



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



(FORMERLY ICEVI NEWSLINE)

April 2011

Message from the President

Quite a lot has been happening since we held our slimmed-down General Assembly - or beefed up ExCo depending on how you look at it - in London at the beginning of December and I'm glad to have this opportunity to tell you about it.

To begin with, the Principal Officers were given a brief to see if we could turn the forced postponement of our 2010 conference to advantage by organising a joint event with our partners in the World Blind Union (WBU) in 2012 when they are due to hold their Assembly. We felt that in principle this could bring benefits in terms of economies of scale and greater cost-effectiveness for the sector, as well as cementing and developing our partnership with WBU. I'm pleased to say that our Secretary-General, Mani, and First Vice-President, Jill Keeffe had very fruitful discussions with Maryanne Diamond and Penny Hartin, WBU's President and CEO, together with our respective conference organisers in Thailand during February, and as a result it has been agreed to hold a joint event in Bangkok, Thailand, running through from 10-18 November 2012. You should already have received a message from Maryanne and me outlining what is planned. In brief, WBU's Assembly and associated meetings will run from 10-16 November, and ICEVI's conference will run from 15-18 November. There will thus be two days of overlap, where joint events are planned. On November 17th there will be a strategic planning event for both organisations together with our international partners and global agencies, and on Sunday 18 November we will hold our own General Assembly. There is still a lot of detailed planning to do, but we believe that the proposed format holds out exciting prospects of cooperation.

In the space I have the rest will have to be in headlines, but we have been busy laying the groundwork for the next phase of ICEVI's development and putting the requisite infrastructure in place. We have finalised the strategic review based on the deliberations of the London meeting last December, and revised our Business Plan with targets for 2011-12. We have renewed our regional committees and appointed a series of EFA-VI committees tasked with taking the EFA-VI campaign forward, and these will be getting down to work.

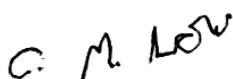
In view of the priority given to regional development at the London General Assembly, a two-day meeting with international non-governmental disability organisations working in the Africa region is planned for the beginning of July in conjunction with the Africa Forum in Accra, Ghana. The aim is to develop a regional strategy for Africa, and other regional strategies will follow. At the same time we will take the opportunity to hold a face-to-face meeting of the working group set up with WBU to develop a joint strategy for taking the EFA-VI campaign to the next stage.

In February, with Larry I visited the Lions Club International Foundation, UNICEF and the EFA Fast Track Initiative run from the World Bank in the USA to enlist their support for the EFA-VI campaign and see how we could work together. While it would be nice to think that these organisations would just wave a magic wand at the centre and fund a programme of joint work with ICEVI, it is clear from these meetings that there is no alternative to our doing the necessary legwork country by country to generate requests for support from the centre. Hence the importance of our ramping up our efforts at regional level.

Other successful developments you can read about in this issue include the following: ICEVI has been invited to make a statement at a meeting of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs in July reviewing progress with implementing nationally agreed commitments and goals in relation to education. The Nippon Foundation has renewed its grant to our Higher Education Project for 2011 in the sum of 178,000 dollars. And finally our Secretary-General, Mani, at an impressive ceremony in Bangkok covered by the media earlier this month signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the launch of the ASEAN Institute on Disability and Public Policy, a collaboration between the American University and the Nippon Foundation with which ICEVI is closely associated. ICEVI's contribution, from which we stand to gain considerable mileage, will be in the area of networking and capacity building.

So you can see there is indeed a lot going on. It's hard for me to keep on top of it all, but fortunately I don't have to, as we have such a good team in place across the globe. It doesn't just depend on one man - or even a small group of Principal Officers. My thanks go in particular to my fellow Principal Officers, our hard-working secretariat, our regional chairs and all those without whose efforts none of this would be possible.

But I cannot close without a thought for those in Japan who have been so grievously affected by the recent earthquake and tsunami. At the end of this issue you can read how the education of blind children is being affected and the resolution with which services are being maintained. Our Japanese colleagues must be at the front of all our minds at this time and I would charge everyone to give as generously as they can to the Nippon Foundation and other appeals for support.



Colin Low
(ICEVI President)

ICEVI invited to make a statement at the UN Meeting

The International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) has been invited by the NGO Branch of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs to present a written statement on the theme of education at the 2011 ECOSOC High Level Segment for NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC to be held in July 2011. As is the practice every year, statements should relate to the theme of the Annual Ministerial Review held during the High Level Segment. The focus of the Annual Ministerial Review this year is on “*Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education*” and ICEVI will make this statement highlighting the importance of educational equity for children with visual impairment in the developing world. It will also emphasise the impact of the Global Campaign on Education for All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI), implemented by ICEVI acting in partnership with the World Blind Union, in increasing enrolment of these children in educational settings.

