



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



ICEVI E-NEWS

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Message from the President and CEO

Dear Members and Colleagues,

Welcome to the August 2023 issue of the E-News. This issue provides an update of ICEVI activities since the February 2023 issue. The ICEVI Executive Board is currently undertaking a strategic review of the mission, values and organizational structure of ICEVI. It is 70 years since the formation of ICEVI in 1952, and much has changed in the field of education for children and young people with visual impairment. We are witnessing rapid change and innovation in accessible technology, artificial intelligence and machine learning, social media, and online communication platforms. The global pandemic, climate emergencies and conflicts demand greater agility and responsiveness from the global disability community. It is essential that the organizational structure, priorities, and communication approaches of ICEVI enable us to progress our mission of inclusive, equitable quality education for people with visual impairment, leaving no-one behind. The strategic review process will conclude at the end of September and we look forward to sharing the outcomes and recommendations in subsequent issues of the E-News.

This issue includes an overview of the 2024 World Conference and General Assembly, and the 2023 regional conferences of ICEVI East Asia, ICEVI West Asia, and ICEVI Africa. ICEVI conferences offer a unique opportunity to learn and share ideas with world leaders and researchers in the field of education for people with blindness, low vision, deafblindness, and multiple disability.

ICEVI continues to prioritize its collaboration with the United Nations' agencies and the global community to promote the human right to education for all people with disabilities, with a specific focus on the right to education for people with visual impairment. We thank you for your support and hope to see you at one of the regional ICEVI conferences this year.

Sincerely,



Frances Gentle
President



M.N.G. Mani
CEO

ICEVI Strategy Review Completed

The much-awaited strategy review of ICEVI has been completed and the draft report discussed by members of the Executive Board. The decision to carry out the strategy review was taken at their annual meeting which was held in Amsterdam in October 2022. The primary objective of the review was to revisit the mission, values and organisational structure of ICEVI, to ensure ICEVI is “fit for purpose” for the current global context.

Mr. Jonathan Dudding facilitated the review process. He conducted online surveys and small group meetings with members of the ICEVI Executive Board, including the principal officers, presidents of ICEVI regions, international partner members, founding members, and umbrella organisations (IAPB, World Blind Union, and Deafblind International). Mr Dudding also completed an extensive review of similar organisations in the fields of disability and education. The final two online review meetings, held on 10th and 17th July 2023, brought together the entire Executive Board.

The review report prepared by Mr Dudding summarises the information gathered from various sources, together with recommendations for the organisation going forward. Feedback on the review report is currently sought from the Executive Board and it is anticipated the final report and recommendations will be ready by the end of September 2023. ICEVI is looking forward to strengthening existing organisational structures as we prepare for the 2025-2028 quadrennium.

ICEVI will share this milestone activity and the outcomes with its constituency in detail. Therefore, the July 2023 issue of The Educator will focus on the strategy review reports and responses generated at every stage of the review process. The July issue will be released by 30th October 2023 as the final stage of the review process will be completed by the 30th September 2023. The outcomes of the review will also be widely circulated to the ICEVI constituency and posted on the website.

Participation in UN Meetings

ICEVI is actively involved with meetings conducted by the UN bodies. This includes the flagship programme of UNESCO pertaining to inclusive education, in which ICEVI shared the experiences of the global campaign on education for all children with visual impairment, jointly organized by

ICEVI and the World Blind Union (WBU). The involvement of ICEVI with UNICEF is also noteworthy as education resources prepared by ICEVI and UNICEF have been shared at global and national levels.

ICEVI and the World Blind Union also worked with UNICEF on developing concept papers pertaining to inclusion and related topics. In June 2023, Dr Frances Gentle, President, ICEVI had a fruitful meeting with Mr Gopal Mitra who is the Global Lead, Disability Rights and Development Programme Group at UNICEF headquarters in New York. The meeting included discussion of UNICEF's research and data collection initiatives and the contribution ICEVI can make to research pertaining to children with visual impairment. UNICEF will be invited to take part in the ICEVI World Conference and regional conferences.

