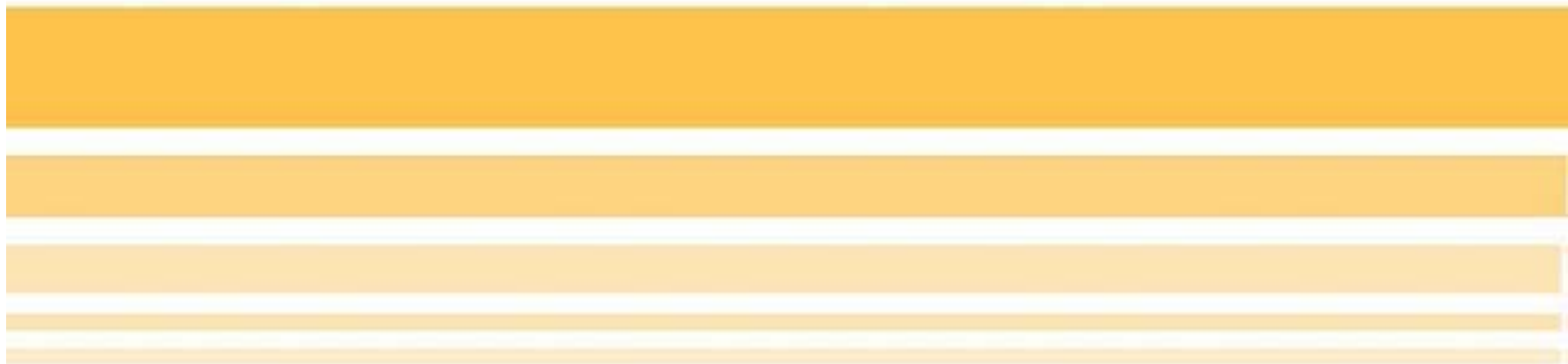




**CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE ON  
HIGHER EDUCATION**

APRIL 11 -13, 2010

PARAMARIBO, SURINAME



**CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS**



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

..... IESALC  
..... International Institute of UNESCO  
..... for Higher Education in  
..... Latin America and the Caribbean

..... UNESCO Kingston  
..... Cluster Office for the Caribbean



# Higher education in small states

Opportunities and Challenges

**Mark Bray**

University of Hong Kong  
(formerly UNESCO-IIEP)

# The small-states lens

## Commonalities despite diversity

- Small states are states rather than just provinces or suburbs in larger countries
- But statehood exists in a context of dependency
- And with limited human resources



# The small-states lens

- Small states have distinctive social features (everyone seems to know everyone else)
- Personnel must be multifunctional
- Institutions may lack economies of scale
- Tensions of national, regional and international

→ A mixture of opportunities and challenges

# Changing contexts in the 21st century

- Globalization
- Technology
- Changing trade regimes and labour markets
- Economic crisis and volatility

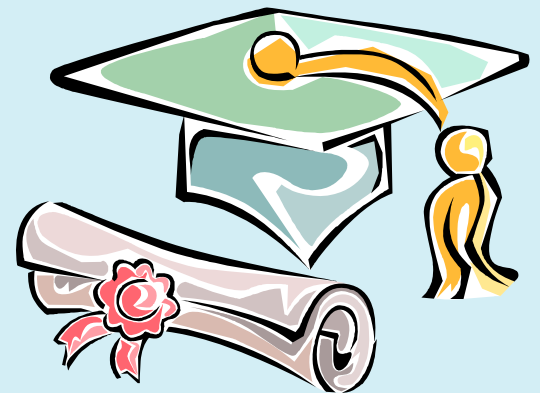


# Implications for higher education

- ▶ Every country wants a university (at least one...)
- ▶ But a university
  - with how many students,
  - with what teachers,
  - for what subjects, and
  - at what levels?

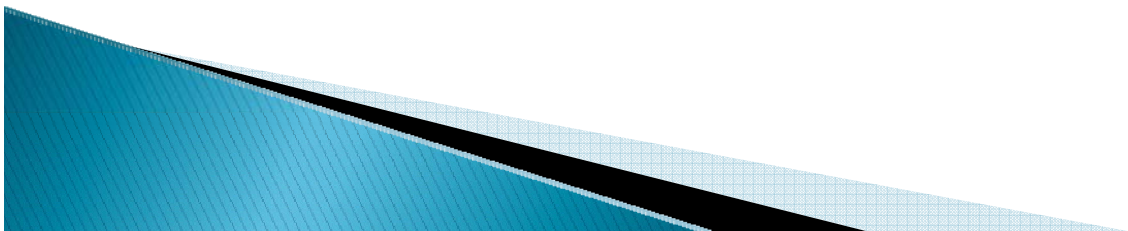


- ▶ What should be done
  - nationally,
  - regionally, and
  - through external institutions?
- ▶ What is the place of research?
- ▶ What arrangements for off-shore institutions?



