

NEWSLETTER

# BELIZE ASSOCIATION OF PLANNERS



*"Making Belize Sustainable"*



## INTRODUCING: CARREN WILLIAMS - BAP DIRECTOR OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

For Carren Williams, 'playing small doesn't serve the world'. She thrives on the notion that there is light in everyone; and that we are all "born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us". If you have ever received an email from her, you would find the full quote - her favourite - at the end of each mail she sends.

One of the founding members of the Belize Association of Planners, the 43 year-old former Principal Planner and Principal Land Information Officer at Belize's Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment, is married, and currently self-employed.

And, despite being shy, the Belmopan native enjoys volunteering; and shining her light by helping to develop BAP, saying it makes her feel "Absolutely great"! She supported the idea to form the Belize Association of Planners because she thought it was progressive for Belize. "The work of BAP is critical in helping to guide national development," she explains.

While she may be an introvert, it does not deter Carren from also being creative, smart, and a go-getter. Those qualities have helped her to create many memories during her volunteerism at BAP. Some of her favourites have been working with and within the Mayflower, Lindo's Alley, and Port Loyola communities, under the Building Urban Resilience to Climate Change Programme (BURCCP). She admits that, "The local skills and leadership of the communities that we work with and the great potential that they have to transform their communities is surprising, but also amazing."

It is through this volunteerism that Carren says she has met some amazing individuals; some of whom she describes as, "My favourite people." Among those are Yaya Marin Coleman, Shari Chaplin, Shaheed, and many more, including some 'wonderful children'.

However, volunteerism does not come without its own trials. Carren admits, "Having the time to participate is a challenge," particularly since she resides in Belmopan, is self-employed, and family-oriented; even though her family is a family of volunteers. Even if she were not volunteering with BAP, Carren says she would keep herself busy and make herself available to be productive, especially since, in her spare time, she loves to work in her garden.

When asked about the future of BAP, Carren says "I think it will get bigger and reach out further in the communities across Belize," since one of the Association's biggest goal is to partner with other organizations for 'win-win solutions'.

Garnering her own inspiration and example from BAP's Executive Director, Carolyn Trench-Sandiford, she exclaims, "Volunteerism opens many doors and builds character." Carren believes that if more people knew of the work BAP is doing in Belize, they would be more willing to assist; and she encourages any and everyone, especially the youth, to donate to and volunteer with this great Association.

## BAP FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES

### Regional Security Initiative Forum



BAP's Director of Communications, Networking and Outreach, Keisha Rodriguez and BAP's Treasurer, Malikhah Cardona, participated in the U.S. Embassy Belmopan in a forum for the Central America Regional Security Initiative Economic Support Funds (CARSI-ESF) grant recipients at the U.S. Chief of Mission Residence.

The event allowed the participants to share the progress and impact their projects are making across Belize. The purpose of the fund is to combat corruption, increase government transparency, promote civil society involvement and enhance democratic governance at all levels of society.

BAP presented on 'Improving Data Ecosystems for Governance and Decision Making in Belize'

### UK/Belize Project Partnership Reception

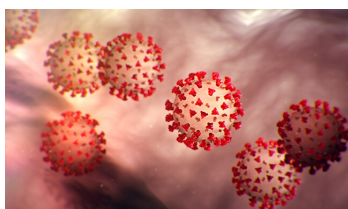


BAP's Director of Communications, Networking and Outreach Keisha Rodriguez and Afeini Chaplin of the Mayflower Community Foundation participated in a reception hosted by the British High Commission to celebrate the UK/Belize projects partnership.

This event provided the space for UK's Belizean partners to share their stories and the accomplishments they have achieved for the benefit of Belize through projects funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

These projects addressed environment and conservation, human rights, security and justice, and economic growth.

BAP presented on the 'Leveraging Solid Waste Management for Community Resilience to Natural Hazards and Climate Change Project.'



### FOR UPDATES ON COVID-19

Contact Ministry of Health - Belmopan  
**Telephone: 822-2325; 822 2363; 822 0809**  
**Fax: +501 822 2942 or 501 822 2055**

**Email Minister of Health and CEO: [seniorsecretary@health.gov.bz](mailto:seniorsecretary@health.gov.bz)**

**Director of Health Services: [dhs@health.gov.bz](mailto:dhs@health.gov.bz)**

# Citizen Security In Belize- Why We Feel Unsafe and How to Fix It? (Part 2)

by Deseree Arzu and Eric Sanchez



Photo Credit: FSTV

(Continued from January 2020 Newsletter) The 2012 Human Development Report for the Caribbean shows that citizens' opportunities are hindered by fear and violence, which are also barriers to human development, the exercise of human rights, and the strengthening of democratic governance. It is for these reasons that UNDP says citizen security 'should not be seen exclusively as a reduction of delinquency rates, but rather as the result of policy that comes from a comprehensive, sustainable, participatory, and multidisciplinary approach'. The organization suggests that the approach is multi-dimensional. It must include plans to improve the quality of life for citizens; it must entail community action for the prevention of crime; effective justice systems that must also be accessible; and education based on values, the rule of law, and respect for human rights.' Urban and Community Planning is certainly a crucial component of any such approach as the central precepts of the profession are congruent with improving the quality of life for all and employing participatory, co-creation approaches in communities.

