

# Building Capacity to Create and Sustain Accreditation Infrastructure to facilitate the CSME

CUT / BUT/UNICEF Educational Conference  
Barbados  
3-5 December, 2008

*Myrna C. Bernard*  
*Director, Human Development*  
*CARICOM Secretariat*

# The CSME

## A single enlarged economic space

Macro-economic and sectoral policy coordination

Free movement of goods, services, capital, technology, labour

Functional cooperation

Common external trade policy

Non-discriminatory access to the region's resources & markets for CARICOM nationals

### The Single Market

# CSME - The Context

In deciding to establish the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), The Heads of Government noted the

‘need to work expeditiously together to deepen the integration process and strengthen the Caribbean Community in all of its dimensions to respond to the challenges and opportunities presented by the global economy’



Building, out of separate national economies, a single, integrated, globally competitive, modern market economy within an economic space called the CSME

# The CSME

## Framework

- Greater opportunities for employment, investment, production and trade for Caribbean people
- Competitive products of better quality and prices
- Improved services provided by enterprises and individuals
- Greater opportunity for travel for nationals to study and work in CARICOM countries

## Expected Outcomes

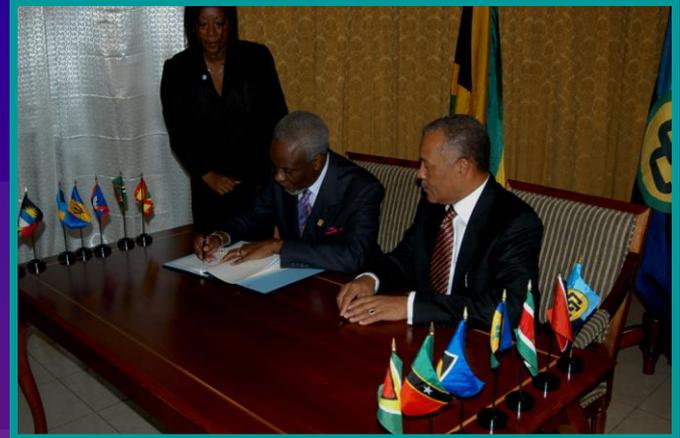
- Full employment of labour and other factors of production
- Improved standards of living and work
- Accelerated, co-ordinated and sustained economic development
- Increased economic leverage and effectiveness *vis a vis* other states, groups of states and entities

**January 2006** - Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas entered into force through ratification by twelve Member States

**January 2006** - The CSM became operational; six Member States signed the Agreement

**July 2006** – Six other Member States signed the Agreement

- The Bahamas is not a part of the CSM
- Haiti is not yet a member of the CSM
- Montserrat is awaiting entrustment



# The Single Market

**Single  
Market  
Policy  
Framework  
is in place**

**Regimes  
exist for :**

**Free intra-CARICOM movement of  
goods**

Intra-CARICOM trade accounts for nearly  
20% of merchandise exports and 12%  
of merchandise imports

**Free intra-CARICOM trade in  
services**

**Free movement of capital and skills**

**Right of establishment  
Access to land**

The agreements made among CARICOM Governments concerning free movement of persons can be divided into two broad categories

The facilitation of travel  
(Hassle free travel)  
Promoting closer union  
and understanding among  
the people of CARICOM

The Free Movement of  
Skilled Labour



CARICOM Nationals have the right to seek work or engage in gainful employment in any CARICOM Member State without the need to obtain a work permit



To be eligible, a person must be involved in legitimate economic activity in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, either as a wage earner or non wage earner



Currently, there are no provisions for free movement solely for purposes of residency or permanent naturalisation or citizenship.

# Eligible Categories

-  ***University graduates***
-  ***Media workers***
-  ***Sportspersons***
-  ***Artistes***
-  ***Musicians***
-  ***Non-Graduate Teachers and Nurses***
-  ***Persons with qualifications equivalent to an Associate Degree***
-  ***Artisans***

# Implications of Global Economy

- Emergence of new economic activities based on information and knowledge
- Demand for higher quality of goods and services
- New jobs associated with higher technology occupations requiring higher entry-level skills
- Rapidly changing skill sets required for jobs
- Growing demand for higher education

# Decisions of 18<sup>th</sup> HGC

 18<sup>th</sup> HGC devoted an entire session to HRD and several mandates, with attendant targets set. These helped to shape and focus policy in MS over the past decade

- Universal Secondary Education
- Increasing the enrolment in tertiary
- Attention to Gender issues
- Learning outcomes for primary level
- Multi-lingualism
- Early Childhood Development
- TVET

# CARICOM Tertiary Landscape

- **Increased access – Upgrading of Community Colleges**
- **New Universities**
- **UWI Open Campus**
- **Increasing mobility of students, programmes and providers across national borders**
- **Increased private investment in the provision of higher education**
- **Networking of Institutions -CKLN**



CARICOM

# CARICOM Tertiary Landscape cont'd

-  Proliferation of extra-regional providers of services
-  Greater diversification of qualifications and certificates
-  New forms of delivering education including distance, web-based etc



