program	Type of Training	Targeted institutions	Year when training was last done
Implements	Internal training program at Forensic Laboratory	National Forensic Science Services	Ongoing (2022)
Participate	Precursor trainings provided by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and other agencies	National Forensic Science Service	Ongoing (2022)
Participate	Drug Chemist training provided by the U.S. DEA United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD)	Pharmacy Unit Ministry of Health and Wellness	Ongoing (2022)

Priority Action 3.4: Strengthen drug information networks in member states by improving the mechanisms used to gather and analyze data to inform the development of public policies that control the illicit supply of drugs.

Not applicable.

OBJECTIVE

4

PARTICIPATE IN AND STRENGTHEN THE MULTILATERAL EVALUATION MECHANISM (MEM) PROCESS, CONSIDERING ITS RECOMMENDATIONS.

Priority Action 4.1: Regularly collect information and data to evaluate implementation of the Hemispheric Plan of Action.

For the eighth round of evaluation of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM), Belize collected information on the implementation of the Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs 2021-2025 and submitted it in a timely manner for evaluation by the Group of Governmental Experts (GEG) in the following thematic areas:

- Measures of Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Support (2021)
- Measures to Control and Counter the Illicit Cultivation, Production, Trafficking, and Distribution of Drugs, and to Address their Causes and Consequences (2022)
- Institutional Strengthening; Research, Information, Monitoring, and Evaluation; and International Cooperation (2023)

Priority Action 4.2: Support and facilitate active and timely participation in each of the MEM activities agreed to by member states.

For the eighth evaluation round of the MEM, Belize designated delegates for the following MEM groups, actively participating and contributing to the evaluation process:

Thematic evaluation	National Coordinating Entities (NCEs)	Governmental Expert Group (GEG)
Measures of Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Support (2021)	Yes	Yes
Measures to Control and Counter the Illicit Cultivation, Production, Trafficking, and Distribution of Drugs, and to Address their Causes and Consequences (2022)	Yes	No
Institutional Strengthening; Research, Information, Monitoring, and Evaluation; and International Cooperation (2023)	Yes	Yes

Priority Action 4.3: Disseminate MEM evaluation reports by member states among national stakeholders, other pertinent organizations, and the general public.

Belize has not carried out periodic activities to promote and raise awareness of the MEM Drug Policy Evaluation Reports aimed at national institutions.

Priority Action 4.4: Promote use of the MEM’s findings to identify technical assistance needs.

Belize has not promoted the analysis of the findings of MEM Evaluation Reports on Drug Policies for national institutions to identify areas where technical assistance is needed to improve national drug-related policies and programs.

Priority Action 4.5: Increase hemispheric cooperation and partnerships among member states and sharing of best practices and lessons learned.

Belize has not reviewed the MEM Evaluation Reports on Drug Policies or identified opportunities to increase cooperation and partnerships with other member states or share best practices and lessons learned (horizontal cooperation).

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

OBJECTIVE

1

PROMOTE AND STRENGTHEN COOPERATION AND COORDINATION MECHANISMS TO FOSTER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, IMPROVE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND EXPERIENCES, AND SHARE BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED ON DRUG POLICIES.

Priority Action 1.1: Develop and implement a plan for promoting and strengthening technical assistance and horizontal cooperation among member states and with states outside of the Western Hemisphere, and with relevant international and regional organizations, and related initiatives and programs.

Belize does not develop or implement a plan for the promotion and strengthening of technical assistance and horizontal cooperation among member states and with states outside the Western Hemisphere, as well as with relevant international and regional organizations, and related initiatives and programs.

The country has not established secure communication channels for the exchange of intelligence information on drug interdiction and control.

Belize does not promote exchange, with member states and with states outside of the Western Hemisphere, and with relevant international and regional organizations, of best practices on training, specialization, and professional development of the staff responsible for implementing the national drug policies and strategies.

The country does not participate in regional coordination activities to prevent crimes related to drug trafficking, such as firearms trafficking, extortion, kidnapping, money laundering, and corruption, among others.

In Belize, there are no bilateral mechanisms for coordination and collaboration with other countries, focused on the dismantling of criminal groups linked to drug trafficking and related crimes.

Priority Action 1.2: Promote technology transfers and information sharing among and between member states and international organizations.

Belize has not promoted technology transfers among and between the Organization of American States (OAS) member states and international (including regional) organizations.

The country has not promoted information sharing among and between OAS member states and international (including regional) organizations.

Priority Action 1.3: Promote the dissemination of good practices and exchange of successful research experiences among and between member states and international organizations.

Belize does not promote the dissemination of good practices or the exchange of successful research experiences among and between member states and international organizations on drug policies.

