



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

NEWSLINE

April 2005

Message from the President

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

As you read this issue of The ICEVI Newsline you will learn why I feel that the past six months have been among the busiest in recent memory.

The momentum of ICEVI's work has been building for some time now and for me the past six months have been among the busiest and most exhausting in recent memory. However, a bit of exhaustion is a small price to pay for what has been a very gratifying six months.

Since October, I have had the pleasure of participating in three ICEVI regional conferences in Central America, West Asia and East Asia. I can not begin to tell you what a wonderful feeling it is to see our regions becoming so active. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate Lucia Piccione (Latin America), Bhushan Punani (West Asia), Mavis Campos (East Asia) and the countless ICEVI members who worked with them to make these regional conferences such a success. A special salute to Mani, our hard working Secretary General who has also contributed so much to these achievements.

Although these regional conferences have been most gratifying nothing has given me more pleasure than the outcomes of a recent meeting that I had the honor of co-chairing in Vietnam. Under the leadership of ICEVI's Vietnamese country co-ordinator Dr. Ng. Duc Minh, Deputy Director for Special Education, National Institute for Educational Strategies and Curriculum, ICEVI, along with Christoffel Blindenmission and the Overbrook-Nippon Network on Educational Technology supported a very important meeting that developed and adopted a National Action Plan for education of children with visual impairment for the period 2005-2015.

Key Vietnamese stakeholders from consumer organizations, special and inclusive schools and teacher training programs along with managers, researchers and policy makers gathered in Hanoi to discuss, debate, develop and adopt this National Action Plan. On the final day of the meeting the Vietnamese stakeholders were joined by representative from twelve international non-government organizations working in Vietnam on service provision to persons with disabilities. The development of such national plans and the collaboration between the government and non-government sectors to achieve "education for all" is a dream that ICEVI has for every country.

I hope the Vietnamese experience with it's concrete outcomes can be replicated by all countries that do not yet have a national action plan for education of children and youth with visual impairment. Certainly, this process will be critical to the success of ICEVI's emerging "Education For All" campaign that we hope to launch at the 12th World Conference in 2006 as the road forward in achieving the major objective of our strategic plan.

With my warm regards and those of all of my colleagues here at Overbrook, I remain,

Sincerely,



Larry Campbell
President

ICEVI EXCO MEETING

The third meeting of the Executive Committee of ICEVI for the current quadrennium was held in ONCE, Spain on 4-5 March 2005. The meeting gave an opportunity to further strengthen the good collaboration between ICEVI and ONCE. Besides reviewing ICEVI's global and regional activities, members spent considerable time discussing the need to develop leadership in ICEVI and suggested possible structural changes to provide continuity to ICEVI activities. The members also deliberated on the joint INGO education policy statement to work towards the overall global campaign of education for all by 2015 and opined that the ICEVI's draft paper on education for children with visual impairment can be used as a base document for the development of the joint INGO policy statement. Members also urged that certain concept papers on selected themes should be developed for wider circulation.

STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN ICEVI SUGGESTED

In order to strengthen the ICEVI's structure, the Principal Officers and members of the Executive Committee had a detailed discussion regarding the restructuring of ICEVI Principal Officers group. This discussion was based upon a draft paper prepared by the President and endorsed by the Principal Officers for the consideration of the Executive Committee. In summary the position paper suggested that with the creation of the post of a full-time Secretary General in 2002 the position of the Secretary has become redundant. It recommended that the post of Secretary be eliminated at the start of the new quadrennium in 2006. The discussion draft suggested that the organization would be better served by the creation of a new post of 2nd Vice President. The group also discussed the suggestion made in draft position paper that the post of Immediate Past President be eliminated, effective with the new quadrennium. Following the discussion the ExCo agreed to recommend eliminating the post of Secretary but rejected the idea of eliminating the post of Immediate Past President. With this proposed change, the Principal Officers under a new restructuring would include a President, Immediate Past-President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, and Treasurer. The EXCO endorsed this restructuring and resolved that the proposed changes and the consequent constitutional revisions be published in the January, 2006 issue of *The Educator* and be placed before the General Assembly of the ICEVI to be held in Malaysia in July 2006 for adoption.

