



PR#008-25

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **GOB Receives Disbursement under the 2023 Bilateral Cooperation Grant from the Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan)**

*Belmopan, January 20, 2025.*

Prime Minister Hon. John Briceño, Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment, has received a grant from the Ambassador of the Republic of China (Taiwan), H. E. Lily Li-Wen Hsu, in the amount of US\$3 million. This represents the remaining disbursement under the 2023 Bilateral Cooperation Program between both countries.

The US\$3 million will be used to reimburse the Government for expenses made under the National School Feeding Program and the Wi-Fi in Schools Program, as follows:

- 1. National Healthy Start School Feeding Program – US\$950,000**
- 2. Wi-Fi Internet in Schools Program – US\$2,050,000**

Both programs are ongoing initiatives by the Government of Belize that started in 2022. The Wi-Fi in Schools Program provides cost-effective, secure, high-speed internet access to teachers and students in the classroom in 197 schools nationwide. All 197 schools were successfully connected in March 2023. Since then, financing the program has included the annual cost of covering ongoing services such as monitoring, security, content filtering, and more. The US\$2,050,000 will cover the cost of sustaining the program in the years 2023 and 2024.

Similarly, the National School Feeding Program continues to combat poverty and malnutrition in children, increasing school attendance and reducing hunger by providing a healthy meal daily to over 3,000 high school students and 5,000 primary school students countrywide. The US\$950,000 will cover the cost of continuation of services that was expended under the initiative for the school year 2023 to 2024.

The Government of Belize remains grateful for the generous support that the Republic of China (Taiwan) has rendered to enable the successful continuation of these impactful initiatives for Belizean students.

## **Ends**

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