OBJECTIVE
2
STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AS DEFINED IN THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS RELATED TO THE WORLD DRUG PROBLEM, MAINTAINING RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

Priority Action 2.1: Strengthen regional and international cooperation by competent authorities to investigate and prosecute criminals on drug-related offenses.

The competent authorities in Belize carry out cooperative activities at the regional and international levels to investigate and prosecute criminals for drug-related offenses through Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties.

The country takes human rights into account when carrying out these activities. In this sense, the following actions are upheld:

- Protection of privacy and personal data
- Fair trial rights
- Prohibition of torture and ill-treatment
- Proportionality and necessity
- Dual criminality
- Safeguards for vulnerable groups
- Right to consular assistance
- Transparency and accountability

Priority Action 2.2: Strengthen regional and international cooperation to facilitate, where appropriate, mutual legal assistance, extradition, and transfer of proceedings, in accordance with international legal instruments, when investigating and prosecuting criminals on drug-related offenses.

Belize carries out activities to strengthen regional and international cooperation to facilitate, where appropriate, mutual legal assistance, extradition, and transfer of proceedings, in accordance with international legal instruments, when investigating and prosecuting criminals on drug-related offenses. In this sense, the following cooperation activities are typically carried out in drug-related cases in Belize:

- Request for Assistance
- Central Authorities
- Channel of Communication
- Dual Criminality
- Gathering and Sharing Evidence
- Witness and Suspect Interviews
- Asset Forfeiture and Seizure
- Controlled Deliveries

- Extradition
- Timely Response
- Confidentiality

Priority Action 2.3: Enact national legislation and/or take administrative actions, as appropriate, to more fully implement the obligations set forth within these legal instruments.

Belize has not enacted or adopted, during the evaluation period (2019-2023), legislative or administrative measures and actions to improve implementation of obligations set forth within international legal instruments related to the world drug problem, respecting human rights and gender equality.

Priority Action 2.4: Promote the accession, ratification, and implementation of the international legal instruments related to the world drug problem and related crimes.

Belize has ratified or acceded to the following international legal instruments:

Conventions and Protocols		Yes	No	
United Nations Conventions	Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000	Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children	x	
		Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air	x	
		Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition		x
	Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961	x		
	Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971	x		
	Convention against Corruption, 2003	x		
Inter-American Conventions	Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Materials (CIFTA), 1997		x	
	Convention against Corruption, 1996	x		
	Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, 1992		x	

EVALUATIVE SUMMARY

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

Objective 1

Establish and/or strengthen national drug authorities, placing them at a high political level and providing them with the necessary capabilities, resources, and competencies to coordinate formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of national drug policies.

CICAD notes that Belize has a national drug authority, which has a legal basis. Moreover, CICAD observes that, in the country, there is an annual budget for the national drug authority, which is integrated into the budget of another government agency. Moreover, CICAD notes that Belize has an ongoing coordination and collaboration mechanism among agencies and other levels of government (national and subnational) to formulate, implement, monitor, evaluate, and update national drug policies or strategies and that the national drug authority coordinates the areas of demand reduction, drug observatory, and international cooperation, but does not coordinate the areas of supply reduction, control measures, or program evaluation.

Objective 2

Formulate, implement, evaluate, and update comprehensive national drug policies and/or strategies that promote balanced, multidisciplinary, and evidence-based approaches, while fully respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, under the principle of common and shared responsibility, consistent with obligations of parties under international law, and take into account gender, age, community, cultural context, and socially inclusive development.

CICAD notes that Belize collects and uses evidence as a basis for formulating and updating national drug policies and strategies. Additionally, CICAD observes the involvement of a relevant actor in the development, implementation, evaluation, and updating of national drug policies and/or strategies; however, the Interior Ministry, Justice Ministry, Education Ministry, Regional and or local government, scientific community/academia, civil society, and the private sector are not involved. CICAD notes that the country has not delegated responsibilities on drug issues to local/sub-national governments to implement concrete actions related to drug policies and/or strategies. However, the national drug authority has, in its central structure, an office or operational unit to promote, coordinate, train, and provide technical support to local/sub-national governments or agencies on drug-related issues. Moreover, the national drug authority has coordinators, offices, or representatives in the sub-national or local territories, as part of a decentralized operational and coordination structure at the local level to respond to the drug problem. However, Belize does not have a specific and ongoing mechanism or program to transfer funds or finance drug initiatives or projects carried out by municipalities or local governments. CICAD observes that the country does not engage private sector entities in the healthcare area to develop innovative approaches in the implementation of drug policies or

exchange information and best practices. Additionally, CICAD notes that Belize does not take into account the OAS 2020 Hemispheric Drug Strategy and its corresponding Plan of Action to formulate or update national drug policies and/or strategies. Moreover, these policies and/or strategies do not take into account the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. CICAD observes that the country's national drug policies and strategies do not take into account the human rights approach, the gender perspective, or the social inclusion approach. Additionally, CICAD notes that Belize does not have the necessary resources to implement drug policies and programs.