Dr Frances Gentle attended the 16th session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CoSP16), hosted by the United Nations at the UN Headquarters in New York, from 13th to 15th June 2023. On behalf of members, she delivered an intervention on the right to education for children with deafblindness. Opening remarks were delivered by H.E Mr. António Guterres (Secretary-General of the United Nations) and Ms Gertrude Oforiwa Fefoame, Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Gertrude is the Global Advocacy Manager (Social Inclusion) at Sightsavers, and President of the ICEVI Africa region.

Also in attendance at CoSP16 in New York, was Dr Praveena Sukhraj-Ely, Treasurer of ICEVI, in her capacity as representative of the South Africa government. Dr Sukhraj-Ely is also the ICEVI Executive Board member of the WIPO Accessible Books Consortium. In this capacity, she delivered a presentation during the 10th anniversary celebrations of the adoption of the WIPO Marrakesh Treaty which took place in Geneva in July 2023.

In addition to these participations, the CEO and the other principal officers and regional presidents attended conferences and meetings at the regional level to expand the networking of ICEVI with global, regional and national bodies.

ICEVI World Conference Update

We had mentioned in our earlier publications about the decision of the ICEVI Executive Board to reconvene the World Conference after a gap of 17 years. We remind the ICEVI constituency that the last full-fledged World conference of ICEVI was organised in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2006. Since then, ICEVI and the World Blind Union have conducted joint General Assemblies with the most recent joint assembly in 2021. ICEVI and WBU have taken a collective decision that while collaboration between the organisations is important at global and regional levels, the General Assemblies may be organised independently and in different years as they follow different formats. ICEVI is pleased that delinking the General Assemblies received positive responses from the Executive Boards of ICEVI and WBU.

The World Conference of ICEVI will be held in Ahmedabad, India from 14 to 17 November 2024. The Call For Papers and registration details are available on the ICEVI website, www.icevi.org, and also on the dedicated conference website, as per information below.

Dates: 14-16 November 2024 for conference and 17th November, 2024 for General Assembly of the ICEVI.

Conference Theme : **“Inclusion in diversity: Equity and accessibility for all”**

Conference website : www.icevi2024wc.org

Conference email : icevi2024wc@gmail.com

Conference Facebook : www.facebook.com/icevi2024wc

In addition to online registration and paper submission, PDF and Word versions of the information may be downloaded from the general ICEVI website and the dedicated conference website. The programme committee, headed by Ms Siân Tesni, has already started receiving abstracts on a wide range of themes of the conference. We encourage you to submit an abstract and register for the conference. The deadline for the receipt of abstracts is **30 November 2023** and intimation on the selection of papers will be made by **early January 2024**.

ICEVI General Assembly

In accordance with the ICEVI Constitution, ICEVI conducts its General Assembly every Quadrennium. With the approaching end to the 2021-2024 quadrennium, the General Assembly will take place on 17 November 2024 in conjunction with the World Conference. As per the Constitution, each of the seven regions will have 12 delegates in addition to the regional President. These delegates have voting rights at the General assembly. At present there are 27 members on the ICEVI Executive Board, including the regional Presidents. Therefore, 84 additional delegates from the 7 regions of ICEVI, together with the Executive Board, will constitute the total number of voting delegates. Delegates address governance and administration issues during the Assembly, including election of Principal Officers and voting, if required, for constitutional amendments. The regional Presidents and their respective Boards have been entrusted with the responsibility of selecting delegates for the ICEVI regions. In some cases, partial financial assistance is provided to regional delegates to attend the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Regional Boards.

As the 2024 General Assembly is conducted in conjunction with the World Conference, the ICEVI principal officers have recommended that a regional delegate should be a person who will be able to deliver a presentation at the World Conference. The regional boards have therefore been requested to give priority to those who present at the World Conference to serve as delegates of the regions. For more clarification on delegates representing regions and those who want to serve in this capacity, please contact the respective regional presidents. The contact details of the regional Presidents can be found on the website of ICEVI. The decision regarding selection of the delegates from each region will be made latest by the end of April 2024.

