

STANDARD FORMAT FOR PRESENTATION OF INFORMATION ON BEST PRACTICES

1. Institution: The Institution that is implementing the best practice:
Good Governance Unit
2. Title: The name of the best practice, the topic it covers, and the subject of the Convention to which it is related:

The primary objective for the formation of the Unit is to promote and strength good governance in the country. It covers a wide variety of areas relating to good governance such as anticorruption, transparency and accountability, rule of law etc. It complies with the international standards established in the International Convention against corruption.

3. Description of the best practice: Include a brief description and summary of the best practice, as well as the reason why it should be considered a best practice, expressly referring to its sustainability:

The Good Governance Unit (GGU) established in June 2022 under the Ministry of the Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform, and Religious Affairs is a best practice in anti-corruption efforts for several reasons, particularly due to its sustainability through its affiliation with this ministry:

- (1) **Clear Vision and Mission:** The GGU has a clear vision and mission focused on promoting good governance, integrity, transparency, and accountability at various levels of governance, both nationally and internationally. This clarity ensures that its efforts are aligned with anti-corruption objectives.
- (2) **Core Values:** The GGU is built on a strong foundation of core values, including transparency, accountability, and the rule of law. These values emphasize the importance of ethical conduct and adherence to legal frameworks, key components of anti-corruption initiatives.
- (3) **Goals and Objectives:** The unit has set specific goals and objectives that directly contribute to anti-corruption efforts. These include increasing public awareness, enhancing transparency, and fostering collaboration between civil society and the government. These goals reflect a holistic approach to combating corruption.
- (4) **Secretariat of the People's Constitution Commission:** By serving as the Secretariat of the People's Constitution Commission, the GGU plays a crucial role in constitutional reform. This involvement ensures that legal and governance structures are updated and strengthened, reducing opportunities for corruption.
- (5) **Increased Transparency and Accountability:** The GGU aims to increase transparency and accountability across all government ministries, which is essential

for combating corruption effectively. This commitment to transparency is a cornerstone of anti-corruption efforts.

- (6) **Civil Society Engagement:** The GGU seeks to forge meaningful relationships between civil societies and the government. Engaging civil society is essential for holding government officials accountable and for monitoring anti-corruption initiatives.
- (7) **Implementation of Good Governance Initiatives:** The GGU's responsibility for implementing Good Governance Initiatives passed by the Cabinet demonstrates its commitment to translating policies into action, which is crucial for combating corruption.
- (8) **National and International Anti-Corruption Initiatives:** The unit is dedicated to implementing both national and international anti-corruption initiatives and conventions. This commitment to aligning with global standards for anti-corruption demonstrates a comprehensive approach.
- (9) **Ministry Affiliation:** One of the key strengths of the GGU is its affiliation with the Ministry of the Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform, and Religious Affairs. This ensures that anti-corruption efforts are integrated into broader governance reforms and have the necessary support and resources for long-term sustainability.

In conclusion, the Good Governance Unit's best practice in anti-corruption is evident through its well-defined vision, core values, and strategic objectives. Its affiliation with the Ministry of the Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform, and Religious Affairs ensures sustainability and a holistic approach to combating corruption in Belize. By promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance, the GGU is poised to make a meaningful impact on reducing corruption in the country.

4. **Reasons/Importance:** Reasons for pursuing best practice should be given. A description should be made of the situation in place before the adoption of the best practice and identification of the problem it is to address:

Corruption in Belize has been a longstanding concern, with instances of bribery, embezzlement, and misuse of public funds affecting various sectors of the government. This corruption has undermined public trust, hindered economic development, and impeded social progress. The formation of the Good Governance Unit (GGU) represents a crucial step forward in addressing this issue. By emphasizing transparency, accountability, and the rule of law, the GGU provides a structured approach to combat corruption and promote good governance. Its establishment underscores the government's commitment to fostering integrity, enhancing public awareness, and building partnerships with civil society to create a more transparent and accountable governance framework. The GGU's best practice approach offers hope for a future in Belize where corruption is reduced, and public institutions serve the interests of the people, ultimately leading to a more prosperous and equitable society.

5. Approach: What was the proposed design and methodology for applying the best practice? What was considered in its design and methodology? Were other countries' experience taken into account? Was a model law taken into account.

In designing the methodology, the need of a comprehensive and holistic approach to good governance reform was considered, the strengths and weaknesses of the current governance system of Belize as well as the opportunities and challenges facing the country was taken into account such as poverty, corruption etc.

6. Implementation: How is the best practice being implemented? What were the human and financial resources needed for its implementation?

