

# Building Resilient MSMEs Accelerating Digitization Project (Belize)

**Good practice: Building digital connectivity centres to expand access and skills to SMEs**

**Relevant DFI commitment(s):** Support digital literacy, skills acquisition, and development so that individuals can overcome the digital divide, participate in the Internet safely, and realise the economic and social potential of the digital economy.

**Type of the initiative:** Project

**Stakeholder Group:** Government

**Launch/adoption:** 2021 - Now

## Goals

The Building Resilient MSMEs Accelerating Digitization Project has several overarching goals:

**Promote Digital Inclusion:** The primary goal is to bridge the digital divide, especially in rural and disadvantaged areas, by providing free access to computers, the internet, and various digital technologies.

**Support Entrepreneurship:** The project promotes entrepreneurial development, business innovation, and competitiveness for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

**Enhance Digital Literacy:** Another critical goal is to provide access to digital literacy training to upskill various groups, including youths, women, the unemployed, migrants, and the elderly.

**Facilitate Government Services:** The centres aim to support access to government services, improving the connection between citizens and government agencies.

**Foster Economic Growth:** The project aims to propel business development and economic growth in local communities by providing resources and training.

## Description

The Digital Connect Centers project is a collaborative initiative launched by the Government of Belize through the Belize Trade and Investment Development Service (BELTRAIDE) and funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The project involves setting up Digital Connect Centers across Belize. As of August 2023, six such centres have been established, with the latest one in Belize City. Each Digital Connect Center is equipped with essential technology, including desktop computers, a printer, and a stable internet connection, and offers services like free access to computers and the internet, training in entrepreneurial development, business innovation and competitiveness support for MSMEs, and digital literacy training.

The centres also connect entrepreneurs to BELTRAIDE's Virtual Knowledge Center (VKC) platform, which provides access to training materials for enterprise growth and innovation, an MSME Directory, a job portal, and other support services and catalogues. While the project aims to serve the entire country, there is a focus on rural areas needing technological services. The initiative involves collaboration between government entities, including the E-Governance and Digitalization Unit (EGDU) under the Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy, Logistics and E-Governance.

*Disclaimer: This note was prepared by the GIFI team to illustrate certain good practices contributing to the implementation of the commitments contained in the Declaration on the Future of the Internet. The information provided in this note is based on the official documents and sources originating from donors or implementors and has not been verified for accuracy. Please see sources in the Internet Accountability Compass for additional information. The content of this note does not represent the views of the European Union or any of its bodies or agencies.*