



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



(FORMERLY ICEVI NEWSLINE)

October 2010

Message from the President

November 6, 2010

Dear Colleagues:

As I sit down to compose my message for this issue of ICEVI E-NEWS I feel a bit like “the boy who cried wolf too many times”. As you know that when the wolf really did show up and the boy cried out for help no one paid any attention and that was the end of that little boy.

At this point I have said farewell to you on so many occasions I am feeling just like that little boy. However, I assure you this is the last time you will need to read through another of my farewell messages.

All of this was caused by the untimely cancellation of our 13th World Conference and General Assembly scheduled for Thailand last August. I will not go on with details of that here as I am outlining in the first item of this newsletter how we are handling that situation.

It has now been a decade since I stepped into the presidency of ICEVI in 2000, having already served two terms as Vice President. I hope you all agree with me that “there is a time and season for everything” and it is time for a new leader at the helm of our organization.

I suppose it is normal in leaving such a position to feel a sense of regret for the things one has been unable to accomplish. However, all things considered, I am stepping down with the feeling that I am leaving ICEVI a better and stronger organization than when I took over as your president in 2000.

Much of the credit for this progress goes to a remarkable group of friends and colleagues who have served as Principal Officers and Executive Committee members and members of Regional Committees during my tenure as president.

In particular, I would like to acknowledge the confidence and support that I have had from the growing number of International Partner Members that has expanded from two to nine over the past decade. These organizations took a gamble on the idea we put forth nearly ten years ago to launch an aggressive global campaign to reach more than 4 million visually impaired children in the developing world with no access to education. I believe I can say that their gamble is paying off as you will see when you read what has been accomplished in just the past three years in an item that follows entitled “EFA-VI – Philosophy to Reality”.

In my thirty plus years of international work nothing has given me the satisfaction I get from knowing that blind and low vision children who had almost no chance for education just a few years ago are today proving to their families and communities that they are every bit as capable as their sighted classmates if simply given the chance.

As I close this message let me thank each and every one of you who has in any way supported my efforts to strengthen and expand ICEVI over the past decade. Under new leadership I feel confident that the foundation we have set will assure continued growth and collaboration in the decade ahead.

As always,



Larry Campbell

President

ICEVI GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN LONDON

The stage is set to conduct the 13th General Assembly of ICEVI at the Royal National Institute of Blind People, London on 3rd December 2010. As most of you probably know by now the decision to cancel the 13th World Conference and General Assembly scheduled for this past August posed many challenges to ICEVI, not the least of which was how and where to conduct a General Assembly where the official business of our organization can be conducted and important decisions such as the election of new principal officers for the coming period can be conducted.

Following a great deal of discussion by the Principal Officers in consultation with the full Executive Committee a decision was made to hold a General Assembly in London in early December. If there is a silver lining to the cloud cast by the decision to cancel the 13th World Conference and General Assembly it is that these unusual circumstances provide ICEVI with a unique opportunity to align its quadrennium with that of the other two member organizations that now form the Vision Alliance; the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) and the World Blind Union (WBU). In recent years these three international “umbrella” organizations have begun to plan and work more closely together and to speak with a unified voice on issues that are of interest and concern to our collective constituencies. For this reason the ICEVI Executive Committee saw merit in aligning ICEVI’s quadrennium with those of IAPB and WBU.

Therefore, as a one-time only situation the General Assembly will be electing principal officers for a two-year period (2011-2012) at the end of which we hope or reschedule the 13th World Conference and hold elections for the period 2012-2016 which then aligns our quadrennium with those of IAPB and WBU.

Under the ICEVI Articles of Association a one-third quorum is required to hold a General Assembly, elect principal officers and conduct other business of the organization. If the General Assembly were held in Thailand 110 delegates would have formed the General Assembly; composed of the Executive Committee, up to two (2) Deputy Regional Chairs and ten (10) additional delegates from each of our seven (7) regions. As we analyzed what it would cost to hold a General Assembly with all delegates present we faced a cost of well over US\$100,000. Clearly this would not have been the best use of our limited resources. Therefore we have decided to hold a General Assembly in conjunction with our regular December Executive Committee meeting by inviting two additional delegates from each region to London thus giving us the one-third quorum needed.

These additional delegates are either the deputy regional chairs or those who are closely associated with the implementation of the Global Campaign on Education for All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI) at the country level. The General Assembly will elect the Principal Officers for the period 2011-2012 as explained earlier.