# Strategies for gaining economies of scale

- ▶ Multi-level institutions
- ▶ Multi-faceted institutions
- ▶ International recruitment
- ▶ Regional cooperation
- ▶ Distance education



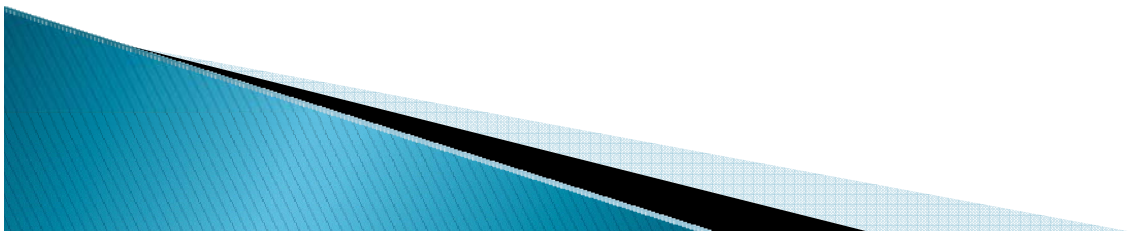


# Where does the pressure for expansion come from?

Universal primary education

→ Universal secondary education

→ Universal tertiary education?

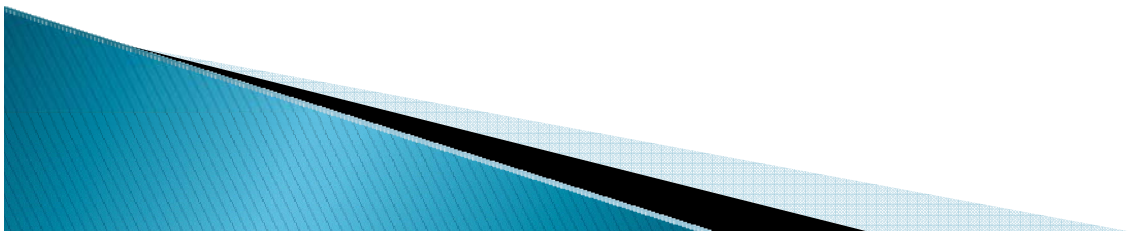


“The Caribbean is way behind the level of participation at tertiary level that obtains in the more competitive countries of the world.”

Bhoendradatt Tewarie

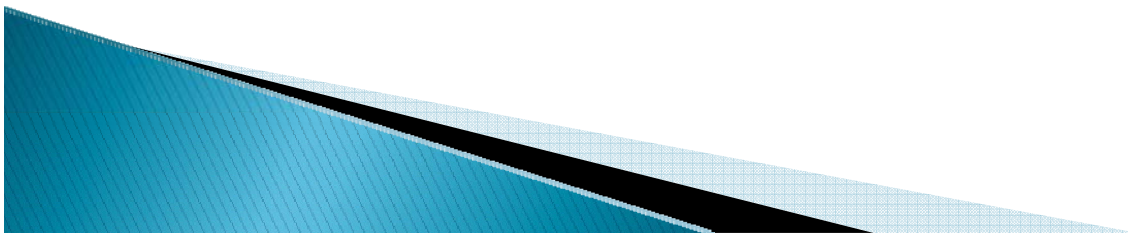
**Do you agree?**

- ▶ If so, what should be done about it?
- ▶ And where will the resources come from?



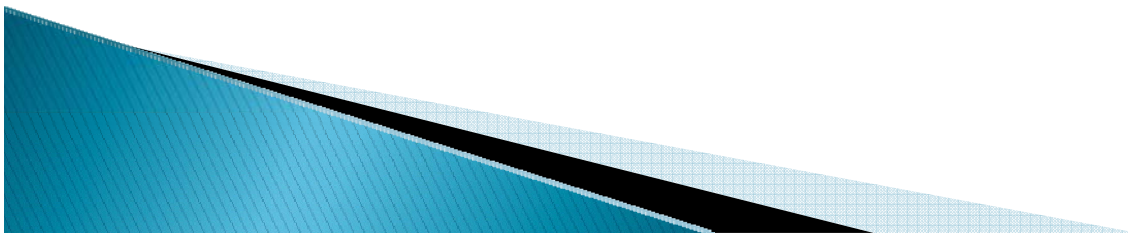
# Private tertiary education

- ▶ Increasingly important
- ▶ Diversified offer of private providers
- ▶ Small states traditionally open to cross-border provision



# Need for system-wide coordination

- ▶ Creation of specific administrative structures for tertiary education
- ▶ Strategic planning exercises
- ▶ External quality assurance and qualifications frameworks