SPEVI CONFERENCE

ICEVI closely works with the South Pacific Educators of the Visually Impaired (SPEVI) and takes active part in its biennial conferences. On January 9-14, 2005, the SPEVI conference was held in Melbourne and it was attended by Jill Keeffe, Regional Chair of ICEVI for the Pacific region and Mani, Secretary General, ICEVI. Both spoke at the plenary and concurrent sessions of the conference. A regional committee meeting of the ICEVI Pacific region was conducted on January 13, 2005

and it was resolved that a workshop on Mathematics be conducted to assist participants from the Pacific Islands. Discussions were also initiated on how the World Blind Union, organizations for the blind in Australia and New Zealand and ICEVI can work together for the promotion of educational services in the Pacific islands.

ICEVI ASSISTANCE TO IRAQ

A meeting of leading international non-governmental organizations was held in Amman, Jordan on March 15, 2005 to discuss ways to help persons with visual impairment in Iraq. The meeting was chaired by Arnt Holte, International Department, Norwegian Assn. of the Blind and Partially Sighted. Bhushan Punani, our Regional Chairperson, West Asia represented ICEVI at this meeting. ICEVI used this occasion to express our solidarity with blind children, youth and their families by donating, 375 Braille writing frames and financial assistance for the purchase of 300 tape records for children with visual impairment in Iraq. ICEVI has also pledged to organize capacity building programmes for teachers and other professionals to strengthen educational services for visually impaired children in Iraq.

WEST ASIA REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The regional conference of the West Asia region on "Inclusion: The Right Approach" was held in New Delhi, India from 23 to 25 January 2005. 374 participants attended the conference and it was the largest for any regional conference of ICEVI. The inaugural address by Larry Campbell, President, ICEVI entitled "Getting the Right Rights-Based Approach Right" stimulated discussions in the conference and participants deliberated on what measures should be in place to ensure the rights and equity to persons with visual impairment. In addition to the plenary sessions, 15 concurrent sessions were also conducted. Participants expressed that the presentations were of high quality. The classical dance and other cultural programmes performed by visually impaired children drawn from different parts of India, which exhibited their sheer skills was one of the highlights of the conference. Honorable Union Minister for Textiles Mr. Shanker Singh Vaghela, Mrs. Sarita Prasad, Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Mr. B.S. Baswan, Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development, etc., were some of the dignitaries who participated in various events of the conference. The conference resolved that the countries in the region should lobby at various levels to create equal educational opportunities for persons with visual impairment under the global campaign of ICEVI to achieve education for all children with visual impairment by 2015. The proceedings of the conference and other details are available on website: www.iceviwestasia.org

EAST ASIA REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The East Asia regional conference held in Jomtien, Thailand from 20 to 23 February was attended by delegates from 14 of the 19 countries of the region. The conference was inaugurated by Her Royal Highness Princess Soamsowalli. ICEVI President, Larry Campbell, delivered the presidential address and Bill Brohier, Past-President of ICEVI delivered the keynote address. Representatives of UNESCO and major international organizations made presentations at this seminar. In addition to the plenary and concurrent sessions, exhibitors were given an opportunity to talk to interested participants about their products. This session was considered by the participants useful in knowing about the latest technological advancement in the field of visual impairment. The 236 participants assembled in Jomtien resolved with one voice that networking in the region is a must to maximize educational opportunities for children with visual impairment. Considering the differences that exist between the countries in terms of resources, educational opportunities, etc., the affluent countries of the regions came forward to support the developing countries to expand educational opportunities. The region also echoed the mission of ICEVI that educational equity should be ensured first, which will lead to the attainment of the EFA goals. A meeting of the regional committee was also conducted during the conference and the country representatives resolved to strengthen ICEVI activities within their countries.

