



**International Council for Education of
People with Visual Impairment**



ICEVI E-NEWS

OCTOBER 2018

Message from the President

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the October 2018 issue of the ICEVI E-News. I am penning this welcome in Madrid, Spain, where I will be attending the IV International University and Disability Congress, hosted by the ONCE Foundation. I will be joined by M.N.G. Mani, CEO of ICEVI; and Fred Schroeder and Jose Viera, the President and CEO of the World Blind Union (WBU). We will be meeting with ONCE representatives to sign the contract to host the 2020 WBU-ICEVI General Assembly (GA) in Madrid. ONCE is the National Organization of Spanish Blind People, and an International Partner Member of both ICEVI and WBU. We look forward to collaborating with ONCE in delivering a world-class event that will showcase recent developments and innovation in services and programs for persons with visual impairment.

The ICEVI E-News is published in April and October of each year, and this issue includes an overview of the annual meetings of the ICEVI Executive Committee (EXCO) and Regional Chairs that were held in conjunction with the ICEVI Philippines Education Forum and the East Asia Conference in Manila, Philippines, in October 2018. The EXCO members welcomed the Overbrook School for the Blind as an International Partner Member. The Overbrook School for the Blind was established in the 1830s in Philadelphia and provides a range of education and early intervention services for children and young people with visual impairment and their families. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with partner members to achieve ICEVI's Mission and the 2017-2020 strategic goals and priority activities.

You are invited to delve into this issue, and to communicate with members of the ICEVI Regional Committee of your region. The contact details of our seven regional committees may be found on the ICEVI website, www.icevi.org.



Frances Gentle, President, ICEVI

New International Partner Member of ICEVI

In 2002, ICEVI had just two International Partner Members (IPMs). We are happy to inform our constituency that the International Partner Membership is steadily increasing and at present the number of IPMs stands at 10, with the 10th member being the Overbrook School for the Blind (OBS), USA. The Overbrook School for the Blind and ICEVI have a long history of collaboration, including joint publication in 2005-06 of the "Mathematics Made Easy for Blind Children" textbook, with the support of The Nippon Foundation. Larry Campbell, President-Emeritus of ICEVI, presided over the textbook's development during his presidency of ICEVI. Larry was also responsible for the International Leadership Programme of the Overbrook School for the Blind. Todd Reeves, the present Chief Executive Officer of the Overbrook School for the Blind, has expressed his expectation of future joint OBS-ICEVI initiatives.

For the information of our E-News subscribers, the current international partners of ICEVI are CBM, Light for the World, ONCE, Overbrook School for the Blind, Perkins School for the Blind, Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children, Royal National Institute of Blind People, Sightsavers, The Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted, and Royal Dutch Visio. The websites of our International Partner Members include a wealth of information and may be accessed from the ICEVI website home page, www.icevi.org.

We warmly welcome the Overbrook School for the Blind and Todd Reeves, CEO, to the Executive Committee of ICEVI.

ICEVI Executive Committee Meeting

The annual ICEVI Executive Committee (EXCO) meeting was held in Manila, Philippines in October 2018. The meeting was attended by 20 of the 27 EXCO members, and the Agenda notes were circulated well in advance. The meeting provided an opportunity to review progress in achieving the strategic goals and priority activities for the 2017-2020 quadrennium. Many decisions and action items were arrived during the meeting, and the ICEVI Principal Officers will provide a progress update at the 2019 Executive Committee meeting.

One of the issues discussed during the EXCO meeting was the draft ICEVI Governance Framework that has been developed over the past year by the Governance Committee. The framework includes an emphasis on registration of the ICEVI regions as legal entities in order to strengthen their capacity to implement regional and national projects. However, the diversity of regional structures and membership arrangements was acknowledged during the meeting, and the decision was made to further develop the Governance Framework through communication between the ICEVI Principal Officers and Regional Committees.

The Executive Committee approved the Joint Education Position Paper of the World Blind Union (WBU) and ICEVI, and endorsed the proposal to hold the 2020 WBU-ICEVI General Assembly in Madrid, Spain. The EXCO appointed members of the Nominations Committee who are tasked with developing a slate of potential Principal Officers for the 2020-2024 Quadrennium. Election of the Principal Officers will take place during the 2020 ICEVI General Assembly, and the election guidelines will be shared with the ICEVI constituency in the January 2019 issue of *The Educator*.