The mandates of the Good Governance Unit are currently being implemented through a small team that comprises of the Director of Good Governance, Legal Counsel, Good Governance Officer, Communications Officer and two Legal/Research Assistants. Currently, the Good Governance Unit will need to expand in human and financial resources to fully meet its ambitious mandates. Financial resources will be needed to develop the National Good Governance Agenda that will seek to promote good governance and implement anti-corruption measures across the government of Belize. The work of the Good Governance Unit as a best practice is ongoing thereby ongoing investment in human resources and the financial resources to implement good governance initiatives.

7. Outcome: How is the end result or expected of implementing the best practice? What are the benefits and/or success stories? Have they addressed the problems originally identified as necessitating a best practice to be implemented? What has been its impact?

The Good Governance Unit as Secretariat to the People's Constitution Commission facilitated numerous Commission meetings, public meetings and public lectures on constitutional reform. As Secretariat, the Good Governance Unit has drafted the Strategic Plan for the Constitutional Reform process, the Code of Conduct for the Commissioners as well as conducting high quality research.

The Good Governance Unit has fostered meaningful partnerships between government departments, civil societies and external good governance and anticorruption entities. The Good Governance Unit has established relations with the E-Governance and Digitalization Unit. One of the E-Governance and Digitalization strategic themes is Good Governance. They aimed to achieve this by "fostering open, inclusive, and transparent institutions to build trust in government structures and digital solutions by promoting e-participation, strengthening e-governance, and releasing public data sets for multiple purposes.

The Good Governance has established working relationships with the NGO Humana People to People Belize. The Unit serves a member of HPP Project steering committee. This relationship was established due to the current projects that HPP Belize are currently implementing. These projects include opening centers with government resources readily available to the public which directly complements the core values of the Good Governance Unit of Responsiveness and Accountability.

The Good Governance established working relations with Transparency International as Belize has not been ranked on Corruption Perception Index (CPI) since 2008 more than 14 years ago. Transparency International is another global movement working with over 100 countries to end the injustice of corruption.

The Good Governance Unit has established working relationships with the Open Government Partnership. The Open Government Partnership a multilateral initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from national and sub-national governments to promote open government, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance.

In order to assess the level of implementation of all external anti-corruption and governance recommendations and initiatives, the Good Governance Unit has recently facilitated the United Nations Office on Drug on Crimes (UNODC) to conduct a comprehensive review of its progress in implementing the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC). This review, focusing on UNCAC Chapter II (Preventative Measures) and V (Asset Recovery), was conducted from August 21 to August 23, 2023. Following the review, the UNODC team and experts will compile an executive summary based on Belize's progress in implementing UNCAC. This summary will provide a concise overview of the strengths and areas needing improvement. Subsequently, the UNODC Secretariat will update the Belize Implementation for UNCAC Report, outlining the country's achievements and recommending measures required for the comprehensive implementation of UNCAC.

8. Potential for technical cooperation: Can the best practice be adapted and used by other countries? Is it possible to provide technical assistance to other countries in implementing the best practice? Provide the point of contact for the entity that can facilitate the technical assistance.

It can be adapted by other countries. Contact point is the Ministry of the Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform and Religious Affairs.

9. Follow-up: Who or what groups will monitor the practice's implementation? Will there be a Follow-up Report?

The Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of the Public Service, Constitutional and Political Reform and Religious Affairs

Reports are made to the Ministry's Management Team and Submissions are made quarterly/annual reports

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WK4Y7d9ZzHmHcEeAP_Vk9aY4R9B9iTt-/view?usp=sharing

10. Lessons: What are some of the lessons learned in implementing Best Practice? What are the challenges in implementing the best practice?

The main lesson learnt in the Good Governance Unit work to achieve its mandate is that the Unit needs to develop partnerships with not only other government agencies and departments but also with the Civil Societies but local and international.

Challenges

- Understanding and navigating the bureaucracy of the Public Service.
- A clear communication structure was not relayed to the GGU which impedes efforts to work collaboratively with the Ministry to achieve common goals.
- Lack of adequate technical and financial resources required for the Unit to achieve its mandates

11. Documentation: Where can further information be found regarding the best practice (e.g., Internet links)? http://www.oas.org/juridico/PDFs/mesicic5_blz_resp_annex6.pdf

12. Contact: Who can be contacted for further information?

Mr. Cesar Ross

Director

Good Governance Unit

Ministry of Public Service, Constitutional & Political Reform & Religious Affairs

cesar.ross@mps.gov.bz