LEE FOUNDATION PROJECTS

In continuation of a successful year of implementation of 79 projects supported by Drs. Richard Charles and Esther Yewpick Lee Charitable Foundation in 2003, 62 projects were implemented in 2004 benefiting nearly 2700 teachers, parents and other professionals and over 35000 children with visual impairment. Impact oriented projects are being planned for future programme implementation. ICEVI values this collaboration with the Lee Foundation and looking forward to continued collaboration.

ICEVI-DBI MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

One of the strategic goals of ICEVI is to network with organizations around the world to serve all categories of children with visual impairment and also on a variety of service areas. In the past ICEVI has signed Memorandum of Understanding with the Hadley School for the Blind and the International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA) for the promotion of distance education and sports respectively. ICEVI and the Deafblind International have recently agreed to sign a MOU that articulates their shared values and outlines a series of collaborative actions. The EXCO welcomed the idea of such an MOU that is currently being circulated to the ICEVI EXCO and to DBI's council members for comment and suggestions. We anticipate that the MOU will be adopted by both organizations and signed in the near future.

THEMATIC CONCEPT PAPERS

ICEVI has also started preparing concept papers on various topics pertaining to services for children with visual impairment. To begin with, a paper on standards expected for effective education of children with visual impairment in regular schools will be prepared and circulated to the members of Executive Committee and other professionals for feedback. Based on the feedback for such a concept paper, other topics will also be selected and papers prepared.

ICEVI / ON-NET FOLLOW-UP WORKSHOP ON MATHEMATICS

ICEVI and ON-NET (Overbrook-Nippon Network on Educational Technology) have been working on a package of training materials to improve secondary level mathematics instruction to children with visual impairment. The draft package was developed in 2004 and 14 teacher educators / special teachers from Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Philippines, underwent a masters training programme in May 2004. Following this training, the master trainers conducted field trials of this package in their respective countries and they were brought back to Bangkok from 24 to 27 February 2005 for a follow-up workshop. The participants were of the view that the package, when available will be of great value to large numbers of special and regular classroom teachers as well to teacher of mathematics at the secondary level. The publication should be ready for production within a few months and available in the 3rd or 4th quarter of 2005. ICEVI hopes to use this new publication at regional level workshops to train master trainers in other regions over the next two years.

WORLD CONFERENCE - UPDATE

Prof. Dr. Ismail Salleh, President of the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB) and Chair of the 12th World Conference Program Committee, MAB Vice President, Mr. Liew Yoon Loy and Mr. George Thomas, Executive Director of MAB joined the recent ICEVI Executive Committee meeting in Madrid to provide ICEVI with an update on progress in organizing the local arrangements for the 12th World Conference. Their presentation made clear that the Host Committee has already made significant progress in planning for what is expected to be the largest world conference ever. Members will be quite pleased to see that the registration fee has been kept at a very reasonable level and that the Host Committee has lined up a range of hotel options all within close proximity to the Putra World Trade Centre at very competitive rates. The Host Committee is currently working on a series of social events that will allow us a taste of Malaysian hospitality in their beautiful and cosmopolitan capital city of Kuala Lumpur and a firsthand experience that will put real meaning behind the often heard phrase "Malaysia, truly Asia".

PROGRAM COMMITTEE - UPDATE

The Program Committee for the 12th World Conference met on 6-7 March 2005 in Madrid. Heather Mason chair of the program committee reported that all speakers for the plenary sessions have been confirmed and most coordinators of Focus Day workshop sessions have also been finalized. Abstracts for parallel and poster sessions have started coming in and we encourage all of our readers to visit the ICEVI website <www.icevi.org> for more information and instructions on **submitting abstracts** for consideration by the Program Committee. At the request of many potential conference participants, the Program Committee has made the decision to extend the deadline for submission of abstracts to **September 15, 2005**.