General Assembly Committees: There will be several initiatives taken by the Executive Board in preparation for the General Assembly in November 2024. One of the constitutional requirements is the appointment of a Nominations Committee to prepare a slate of candidates for the Principal Officer positions for the Quadrennium 2025-2028. The Nominations Committee will be appointed by the Executive Board of ICEVI and has the important task of identifying suitable officers who will strengthen the profile of ICEVI during the next Quadrennium. The process of nomination will be published in The Educator. In accordance with the

Constitution, members of ICEVI may suggest suitable candidates through the Executive Board.

Another important committee that will be appointed by the Executive Board is the Resolutions Committee. This Committee is responsible for any potential amendments in the Constitution and Bye Laws of ICEVI that require endorsement by voting delegates at the General Assembly. Proposed amendments, if any, to the Constitution and Bye Laws will be published in the July 2024 issue of The Educator so that every member of the ICEVI constituency has an opportunity to review them prior to voting at the General assembly.

In addition to these two committees, ICEVI will also appoint an Awards Committee. This Committee is responsible for identifying people from across the regions of ICEVI who have contributed to the growth of ICEVI who could be recognised at the General Assembly. It is anticipated the three committees will be approved by the Executive Board during their 2023 meeting in December. Once approved, the committees will commence their work. More information on the committees will be shared in the communication channels of ICEVI.

The Educator with focus on ICEVI Task Groups

We had mentioned in the earlier issues of ICEVI publications that the discussions of the President and CEO of ICEVI with the international partner members led to the formation of thematic task groups that were commissioned to develop position papers on ICEVI on specific themes. At present these are the following five task groups:

- Advocacy/Influencing task group – facilitated by Andrew Griffiths (Sightsavers),
- Gender Equality and Women’s Rights task group and Task group on Children’s Participation, both facilitated by Ana Peláez (ONCE),
- Technology in Education task group – facilitated by Marcel Janssen (Royal Dutch Visio), and
- Deafblindness and Multiple Disability task group – facilitated by Mirko Baur (Deafblind International).

It is anticipated that the Task groups will deliver presentations and workshops during the World Conference of ICEVI in November 2024.

In recognition of the work done so far by these task groups, the January 2023 issue of *The Educator*, ICEVI's official magazine, was devoted to the task groups. The readers can access the work plans, background papers, etc., of each task group from *The Educator*. The purpose of publishing the work of the task groups is to encourage members of ICEVI to offer services to the task groups wherever possible. ICEVI believes that the work of these task groups will lead to development of position papers, based on empirical evidence, that may be used by the global disability community and local governments when formulating policies on specific issues. Based on the outcomes of the task groups, ICEVI may initiate formation of additional task groups going ahead.

Updates on ICEVI Regional Conferences

The stage is set for holding the ICEVI **East Asia Regional Conference** in JogJakarta, Indonesia from 18 to 20 September 2023. Nearly 200 participants are expected to attend this event. The program book of the conference is being finalised and will be available soon for reference. Deafblind International (DbI) will deliver a presentation during the opening session of the conference, together with a workshop, on its global deafblind education campaign entitled "Let Me In". In addition to presentations on technology, early intervention, and multiple disabilities, there will be an exclusive session on youth empowerment. Attendees for this session will be young people who are graduates of the higher education programme of ICEVI supported by The Nippon Foundation.

The ICEVI West Asia and Sense International India will be hosting the **West Asia Regional Conference** in Dhaka, Bangladesh from 2nd to 3rd September, 2023. The conference will be organised in hybrid mode, with 100 additional participants from Ahmadabad, India, and 100 online participants from Kathmandu, Nepal. The conference theme is "Advancing accessible technology for leaving no one in Education". The objectives of the Conference are to equip educators, professionals, parents and people with visual impairment and Deafblindness about advancements in the field related to technology, communication and learning strategies.