Objective 3

Design and coordinate national drug policies, that can be harmonized across related government policies and/or strategies, that address the fundamental causes and consequences of the drug problem.

CICAD notes that Belize does not have interagency or multisectoral policy and technical coordination mechanisms to address the drug problem in a comprehensive, balanced, and multidisciplinary approach, including its causes and consequences. Moreover, CICAD observes that the country does not have concrete multisectoral plans or programs to address the causes and socioeconomic consequences of the drug problem. Additionally, CICAD notes that Belize does not participate in international cooperation programs at the bilateral and multilateral levels to strengthen policies, programs, and institutions and their internal processes. Moreover, CICAD observes that the country does not promote comprehensive and cross-cutting public policies to reduce and prevent crime, violence, social exclusion, and corruption. Also, CICAD notes that Belize does not implement measures that promote equal access to justice and due process, taking into account gender, age, community, and cultural context approaches. On the other hand, CICAD observes that the country implements measures that foster citizen participation in crime prevention, build community cohesion, increase public safety, and emphasize social inclusion.

Objective 4

Design, adopt, and implement alternatives to incarceration for minor or non-violent drug or drug-related offenses, while taking into account national, constitutional, legal, and administrative systems, and in accordance with relevant international instruments.

CICAD notes with concern that Belize's law does not provide for alternative measures to incarceration for minor or non-violent drug-related offenses. Additionally, CICAD observes that, in the country, there are no legislative reform initiatives that take into account the implementation of alternative measures to incarceration for minor drug-related offenses. Moreover, Belize does not promote a common understanding of national legal norms, regulations, or internal procedures for the implementation of alternatives to incarceration.

Objective 5

Promote and implement, as appropriate, in accordance with the policies, laws and needs of each country, comprehensive programs that promote social inclusion, especially to those at-risk populations.

CICAD notes that Belize has inter-agency and multisectoral programs that promote the social inclusion of individuals, families, and communities affected by the drug problem, taking into account the specific needs of vulnerable populations. However, CICAD observes that the country does not disseminate best practices or lessons learned to improve institutional responses to the needs of people in at-risk situations.

Objective 6

Promote proportionate sentencing for drug-related crimes that provides for penalties commensurate with the relative seriousness of offenses, in line with the international drug conventions and respecting the principles of due process, with gender perspective, age, community, and a human rights approach.

CICAD observes that Belize promotes legislation that provides for proportional legal sentencing for minor drug-related offences, in accordance with domestic law but does not have special courts for these offenses. Also, CICAD notes that the country does not promote legal reforms regarding proportional sentencing for minor drug-related offenses.

RESEARCH, INFORMATION, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION**Objective 1**

Establish or strengthen national observatories on drugs, or similar technical offices, strengthening national drug information systems, and foster scientific research to generate, collect, organize, analyze, and disseminate information to inform the development and implementation of evidence-based drug policies and strategies.

CICAD notes with concern that Belize does not have a National Observatory on Drugs (NDO) or a similar technical office. Moreover, CICAD observes that Belize has not established or maintained working relationships with universities or specialized research centers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or other academic or research institutions and has not carried out studies on the drug problem through them. Additionally, CICAD notes that the country has not developed or adopted quantitative and qualitative methodologies and information-gathering mechanisms that allow for the comparison of data among countries. Also, the country has not conducted studies that use methods that are non-representative of the population to obtain information on drugs that can be shared with other countries that have carried out studies with similar methodologies. Belize does not have an early warning system (EWS) to identify NPS or other emerging drug-related threats. CICAD observes that the Priority Action to build capacity among relevant stakeholders to enhance the collection,

management, and dissemination of drug related information is not applicable to Belize. CICAD observes that the country has not established forums that allow drug researchers to present their findings to policymakers. CICAD observes that the Priority Action to foster and disseminate best practices and the exchange of successful experiences in research among member states is not applicable to Belize.

Objective 2

Expand access to information on drug use and related issues through the use of sound, systematic data collection practices, scientific research, and standardized methodologies, ensuring that countries have the information necessary to develop sound demand reduction programs and policies.

