



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



(FORMERLY ICEVI NEWSLINE)

April 2007

Message from the President

April 17, 2007
Philadelphia, PA

As I prepare this message I know my friends in Kenya will have big smiles on their faces today. It has become an annual tradition for me to mail the sports page of the local newspaper to my Kenyan colleagues at this time each year when the results of the famous Boston Marathon are published. Well, our Kenyan colleagues must really be gloating this year. Seven of the top 10 men's finishers and 2 of the top ten women's finishers are Kenyans.

However, this year I will not mail the sports page but will carry it to Nairobi where on May 8th ICEVI and WBU will officially launch the Education for All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI) Campaign for the Africa region at the 4th Africa Forum. This event will mark the starting point for a great new African marathon; a race to achieve the "right to education" for every blind and low vision child in that region.

Less than a year after the launch of the EFA-VI Global Campaign in Kuala Lumpur "starting lines" are being marked in all of our regions and races for education equity will shortly be underway. You will learn more about those preparations in this issue of [ICEVI E-News](#).

This year Overbrook is celebrating its 175th anniversary with a number of special events to mark the occasion. Last week Sabriye Tenberken, an early graduate of the Overbrook International Program and her partner Paul Kronenberg were with us for the Philadelphia premier of the documentary "Blindsight". Some of you have, no doubt, heard of the work of Sabriye and Paul in Tibet, SAR China and the organization they have founded Braille Without Borders www.braillewithoutborders.org.

In this issue of [ICEVI E-News](#) Paul and Sabriye are sharing with our readers information on a new international training program they are establishing. They are looking to you, the members and friends of ICEVI for potential candidates for what promised to be a dynamic program for blind and low vision individuals with proven leadership ability.

Since the graduates of this program are likely to be both positive role models and articulate spokespersons for the cause of the EFA-VI Global Campaign, I urge you to contact Sabriye and Paul braillewb@gmx.net with the names of truly exceptional blind and low vision individuals you feel may be interested in this new program that will start in 2008.

I hope you will enjoy this issue of [ICEVI E-News](#) and will support our Global Campaign and all other ICEVI activities in your region.

As always,

Sincerely,



Larry Campbell
President

EFA-VI GLOBAL CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES UNFOLDING

Launching a global campaign on education for all children with visual impairment was a dream of ICEVI in the last quadrennium. Thanks to the tireless work of the members of the Executive Committee of ICEVI and the members of the Global Task Force, this campaign is now a reality. The regional chairs have already started grouping countries within the regions as to those that are ready for the launch, countries where some additional input is necessary for the campaign, countries that require more professional assistance in implementing the campaign activities and countries where awareness about the campaign is yet to take place. Though some countries in each region are being identified as focus countries for EFA programme implementation, the regional chairs have been encouraged to plan appropriate activities in other countries too so that in the course of time, the education for all global campaign becomes an international movement. The Global Task Force met with the regional chairs in April 2007 and discussed potential road maps for the regions in the implementation of the campaign. The Global Task Force and the regional chairpersons are fully aware of the fact that the path is rather a challenging one and the success of the campaign depends on the involvement of all stakeholders of the countries including that of the Governments, Disabled Peoples Organisations, international non-governmental development organisations, national organisations, etc. The road to EFA will certainly be a learning experience for both ICEVI and the World Blind Union (WBU) but we are determined to succeed. The ICEVI website www.icevi.org has a dedicated section for the EFA-VI campaign and we encourage the readers of the E-News to log onto the website to know more about the campaign.