WBU-ICEVI Joint Position Papers

WBU and ICEVI have been developing Joint Position Papers which are presented to Global bodies, including those connected with the United Nations. Some of the joint position papers prepared to date pertain to education, inclusive education and braille literacy. The Executive Committees of WBU and the ICEVI ensure that the position papers are reviewed on a regular basis to maintain alignment with current principles and practice in education, as reflected in UN conventions and the work of the global education community.

A committee consisting of ICEVI and WBU members recently undertook a review of the education and inclusive education position statements. The committee revised and merged the two statements into one position statement that incorporated the principles of the UN Education 2030 Framework for Action, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The ICEVI Executive Committee endorsed the Education Position Statement during the October 2018 meeting in Manila. The Position Statement will be reviewed by the

WBU Executive Committee during their November 2018 meeting, and once endorsed, will be uploaded on the ICEVI and WBU websites. The Position Paper will also be published in the ICEVI journal, The Educator, and shared with E-News subscribers.

WBU - ICEVI General Assembly Updates

The World Blind Union and the ICEVI have selected Madrid as the venue for the 2020 Joint General Assembly. ONCE, one of the long term partners of both WBU and ICEVI, will be the host organisation. The first planning meeting of ICEVI, WBU and ONCE will be held on 20 – 21 November 2018 in Madrid. This meeting will include discussion of the overall framework for the general assembly, the logistics, visa issues, general structure of the sessions, appointment of the organising committee and a joint program committee, and other logistics relating to the general assembly.

The first two joint General Assemblies were held in Bangkok in 2012 and Orlando in 2016. Delegate recommendations from these two assemblies will be considered in all aspects of planning for the 2020 General Assembly. Information about the 2020 General Assembly will be disseminated through our publications and the ICEVI website following the November 2018 meeting in Madrid.

The Philippines Education Forum

Since 2017, ICEVI has been experimenting with the concept of organising Education Forums in the countries where the Executive Committee meetings are held. The Education Forums offer an opportunity to bring together members of the ICEVI Executive Committee and national leaders, professionals, parents and other stakeholders to explore national issues pertaining to education for children with visual impairment, and to formulate recommendations or guidelines for the effective implementation of services for persons with visual impairment.

The first Education Forum took place in South Africa in 2017. The second Education Forum was held in conjunction with the ICEVI Executive Committee meeting in the Philippines in October 2018. More than 200 educators, parents, government officials, and representatives of NGOs and international organisations attended the Philippines Forum. A variety

of topics were discussed with regard to the Philippines education context, including the Sustainable Development Goals, the Education for All campaign, technology and its implications, education for children with multiple disabilities and visual impairment, the Philippines parents' movement, higher education and participation in sports. One outcome of the Philippines Education Forum was the development of a set of resolutions that the stakeholders should address to strengthen the existing educational and employment services for persons with visual impairment in the Philippines.

As a result of the success of the education forums held in South Africa and the Philippines, the ICEVI Executive Committee has made the decision to promote the hosting of education forums in conjunction with future Executive Committee meetings of ICEVI. The education forums provide an excellent opportunity for the host country to interact with members of the ICEVI Executive Committee, many of whom are world leaders and decision makers in their own disciplines and also represent leading organisations in the field of visual impairment.

ICEVI East Asia Regional Conference

The ICEVI Constitution states that the members of the ICEVI are basically members of the regions. In keeping with the spirit of this clause of the Constitution, ICEVI strongly promotes regional events and regional conferences as a means of providing opportunities for teachers, parents and other stakeholders to share information, experiences and challenges. The ICEVI regional conferences also serve as a vehicle for strengthening regional development and collaborative partnerships. It is a general practice that at least one of the regions of ICEVI conducts a regional conference each year during the Quadrennium.

The ICEVI East Asia region includes 19 countries and the regional conference took place in Manila, Philippines on 16 - 18 October 2018. The ICEVI Executive Committee meeting was held at the same venue prior to regional conference, and enabled the Executive Committee members to speak on various topics in both the plenary and concurrent sessions. The conference was attended by more than 250 participants from 30 countries. The event was hosted by the Resources for the Blind, a

reputed organisation in the Philippines. Members of the ICEVI Executive Committee extend their sincere appreciation to Amy Mojica, Executive Director, and the staff of the Resources for the Blind for conducting this exceptional conference.