In an effort to be as totally transparent as possible I have asked the Nominations Committee to complete their work before this issue of the ICEVI E-NEWS reaches your mailbox so that all of our members will have an opportunity to review the proposed slate of principal officers before our General Assembly in London. The report of the Nominations Committee follows immediately after this message.

If any of our readers have questions about the way we are managing the business of our organization under these unusual circumstances I urge you to write to myself or your regional chairperson.

Thanks for your support and understanding during this difficult period.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee of ICEVI meeting held in December 2009 appointed Dr. Bhushan Punani, Regional Chair, West Asia Region as the Chairperson of the Nominations Committee to suggest a slate of Principal Officers for ICEVI for the next quadrennium. The other members of the committee are as follows:

- 1. Wilfred Maina (Chair, Africa Region)**
- 2. Frances Gentle (Chair, Pacific Region)**
- 3. Monika Brenes (CBM) and**
- 4. Arnt Holte (NABPS)**

As the Executive Committee directed the Nominations Committee to suggest Principal officers for the period 2010-2012 as a result of the cancellation of the 13th world conference and also to align our quadrennium with that of the IAPB and WBU, the nominations committee did a search during the past one year keeping in mind the expectations of ICEVI from these Principal Officers.

In nominating Principal Officers for the period 2010-12, the Nominations Committee considered the following key parameters:

1. A Principal Officer nominated should have adequate time for ICEVI as all are volunteers having full-time job and sometimes, their regular work may limit their attention towards ICEVI.
2. Ideally the Principal Officer should have support from their own employer to allow for the maximum amount of our ICEVI's limited resources to be directed to our programmes.
3. While the new President will need to make decisions on how to most effectively utilize the talents of his/her team of Principal Officers it is likely that each will need to be willing to take responsibility for one or more important aspects of the organizations work.

Under normal circumstances the Nominations Committee would first deliver their report at the ICEVI General Assembly. However because we are working under unusual circumstances the President asked the Nominations Committee to have their report available for inclusion in this issue of ICEVI E-News so that all members would be aware of the recommended slate of Principal Officers that will be suggested to the General Assembly when it meets in London in early December. Bhushan Punani reports that the Nominations Committee has unanimously arrived at the following suggested slate of Principal Officers to be presented to the General Assembly on December 3rd.

- President : **Lord Colin Low**, Vice-President, RNIB, UK
- 1st Vice-President : **Jill Keefe**, Centre for Eye Research, Australia
- 2nd Vice-President : **Hans Welling**, Visio, The Netherlands
- Treasurer : **Nandini Rawal**, Blind People's Association, India

STRATEGIC REVIEW OF ICEVI ACTIVITIES

Following the General Assembly on the forenoon of 3rd December, a Strategic Review session will be organized with the involvement of all the delegates who are present for the General Assembly. This session will be facilitated by Bill Winkley, a consultant from the USA who assisted the Executive Committee of ICEVI to formulate a comprehensive strategic plan of our organization in 2002. The Strategic Review meeting will be used to identify specific issues and areas requiring attention over the next two years providing a "roadmap" for the new Executive Committee. The document to be developed as a result of the outcomes of this meeting will be widely circulated to the constituency of ICEVI and also

posted on its website. Members having any thoughts on the strategic review may send their suggestions to the Secretary General, ICEVI at sgicevi@vsnl.net

EFA-VI GLOBAL CAMPAIGN – PHILOSOPHY TO REALITY

The EFA-VI Global Campaign was launched in 2006 in the presence of more than 1200 participants of the ICEVI World Conference held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The campaign set out principles such as creation of demand for education, embedding the EFA-VI campaign within the overall EFA initiatives of the countries, ensuring provision of support services, creating alternative approaches where necessary, etc., and listed increased enrolment of children with visual impairment, reduction in dropout rate, availability of support services, and performance on par with non-disabled children as the broad parameters of success. The Global Task Force also suggested that the campaign should be implemented in 14 focus countries by the end of the quadrennium 2006-2010. As the quadrennium is coming to a close, ICEVI wants to present the following snapshot of the campaign, which reveals the successes as well as challenges to address in the future.

