



**INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION OF  
PEOPLE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT**



**(FORMERLY ICEVI NEWSLINE)**

**APRIL 2015**

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## Message from the President

Can I add my congratulations to: Nafisa Baboo, Light for the World representative on our Executive Committee, who has been elected to the Board of the Global Campaign for Education; Praveena Sukhraj, ICEVI Principal Officer, who made a presentation on behalf of ICEVI and the World Blind Union at the day of general discussion on Article 24 of the UNCRPD held on 15th April in Geneva, and has also been appointed to represent ICEVI on the Board of the Accessible Books Consortium hosted by WIPO; and Kay Ferrell, Chair of our North America / Caribbean Region, who delivered a statement at the UN ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) High Level Segment for NGO's on Managing the Transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals on 10 July. It is excellent news that ICEVI's profile is being raised in all these forums.

We had a very good meeting of the Executive Committee in London on 8-9 April. Headlines included:

- It was agreed that the regions should be registered as separate companies in London with ICEVI global remaining the overarching body and flexibility for individual countries to register locally with the agreement of the Executive Committee. ICEVI's constitution should also be amended to permit some variation between regions in the priority accorded to different activities.
- It was generally agreed that there should be some increase in membership fees. It was considered that the organisational membership fee should be increased with immediate effect, the size of the increase to be recommended by the Principal Officers. As regards the fee for International Partner Members, there was support for the view that this should increase by 2 % each year to allow for inflation, but it was agreed that the matter should be discussed individually with International Partner Members. Individual membership fees should be reviewed in consultation with the regional chairs. INGDO's based in particular regions might be invited to join the appropriate regional committee, and smaller INGDO's who are not members of ICEVI's Executive

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Committee may also be charged an appropriate fee to become voting members of the regional committee.

- It was learned that a memorandum of understanding had been signed between the East Asia Region and the Special Education Regional Centre of the South East Asia Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO-SEN), which should provide an excellent forum in which to promote our agenda. Dr Mani was invited to attend their internal directors meeting on 8-10 June, and I will be giving the inaugural address to the regional conference on special education which SEAMEO-SEN are organising in Bangkok at the end of July.
- It was agreed that ICEVI should publish the Educator and other publications in digital form only in the future and gradually phase out the production of hard copy versions. The Secretariat is already actively exploring the logistics of actioning this.

Finally, I had a very successful visit to Mauritius at the end of April with a view to establishing a pilot of our technology initiative there. We met with the Global Rainbow Foundation, a local NGO who will lead the pilot for us, and were warmly welcomed by the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministers of Education and Social Security, as well as the UK High Commission, who all offered their support. We met the Chief Executive of Standard Chartered Bank and his staff, who were also very encouraging. They said we had come at just the right time in terms of the funding priorities of their Seeing Is Believing initiative, and if we could make things work in Mauritius, the initiative could be rolled out to other countries in Africa. Importantly, we also visited the local blind school, where it was clear there was scope for the more effective use of technology.

*C. M. Low*

**Colin Low**

President, ICEVI

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### **EFA-VI Global Campaign – Current Status**

The global campaign on Education for All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI) being implemented by ICEVI, acting in partnership with the World Blind Union (WBU) had facilitated the enrolment of over 105,000 students with visual impairment since its inception in 2007 and ICEVI reiterates that this additional enrolment is due to the collective work of the INGDOs, local Governments, DPOs and local NGOs. Irrespective of the actual number, there is a strong conviction among all stakeholders in ICEVI regions that the enrolment of children with visual impairment is certainly increasing and the EFA-VI Campaign had its significant impact on this increase. The ICEVI Regions also conducted over 650 capacity building programmes for training nearly 60,000 teachers since the inception of the campaign.

In the light of ICEVI's focus on advocacy with mainstream organisations, more countries within the ICEVI regions will be involved in the campaign activities in the future. Good practices of the existing EFA-VI countries will also be emulated in other countries within the regions and the countries already supported by ICEVI for a significant period will be asked to absorb the campaign activities within the overall education programmes.