Preparations are underway for organising the **Africa Regional Conference** in Nairobi, Kenya from 10 to 12 October 2023. The deadline for submissions of Abstracts for TechLab and Video Presentations at this conference has been extended to 31st August 2023. For more information about these opportunities and to submit your Abstract, kindly visit the papers page of the conference website at www.conference2023.iceviafrica.org

WBU-ICEVI Joint position papers

ICEVI and the WBU have agreed to collaborate in developing position papers on specific themes. Both organisations in the past jointly developed position statements on education of visually impaired children and inclusive education. The joint statements are used for the purpose of advocacy at the global level and also in meetings of the United Nations. The ICEVI Regional Boards have also used the joint statements to influence policies at regional and national levels that impact on the education of children with visual impairment. The joint statement on inclusive education, for example, was of particular help to many organisations in formulating strategies to educate visually impaired children within mainstream education programs.

ICEVI and WBU are currently preparing joint position statements on emerging themes that will be discussed and endorsed by their respective boards. before release on publication. ICEVI has taken the lead in drafting the joint position statements on Early Intervention and Early Childhood Care and Education, and The Right to Education, Including Lifelong Learning. WBU has taken the lead in drafting the statements on Digital Learning Spaces, and Education in Emergencies for Persons with Blindness, Low Vision/Partial Sight, Deafblindness, and Multiple Disability. Once finalised, these statements will also be shared with the members of the ICEVI constituency through its publications and channels like the website. The anticipated date for release of four joint position statements is 3rd December 2023, International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Instructional Videos on Teaching Mathematics

As a part of the higher education project of ICEVI and implemented in the East Asia region with the support of The Nippon Foundation, 475 instructional videos on mathematics have been prepared and already uploaded on the dedicated YouTube channel "ICEVI Math Made Easy" -

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrmcpSzNg_9EXLbqExtVIAQ. The videos can be viewed through a channel which has more than 4000 subscribers. The videos cover a variety of topics ranging from primary level to senior secondary level mathematics education. Besides these videos, there are self-Instructional lessons on teaching abacus to visually impaired children. The 475 videos were prepared by MNG Mani, CEO of ICEVI, who has expertise in mathematics. As the next stage of the video preparation, it was proposed to train teacher educators from the higher education countries who in turn may prepare instructional videos.

A master training workshop was organised in Jakarta for teacher educators from Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Cambodia and Laos in November 2022. All participants have subsequently organised workshops for teachers in their own countries. However, the project participants in Philippines and Indonesia were encouraged to train more teachers who in turn could prepare instructional videos from the perspectives of the teachers. The project wanted to have a variety of approaches in learning mathematics concepts and therefore encouraged teachers in these countries to prepare videos on specific themes focusing on primary to senior secondary level education. It is gratifying that the Philippines has produced 87 videos and Indonesia has produced 68 videos exclusively made by the local teachers. These videos are being edited by the Project team and close captioning will be added to each video. All the videos will be uploaded on the ICEVI YouTube channel latest by November 2023. With the addition of these videos there will be more than 600 instructional videos on teaching mathematics that serve as an excellent resource for parents, teachers and children with visual impairment for strengthening the learning of mathematics.

Training Videos from International Partner Members

International partners of ICEVI have developed a number of learning materials that can be found on their websites. For convenience, the logos and website links for all the international partners are included on the homepage of the ICEVI website, <https://icevi.org/>. We have started collecting instructional/training videos prepared by our international partners. These are posted on the homepage of ICEVI, under "training videos", <https://icevi.org/training-videos/>. To date, a series of videos prepared by NextSense (Australia) and Royal Dutch Visio (Netherlands) are

available on the homepage of the website. We anticipate adding additional videos in the future.

WIPO ABC International Excellence Award

The WIPO Accessible Books Consortium (ABC) has extended the deadline for its International Excellence Award to September 1st, 2023. The application form for the Award can be accessed from the following link:

<https://www.accessiblebooksconsortium.org/w/news/2023/wipo-accessible-books-consortium-international-excellence-award-2023-call-for-nominations>

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