



International Council for Education of
People with Visual Impairment

Annual Report 2013



Our International Partners





What is ICEVI?

Founded in 1952, the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) is an organization of individuals and agencies concerned with the formal and non-formal educational needs of children with visual impairment throughout the world.

Mission

To promote equal access to appropriate education for all children and youth with vision impairment so that they can achieve their full potential.

Regions

The 7 regions of ICEVI and their coverage of countries are as follows:

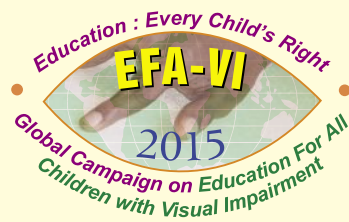
Africa	:	52
East Asia	:	19
Europe	:	49
Latin America	:	19
North America and the Caribbean	:	15
Pacific	:	15
West Asia	:	25

Activities

- EFA-VI Global Campaign
- Capacity Building of Teachers, Parents and other Personnel
- Advocacy
- Working with larger initiatives on Education For All
- Higher Education
- Technical Support
- Research

ICEVI works closely with International Non-Governmental Development Organizations (INGDOs) and UN bodies such as United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN-ECOSOC), UNESCO, UNICEF, and WHO.

Our biannual magazine “The Educator” is available in inkprint and Braille in both English and Spanish. It is also posted on our website www.icevi.org. We also publish a biannual electronic newsletter that is distributed to more than 4000 individuals and organizations in over 180 countries.



Education For All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI) Global Campaign

What is the Global Campaign?

The **Education for All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI)** is a Global Campaign and program of the **International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI)** acting in partnership with the **World Blind Union (WBU)** to ensure that girls and boys with blindness and low vision enjoy the right to education.

Guiding Principles of the Campaign

- ◆ **First**, a demand for education is being created as a basic foundation for the campaign.
- ◆ **Second**, the campaign works within the framework of the general and special education system of countries selected for implementation.
- ◆ **Third**, girls and boys with visual impairment are included in the general education system with appropriate support.
- ◆ **Fourth**, alternative educational approaches are being considered for those children with specific needs such as those who are deafblind and multiply disabled and require more highly specialised services.

Who are involved in the Campaign?

- ◆ CBM
- ◆ International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness

- ◆ Light for the World
- ◆ ONCE
- ◆ Perkins School for the Blind
- ◆ Royal National Institute of Blind People
- ◆ Sightsavers
- ◆ The Nippon Foundation
- ◆ The Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted
- ◆ The Royal Dutch Visio
- ◆ World Blind Union

EFA-VI Update

- ▮ More than 80,000 children with visual impairment enrolled in schools.
- ▮ More than 36,000 teachers, parents and other personnel trained.
- ▮ Working with UN Bodies, National Governments, DPOs and International Non-Governmental Development Organisations.

Though accurate statistics on enrolment may be difficult to obtain, the fact remains that the rate of enrolment of children with visual impairment in general schools is steadily increasing and ICEVI attributes this growth to the collective work of the local Governments, NGOs, Organisations of blind people and the International Non-Governmental Development organizations.

Participating Countries in the EFA-VI Global Campaign



Restrategizing the Global Campaign

The Executive Committee meeting held in London in February 2013 resolved to reinstate the Global Task Force to develop ownership for the campaign by larger stakeholders. The reinstated Global Task Force of the Campaign which met in Madrid on 31st May and 1st June 2013 recommended the following:

1. ICEVI should work with broader alliances on education to make the Global Campaign on Education for All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI) as an integral part of the national education initiatives.
2. ICEVI should treat itself as a facilitator/catalyst for pushing policy implementation at the national level and should not assume the role of direct service provider.
3. ICEVI should also involve itself with the Global Campaign on Education.
4. The global level engagement with broader alliances should also aim at supporting the national level work of ICEVI and WBU.
6. The targets for the EFA-VI Campaign should be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively.
7. It was suggested that an increase of 10-20% year-on-year in coverage of children with visual impairment should be insisted upon and the National Task Forces should work towards this goal.
8. ICEVI and WBU may also consider issuing joint statements on education relevant to the regions and also for countries within the regions.