### **ICEVI at the General Assembly of GCE**

The ICEVI has become an International Member of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE). This will be an appropriate platform for advocating disability agenda in the mainstream education programmes. ICEVI underlines the importance for the ICEVI regions to work with the National Coalitions of Education to strengthen the EFA-VI activities at regional and national levels. Praveena Sukhraj, Principal Officer and Martin Osangiri Okiyo, Regional Coordinator, Africa region represented ICEVI at the General Assembly of the GCE held in Johannesburg, South Africa in February 2015. Periodic updates on GCE activities will be shared with the EXCO members and also posted on ICEVI website.

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## Update on WBU-ICEVI General Assembly

The World Blind Union (WBU) and the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) will be jointly holding their General Assemblies at the Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando, Florida, USA, from 18<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> August 2016. The theme of the General Assembly is **Human Rights and the CRPD – What Lies Ahead** and the Schedule is as follows:

- Thursday, August 18 – Meetings of the WBU Executive Committee and Assembly Committees
- Friday, August 19 to Monday, August 22 – WBU Assembly proceedings
- Monday, August 22 – ICEVI Opening Ceremony, ICEVI Papers Day and Gala Dinner
- Tuesday, August 23 – Wednesday, August 24 – Joint WBU-ICEVI concurrent sessions, ICEVI Regional Committee meetings, WBU/ICEVI Closing Ceremony
- Thursday, August 25 – ICEVI General Assembly and Executive Committee meeting

## ICEVI Day at the WBU-ICEVI General Assembly

The WBU-ICEVI Joint Assemblies will include an ICEVI Day on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016 that will be dedicated to conference-style papers and workshops. The theme of the ICEVI Day is “Education for All Children with Visual Impairment: Beyond 2015”. The theme highlights the United Nations 2000-2015 education Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA) goals that have guided global and national efforts to achieve universal primary education and gender parity by 2015. With the 2015 MDGs deadline rapidly approaching, the United Nations and international community set to work to create a new global development and sustainability agenda. The Beyond 2015 education agenda encompasses a vision of access to all and rights-based perspectives on equity and inclusion. The Beyond 2015 education agenda includes particular attention to gender equity and overcoming all forms of discrimination in and through education.

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## Presentation Topics

Papers are invited on all aspects of education for children and youth with visual impairment including, but not limited to, the following:

- Parent and family perspectives, e.g. building family support systems, the role of parents in education, parent impact on community, formation of parent groups
- Early childhood intervention or Early childhood care and education (ECCE)
- Before-school or preschool education
- Awareness creation and advocacy in education of children with visual impairment
- Inclusion or inclusive educational practices
- Educational equity for girls and women
- Curriculum alignment or adapted instructional materials
- Access to curricular and extracurricular areas or the expanded core curriculum
- Teaching mathematics or science
- Literacy or alternative formats (braille, large print or electronic)
- Orientation and mobility
- Social, life or independent living skills
- Career education
- Access to sport, physical education or recreational activities
- Education options for out-of-school children with visual impairment
- Transitions: Home to school or school to adult life
- Education for children with visual and multiple disabilities (MDVI) or deafblindness
- Low vision
- Access to mainstream or adaptive/assistive technologies
- Innovation and emerging technologies
- Principles of universal design in education
- Innovation in the provision of support services or use of community resources
- Personnel preparation – education of teachers or other professionals
- Role models and mentors
- Higher education - opportunities and challenges
- Alternative education models for young adults
- Tackling adult illiteracy among persons with visual impairment

Please visit ICEVI website [www.icevi.org](http://www.icevi.org) for more details

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## **IDP Africa Forum**

The IDP Africa Forum which was scheduled for October 2014 will be reconvened on 4-8 October 2015 in Kampala, Uganda. ICEVI will organise a number of technical sessions at the Forum besides conducting its executive committee meeting and also re-launching the Global Campaign. The technical sessions will give an opportunity to understand the network activities of ICEVI, particularly with International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) and the partnership with the SouthEast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation Regional Centre for Special Education (SEAMEO SEN). In addition to these, ICEVI will also conduct key sessions covering multiple disabilities, early intervention, EFA-VI Global Campaign, Low Vision, Teaching of Mathematics etc. Subject experts and members of the ICEVI executive committee will be conducting these sessions and ICEVI hopes that the Africa Forum will certainly serve as an excellent platform for the delegates of the Africa region to know more about the ICEVI activities. The call for papers for the Africa Forum is open and the information can be accessed by logging onto the link <http://www.perkins.org/international/africa/africa-forum/abstracts>.