# Imperatives

-  **Harmonisation of tertiary systems**
-  **Articulation among programmes in institutions**
-  **Regional Qualification Frameworks**
-  **Development and operationalisation of Quality assurance systems**
-  **National and regional accreditation**

# Imperatives cont'd

- **Enhancing the quality of Tertiary education available to students in the Region**
- **Building capacity of higher education institutions to manage and enhance quality and thus establish institutional autonomy**
- **Systems for credentialing of skills**
- **Portability of qualifications**

# A Tertiary Education System

- **The Critical challenge is the development of a SYSTEM of Tertiary education in the region**
  - Universities
  - Community Colleges
  - Teacher Education Institutions
  - Technical colleges
- **Seamless Qualification Frameworks**
- **Coordinated approaches to Quality Assurance**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Distinctive frame factor</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Mature</b>	<p><b>Diverse and extensive HE system</b></p> <p><b>HE systems have own agendas</b></p> <p><b>Government role participative</b></p> <p><b>Well entrenched HE system</b></p>	<p><b>Sweden</b></p> <p><b>Denmark</b></p> <p><b>United States</b></p> <p><b>Australia</b></p> <p><b>United Kingdom</b></p>

<b>Category</b>	<b>Distinctive frame factor</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Evolving</b>	<p><b>Some well established HE institutions</b></p> <p><b>Government has a key agenda</b></p> <p><b>Wide qualitative range of HE institutions</b></p> <p><b>EQAAs established and have status</b></p>	<p><b>India</b></p> <p><b>South Africa</b></p> <p><b>Trin. &amp; Tob.</b></p> <p><b>Jamaica</b></p> <p><b>Malaysia</b></p>

<b>Category</b>	<b>Distinctive frame factor</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Embryonic</b>	<b>Limited range of HE institutions</b>  <b>Government has a hegemonic role</b>  <b>EQAAs relatively new</b>  <b>Mushrooming private sector</b>	<b>Botswana</b>  <b>Guyana</b>  <b>Vietnam</b>



# Critical Issues

## Ashton & Stanley-Marcano:

- ❑ In order to ensure that EQA meets the needs of its many stakeholders in “emerging” and “embryonic” systems, it is important to ensure that due attention be paid to factors such
  - ❑ Level of development of the tertiary system
  - ❑ Technical and administrative capacity in
    - the responsible ministries
    - tertiary institution themselves
  - ❑ TLI s often lacking in the fundamental infrastructure necessary for supporting quality education.
  - ❑ Limited experience and knowledge of tertiary education in the responsible government ministries



# QA - Critical Issues cont'd

- ❑ Ensuring wider focus on accountability, equivalency and managerial control, as the defining elements of quality and the strategies adopted to assure it
- ❑ Governments and stakeholders other than the TLIs have legitimate expectations in the quality assurance
- ❑ Govt as facilitator
- ❑ Need to guard against top down approaches to assuring quality assurance
- ❑ TLIs need to occupy a central role in the process

# Main outputs - QA & Accreditation Systems

- 📖 **Accountability** – to those who pay for tertiary education inter alia, State, individuals and their families and employers.
- 📖 **Information** - for those who need to know about the standards that are achieved by students. This includes employers, governments and potential students themselves.
- 📖 **Enhancement** – of the quality of educational provision, through learning from identified strengths and weaknesses, and the sharing and dissemination of good practice, both within and between institutions -  
London

# Effects of Quality Assurance

- ❑ QA systems have caused academic institutions to give greater attention to issues of effective teaching and learning.
- ❑ Degree completion rates have improved in some systems
- ❑ Institutional management has improved
- ❑ Strategic planning has been strengthened
- ❑ Programmes have become more responsive to changing needs.



# Purposes and External Quality Assurance (EQA)

- Safeguarding of national academic standards for higher education
- Accreditation of programmes and/or institutions
- User protection
- public provision of independently-verified information (quantitative and qualitative) about programmes or institutions
- Improvement and enhancement of quality



# Accreditation

“accredit” means the according of recognition by a competent authority on the basis of an informed evaluation, that the programmes of study offered by an institution or service provider and any award it confers satisfy regionally prescribed or recognised standards and “reaccredit” and “accreditation” shall be construed accordingly

IGA establishing the Regional Accreditation Agency



CARICOM

# Accreditation Infrastructure



## Major Elements:

- National Accreditation Bodies
- Regional Accreditation Agency
- CARICOM Accreditation Agency for Medicine and Health Professions
- Professional Bodies (*Regional Teacher Education Council*)
- Legal and Policy Frameworks



CARICOM

# Accreditation Infrastructure

- Development of a Quality Assurance Culture
- Capacity building at all levels
- Consistent standards and codes of practice
- Partnerships among TLIs – ACTI / CKLN
- Employers
- Trade unions
- Partnerships/Memberships in Regional and International Quality Assurance Bodies
- Sensitised publics



# Rationale for Regional Arrangements

- ❑ **National and Regional Accreditation**
- ❑ **Regional arrangement built upon national mechanisms**
- ❑ **A regional superstructure would be costly and cumbersome**
- ❑ **Regional mechanism assigned a coordinating role, with national bodies working to common criteria and standards**



# NABs – Need for Common Criteria

■ Assurance that standards of achievement of students on comparable programmes are equivalent -necessary for the mutual recognition of qualifications, especially in context of the CSME.