Belize, like other similarly developing countries, has much to be desired in terms of embracing proper planning as a discipline, profession and process that is necessary for sustainable development and in particular to address challenges such as urbanization with its myriad of ancillary challenges including ever increasing rates of crime and violence. It can therefore be asserted that if Belize would embark on a path to properly plan its settlements, particularly its cities and towns; to tackle issues of socio-economic

inequality, socio-spatial and environmental injustices, ethnic and gender gaps within and among communities; undoubtedly there would be significant positive impacts on overall citizen security.

More specifically though, we will discuss below three aspects of planning that can have a direct impact on citizen security as well as examine whether these can be viable options for Belize.

The first option for consideration is Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) which is a multidisciplinary approach to community planning that seeks to deter criminality and criminal intents via the manipulation of the built environment. Fundamentally, CPTED enacts strategies which suggest an alteration in the behaviour of citizen through well

positioned physical designs throughout the built environment; and which by their implementation influences or prevent potential criminal tendencies. Also, CPTED is not only a tool that ought to be utilized to deter criminality, but it is equally beneficial towards the increase in a sense of safety and likability within a domain or community. Another commonly used term to describe the influence of CPTED is 'Eyes on the Street'. Basically, how we as planners, orient buildings, windows and focus towards the street or a vacant space, as opposed to away from it. Ideally, increasing how many 'eyes' are potentially oriented towards the street, which in itself is prevention.

Common example of CPTED designs and concepts that could easily be implemented within Belize are: A. Lighting: It is shown that crime is less likely to occur in areas that are properly lit. Therefore, utilizing CPTED principles, would call for poorly lit areas to be better serviced, that is, increasing lighting for these areas. However, this does not mean that there cannot

be creativity with light type or style as various forms of lighting design could result in a warmer and friendlier place for families and community members. B. Clearing and Design: Another vital aspect of CPTED focuses on the continuous clearing of regions within the community that may be filled with clutter, overgrown vegetation and or unwanted debris. Again,

it is often seen that crime or criminality is opportunistic. Hence, with the reduction of areas that may be deemed opportune for the crime; there should be a direct correlation to the reduction of such crime. Furthermore, buildings, which create voids, blank spaces or hideaway points should be addressed and fitted to meet CPTED standards. Fixtures that could be added to improve the functionality of these building include paintings, mirroring and landscaping.

The second option we will discuss entail revenue generation for security through planning policies. The Achilles heel to majority local governments and their municipalities is their inability to properly generate finance to ensure the smooth running and operation of the municipality. While the finances that do become available are often take up by personal emoluments, administrative and operating cost; leaving very little for programmatic outputs. Areas such as Citizen Security often take the proverbial back bench and is left with little to no budget. In more developed municipalities, the policing or Citizen Security aspect comes under the jurisdiction of the Local Government, where it can be more directly managed and fitted to the needs of that municipality. In lesser developed municipalities, financially, the security is provided by the central or federal government and is often not localized nor specific to a region or municipality.

## Black History Month



Mr. Henry C. Fairweather  
(Photo Courtesy ambergriscaye.com)

**Did you know** that Henry C. Fairweather was the first Director of the Housing and Planning Department in Belize, which was established by Phillip Goldson in 1954?

During his career as a surveyor, Mr. Fairweather was a member of a survey team that helped define the Belize-Guatemala border; and he also helped to choose the location for the city of Belmopan.

Known as the 'Mahogany Man', Mr. Fairweather planted over 100,000 mahogany trees in Belize, over two decades.



"Making Belize Sustainable"

**MISSION** – To address relevant planning and development issues in Belize by working in partnership with the public and private sector and civil society organizations, and the people of Belize through research, education, advocacy and action.

## Upcoming BAP Activities

- Signing of Memorandum of Understanding between BAP and Belize City Council for waste management pilot project activity in Mayflower community
- Board Meeting and Quarterly Mixer-Thursday April 2nd, 2020

**VISION** – BAP is a proactive professional planning organization committed to assuring social justice and promoting sustainability in the natural and built environment.

Phone: 501 670 0509 Email: [info@belizeplanners.org](mailto:info@belizeplanners.org) Web: <https://www.belizeplanners.org>

**WE ARE SOCIAL:**