## **Regional Development of ICEVI**

The ICEVI Executive Committee meeting was held in London on 5-8 April 2015. Amongst administrative matters members had a detailed discussion about the development of ICEVI regions. There was unanimous view that ICEVI regions should be registered as independent legal entities in London. A model constitution for the regions will be formulated and the regions will have consultations before finalizing the regional constitutions. Hans Welling, Advisor, Regional Development will lead the consultations of the regional committees / steering groups to take this initiative forward. The ICEVI constitution will also be amended at the next Executive Committee meeting and published in The Educator, ICEVI's official magazine, so that the changes can come into effect from the next general assembly of ICEVI in 2016.

The regional chairs suggested the following process for a strong regional development:

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- Country level planning is key to the success of ICEVI regions and therefore, country level contacts should be established.
  - Regional and (sub-regional plans wherever necessary) should be prepared based on key priority areas of the region.
  - The implementation plans of the regions can be submitted to INGDOs, funding agencies, and individual donors for support.
  - The existing procedures in the election of regional chairs, as described in the constitution of ICEVI, may continue.
  - The regional committee should have adequate representation from key stakeholders of the region.
  - INGDOs in the regions can be made members of the regional committees.
  - Regional chairperson may be the one who has professional credentials, strong influence in the region, and one who has faith in the principles of ICEVI. The regional chair may also have an institutional support. He/she should have sufficient time for the work of ICEVI. Ability to develop linkages with Governments and local organisations should also be considered as a desired quality for the regional chairperson.
  - ICEVI should try to provide administrative support to strengthen the work of regional chairs. Funds for this purpose may be mobilized through membership, INGDOs present in the region and other potential funding sources.

### Higher Education project of ICEVI

The Higher Education project of ICEVI being implemented in Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, The Philippines, Vietnam and Laos has benefitted more than 1,400 students with visual impairment. The Nippon Foundation, which has been supporting this project, is pleased with the outcomes and decided to extend support for additional 3 years (2015-18) with a special focus on creating employment opportunities. A meeting of the country coordinators of the higher education project will be held in Bali, Indonesia in September 2015 in conjunction with the East Asia Regional Conference of ICEVI. The annual report of the higher education project can be accessed from ICEVI website [www.icevi.org](http://www.icevi.org)

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## ICEVI Technology Initiative

Access to information is at the heart of EFA-VI Global campaign. ICEVI has formed a strategic partnership with the DAISY Consortium to provide practical solutions for print disabled people. Colin Low, President ICEVI and Richard Orme, CEO, DAISY are leading the technology initiative and made a visit to Mauritius recently to work on a pilot project. The emerging strategy of this initiative has three drivers - "kit", "content" and "confidence". "Kit" refers to the devices we need for accessing information using ICT. "Content" refers to the materials we need to access in an accessible form. Formerly these were textbooks in hard copy, but now they are in electronic form so that they can be accessed flexibly in braille, large print or synthesised speech, as required. And "confidence" refers to the skills needed to use this kit and content with confidence, both on the part of users and trainers. ICEVI's role is a coordinating one and our aim is, by acting as a facilitator, to deliver our objective in conjunction with our international partners and other stakeholders. More details will be published in the future issues of The Educator.

## ICEVI East Asia Regional Conference

ICEVI East Asia took lead in implementing the EFA-VI Global Campaign. Besides the launch of the Campaign in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2006, Vietnam from the East Asia region became the first focus country of the global campaign and the country has demonstrated how disability services can be integrated into the mainstream education programmes. The region is also implementing higher education for persons with visual impairment in collaboration with the Nippon Foundation which is another flagship programme of ICEVI. In order to have further interaction and exposure about these activities, the ICEVI East Asia region will be holding its regional conference in Bali, Indonesia from 28<sup>th</sup> September to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015. The title of the conference is "Education For All Children with Visual Impairment Beyond 2015 – Asian Perspectives".

Over 300 delegates representing the countries in the East Asia region and also international bodies working in the region will be participating

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in this regional conference. The Nippon Foundation which is supporting ICEVI's Higher Education project in the East Asia region will be given a special award on this occasion to recognise their solid support to ICEVI over the years.