In recognising the need for regional conferences, the Executive Committee of ICEVI has decided that henceforth the contribution of the ICEVI Global to such regional conferences should be increased from the present US\$ 10,000 to US\$ 20,000 so that the host country can facilitate the involvement and participation of more delegates from within the region.

A report on the ICEVI East Asia conference is currently being prepared and will be shared with the ICEVI constituency through our website.

GCE General Assembly

The 6th World Assembly of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) will be held in Kathmandu, Nepal on 16 – 18 November 2018 under the theme of “Transforming public education systems for equality, inclusion and justice”. ICEVI is a global member of the GCE and works closely with other GCE members on various issues. An example of this collaboration was the keynote address delivered by Ms Camilla Croso, President of GCE, at the ICEVI Day that took place during the 2016 Joint WBU-ICEVI General Assembly in Orlando, Florida. The GCE Board includes Ms Nafisa Baboo, who represents the Light for the World on ICEVI’s Executive Committee. ICEVI provides input into the GCE position on disability-inclusive education. Dr. Bhushan Punani, the ICEVI West Asia Regional Chairperson, will represent ICEVI at the GCE World Assembly in Kathmandu in November 2018. In addition to attending the deliberations of the GCE World Assembly, Dr. Punani will hold discussions with the officials and civil society groups present about the possibility of ICEVI’s technical contribution in the preparation of UNCRPD shadow reports. ICEVI identifies the importance of including questions relating to national data collection on visual impairment in the Questionnaires used for the preparation of the shadow reports. More updates on this will be available after the GCE General Assembly.

Higher Education Coordinators Meeting

ICEVI has been implementing the Higher Education initiative in seven countries in the East Asia region: Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos and Mongolia. In these countries, the higher education projects are implemented by ICEVI. Most of these partners also implement technology related activities in collaboration with the Overbrook Nippon - Network on Education Technology (ON-NET) and the focus is mostly primary and secondary education. The annual coordinators meeting of the Higher Education initiative was held in Manila on 19 October 2018 and was attended by Eriko Uchiyama from The Nippon Foundation; Frances Gentle, President of ICEVI; Todd Reeves, CEO of Overbrook School for the Blind; Mani MNG, Co-Project Director of the Higher Education Project; and Wenru Niu, Project Director of the ON-NET program, Overbrook School for the Blind. The coordinators discussed at length the need to promote employment opportunities for persons with visual impairment in addition to education. The coordinators also discussed the outline of a publication that ICEVI and ON-NET will release, that highlights the impact of The Nippon Foundation support on the lives of persons with visual impairment in the region. The publication is a priority for both ON-NET and ICEVI and the coordinators have agreed to collect case studies and narratives about the individuals and organisations that have been involved in the higher education and technology initiatives supported by The Nippon Foundation. It is anticipated that the publication will be completed by the end of 2019 and we are planning to release it at a fitting event such as the General Assembly of WBU and ICEVI.

Parents' Movement

ICEVI has been working closely with organisations of Parents of visually impaired children. It was in 2006 that ICEVI initiated the formation of the International Association of Parents of Visually Impaired Children and since then, the parents' bodies have been attending the annual ICEVI Executive Committee meetings as observers.

The East Asia region of ICEVI is working closely with PAVIC, the "Parents Association of Visually Impaired Children in the Philippines". PAVIC was an active member of the various committees that organised the East Asia Regional Conference, and was encouraged to organise specific workshops

that addressed topics of importance to parents from across the region. These workshops were well attended and evoked discussion, friendship-building and action planning among the participants.

During the meeting of the ICEVI Regional Chairs and Principal Officers in Manila, there was a proposal that the parents' movement be strengthened across ICEVI's regions, commencing with the collection of data on parent groups around the world. Ms Susan LaVenture, President of the International Parents Organisation, was also present at the meeting of regional chairs. There is a possibility that ICEVI will work with the International Parents' Organisation to identify the parents movement in each region. Ms Susan LaVenture will lead this initiative and suggest a modus operandi to carry the initiative forward.