EFA-VI INITIATIVE IN VIETNAM

Vietnam is one of the Fast Track Countries for the implementation of education for all movement as identified by the World Bank and this initiative is being used by ICEVI and the WBU to implement the global campaign on education for all children with visual impairment. The East Asia region has included Vietnam as one of the focus countries for the EFA-VI campaign and in this connection, the country has already formed a National Technical Task Force with Madam Mai, the Vice-Minister of Education as its chairperson and Dr. Minh, Deputy Director, Department of Curriculum Development, Ministry of Education and Training as its secretary. The President and the Secretary General of ICEVI visited Vietnam on 12-13 February 2007 and held discussions with the Vice Minister and other officials from the Ministry of Education and Training to discuss strategies to expand educational opportunities for children with visual impairment in Vietnam. A meeting with the officials of the Vietnam Blind Association was also organised. ICEVI will help the country to organize a national workshop in the near future to formulate a plan of action for the

implementation of the EFA-VI global campaign. More EFA news about Vietnam will be posted on the website of ICEVI www.icevi.org

MEETING OF THE GLOBAL TASK FORCE

The Global Task Force meeting of the EFA-VI global campaign was held in Oslo, Norway on 23-24 April 2007. This meeting had a special significance as the regional chairpersons of ICEVI also attended the meeting and the plans for “focus countries” in each region were discussed. The GTF has already suggested ways to classify countries within each region for implementation of EFA-VI activities and these strategies were discussed further for crystallization. The GTF is of the view that while some countries within each region might be taken up as focus countries to monitor the performance indicators of the global campaign, it feels that varied activities such as awareness creation, capacity building, development of literature, etc., may also take place in other countries within each region so that more countries take part in this campaign in one way or the other. The meeting prepared such a plan for the quadrennium to implement various types of EFA-VI activities.

ICEVI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN OSLO, NORWAY

The first meeting of the Executive Committee of ICEVI for the quadrennium 2006-2010 was held at the Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted (NABP), Hurdal, Norway on 25-26, April 2007. The NABP, one of ICEVI's international partner members hosted this meeting. The agenda of the meeting included strengthening regional activities of ICEVI, collaboration with international organizations, EFA-VI campaign, publications, research, administrative structure, future activities of ICEVI, etc. The strategic update of this meeting will be posted on the website of ICEVI and will also be published in the July 2007 issue of The Educator.

LAUNCH OF EFA-VI IN AFRICA

The Fourth Africa Forum will be held in Nairobi from 6 to 11 May 2007 and ICEVI will take an active part in this event. The launch of the EFA-VI campaign for the Africa region will also take place during this Forum. Both ICEVI and WBU hope to make the EFA-VI campaign an official activity of the Africa Decade of Disabled People. Besides organising a workshop on the EFA-VI campaign, ICEVI will also be organising workshops on teaching mathematics and teacher preparation. The deliberations on teacher preparation are likely to bring professionals from the universities and higher education institutions from different parts of Africa and will serve as a platform for curriculum development activities in the future.

SPEVI FORUM – A BRIEF REPORT

The South Pacific Educators of the Visually Impaired (SPEVI) Forum is an opportunity to bring educators of the Pacific region for a common platform once every two years. The latest SPEVI Forum was organized in Perth, Australia on 6-11, January 2007 and was attended by more than 200 participants from the region. Since the last quadrennium, there has been strong networking happening between ICEVI and SPEVI with ICEVI conducting regular academic sessions at the SPEVI Forum. Dr. Jill Keeffe, Vice-President, ICEVI presented the inaugural address of Larry Campbell, President at the recent forum held in Perth. The EFA-VI campaign became an important discussion topic at the Forum and delegates from Australia and New Zealand expressed interest in working together for the improvement and expansion of educational services for children with visual impairment in developing countries, particularly in the Island nations of the Pacific region.

PACIFIC FORUM FOR EFA-VI

The ICEVI Pacific region effectively used the opportunity of the SPEVI Forum to organize a workshop under the banner of “Pacific Forum” to orient countries in the Pacific region to the concept of the EFA-VI global campaign. More than 30 participants from Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Australia, and New Zealand attended the Forum, on 4-5 January 2007. The Group deliberated in detail on strategies to implement the EFA-VI campaign in the Pacific region. Mrs. Maryanne Diamond, Vice-President, WBU and Mr. Cheng Hock, Regional President, Asia-Pacific region of WBU, were actively involved in the Forum. The participants of the Forum unanimously resolved that the countries within the region should work for the betterment of education of children with visual impairment in the region, and also proposed using the PRIDE (Pacific Region Initiative for the Delivery of basic Education) project for implementing the EFA-VI campaign. It was resolved to organise a workshop for the PRIDE project coordinators and the EFA-VI stakeholders in Fiji on 10-14 September 2007 to prepare detailed country plans to hasten the implementation of EFA-VI.

MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION PROJECT

In the October 2006 issue of the E-News, the commencement of the ICEVI-Pertuni (Indonesian Blind Union) pilot project on higher education was reported. The project is currently providing support services to approximately 75 blind and low vision students enrolled in 16 higher education facilities in Bandung and Jakarta. An interim evaluation of the project was conducted in February 2007 and the results were positive. Interviews with scores of visually impaired learners, teachers, fellow students, administrators, etc., revealed that blind students involved with the project are more confident than ever before with a marked progress in their academic and

social integration, self-esteem and use of technology. The final evaluation of the project will be conducted in June 2007. We are reasonably optimistic that if the final evaluation is positive, ICEVI will be able to expand this initiative to other areas of Indonesia and to other countries in the region. ICEVI believes that the higher education facilities too will become a part of the continuum of the education for all global campaign. The final report of the evaluation will be posted on the website of ICEVI in July / August 2007.

PROJECT TO DEVELOP MATH BRAILLE CODES IN INDONESIA

Following the development of a Mathematical package to enable children with visual impairment learn mathematics effectively, ICEVI, Overbrook – Nippon and HKI organized a workshop for teachers and officials in Jakarta, Indonesia on 6-7 February 2007 on formulating appropriate strategies to teach mathematical Braille codes in Bahasa, Indonesia. A task force has been constituted for this purpose in Indonesia and the work in this area is underway. A follow-up workshop will be organised in June 2007 to finalize the strategies for teaching mathematics in regular and integrated schools.

REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE EAST ASIA REGION

The East Asia Regional Committee consists of 19 countries. In order to effectively implement a regional plan for the East Asia region, a Regional Executive Committee (REXCO) has been formed. The first meeting of the REXCO was held in Kuala Lumpur on 2-3 April 2006. The REXCO classified the countries within the region into four categories, namely, 1. countries that can help others, 2. countries that are ready for EFA-VI with assistance from ICEVI, 3. countries that require more time to launch EFA-VI activities, and 4. countries where awareness should start regarding the EFA-VI initiative. The REXCO will meet regularly to monitor ICEVI activities in the region.

ICEVI'S REPRESENTATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST CONFERENCE

The EBSAR FOUNDATION in collaboration with the Middle-East Region of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness organised a symposium on "Pediatric Clinical Low Vision Course" on 7 March 2007 at the Saudi Ophthalmology 2007, King Fahad Cultural Centre, Riyadh. ICEVI was represented by Dr. Bhushan Punani, Regional Chairperson, West Asia region, who also spoke on "Essential components for promoting education of persons with low vision." ICEVI is proposing to strengthen its activities in the Middle-East Region and therefore, this conference was used as a forum to network with organisations in the region. Our congratulations to the EBSAR Foundation for their leadership and initiative

NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED

The new ICEVI website www.icevi.org has been made more user-friendly for low vision persons. Persons with low vision can increase the font size of the documents on the website according to their preference. The information provided, particularly in the publication section of the website of ICEVI, is considered to be of immense value by its viewers. You can view the website and offer your suggestions for its refinement.