### **ICEVI at the UNCRPD Education Discussions**

Praveena Sukhraj, Principal Officer, ICEVI represented both the World Blind Union and ICEVI at the Day of General Discussion on Article 24 of the UNCRPD held on 15 April in Geneva. She made a presentation on behalf of ICEVI and WBU, which was well received. ICEVI and WBU are pleased that many of the recommendations she put forward in the presentation were included as recommendations that will be adopted by the committee, as they were highlighted by the UNCRPD rapporteurs in the Report Back session.

### **Meeting with the President, Lions Clubs International**

The Vision Alliance Network consisting of IAPB, ICEVI and WBU had a meeting with Mr. Barry Palmer, President, Lions Clubs International in London in March 2015 to discuss the possibilities of joint programmes between the Lions movement and the Vision Alliance. The Vision Alliance is encouraging the regional contacts of IAPB, ICEVI and WBU to get involved with the Local Lions clubs to prepare proposals in the areas of education and rehabilitation that can be sent to the Lions Clubs International for funding.

### **ICEVI – SEAMEO SEN Collaboration in 2015**

In continuation of the MOU signed by ICEVI with the Special Education Regional Centre of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), which is a key forum of ministers to promote education related policy issues, the following joint activities will be organised by ICEVI and the SEAMEO SEN in 2015.

- ICEVI will play an active role with the SEAMEO-SEN in organising a Regional Conference on Special Education in Bangkok in July 2015.
- ICEVI will organise a series of capacity building programmes in countries within the ASEAN region in 2015.

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- ICEVI will try to get a slot in the Conference of Education Ministers of this region, whenever it is conducted, to speak on ICEVI activities and the work pertaining to the EFA-VI Global Campaign.

### **Marianne Riggio – the new Editor of The Educator**

Dr. Aubrey Webson, Editor of The Educator, has been appointed as the Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations in late 2014 and therefore, Marianne Riggio, Coordinator of Educational Leadership Program and International Campus-related training from the Perkins International took over as the Editor of The Educator. Marianne has vast international experience in education of children with visual impairment and we are sure she will do a great job as the Editor of ICEVI's publication. She will work on the July 2015 issue of The Educator which will focus on Innovative Education Practices. *Welcome Marianne to the ICEVI family!*

### **Nafisa Baboo on GCE Board**

Nafisa Baboo, a member of the ICEVI Executive Committee representing the Light for the World has been elected as a member of the Board of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE). ICEVI constituency congratulates Nafisa for this great recognition and ICEVI is glad that Nafisa will use this international platform to push the disability agenda in mainstream education programmes. ICEVI regions will also be involved in GCE activities, particularly with the celebration of the ongoing Global Action Week activities. More information about GCE and ICEVI partnership will be published in the subsequent publication of ICEVI and will also be posted on ICEVI website [www.icevi.org](http://www.icevi.org).

### **ICEVI Publications go Digital**

ICEVI has been bringing out a number of publications every year that include the ICEVI E-News, The Educator, Annual Reports - General and Higher Education, Handbook, Guidelines for countries in implementing EFA-VI etc. The Executive Committee which met in April 2015 recommended that the publications can be made in digital form to reach out to a large number of people around the world. In response

to this recommendation, a digital copy of the January 2015 issue of The Educator was sent to over 3500 contacts throughout the world. The responses are encouraging and ICEVI will bring out more digital publications in the future.

### Potential topics for The Educator

ICEVI has been focusing on thematic issues such as inclusion, teacher preparation, technology, early intervention, low vision, Braille literacy, etc., for The Educator and the past issues can be accessed through the website of ICEVI [www.icevi.org](http://www.icevi.org). Those who have suggestions with the new topics for the future issues of The Educator may contact **Marianne Riggio** ([Marianne.Riggio@Perkins.org](mailto:Marianne.Riggio@Perkins.org)), Editor and **MNG Mani** ([sgicevi@vsnl.net](mailto:sgicevi@vsnl.net)), Associate Editor.

**ICEVI E-News comes to your mailbox in May and November every year. Please provide us with the e-mail addresses of individuals and organizations that may be interested in receiving the ICEVI E-News and The Educator.**

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