



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



(FORMERLY ICEVI NEWSLINE)

APRIL 2014

Message from the President

Dear Colleagues

In this issue you will find details of encouraging progress in our work with the EFA-VI Global Campaign, our higher education initiative, the Vision Alliance, the International Disability and Development Consortium, the development of a new technology strategy and more. I should like particularly to draw your attention to the IDP Africa Forum, which will be organised in Kampala in October 2014. Our Executive has decided to re-launch the EFA-VI Campaign in conjunction with the Forum in order to increase its visibility and also to promote its wider implementation throughout the education sector. We will also be organising meetings of the Executive Committee, Global Task Force and Regional Chairs in Kampala around the time of the Africa Forum, and the significant presence of ICEVI will help to raise the profile of our work in the vast Africa region.

A key priority at the moment is the development of a technology strategy as part of the EFA-VI campaign. In conjunction with our international partners and other experts, we are developing a number of pilot projects to demonstrate how technology can expand educational opportunities for children with visual impairment in developing countries and enhance the quality of education. The aim will then be to scale these up on the basis of the models which appear to work best. We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of Sightsavers and RNIB in helping to fund this work.

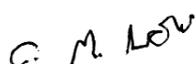
Soon ICEVI is likely to become a member of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and we have already been making a useful contribution to their Global Action Week designed to highlight issues of disability and inclusion.

The Vision Alliance comprising IAPB, ICEVI and the WBU will put up an exhibition stand in the forthcoming Lions International Convention in Toronto in July 2014 with the aim of bringing our organisations closer to the Lions movement worldwide.

With the help of lawyers in London we are modernising our constitution. As part of this work, we will aim to streamline our operations by registering all our regions in London alongside the global organisation. We gratefully acknowledge the support of RNIB with this work.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate Nandini Rawal, our Treasurer, who has become the Executive Director of the Blind People's Association, one of the largest organisations in India working in the disability sector.

I look forward to meeting those of you, who will be in Kampala in October.



Colin Low
President, ICEVI

ICEVI Strategy Document Revised

The ICEVI Strategy has been revised by incorporating the inputs provided by members of the Executive Committee at the meeting held in Vienna in November 2013. Global advocacy, networking, lobbying with governments, strengthening national initiatives, promoting national level centres of excellence, emphasis on regional development etc., are some of the key focus areas of the ICEVI revised strategy. This document has also been published in the January 2014 issue of The Educator for the benefit of the larger ICEVI Constituency. As strategy document is always a dynamic one, it will undergo revisions periodically to accommodate the growing trends in the disability sector particularly with reference to visual impairment. The next revision will take place at the end of the Quadrennium 2013-16.

Participation in Online consultations of UNICEF Working Groups

Following the participation of ICEVI at the global programme for children with disabilities, conducted in UNICEF, New York in September 2013, ICEVI was included in two working groups of UNICEF viz., Policy Beyond 2015 and Teacher Preparation. ICEVI took part in a number of online consultations on these subjects since then and contributed to various discussion areas. ICEVI will continue to strengthen its collaboration with UN bodies to ensure that the disability agenda becomes an integral part of the larger initiatives on education.

Participation in IDDC Task Group

Following the inclusion of ICEVI on the Inclusive Education Task Group (IETG) of the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC), M.N.G. Mani, CEO attended the face-to-face meeting of IETG held at the CBM office in Brussels, Belgium in February 2014. One of the key recommendations of the task group was to celebrate the Global Action Week (GAW) 2014, which lays a special focus on disability. Subsequently ICEVI encouraged its Regional Chairpersons to organize a number of programmes including capacity building, lobbying with governments for strengthening proactive policies about disability etc. The Africa, Latin America, and West Asia regions collaborated with

many of our international partners at the regional and national levels to organize activities to observe the Global Action Week.

Discussions on WBU-ICEVI Joint General Assemblies

As a result of the successful joint assemblies of WBU and ICEVI held in Bangkok 2012, the ICEVI Executive Committee endorsed the proposal to organize joint assemblies in 2016 and in this connection a bid from the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), Baltimore, USA had been received. Mr. Arnt Holte (President) and Penny Hartin (CEO) both from WBU and M.N.G. Mani (CEO) representing ICEVI had a detailed discussions with the officers of NFB in February 2014 and also visited a few potential venues in Baltimore to organize the joint event. Final decision on the venue will be communicated soon through e-mail, publications and website. One of the features proposed in the joint assembly is that ICEVI will have an exclusive day to assist professionals to make academic presentations. More details of the format of the joint assembly will be available soon.

Vision Alliance Stand in the International Convention of the Lions Clubs

Vision Alliance, a network of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB), ICEVI and WBU will be putting up an exhibition stand in the forthcoming International Lions Convention to be held in Toronto from 3rd to 8th July 2014. Penny Hartin and Mani, CEOs of WBU and ICEVI will attend the convention and interact with the Lions Clubs of various regions to augment educational services for persons with visual impairment. Lions International is working in the area of education and rehabilitation too besides its primary focus on prevention. ICEVI regions have also been encouraged to work with the Lions Clubs for initiating educational programmes at the local level. The collaborative process has begun and more concrete plans at the regional and national levels are expected to emerge in the near future. It is heartening that the Lions Clubs International Foundation has become one of the organizational members of ICEVI.

