

AGEING AND DEVELOPMENT IN BELIZE

Ix-Chel Poot

Executive Director

National Council on Ageing

BELIZE BACKGROUND AND GENERAL INFORMATION



- Bordered on the north and northwest by Mexico, to the south and west by Guatemala, and to the east by the Caribbean Sea
- Population is comprised of six major ethnic groups
- 2017 indicated there were an 387,879 Belizeans an approximate 20% increase since 2010

POPULATION



- 6% of Belize's population is 60+
- 35% are between the ages of 15°-34

Life expectancy

- women 74 & men 72
- Estimated equal amount of men and women 60+
- More women in the 75+ age group.

ABOUT THE NCA

- 2002 Adoption of the Belize National Policy for Older Persons
- 2003 Establishment of the National Council on Ageing NCA as a Statutory Board attached to the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation & Poverty Alleviation.
- The board of directors is comprised of members from Government Ministries, Older Persons Organizations, the Church, and Civil Society.
- NCA's mandate is to implement policy and act as a coordinating body for agencies addressing ageing.

Background

- >84% of the older population do not earn any employment income,
- ▶63% do not receive a pension or benefit
- ▶ 55% of women receive a pensions
- >44% of men receive pensions
- 2010 Country Poverty assessment indicated that 34% of all older persons were living in poverty.

- Belize's Social Security System established in 1981
- Non-Contributory Pension Program launched in 2003 (Women 65, Men 67)
- ►BOOST Building Opportunities for Our Social Transformation
- Community based organizations (HelpAge Belize, HOPE, LIFE)
- ▶ Belize Electricity Ltd Bill Pay Program

In 2016 the Belize Private Pensions Act was passed, this legal instrument is designed to facilitate the registering and supervision of Private Pensions and the protection of private pensioners.



- Country's medium term development strategy (GSDS) identified Priority Actions:
 - Adjustment to social security contributions,
 - Acquisition of resources from government to cover costs of the non-contributory pension
 - Gradual increase of the retirement age from 55 to 65.

NCA 2018 Conference on Ageing will focus on Financial Planning for Retirement with the objective to begin a larger discussion on individual responsibility and options to safe guard financial security



SOCIAL PROTECTION IN HEALTH



Beltraide

- National Health Insurance
- Mercy Care Clinic
- Expansion of HelpAge Medical Services
- Basic Home Health Care-giver Program.

SOCIAL PROTECTION IN HEALTH

- There is still need to Mainstream ageing issues into existing health plans and protocols including plans aimed at addressing non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and obesity.
- Standardize caregiver training caregiver training and certification course ensuring a minimum standard for care with private homes and institutions.
- Improving access to health services for older persons who live in rural areas.

HUMAN RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS

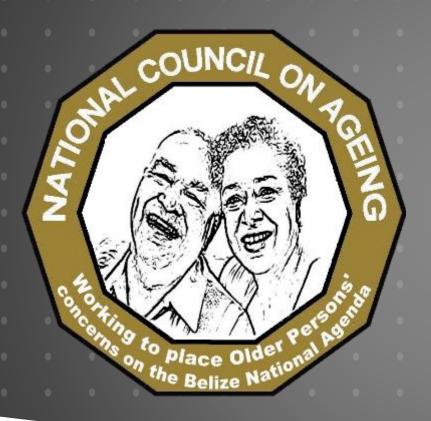
- VOICE Organization
- National Conference on Human Rights & Ageing
- Promotion of the Inter-American convention on the Rights of Older Persons
- On going awareness activities.



HUMAN RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS

- Revision of the National Policy for Older Persons,
- Revision and possible re-drafting of the BelizeOlder Persons Act
- Advocating for the signing on to the InterAmerican Convention on
 the Human Rights of Older
 Persons by the Government
 of Belize Ongoing

THANK YOU



NATIONAL COUNCIL ON AGEING

Unit 17 Garden City Plaza
City of Belmopan
Belize Central America

Tel: +501-822-1546

Email: ncabze@yhoo.com

Website: www.ncabz.org

Facebook: National Council on Ageing, Belize