MEETING OF THE PUBLICATION COMMITTEE OF ICEVI

The Publication Committee meeting of ICEVI was held in Copenhagen, Denmark on 18-20 March 2007 with Harry Svensson, 2nd Vice President, ICEVI as its chairperson. The committee has prepared a detailed plan of action for publication during the current quadrennium. The committee also discussed ways to better disseminate our publications in order to spread the vision and mission of ICEVI. One of the key decisions of the Publication Committee is that the future issues of The Educator, the official magazine of ICEVI will deal with specific topics pertaining to the EFA-VI global campaign. The committee will also constantly update the website materials of ICEVI. You will see substantial changes in the publications as well as on the website in the future. Our thanks to Peter Rodney [Denmark] and Cay Holbrook [Canada] for their contributions

ATTENDANCE IN WBU'S OFFICERS MEETING IN TORONTO

Larry Campbell, President ICEVI attended the officers meeting of the World Blind Union held in Toronto, Canada on 3-4 April 2007 and provided the WBU Officers with a progress report on the EFA-VI campaign. He also highlighted the importance of the effective involvement of the World Blind Union in creating a demand for education of children with visual impairment throughout the world, particularly in the developing regions.

MARGA-SCHULZE FOUNDATION : INVITATION TO ORGANISATIONS

The Marga-Schulze Foundation has special interest in promoting higher education for girls with visual impairment. Hundreds of visually impaired girls have benefited from this programme in Asia and Africa. The Foundation is also encouraging institutions to organise capacity building activities for blind girls and women in the areas of communication skills, personality development, orientation and mobility, information and communication technology, etc. The EFA-VI global campaign provides special emphasis to the education of girls with visual impairment and therefore, the objectives of the Marga-Schulze Foundation are supporting the campaign activities.

ICEVI hopes to work closely with the Foundation in the implementation of education for all girls with visual impairment in the developing world.

CELEBRATION OF LOUIS BRAILLE BI-CENTENNIAL

The first revolution in the education of persons with visual impairment happened when Louis Braille invented Braille scripts. In order to recognize his mammoth contribution to blind welfare, ICEVI and WBU are planning for the celebration of Louis Braille Bi-Centennial in January 2009. To mark this occasion, the January 2009 issue of The Educator will be devoted for Braille literacy highlighting the importance of Braille and how to make it popular among persons with visual impairment. In addition to this publication, ICEVI and WBU will also celebrate this event in a fitting manner in different parts of the world using the regional structures of both the organisations. The readers are encouraged to provide ideas if any for the celebrations.

BIDDERS FOR THE 13TH WORLD CONFERENCE OF ICEVI

Following the most memorable 12th World Conference of ICEVI held in Kuala Lumpur in July 2006, ICEVI is inviting bidders for the 13th World Conference. Some countries have already expressed interest in hosting the next World Conference in 2010. The executive committee of ICEVI will review these offers. For further information on preparing a bid for next World Conference please contact the Secretary General sgicevi@vsnl.net

APPLICATIONS NOW BEING CONSIDERED

Sabriye Tenberken and Paul Kronenberg the founders of Braille Without Borders (BWB) have announced that applications are now being received for 2008 admissions to The International Centre for Development and Project-Planning (ICDeP).

Braille Without Borders will train blind and visually impaired people who are motivated to become leaders of social projects in their own regions or countries. BWB will select people with the initiative, motivation and skills required to fight poverty and create opportunities for the disadvantaged.

Over a one-year period participants will receive training by highly qualified and motivated teachers who will foster skill, knowledge and practical experience in project management, fundraising, public relations, personality development, soft skills, project planning, computer technology and English/communication skills. Only if blind people themselves speak out in this way, can attitudes toward blindness be changed.

If you are, or know of a candidate for this program, ICEVI encourages you to write for further information to BrailleWB@gmx.net and to watch for further information in future issues of ICEVI E-News and The Educator.

LOW VISION-THEME OF THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE EDUCATOR

The theme of the July 2007 issue of The Educator will be “Low Vision”. Dr. Jill Keeffe, 1st Vice-President, ICEVI will be the thematic editor. Professionals and consumers throughout the world have already been invited to contribute to this issue. The publication committee believes that the articles on low vision will form a useful monograph for those who are interested in expanding their knowledge and developing low vision services.

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

For further details, contact:



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