Belize



Organization: Belize Livestock Producers Association (BLPA)
Location: Stann Creek and Toledo Districts, Belize
Solution: Silvopastoral systems for sustainable livestock management in Belize
Factsheet Period: First round of UNDP AFCIA funding (16 months); Second round of UNDP AFCIA funding (12 months)



Livestock Producers Association team at silvopastoral promotion activities in Belize @BLPA

Agriculture is a critical sector in Belize, serving as a strong foreign exchange earner and contributing 9% to the country's GDP in 2023 (World Bank). However, climate change poses an immediate risk to Belizean farmers, as extreme weather events exacerbate pasture degradation caused by poor management practices. Belize Livestock Producers Association aims to enhance cattle producers' capacity to adopt climate-resilient practices, improve farm productivity and improve their quality of life. By introducing a silvopastoral model, the initiative integrates forage and grazing feed to improve pasture quality, reduce land-use pressure and deforestation, and increase biodiversity. This transition from traditional cattle production fosters healthier livestock, increases farm efficiency and boosts farmers' incomes, ultimately building resilience against climate change while promoting sustainable agriculture in Belize.

Key achievements

- Developed a farmer training curriculum for silvopastoral systems, promoting productivity, sustainability and the engagement of women farmers.
- Founded seven Farmer Field Schools and trained 210 farmers in rotational grazing techniques and silvopastoral systems
- Protected 120 forage banks (48 acres) ahead of upcoming dry season.
- Improved pasture management and forage availability, reducing the need for farmers to sell cattle or purchase emergency feed during extreme dry periods.
- Secured World Bank (CRESAP) support to include livestock farmers in Toledo and Stann Creek in the matching grant programme.

Social impact

- Increases farmers' income streams by enhancing land productivity and efficiency.
- Upskills farmers through a sustainable, locally led training model, building long-term resilience.
- Expands economic opportunities for women by providing training in climate-resilient farming, fostering greater financial independence and adaptation capacity.

Adaptation benefits

- Restores degraded pastures and reduces land usage by adopting silvopastoral systems.
- Protects biodiversity, improving the quality of life for both animals and communities.
- Builds resilience in cattle feed systems by diversifying feed sources, reducing vulnerability to extreme weather events.





Innovation

- Introduces silvopastoral systems as a novel approach in Belize, replacing traditional cattle-ranching with a more sustainable alternative.
- Catalyzes the transformation of the cattle industry from an extensive production system to a more efficient and sustainable one.
- Increases pasture productivity, enabling increased feed production without contributing to deforestation.
- Implements a bottom-up training approach, using a farmer-to-farmer model to improve local practices and knowledge sharing.

Replication potential

- Offers the potential to upscale productivity of the entire cattle industry by replacing traditional cattle ranching practices with more sustainable, high-productivity systems. Belize Livestock Producers Association (BLPA) currently represents 5,200 cattle producers nationwide, providing a strong foundation for industry-wide adoption.

Funding snapshot

- UNDP-AFCIA grant: US$235,000 (initial grant: $125,000; scaling grant: $110,000)

Investability	
Revenue per year	Gross revenue per animal is US$625 (current market price of livestock weight is $1.25 per pound, multiplied by average selling weight of 500 pounds). Total revenue per acre per year is now $1,250.
Sustaining criteria	This initiative was fully funded by the UNDP-AFCIA grant and is being developed into a self-sustaining solution. BLPA has sustained its non-profit operations for over half a century, through revenue sources such as cess collections for sale of livestock and sale of produce.
Financial innovation	Encourages farmers to adopt rotational and integrated pasture systems, ensuring year-round access to high-quality feed while reducing financial risk. Reduces costs by optimizing land-use, minimizing the need for extensive land ownership and clearing. Boosts productivity and revenue, with average animal production per acre increasing from 0.5 to 2, demonstrating the efficiency gains from improved land management.
Expected return	US$1,250,000, as BLPA targets 170 farmers and 1,000 acres of pasturelands

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To read their story, visit UNDP-AFCIA

To watch their video, click here

To contact the initiative, visit BLPA