Human Interest Stories

Master **Reda**

Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation (BASR), Palestine



At the age of 11 months, **Reda** was diagnosed to have a large temporoparietal arachnoid cyst in the left hemisphere. The cyst was removed at the age of 12 months, upon which he developed hydrocephalus and got a shunt. Reda had been receiving early intervention at Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation (BASR) since August 2008 at the age of 18 months. He could not move, had fair head control, poor sitting balance, flaccid upper and lower limbs and poor hand function. He had no reaction to light or to people, no light perception and pale optic discs. In November 2008 he had some limited visual field in the right eye but no response in the left eye. He had not had spectacles at that time and he used to become very quiet, looking keenly when +6.0 lens was placed in front of his right eye. After this, he became very motivated to play, so the VIISA assessment of developmental skills for young children with visual impairment was administrated for him, upon which he was followed up individually through an activity plan by BASR's multi-disciplinary team. Reda's mother also worked with him at home following the same exercises and became more aware of her son's problem.

Reda's vision for communication seemed moderately good and improved with the spectacles. We tried to get him accustomed to using pictures

so that we could start measuring visual acuity. Reda's development actually seemed to be moving progressively with normal steps. Reda is now able to see big objects, follow movements, recognize people at distance, and recognize pictures. Cognitively, he became more aware of shapes and colours. His spectacles have been changed many times and his functional vision became better.

One of the team's aims was to integrate Reda in the community starting with preschool inclusive education and he was well prepared socially and cognitively as well as his family for inclusion. Thus, in the school year 2011–2012, Reda had been integrated in the Latin Patriarchate kindergarten in Beit-Jala after modifying the kindergarten physical and learning environment and making it accessible for preschool children with impaired vision and additional disabilities.

The preschool teachers were provided with relevant training and teaching techniques that would enable them to meet the specific learning needs of young children with impaired vision.

Adaptations to the preschool curriculum and teaching methods were also made to better suit those children's learning needs and help enhance their vision and developmental skills. Reda had been periodically followed up in KG1 and KG2 by BASR's vision rehabilitation team in the presence of his teacher. He was also followed up once a week through family support sessions. Reda successfully graduated from KG2 and was promoted to 1st grade at the same Latin Patriarchate School in September 2013.

BASR's team continued to provide the child and his family with regular support. This successful initiative of inclusive education at the preschool level was launched by BASR in partnership with CBM after the adoption of the ICEVI EFA-VI campaign in Palestine in 2011.

Miss Milicent Asare

Wechi Senior High School, Ghana



Miss Milicent Asare is 20 years old and in Wechi Senior High School form two. She was identified as having a low vision at age 7 as a result of congenital cataract. School life, she said was a challenging one especially attending a community school where the teachers have inadequate knowledge on how to handle partially blind students. They only thing they did was to ensure that she sits on the front row. She said she struggled through until primary five when her parents sought advice and sent her to the school for the Blind at Akropong. There she learned Braille and continued to the JHS level and then to the Wechi SHS. “Studies as a blind student in the SHS is not easy, she exclaimed”.

“I have to rely on few friends to read notes for me to Braille after classes. When my friends are reading concise pamphlets and handouts, we are limited to the reading of the few old Braille text books. Thank God I now have skills in ICT. My parents bought modem for me and now I am able to do a lot of things which I could not do some years back”.

When asked to mention the things she can now do with the access to the laptop, she outlined the under listed.

Access information on the internet e.g.
Domestic violence bill, constitution of Ghana
etc.

Access audio books on line, read story books

Exchange literature books with friends online

Watch films and literature videos

Do my assignment and print out for my
teachers to mark.

With the skills in ICT, we are now place at equal level with our sighted colleagues. All we see is possibilities.

The EFA-VI Campaign has many such human interest stories.

The campaign tries to make a “different” in the lives of children with visual impairment.

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 revised strategy of ICEVI. As the strategy document is always a dynamic one, it will undergo revisions periodically to accommodate the growing trends in the disability sector with particular reference to visual impairment. The next revision will take place at the end of the Quadrennium 2013-16.

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 partners 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.

Global Advocacy and Networking

During the year 2013, ICEVI networked with global bodies in promoting education of persons with visual impairment and some key events are enumerated below:

ICEVI in the high level meeting of UN

The ICEVI enjoys consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UNECOSOC) and UNESCO and also participates in various policy formulation meetings of the UN bodies along with the World Blind Union (WBU) and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB). The high level meeting organized by the United Nations in New York on 23rd September 2013 was represented by Colin Low, President, ICEVI. The meeting was also attended by Penny Hartin, CEO, WBU and both Colin and Penny used this opportunity to interact with the Government officials, diplomats etc., about the need to include education of children with disabilities as an integral part of the larger initiatives on education.

