

ENHANCING THE BELIZE NATIONAL QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE

ABOUT

National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) facilitates the standardization of quality by producers that not only improves products and services to meet increasingly demanding customer expectations, but also enhances opportunities for expansion into new export markets. The development of NQI also forms a significant foundation for consumer protection. Protecting human safety and health and the environment are important objectives of standards. Minimum quality and safety standards, including measurement standards and traceability to international standards allow consumers to assess a product before purchasing it, have confidence and trust in the measurements shown, and enable regulators to exclude unsafe products from the market.

PROJECT BENEFITS

Recognizing gaps in Belize's NQI, this project seeks to strengthen the Belize Bureau of Standards (BBS) capacity for calibration and verification of weighing instruments to ensure measurement accuracy and traceability that can verify they are equivalent to measurements taken internationally. It will also improve the BBS' ability to meet the growing global demand for quality and standardization service that facilitates the certification of products and services from Belize to participate in the global marketplace.

The expected outcomes of this project are improved capacity for calibration and measurement and increased application of International Organization for Standardization (ISO)-based quality management systems by the BBS stakeholders to improve the National Quality Infrastructure and internal operations.



The expected outputs of this project are:

- (a) Acquisition of two sets of International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML) Class E1 weights (1mg - 10kg) and 10 units of 100 kg OIML Class F1 weights.
- (b) Mass standards accurately calibrated by BBS.
- (c) Stakeholders are certified as trainers in the auditing and implementation of the ISO 9001:2015-based Quality Management Systems (QMS).
- (d) Stakeholders are certified as trainers in the auditing and implementation of ISO/International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) 17025:2017 based on QMSs

EPA AND CSME STANDBY FACILITY

The Enhancing of the Belize National Quality Infrastructure Project grant agreement with the Caribbean Development Bank was signed in November 2021. It is supported through the CARIFORUM-European Union (EU) Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) Standby Facility for Capacity Building.

The EPA and CSME Standby Facility is a EUR 8.75 million programme financed by the European Development Fund (EDF) being managed by CDB to support projects in Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, the Commonwealth of Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, St Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago (CARIFORUM). It is intended to build capacity in the region and better position businesses to trade within CARIFORUM and the European Union.