# Structures for Quality Assurance

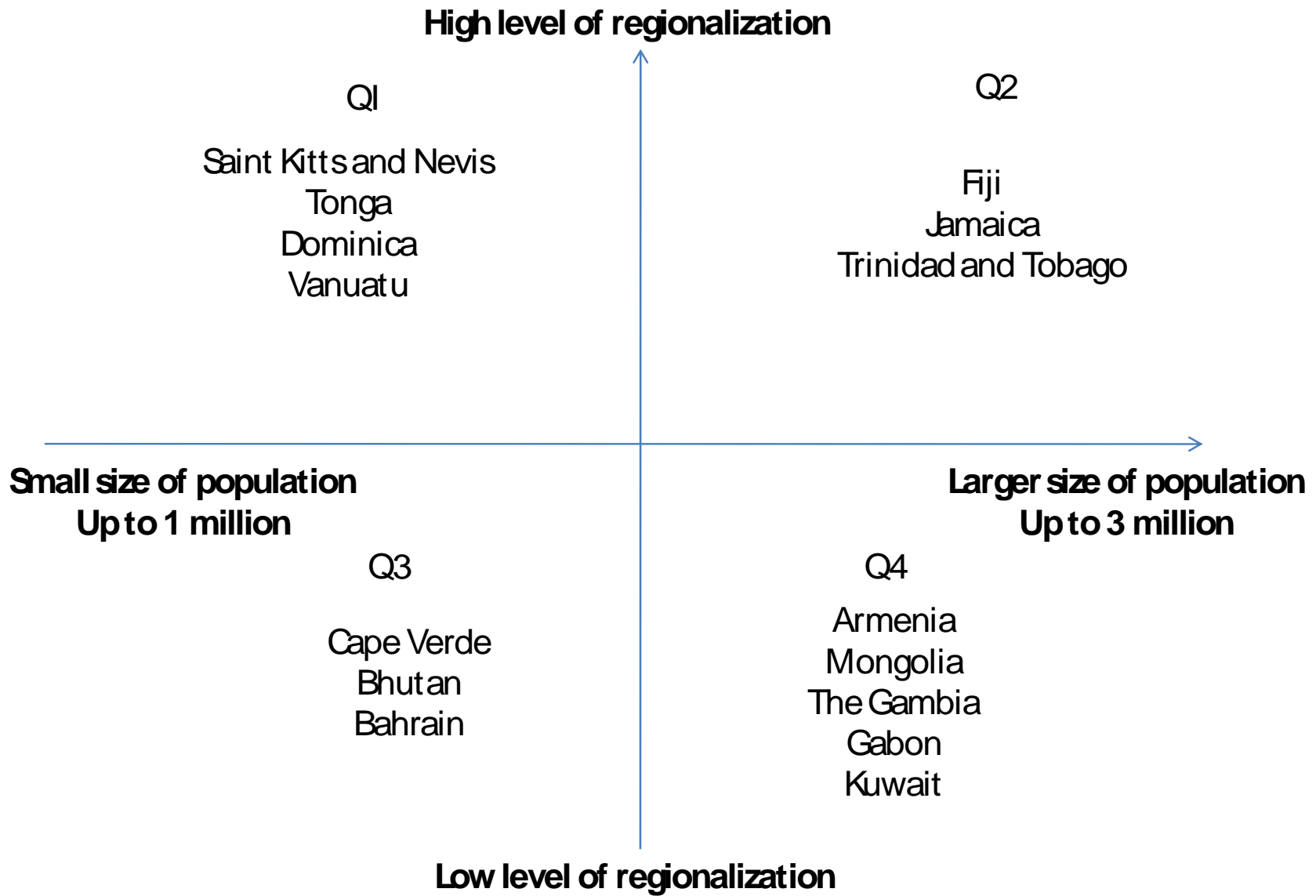
	<b>Multi-functional</b>	<b>Multi-level</b>	<b>Regional</b>
<b>Barbados</b>	Barbados Accreditation Council		UWI, CARICOM
<b>Dominica</b>	National Accreditation Board		UWI, CARICOM
<b>St. Lucia</b>		TVET and Accreditation Unit	UWI, CARICOM
<b>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</b>	Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago		UWI, CARICOM
<b>The Bahamas</b>	National Accreditation and Equivalency of the Bahamas		UWI, CARICOM
<b>Belize</b>	National Accreditation Council*		UWI, CARICOM

# Tension between regional and national policy agendas

Caribbean patterns can usefully be compared with:

- South Pacific
- Southern Africa
- Gulf
- South Asia
- Other locations

# Policy Quadrants



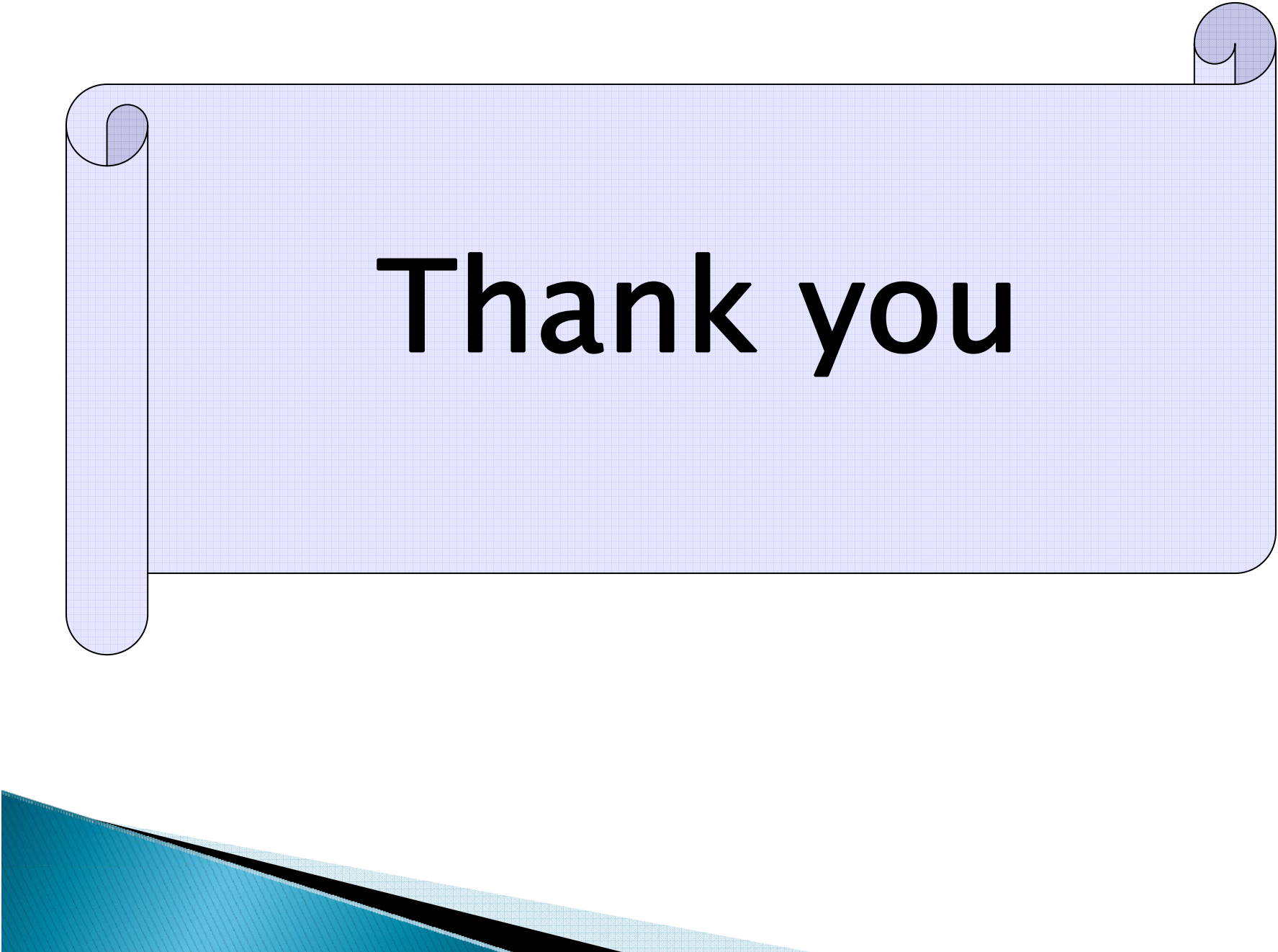
# Policy priorities and options

Quadrant	Q1 high regionalisation/ low population	Q2 high regionalisation/ high population	Q3 low regionalisation/ low population	Q4 low regionalisation/ high population
<b>Policy priorities</b>	Institution-building Regulation	Institution-building Regulation Integration and articulation	Regulation + Institution-building	Regulation + Institution-building Integration and articulation
<b>Sources of solutions</b>	National and regional solutions for regulation	National and regional solutions for regulation, integration and articulation	Solutions for regulation from neighbouring countries, international quality assurance services	Solution for regulation from neighbouring countries, international quality assurance services



# Four Conclusions

1. Small states have distinctive characteristics, albeit on a spectrum of scale
2. Small size presents both opportunities and challenges
3. Pictures are evolving
4. Useful lessons can be learned from comparison:
  - within the Caribbean, and
  - between the Caribbean and other parts of the world



**Thank you**