ICEVI in GPCWD Meet

ICEVI was well represented at the Global Programme for Children with Disabilities organized by UNICEF at its head quarters in New York on 24th September 2013. The meeting was attended by Colin Low, President and Mani, CEO, ICEVI. During the

interventions it was proposed that ICEVI be involved in activities dealing with teacher preparation, advocacy, curriculum development etc., as ICEVI has the requisite experience in these areas. UNICEF had sent an invitation to ICEVI to join different working groups to take the GPCWD programme forward and subsequently ICEVI has become a part of two task groups dealing with "Policy Beyond 2015" and "Teacher Preparation." Colin Low, President and Mani, CEO, ICEVI are ICEVI's representatives on the policy task group whereas Frances Gentle, 2nd Vice President and Mani, CEO, ICEVI are the contact persons for the teacher preparation task group.

ICEVI in IDDC Task Force

ICEVI became a member of the Inclusive Education Task Group of the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC). ICEVI also shared its guidelines on inclusive education with the members of IDDC and will take active part in the activities of IDDC at the global level and will also promote similar networks at the regional and national levels.

Regional Development - Key Driving Force of ICEVI

The constitution of ICEVI states that its members are primarily the members of the regions and therefore, the quality of regional development determines the extent of growth of ICEVI. Our regions organised regional conferences, regional strategy development meetings and also meetings of the regional committees. Some of the key highlights of the regional activities in 2013 were as follows:

ICEVI West Asia regional conference and strategy development meeting:



The 2nd Joint Asian Conference of ICEVI and the Deaf Blind International (DbI) was hosted by the Blind People's Association (India) and Sense International India (SII) in Ahmedabad, India on 5-7 April 2013. It was attended by over 400 participants from 19 countries and the deliberations were productive. The Conference theme was "Towards an Inclusive Tomorrow" and the focus areas were education, technology, and advocacy.

The West Asia strategy development meeting was held in Ahmedabad, India on 8th April 2013, which was attended by members of ICEVI West Asia Regional Committee, Treasurer and CEO of ICEVI, representatives from the Asian Blind Union, CBM, Sightsavers, Sense International, IAPB, Perkins School for the Blind, and other international organisations present in the region. The members acknowledged that the regional activities can be further strengthened by registering ICEVI as a legal entity in the region.

ICEVI Africa Regional Executive Committee meeting

The regional executive committee meeting of the Africa region was held at the premises of the South African National Council for the Blind (SANCB) in Pretoria, South Africa in May 2013 which discussed specific action plan for EFA campaign activities in the region, networking, holding regional conference etc., in the quadrennium 2013-16. The key highlight of the Africa Region is that the ICEVI, AFUB and the African Decade for Disabled Persons have agreed to work very closely to complement the efforts of each other. The African Decade for Disabled Persons has already included the EFA-VI Global Campaign as one of its official programmes.

ICEVI Regional strategy meeting in Latin America

The Latin America regional strategy development meeting was organized in

Buenos Aires on 11th and 12th September 2013, which was attended by representatives of international organizations such as the CBM, ONCE, FOAL, Perkins School for the Blind and ULAC. The meeting came up with practical suggestions for networking within the region to optimize educational services for children with visual impairment. The members also outlined measures to be undertaken to register ICEVI Latin America Region as a legal entity.

BETTY LEOTSAKOU – the New Regional Chair of ICEVI Europe Region

The ICEVI Europe Regional Conference was held in Istanbul, Turkey in July 2013. The Conference was attended by about 200 participants from the whole of Europe. Hans Welling, the Regional Chair of the Europe Region relinquished office at the Conference and the region elected Betty Leotsakou from Greece as the new regional chair for the quadrennium 2013-2016.

JAMES D AIWA – the New Regional Chair of ICEVI Pacific Region

Mr. Paul Manning, the regional chair of the Pacific region stepped down from his position due to poor health. The Pacific Regional Committee resolved to invite Mr. James D Aiwa from Papua New Guinea as the Regional Chair of the Pacific Region for the rest of the quadrennium 2013-16. James Aiwa is serving as an educator in Special Education and also works very closely with the Ministry of Education on matters dealing with the Education of Special Needs Children.