1. The campaign started in three focus countries, viz., Vietnam, Paraguay and the Dominican Republic in 2007 and the lessons learnt are being applied in other countries where the Campaign begun in 2008 and 2009. At present the campaign activities are being implemented in 12 countries in five regions of ICEVI as per the following details:
 - **Africa** : **Ethiopia and Mozambique**
 - **East Asia** : **Vietnam and China**
 - **Latin America** : **Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay and the Dominican Republic**
 - **Pacific** : **Fiji**
 - **West Asia** : **Nepal and Pakistan**
2. Preparation work is going on in Burkina Faso (Africa), Cambodia (East Asia) and Palestine (West Asia)
3. We have data from 7 of the 12 focus countries (Ecuador, Paraguay, The Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Nepal, Pakistan, and Vietnam) which launched the campaign prior to 2009 and it is heartening to note that 30,796 additional children with visual impairment have been enrolled in schools

4. 121 capacity building programmes have been organized
5. 12,184 teachers have undergone short-term training activities
6. Out of the children enrolled, 15,293 are boys and the remaining 15,503 are girls.
7. 20,654 children have been enrolled at the pre-primary and primary levels.
8. 445 children enrolled are those with multiple disabilities.

Though we can be proud of our successes, there are challenges to be surmounted too and some of them are listed below:

1. EFA-VI campaign is initially viewed as just another project of an international organization and this perspective needs to change in order assure that visually impaired children's needs are part of every national plan under the broad global EFA initiative led by UNESCO, UNICEF and The World Bank.
2. Networking with IAPB and WBU is yet to be strengthened at the national level in most regions.
3. Collecting national data, particularly with respect to enrolment, dropout, performance, etc., requires considerable time as we have to depend on Government mechanisms to obtain this information.
4. With the exception of Latin America, regional strategies are missing for most of the regions of ICEVI. Though there are country specific plans, regional strategies need to be developed to provide a broad framework to ICEVI's activities.

Country-wise summary reports of the EFA-VI campaign can be viewed on the ICEVI website.

The Strategic review meeting will address the challenges of the campaign and suggest a way forward for its smooth expansion in the future.

EFA-VI PROMOTION WITH THE INVOLVEMENT OF LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL

The SightFirst Programme of the Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) will for the first time formally embrace education of children with visual impairment soon. A document entitled "Education and Rehabilitation for Blind & Low Vision

Persons” prepared by its SightFirst Long-Range Planning (SFLRP) Working Group has been accepted by Lions International and will soon be distributed to Lions Clubs around the world encouraging engagement in programs that expand educational access for blind and low vision children.. Larry Campbell, ICEVI, Penny Hartin, WBU, Jill Keeffe, SightFirst Technical Advisor, Steven Rothstein, Perkins School for the Blind and Chuck Young, Hadley School for the Blind made significant contributions to the discussions of the Sight First Program Advisory Committee.

EXPLORING CO-FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EFA-VI

ICEVI strongly believes that the EFA-VI Global Campaign can be used as a tool by its International Partner Members to expand educational opportunities for children with visual impairment in countries where they work. In some cases, case histories generated from the EFA-VI Campaign were also used successfully for generating resources. One classic example is the resource mobilization campaign initiated by the Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted to assist visually impaired children study in Vietnam which was well received by the donors. ICEVI and CBM are in discussion to explore possibilities for co-funding opportunities to promote EFA-VI Global Campaign in specific countries or regions in the developing world. ICEVI and CBM will have a joint meeting in late January 2011 to discuss the modus operandi of the proposal for co-funding possibilities.

A BIG THANKS TO MICROSOFT NETHERLANDS

Microsoft Netherlands in an effort to generate attention to Internet Explorer 8 (IE8) agreed to contribute 1 Euro to education programs for disabled children for each customer migration from IE6 to IE8. The result was a gratifying Euro 11,000 to the EFA-VI Global Campaign. Our thanks to Microsoft-Netherlands and to Hans Welling for his efforts in initiating this partnership with Microsoft

REGIONAL CHAIRS ELECTED

The Regional Chairpersons of ICEVI are normally elected at the regional meetings conducted during world conferences. As the 13th world conference was called off, each region is adopting its own strategy to elect the regional chairs for the period 2010-12. The Europe Region has already elected Hans Welling, the incumbent chairperson as the Regional Chair for the period 2009-13. Unlike other

regions, the Europe region elects its regional chair well ahead of the world conferences and therefore, election of Hans came months before the cancellation of the 13th world conference. In the case of Pacific region, the members of the Regional Committee and the delegates of the Pacific region who voted at the 12th World conference of ICEVI have elected the incumbent Regional Chair Frances Gentle through postal ballot. Similarly, Lucia Piccione has been elected unanimously by the delegates of the Latin America region. The delegates of the North America and Caribbean region have already elected Kathy Huebner, the current chair of the region for the period 2010-12. The Africa, East Asia, and West Asia regions are yet to complete the election process and this is likely to be completed before the commencement of the General Assembly. In case the process is delayed, then the present Regional Chair will continue until an alternative arrangement is made. Given the peculiar situation of electing the regional chair in the absence of a full-fledged General Assembly, the EXCO and Regional Committees are trying to adopt the best possible ways to have the regional committees and regional chairpersons in place to ensure the smooth continuity of ICEVI activities in the regions.

