

OFFICE OF GOVERNANCE
Government of Belize

Launch of Website & Open House
January 31, 2006
Administration Building
Belmopan, BELIZE

Opening Remarks by Mrs. Myrtle Palacio

“Empowerment and Participation through Knowledge and Awareness”

Good governance is the competent management of resources and business in a manner that is transparent, accountable, and responsive. The practice of good governance principles is not limited to the public sector, includes the private sector, and social partners, such as Churches, Trade Unions, NGOs etc. The present focus of the Office of Governance is on promoting the improvement of the public service, influencing the development of structures and capacities of government agencies such as oversight bodies, bringing awareness of the democratic process to the public and supporting policies formulated for the common good. At the base of all this is the creation of intimate/ acute awareness in order to encourage participation.

On taking up this position, I conducted an assessment of the general situation via an environmental scan, focus group survey and library research. The exercise was three-fold: firstly, to gather information on facets in the environment that may impinge and/or impact on future plan of action. Secondly, to generate a ripple effect throughout the public service community, and aid in heralding the entrance of the Office. Thirdly to garner further insights into the nuances of the Belmopan Public Service culture—the value climate within this community; including group ethos, psychic relations and communication channels. As a public officer, I am the situated knower or the outsider within, and I utilized this opportunity as a participant observer to draw better insights into the general situation.

Armed with this knowledge, today marks the first of many forums to narrow the gap between knowledge and awareness. The website will facilitate access to information and enhance efficiency. Its benefits are many. In the near future, it will be a one-stop hub of information to the general public—from accessing e-forms to seeking employment. It provides for a module called Global Learning System that allows the presentation of courses on-line including online examination. This means that a Finance Officer in Punta Gorda need not travel to Belize City for training. This will expand training opportunities while saving cost.

It is our aim to organize through an inter-ministerial committee and the HRDC a celebration of Public Service Day on June 23 to show case our worth through our various tasks. On that day we hope to recognize and value Our officers by recognizing and rewarding excellence and consistency in the practice of good governance principles.

On behalf of the staff let me welcome you to OUR HOUSE—*Mi casa es tu casa*. Do stop by ask questions and share initiatives.

Thank You
Myrtle Palacio