



Belize Association of Planners **NEWSLETTER**

Women in Urban Planning Making Waves



WOMEN IN URBAN
PLANNING

by [Belize Association of Planners](#) on March 28th, 2022

Background

The month of March is globally commemorated as Women's Month dedicated towards celebrating and embracing women across societies, race, ethnicities, religion, status; among others. Joining in this inspiring celebration, the Belize Association of Planners would like to highlight women who are at the forefront of urban planning and development for Belize. In the

21 century, urban planning is still seen as a predominantly male occupation worldwide; but in Belize we are a women-driven profession. At BAP's inception, seven of our ten founders were women and that dynamic persists today. Thus, we are using our newsletter to highlight two beautiful and ambitious women urban planners who are positively contributing to creating a sustainable and resilient Belize.

Women of Month

Keisha Rodriguez, Urban Planner



Keisha D. Rodriguez is an Urban Development Planner and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Specialist with over ten (10) years' experience in this field. She is currently a Technical Assistant Consultant with the Project Development and Management Unit of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC).

In 2010, Keisha attained a Master of Science in International Environment Sustainable Development (IESD) from the College of Engineering of National Central University through the Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF) scholarship programme. Her research focused on synergistic approaches to Sustainable Urban Development and Climate Change Resilience in developing country contexts.

Keisha has accrued significant professional experience in Belize in the private and public sector preparing plans and strategies that seek to address contemporary and emerging development challenges in urban communities within an integrated, sustainable and climate resilient framework. As the Urban Planning Officer under the Belize Municipal Development Project (2011-2015), a project funded by The World Bank, she spearheaded the preparation of Municipal Development Plans for seven municipalities in Belize.

Between 2016 and 2021, Keisha worked as an independent consultant with local as well as international multi-disciplinary teams on numerous urban sector projects in Belize focusing on areas such as Local Economic Development (LED), Tourism, Child-friendly Cities, Data and

Innovation, Sustainable and Smart Cities, Disaster Risk Management and Climate Resilience. Keisha has garnered comprehensive, integrated knowledge and understanding of the governance framework for development planning in Belize, at the central, local and sectoral levels.

Keisha is a founding member of the Belize Association of Planners (BAP). She currently serves as BAP's Vice President and has represented the organization in various capacities including at Habitat III in Ecuador where the New Urban Agenda was adopted in 2016; and as advisor and coordinator for international universities partnerships with Ohio State University, Florida State University and New York University. In 2017, she also completed a professional fellowship under the U.S. State Department's Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLAI) with the Piedmont Environmental Council and Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Barbara Tillett-Abdulhadi, Urban Planner



Barbara earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Environmental Design, Urban Planning from Ball State University, IN, USA, after previously completing a 3-year Physical Planning Diploma program at the College of Arts, Science and Technology (now U-Tech) in Kingston, Jamaica.

Her career as a planner started in 1989 at the now defunct Urban Development Corporation, then continued at the Housing and Planning Department. Barbara spent a year at the Central Statistical Office through the 2000 Census period, before moving to the Lands and Surveys Department. She then left to live in the Middle East for a number of years where she taught English, and although not actively engaged in planning at the time, she valued experiencing some of the Middle Eastern cities. Among her favorites is Cairo, Egypt, which has a rich medley of old and new that coexist in an interesting mix. There, the very ancient pyramids of Giza vie for superiority with the more modern high-rises, raised bridges and highways - a city teeming with life and that truly never sleeps. This contrasts with the modern city of Muscat, Oman with its profusion of newer buildings which draw upon the very best of traditional Arabic architectural designs integrated into a contemporary cityscape.

In 2012, when Barbara returned to Belize, there was a cadre of urban and regional planners practicing in Belize, yet the work of planners seemed to have stagnated. The planning

professionals in Belize were desirous of forming an association to advance the planning profession and to highlight the importance of planning for development. She then joined them, and in 2013 the Belize Association of Planners (BAP) was incorporated. At present, she serves as secretary on BAP's executive board, and sometimes represents BAP at planning related forums, as well as participate in some of their project activities. She stated that it is an honor to be a part of this association that has done important work of empowering local communities through participatory planning and which continues to call attention to the importance of planning for urban development.

"We need women at all levels, including the top, to change the dynamic, reshape the conversation, to make sure women's voices are heard and heeded, not overlooked and ignored." ~ Sheryl Sandberg"



Total Business Solutions Ltd. celebrated Belizean women leaders in GIS who are making valuable contributions to national development!



"From citizen security to climate change, inland agriculture to coastal and marine development—with digital innovation and telecommunications as the backbone of each pillar upon which the national economy stands—the women featured in this compelling and novel story map demonstrate the transformative power of applying GIS to Belize's data-driven socioeconomic recovery and the important role of women in the process.

Enjoy this story map, <https://bit.ly/BelizeanWomenInGIS>, as we hear from these women leaders themselves as they share what it means to lead and how they are using geospatial technologies." (Source from Total Business Solutions Ltd, 2022)



Phone: 501 670 0227

Email: info@belizeplanners.org

Web: <https://www.belizeplanners.org>

WE ARE SOCIAL:

@Belize Association of Planners

@belizeplanners

@Belize_Planners