VISION ALLIANCE COUNTRY MEETING IN NEPAL

The Vision Alliance concept being nurtured by IAPB, ICEVI and WBU at the global level needs to percolate at the national level too and in this context, three focus countries, viz., Nepal, Mozambique, and Vietnam where the EFA-VI Global Campaign activities are underway have been identified for establishing closer links between the national units. A meeting of the professionals in the health sector including that of the Government of Nepal, Associations of the Blind in Nepal and Education Ministry officials was held in Kathmandu, Nepal on 28th October. Mani, M N G, Secretary General, ICEVI and Bhushan Punani, Regional Chairperson, West Asia participated at this meeting and discussed ways for the organisations to work together for synergy. Nepal has already demonstrated additional enrolment of children with visual impairment in mainstream schools and the country-report indicates the involvement of organisations of the blind and health sector in the early identification of children and their enrolment in schools. In Vietnam too this type of collaboration has been demonstrated and the Vision Alliance wishes development of such network activities in all countries of the world. The Vision Alliance is also proposing to organize world conferences of the respective organisations in the same venue and such an arrangement would strengthen all the three organisations. More information on Vision Alliance network can be accessed from the respective websites of the IAPB, ICEVI and WBU.

WORLD BLIND UNION EXECUTIVE MEETING

Larry Campbell, President ICEVI will be attending the Executive Committee meeting of the World Blind Union to be held in Melbourne in early November. The possibility of organizing the world assemblies of both the organisations in a common place will also be discussed at this meeting.

HIGHER EDUCATION PROJECT REVIEW

The higher education project of ICEVI with the support of the Nippon Foundation is being implemented in Cambodia, Indonesia, The Philippines, and Vietnam. This project is helping more than 300 students with visual impairment pursue higher education in their respective countries. The project not only provides access technology to help students achieve equal access to information at the university but also on shaping and influencing public policies related to support services required by blind and other disabled students enrolled in higher education. A mid-term review of this project will be held in Bangkok, Thailand on 9th November. The project holders will make presentation on the current status of the activities and challenges to be addressed for improving the project in the future.

15th WORLD CONFERENCE OF THE DEAFBLIND INTERNATIONAL – FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

GRUPO BRASIL, a network of organizations that provides services to deafblind people in Brasil and ADEFNAV, a Resource Center, will be hosting the 15th Deafblind International World Conference in São Paulo Brazil, September 27 through October 01, in 2011. "Inclusion for a lifetime of opportunities" will be the theme of this conference. According to a communiqué from the Dbl, the conference will review and analyse situations that not only connect deafblind people with one another but also enable the development of their best potential together with achieving their independence. This is seen as a great opportunity for Latin America to share its own experiences with the rest of the world and to highlight the special needs and issues of the Brazilian context. In a sense, this will be seen as a Dbl Conference with the face of Latin America. More information on this event can be seen on the website of the Dbl.

THE EDUCATOR – READER SURVEY

Each issue of The Educator is posted on ICEVI website and is read by a great number of people. There is also an increasing demand to receive the printed versions of the journal. ICEVI needs to know more from the readers about the quality and presentation of each issue of The Educator. Please spend a few minutes answering our reader survey on Internet. You'll find the survey on <http://fluidsurveys.com/surveys/brl-challenge-survey/icevi-educator-survey/>

3RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION FOR ALL

The Third International Conference on 'Education for All' will be organized by the University of Warsaw from 29th June to 1st July 2011. The Conference will devote on equalizing chances of educational access for persons with disabilities. Those interested in this conference may contact Paweł Bysko, Conference Coordinator, Office for Persons with Disabilities, University of Warsaw, e-mail: disability@uw.edu.pl, tel. +48 22 55 24 228, <http://www.disability.uw.edu.pl/>

ICEVI will be making a presentation on the status of the EFA-VI Global Campaign at this conference.

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

For further details, contact:



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