■ Need to avoid “regulatory arbitrage”.

i.e. Providers of services ( especially overseas providers) moving their locations so as to take advantage of what is seen as the least demanding regulatory regime

Could be a temptation for some countries, given the economic benefits that can flow from the presence of an overseas campus - Ashton et al



# Status

- ❑ **Intergovernmental Agreement now open for signature by Governments**
- ❑ **Several NABs established**
  - Model Bill developed to facilitate establishment National Accreditation Bodies**
- ❑ **Capacity building undertaken for NABs over the past five years (COMSEC - critical partner)**



CARICOM

# Regional Accreditation Agency

## Objectives

-  *Promotion and development of a quality assurance ethos as the foundation for the development of a seamless, efficient tertiary education and training system in the Caribbean Community*
-  *Ensurance of the enhancement and acceleration of economic and social development in the Community through the widening of access to quality tertiary institutions and the awards, programmes and courses of such bodies.*



CARICOM

# Functions of the Agency (i)

- *Facilitation of the movement of skilled persons within the Caribbean Community*
- Securing and maintaining international recognition and negotiating and concluding international agreements with third state entities for mutual recognition *of post secondary or tertiary institutions and the awards, programmes and courses of such bodies.*

# Functions of the Agency (ii)

- ❑ **Develop guidelines for good practices in tertiary education and assist national accreditation/ equivalency /quality assurance bodies in discharging their responsibilities**
- ❑ **Develop core criteria, *standards and procedures for facilitating the development of a tertiary education quality assurance system in the Caribbean Region***
- ❑ **Collaborate with national accreditation bodies, professional bodies and other relevant bodies to develop training programmes designed to create a regional cadre of trained assessors**

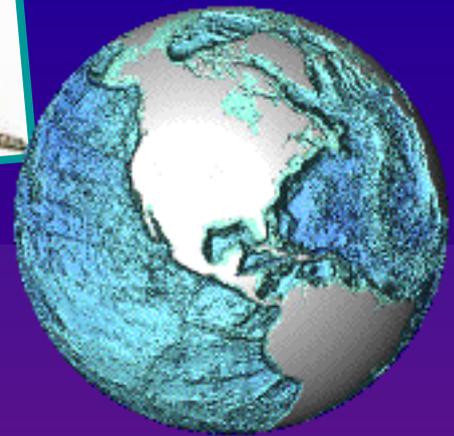
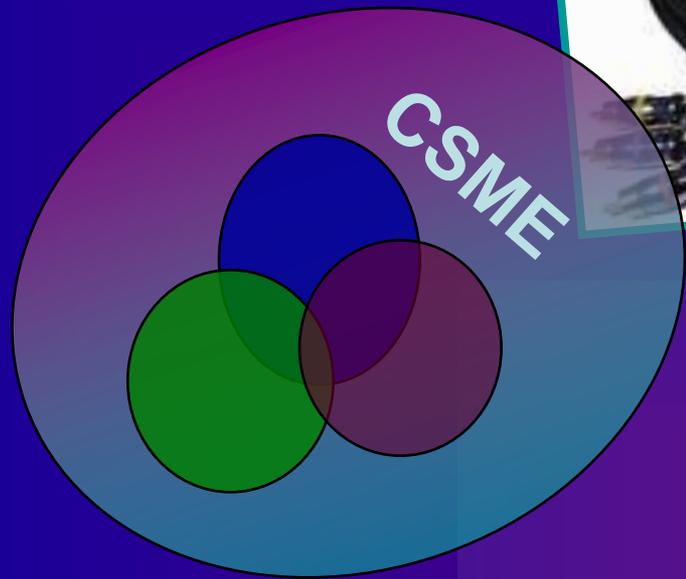


# Functions of the Agency (iii)

- **Provide guidance / guidelines for the evaluation of foreign qualifications and the provision of foreign providers**
- **Arrange to accredit institutions and accord equivalency to programmes and courses where involvement of the Agency is considered to be necessary**
- **Establish and maintain relations with quality assurance bodies in third states**
- **Conduct research and disseminate information**
- **Educate and inform stakeholders.**



CARICOM



**The CSME – intended to provide a platform and enabling environment for a more effective interface with the global economy**



CARICOM

# Beyond Equivalency

- **Need to necessary to demonstrate that achievement matches the world class standards expected by inward investors**
- **Necessary to demonstrate that standards are comparable with those of partner countries in a regional Integrated market**
- **Necessary to demonstrate that tertiary education is performing effectively in meeting national economic and social needs.**



CARICOM

*Thank You*