CICAD notes that Belize has not carried out or published demand reduction studies during the evaluation period (2019-2023). However, CICAD observes that the country has a national system for the collection of data on the number of patients treated, diagnoses, clinical history, and available information on treatment outcomes. On the other hand, CICAD notes that Belize has not conducted studies to evaluate treatment and prevention programs or interventions, nor process, intermediate outcome, or impact evaluations of its prevention or treatment programs. Additionally, the country does not have mechanisms to continually monitor and evaluate the results of care, treatment, rehabilitation or recovery and social integration programs and services in the public health and/or social protection network.

Objective 3

Expand and enhance the collection and dissemination of information on illicit drug production, trafficking, and related issues, through the use of sound, systematic data collection practices, scientific research, and standardized methodologies.

CICAD notes that Belize has mechanisms to collect and analyze information related to the illicit supply of drugs and has information related to supply reduction, trafficking, and related crimes. However, the country does not carry out periodic studies and research on the illicit drug market or on the medical and scientific use and other legal uses of narcotics or psychotropic substances, subject to international control systems. CICAD observes that Belize does not collect information on the drug price, purity or concentration, or chemical profile of drugs nor conducts chemical characterizations or purity tests of substances that may or may not be subject to international control. CICAD notes that the country has an institution that is responsible for analyzing chemical substances, precursors, and pharmaceutical products, including new psychoactive substances, additionally, the country implements and participates in periodic training programs for personnel involved in the analysis of these substances.

Objective 4

Participate in and strengthen the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) process, considering its recommendations.

CICAD notes that, for the eighth round of evaluation of the MEM, Belize collected information on the implementation of the Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs 2021-2025 and submitted it in a timely manner for evaluation by the Group of Governmental Experts (GEG). CICAD observes that, for the eighth evaluation round of the MEM, the country designated delegates for most of the MEM groups, actively participating and contributing to the evaluation process; however, it did not designate a GEG expert in 2022. CICAD notes that Belize has not carried out periodic activities to promote and raise awareness of the MEM Drug Policy Evaluation Reports aimed at national institutions. Moreover, CICAD observes that the country has not promoted the analysis of the findings of MEM Evaluation Reports on Drug Policies for national institutions to identify areas where technical assistance is needed to improve national drug-related policies and programs. Additionally, CICAD notes that Belize has not reviewed the MEM Evaluation Reports on Drug Policies and identified opportunities to increase cooperation and partnerships with other member states or share best practices and lessons learned (horizontal cooperation).

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**Objective 1**

Promote and strengthen cooperation and coordination mechanisms to foster technical assistance, improve exchange of information and experiences, and share best practices and lessons learned on drug policies.

CICAD notes with concern that Belize does not develop or implement a plan for the promotion and strengthening of technical assistance and horizontal cooperation among member states and with states outside the Western Hemisphere, as well as with relevant international and regional organizations, and related initiatives and programs. Additionally, the country has not established secure communication channels for the exchange of intelligence information on drug interdiction and control. Moreover, the country does not promote the exchange, with member states and with states outside of the Western Hemisphere, and with relevant international and regional organizations, of best practices on training, specialization, and professional development of the staff responsible for implementing the national drug policies and strategies. Additionally, Belize does not participate in regional coordination activities to prevent crimes related to drug trafficking, such as firearms trafficking, extortion, kidnapping, money laundering, and corruption, among others. Moreover, in the country, there are no bilateral mechanisms for coordination and collaboration with other countries, focused on the dismantling of criminal groups linked to drug trafficking and related crimes. Additionally, CICAD observes that Belize has not promoted technology transfers among and between OAS member states and international (including regional) organizations or promoted information sharing among them. Additionally, CICAD notes that Belize does not promote the dissemination of good practices or the exchange of successful research experiences among and between member

states and international organizations on drug policies.

Objective 2

Strengthen international cooperation as defined in the international legal instruments related to the world drug problem, maintaining respect for human rights.

CICAD notes that the competent authorities in Belize carry out cooperative activities at the regional and international levels to investigate and prosecute criminals for drug-related offenses. Moreover, CICAD observes that the country carries out activities to strengthen regional and international cooperation to facilitate, where appropriate, mutual legal assistance, extradition, and transfer of proceedings, in accordance with international legal instruments, when investigating and prosecuting criminals on drug-related offenses. On the other hand, CICAD notes that Belize has not enacted or adopted, during the evaluation period (2019-2023), legislative or administrative measures to implement compliance with the obligations established in international legal instruments related to the world drug problem, respecting human rights and gender equality. However, CICAD observes that the country has ratified or acceded to most of the international legal instruments of the United Nations and one of three of the OAS Inter-American legal instruments regarding the world drug problem and related crimes.



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