Extension of Higher Education Programme

ICEVI has been implementing Higher Education programme in Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines and Vietnam to encourage students with visual impairment pursue higher education. Use of technology and making universities as inclusive are some of the key components of this programme. ICEVI has been making periodical evaluation of the higher education activities with the Nippon Foundation and the results are encouraging. In recognizing the positive outcome as well as the impact of the programme, the Nippon Foundation has sanctioned necessary grants to continue the work in 2014-15. One of the future issues of The Educator, ICEVI's official magazine, will focus on higher education, which will give an opportunity to the project partners to highlight the activities and modus operandi of the programme.

Renewed approach to higher education programme

The coordinators of the higher education programme supported by the Nippon Foundation met in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in February 2014 to plan specific implementation strategies for the year 2014-15. The coordinators suggested that the fruits of higher education can be felt only when successful rehabilitation takes place in the case of visually impaired individuals. In response to this recommendation, a core group was formed to discuss additional inputs to be added to the higher education project to increase the employability of visually impaired individuals. The core group met in Manila in March 2014 and resolved that the higher education programme implementation in the future should include development of job skills in persons with visual impairment besides their academic studies and training them in soft skills. These components will be built into the future activities of higher education (2015-16 onwards) in order to facilitate a smooth transmission of students with visual impairment from education to employment.

IDP Africa Forum – ICEVI Activities

The ICEVI will organize a number of technical sessions in conjunction with the IDP Africa Forum to be held in Kampala, Uganda from 13 to 18

October 2014. The technical sessions include EFA-VI Campaign, Regional Development, Vision Alliance, Early Childhood Education and Intervention, Low Vision, Mathematics, Education of Children with Multiple Disabilities etc. Registration for the Forum can be made by logging onto the website <http://www.perkins.org/idp/africa-forum/register/>. ICEVI will also organize its Executive Committee Meeting on 11th and 12th October, which will give an opportunity to its members to interact with our colleagues in the Africa region. A detailed programme of ICEVI workshops will be shared with ICEVI members and also posted on our website www.icevi.org.

Re-launch of the EFA-VI Campaign

The EFA-VI Global Campaign implemented by ICEVI acting in partnership with World Blind Union has shown tangible results in all regions of ICEVI. It is certainly increasing the pressure on governments to formulate proactive legislative measures on disability and the enrolment of children with visual impairment in schools is steadily increasing. EFA-VI Campaign is a testimony to the collective synergy of our international partners, local governments, NGOs, DPOs etc., and ICEVI continues to serve as a catalyst in bringing different stakeholders together for a common cause. The Executive Committee, which met in Vienna suggested the re-launch of the campaign to provide more impetus and visibility. ICEVI is proposing to organize a re-launch programme in conjunction with the Africa Forum in Kampala, Uganda, where the Global Task Force of the EFA-VI will also meet, prior to the inauguration of the IDP Forum. ICEVI is planning to bring key personalities connected with global initiatives such as Global Campaign for Education (GCE) for the re-launch of the EFA-VI Campaign. More details of the re-launch activity will be available soon.

Promotion of Parents' Activities

ICEVI had a meeting with the officials of PAVIC (Parents Advocates for Visually Impaired Children) in Manila, Philippines on 22nd April 2014 to strengthen joint activities in the East Asia region. ICEVI works closely with the International Parents' Association for the Visually Impaired and it is in the process of promoting parents association activities at the regional levels. The July 2014 issue of The Educator is devoted

exclusively for parental issues in order to focus parents' perspective in education and PAVIC will also be contributing to this special issue. ICEVI supported the PAVIC in organising its 4th National Parents Congress in Manila from 9 to 11 May 2014. ICEVI is also proposing to organize its East Asia Regional Conference in partnership with PAVIC in 2015.

ICEVI Technology Strategy

Technology plays an important role in implementing ICEVI's strategy. Colin Low, President, ICEVI is heading an initiative to develop an appropriate strategy in technology that will be integrated into the EFA-VI Campaign, which has a potential to enhance the learning experiences of students with visual impairment and at the same time, expand educational opportunities for children who are currently un-reached in the developing countries. This strategy is likely to culminate into a proposal, which will bring on board our international players to take active role supporting the technology initiative. Further development in this area will be informed to the ICEVI members in the second half of 2014.

ICEVI's involvement in GCE

Since the WBU-ICEVI Joint World Assembly held in 2012, ICEVI has been collaborating with the mainstream initiatives on education. ICEVI has approached the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) for formal membership which will be taken up by the GCE in the future. ICEVI believes that it will be able to influence general initiatives to incorporate issues dealing with disability to make the general system more inclusive in nature.

ICEVI in CCNGO-EFA Meet

ICEVI was invited by the Collective Consortium of Non-Governmental Organisations (CCNGO) on Education For All to attend its meeting held in Chile on 21-23 May 2014. Lucia Piccione, 1st Vice-President represented ICEVI at this important event and shared the experiences of the EFA-VI Global campaign.

Nandini becomes the Executive Director, BPA

Nandini Rawal, Treasurer of ICEVI has been elevated to the position of the Executive Director at the Blind People's Association (BPA), which is one of the largest organizations in India working in the disability sector. Nandini takes over from Dr. Bhushan Punani, who has been made the Executive Secretary of the BPA. Bhushan also serves as the Regional Chair of the ICEVI West Asia region. Congratulations to both Nandini and Bhushan.

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. Those who have suggestions with the new topics for the future issues of The Educator may contact its Editor **Aubrey Webson** (Aubrey.Webson@perkins.org), or **MNG Mani** (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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