TTS Launch in Burmese Language

ICEVI and ON-NET take pride in supporting an initiative that has resulted in the development of a Text-To-Speech (TTS) engine in the Burmese language. The TTS will help thousands of visually impaired individuals to access information from the digital world, and is likely to help in their education, employment and empowerment. We take this opportunity to thank Mr. Dang Hoai Phuc who is one of the project coordinators of the ICEVI Higher Education program and also works as the Director of the Sao Mai Vocational and Assistive Technology Center for the Blind in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Mr. Phuc has spearheaded the development of the TTS in partnership with our colleagues in Myanmar and the Myanmar National Association of the Blind.

The TTS software is ready for launch and ICEVI and ON-NET are planning for a formal ceremony in early 2019 that will involve organisations of visually impaired persons, government departments, voluntary bodies and persons with visual impairment. The event will highlight the efficacy of the TTS software and the possibilities of networking between the partners of the Higher Education initiative to produce such useful software for the benefit of visually impaired students in Myanmar. The detailed plans are yet to be finalised, and the TTS software launch will provide an opportunity to highlight the value of the initiative. Development of the TTS for the Burmese language is expected to serve as a model for other

countries in the region to emulate. More information will be posted on the ICEVI website after the launch ceremony.

Africa Forum

ICEVI focuses on regional conferences every year. In the Africa region, ICEVI will link with a prominent event such as the Africa Forum to bring ICEVI participants together to discuss regional issues pertaining to education of persons with visual impairment in the region. ICEVI has been active in the Africa Forums held since 2010, and is a member of the Africa Forum Advisory Committee for the next Africa Forum that is likely to be held in Ethiopia in September 2019. The 2019 Africa Forum will serve as an opportunity to bring together members of ICEVI and international and regional organisations which are directly or indirectly connected with implementation of education in the region.

During the last Africa Forum, held in Kampala, Uganda, ICEVI re-launched the ICEVI-WBU global Education For All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI) campaign. In several ICEVI regions, the campaign has shifted from “service to advocacy and networking”, with ICEVI supporting mainstream organisations that are involved in promoting the EFA-VI campaign. ICEVI’s Executive Committee and Regional Committee are looking forward to the Africa Forum as an opportunity to plan joint initiatives with other organisations that are present in the region. ICEVI has also been working with the Africa Union of the Blind (AfUB) on a range of joint initiatives and future collaboration will be formulated at the Africa Forum.

ICEVI is also exploring the possibility of organising its annual Executive Committee meeting in conjunction with the Africa Forum. More details including the exact dates of the Africa Forum will be intimated in the course of time.

The Educator, January 2019 – A Note to Authors from Marianne Riggio, Editor

Thank you for your interest in writing an article for the upcoming issue of the **The Educator**. The theme of this issue will be ***Innovative Practices in Professional Development***.

Key to achieving the UN Strategic Development goal of all children attending school by 2030 is that countries around the world have teachers and related service providers who have the knowledge and skills required to assure that students who are blind, visually impaired, including children who have significant multiple disabilities or deafblindness, receive equal access to a high quality education as their sighted peers.

In the past few years, it has been very impressive to see the many creative strategies that have been developed and implemented to address the global shortage of highly qualified teachers and related service professional. We are very eager for people to share their models and their success stories, including how these programs in impacted individuals who are visually impaired. By sharing your stories, you will inspire others to think more creatively about their work and elevate our field.

Please submit your article no later than **January 30, 2019**.

GUIDELINES

- Usually articles for the ***The Educator*** are 4-6 pages in length, 2000-3000 words.
- For many readers of the ***The Educator***, English may not be a first or primary language. Please write in a clear style, avoiding jargon or colloquialisms. If you use acronyms, abbreviations, or technical terms, please define them when first used in the manuscript.
- Your article must not have been published before, either in print or online. If your article contains material copyrighted by others, please include a copy of the author's permission to use the material.
- If you use footnotes, please format them as endnotes.
- Please use this citation style for the reference list (if any) at the end of the article:

Book:

Keller, H. (1908). *The world I live in*. New York, NY: Century.

Article:

Vlden, M (2018). *Conducting Psychotherapy with Individual with Acquired Deafblindness*. *DbI Review*, No. 60), 32-41

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- When referring to the work of another author with the text, please use this citation style:
“The very specific challenge related to deafblindness is that the person to some degree has a restricted access to information and communication.” (Viden, 2018),
 - When you submit your article, please include the following information:
 - Name of author
 - Mailing address
 - Telephone (please include international dialing codes)
 - Fax number
 - Email

Again, thank you for your willingness to contribute to this special issue. Please let us know if we can assist you.

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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