WORLD CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The “scholarship committee” headed by Grace Chan, Treasurer of ICEVI is in the process of generating funds to help make it possible for those who cannot otherwise afford to participate in the World Conference to do so. The final amount of support that will be available in the special fund will not be known until early 2006. However, we do know at this time that at least US \$ 100,000 will be available from a special reserve fund that was established at the start of this quadrennium. Decisions on how this support will be distributed will be made by Regional Chairs and their committees using guidelines from the Executive Committee. In addition to financial need and the ability of the applicant to raise part of the support from other sources the Committees have been asked to give priority to those applicants who have had a presentation accepted by the Program Committee. Allocation of available funds to each region will be based upon a formula agreed upon by the Executive Committee that takes into account three factors for each region that include; population, average per capita income and average cost of airfare from points within each region to Kuala Lumpur. This formula applied to each region means that the total sum available in the scholarship fund will be distributed to regions as follows:

Africa	..	20%
East Asia	..	15%
Europe	..	11%
Latin America	..	17%
North America and Caribbean	..	09%
Pacific	..	08%
West Asia	..	20%

Those who feel they may be eligible to apply for such support are encouraged to contact with their regional chairperson and to consider early submission of an abstract to the Program Committee. More information on the “scholarship fund” will be forthcoming in future issues of The Educator and The ICEVI Newsline and on the ICEVI website. Contact information of all regional chairs can be found on the inside cover of The Educator and on the website of ICEVI www.icevi.org.

NOMINATIONS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee of ICEVI has nominated Lucia Piccione, Regional Chairperson of ICEVI Latin America as Chair of the Nominations Committee that is charged with preparing a suggested slate of Principal Officers for the 2006-2010 quadrennium that is to be considered by the ICEVI General Assembly on the final day of the 12th World Conference.

Herman Gresnigt, the past Chairperson of ICEVI Europe and a 2002 recipient of ICEVI's highest award has graciously agree to serve as Chair of the Awards Committee for the 12th World Conference. Criteria that will be used by the Awards Committee and guidelines for submitting nominations are currently being prepared by Herman and his committee and will appear in the next issues of The Educator and The ICEVI Newsline.

IMPORTANT FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The following events of ICEVI will take place in the near future:

1. Regional Committee meeting of ICEVI Africa region will be conducted in Accra, Ghana from 19 to 20 May 2005.
2. ICEVI will take part in the International Convention of the Lions Clubs International in Hong Kong from 26 June to July 1, 2005. An exhibition stall on education of children with visual impairment, with particular reference to the education for all campaign of ICEVI will be set up for the benefit of Lions representing Lions Clubs throughout the world, who will be attending the convention.
3. The regional conference of the Europe region will be held in Chemnitz, Germany from 14 to 18 August 2005. For further information see the ICEVI European Regional Webiste. <www.icevi-europe.org>

TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

A sample teacher education curriculum with particular reference to visual impairment was presented at the meeting of the Executive Committee of ICEVI held in March 2005. The inputs provided by the members will be incorporated in the curriculum and the revised one will be posted on the website of ICEVI in June 2005. Countries wishing to formulate special education teacher preparation curriculum in visual impairment may refer to this and adapt for local specific requirements.

SPORTS AND RECREATION – THEME OF THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE EDUCATOR

The next issue (July 2005) of The Educator will be devoted to Sports and Recreation for persons with visual impairment. As per the Memorandum of Understanding between ICEVI and International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA), this issue will be

coordinated by both ICEVI and IBSA. Enrique Perez, the President of IBSA will serve as the Thematic Editor of this issue. Those who want to contribute articles for this issue may send in their articles to Enrique Perez (ibsa@ibsa.es) with a copy to Steve McCall (s.mcCall@bham.ac.uk), Editor of The Educator and to the Secretary General, ICEVI.

This electronic Newsline of ICEVI comes to your mailbox in April and October every year. Please provide us the e-mail addresses of individuals and organizations that may be interested in receiving the Newsline and The Educator.

For further details, contact:



ICEVI Secretariat

International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment

IHRDC Campus, Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya Post

Coimbatore – 641 020, INDIA

Phone : 91-422 -2697530

Fax : 91-422 -2692353

e-mail : sgicevi@vsnl.net

Visit us at www.icevi.org