East Asia strengthening ties with UNESCO

The UNESCO regional office, Bangkok took active role in the ICEVI regional strategy

development meeting held in Bangkok in April 2012, which served as a platform to strengthen ties with UNESCO and also to advocate for education for children with disabilities within the larger framework on education. Dr. Suwimon Udompiriyasak, Regional Chairperson attended a number of meetings at the UNESCO office, Bangkok during 2013.

North America and the Caribbean

region organised a series of conference calls on networking and the members also took active role in regional and national level conferences within the region. Kay Ferrell, the Regional Chairperson was also the keynote speaker of the conference of the South Pacific Educators of the Visually Impaired (SPEVI) organised in January 2014 and stressed on inter-regional cooperation within ICEVI regions.

Hans Welling – ICEVI’s Advisor for regional development



Mr. Hans Welling, Former Vice-President of ICEVI and also the former Regional Chairperson of the ICEVI Europe Region has been invited by the ICEVI EXCO to serve as its Advisor, Regional

Development to strengthen the regional structures. Hans will work closely with the Principal Officers and Regional Chairs of ICEVI to develop quadrennial regional plans. ICEVI congratulates Hans and is looking forward to his significant professional contributions in the way forward in developmental activities of the ICEVI regions.

Higher Education Project making Steady Progress



The ICEVI in collaboration with the Nippon Foundation has been implementing higher education programme for students with visual impairment in Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam. In 2013-14, the project included Myanmar as the additional country. The local partners implementing the project are Krousar Thmey (Cambodia), Pertuni (Indonesia), Resources for the Blind, Inc. (Philippines), Sao Mai Computer Center for the Blind (Vietnam), and Myanmar National Association of the Blind (Myanmar). During the academic year 2013 – 2014, 569 students with visual impairment were assisted in the Higher education projects in the five countries.

S.No.	Country	Students supported
1	Cambodia	29
2	Indonesia	185
3	Philippines	176
4	Myanmar	41
5	Vietnam	138
Total		569

The higher education project is likely to be extended to Laos from 2014 onwards and discussions are also on to expand the scope of higher education by including the employment component, which will enable a smooth transition from school to work for persons with visual impairment.

ICEVI in Key policy making bodies

ICEVI CEO in National EFA Mission of India

Dr. MNG Mani, CEO, has been appointed as a member of the Executive Committee of the National Education For All (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan) Mission of Government of India, which is a proud moment for ICEVI. The General Body of this Mission is headed by the Prime Minister of India and the Executive Committee is chaired by the Minister for Human Resource Development.

MARTIN OSANGIRI, ICEVI's Regional Coordinator – IBSA Africa President

Martin Osangiri Okiyo, the Regional Coordinator of ICEVI Africa region has been appointed as the President of IBSA Africa region. As ICEVI and IBSA have a memorandum of understanding to promote sports, Martin's involvement in IBSA would unite both the organizations for promoting sports activities.

Future Events

ICEVI Regions to celebrate Global Action Week in May 2014

ICEVI is glad that the Global Campaign for Education has identified “Disability” as the theme for its Global Action Week to be observed in May 2014. This occasion will be used all over the world to create awareness about the abilities of persons with disabilities. ICEVI has already requested its Regional Chairs of Africa, East Asia, Europe, Latin America, North America and Caribbean, Pacific and West Asia to design specific programmes in their countries of operation to observe the Global Action Week. The ICEVI initiative to celebrate this special occasion will include conduct of awareness programmes, advocacy activities, publication of literature on disability that may be of interest to the common public, etc. The specific programmes of each region will be posted on ICEVI website.

ICEVI in IDP Forum

The ICEVI Africa Region is proposing to organize a regional event of ICEVI in conjunction with the IDP Africa Forum to be held in Kampala, Uganda on 13 - 18 October 2014. As the Africa Forum brings a large number of participants from different countries within the region it would be an excellent opportunity for ICEVI to share its vision particularly with reference to the Global Campaign on Education for All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI) being implemented in collaboration with the World Blind Union. ICEVI will conduct a number of technical sessions as a part of the Africa Forum, organize specific thematic workshops etc., and it is hoped that this event will provide the necessary impetus for the expansion of ICEVI activities in the region.

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. 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.

Compliments from Team ICEVI

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