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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Ministry of Labour Launches Education Tour on Child Labour Policy Implementation**

*Belmopan. February 21, 2023.*

The Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development, Labour and Local Government kicked off the implementation of its Child Labour Education tour in Chunox, Sarteneja, Progreso and Copper Bank villages in the Corozal District on February 15, 2023.

Village council chairpersons, teachers, principals, farmers, parents and students participated in the sessions. Sessions are scheduled to be held nationwide for the sugar, banana and citrus industries and other agro-industry stakeholders.

The Child Labour Education sessions are designed to advocate for and protect children's rights and to foster collaboration with the private sector and other organizations in implementing Belize's National Child Labour Policy and Strategy 2022-2025. The sessions also aim to prohibit the employment of children in certain occupations, regulate the working conditions of children in other occupations, and eradicate the worst forms of child labour in Belize by 2025.

Child labour is a violation of fundamental human rights. It impedes children's development, potentially resulting in lifelong physical or psychological harm. It is a complex issue that requires strong partnerships, social dialogue, and collaboration for everyone to understand the difference between hazardous work and light work. The economic benefits of eliminating child labour in the business sector far outweigh the costs.

In July 2022, the Government of Belize, through the Ministry of Labour, the International Labour Organization, UNICEF Belize, and other stakeholders, collaborated to develop and launch the new National Child Labour Policy and

Strategy 2022-2025. The policy focuses on developing all Belizean children in a safe and nurturing environment, creating a future where they can flourish and live up to their fullest potential.

Belize has made significant progress in eradicating child labour, moving up the ranks from minimal to moderate as graded by the United States Department of Labour. The Ministry of Labour will continue to collaborate with key stakeholders to direct the focus and convergence of this strategy to Belizean children wherever possible while ensuring that the families of those affected by child labour are prioritized for support.

## **Ends**

For more information, please contact:

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