EFA-VI Update

A Strategic Planning Meeting held in London in December 2010 resolved that ICEVI should constitute special committees to monitor the implementation of the EFA-VI Global Campaign. Consequently four committees in addition to the existing resource mobilization group have been formed. ICEVI is glad that Simon Bush from Sightsavers has agreed to chair the Global Networking and Advocacy Committee with Aubrey Webson (Perkins School for the Blind, USA), Paul Manning (Parents Association, New Zealand), Ana Pelaez (ONCE, Spain), Penny Hartin (World Blind Union, Canada) and Praveena Sukhraj (South Africa) as its members. The Media and Materials Committee is headed by Pete Osborne, (RNIB, UK) and other members are Nandini Rawal (Treasurer, ICEVI), Aubrey Webson (or a representative of the Perkins School for the Blind) and Glenda Alexander (Vision Australia). The Programme Review Committee which will assist the Executive Director of the Campaign consists of Professor Jill Keeffe (First Vice President, ICEVI), as its Chairperson and Catherine Naughton (CBM, Germany), Adelaide Addo-Fening (Sightsavers, UK), Manuela Krauter (Light for the World, Austria), and Bernadette Kappen (Deafblind International) as its members. In response to the resolution of the London Meeting, ICEVI and WBU have also formed a Joint Committee to discuss specific strategies to augment the EFA-VI Campaign and to strengthen collaboration between ICEVI and WBU at the global, regional and national levels. The ICEVI – WBU Joint Committee consists of Larry Campbell, the Immediate Past-President of ICEVI, Catherine Naughton (CBM)

and Kevin Murfitt (Vision Australia) representing ICEVI and Maryanne Diamond - President, WBU, Arnt Holte – Vice President, and Penny Hartin - CEO representing the WBU. Larry Campbell will chair this committee. All the committees have specific terms of reference to work with and they have been asked to keep regional development and nurturing local leadership as the crosscutting issues in the work of ICEVI. These committees will have teleconferences and are also likely to have face-to-face meetings in July 2011 in Accra, Ghana, in conjunction with the Africa Forum. ICEVI believes the work of these committees will provide a road map for the implementation of the Global Campaign.

ICEVI INGDO Meeting in Accra, Ghana

The constitution of ICEVI states that its members are primarily the members of the regions and therefore the strength of the organization depends to a large extent on the effectiveness of regional activities. As ICEVI is growing with its primary programme of EFA-VI and also with other global networking activities, it is suggested that each region develops comprehensive strategies keeping in view local specific factors. ICEVI strongly believes that the International Non-Governmental Development Organisations (INGDOs) present in a particular region should be brought on board in planning such regional strategies as they have significant experience in working with developing countries. A planning meeting for the Africa region will be held on 1st and 2nd July 2011 in Accra, Ghana to formulate strategies for the vast Africa region and ICEVI has invited leading INGDO partners for a discussion. Africa Union of the Blind, CBM, CIDA, Francophone Blind Union, Light for the World, Perkins School for the Blind, Secretariat of the African Decade, Sightsavers, Visio, and World Braille Foundation have already agreed to attend the event. The outcomes of this meeting will be posted on the website of ICEVI (www.icevi.org) and also published in The Educator.

POs and EXCO Meetings of ICEVI

A meeting of the Principal Officers of ICEVI will be held on 30th June in Accra, Ghana. The meeting assumes special significance as it is conducted just prior to the INGDO meeting for developing strategies for the Africa region. The meeting will also review the agenda of the executive committee meeting of ICEVI scheduled for Leipzig, Germany on 1-2 October 2011, in conjunction with the World Congress Braille 21.

ICEVI – WBU Joint Event in November 2012

The cancellation of the 13th World Conference of ICEVI enabled the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB), ICEVI and WBU to come on the same cycle of quadrenniums. ICEVI and WBU Executive Committees have authorized their Principal Officers and the Table Officers to explore the possibility of organising a joint event in Bangkok in 2012. The ICEVI Principal Officers after a series of discussions resolved that an expanded General Assembly could be conducted in the place of a routine World Conference. The recommendations emerged in the light of the general opinion that regional conferences are more relevant to strengthen ICEVI and therefore it was suggested that the General Assembly should be used as a think-tank to plan the future activities of the organisation. As ICEVI and WBU are working closer than ever before, it was also proposed that the joint event should provide opportunities for its members to attend joint technical sessions on topics which are of mutual interest for both organisations. A Joint Committee consisting of Maryanne Diamond – President WBU, Penny Hartin – CEO WBU, Jill Keeffe – First Vice-President ICEVI and Mani – Secretary General ICEVI met with the Thai Blind Union, which has assumed responsibility for hosting the event on 18th and 19th February 2011 to discuss the format of this first ever joint event. The WBU will hold its General Assembly from 10 to 16 November 2012 whereas ICEVI will hold its General Assembly from 15 to 18 November 2012 thus giving an opportunity for both the organizations to conduct joint sessions on common issues on the 15th and 16th November 2012. On 17th November, a meeting to discuss WBU-ICEVI Joint Strategy for scaling up EFA-VI will be organized and this event will be attended by the delegates of ICEVI and members of WBU. More information on the format of the event along with the topics of presentations and workshops will be posted on the websites of ICEVI and WBU.

Vision Alliance Initiative

Members are aware that the International Agency for Prevention of Blindness (IAPB), ICEVI and WBU have formed the Vision Alliance which discusses advocacy and crosscutting issues. To begin with, the Vision Alliance concept is being put into action in Nepal, Mozambique and Vietnam thereby educators and medical professionals are sensitized to address the common parameters of education, demand creation, rehabilitation etc. The chair of the Vision Alliance is rotated every year and for 2011, Christian Garms, President of IAPB will serve as its chairperson. The members of the core group which consists of the Presidents and CEOs of the three organizations had a conference call on 21st March 2011

and one of the resolutions is that each organization should have the other two organizations on their boards as non-subscription paying members. The next meeting of the Vision Alliance will be held on 3rd July 2011 in Accra, Ghana.

Collaboration with Lions Clubs International Foundation

ICEVI is among a few organizations which were instrumental in assisting the Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) to include the agenda of education and rehabilitation in its Sight First Phase 2 programme. Lord Low, President and Larry Campbell, Immediate Past President of ICEVI had a meeting at the head office of LCIF on 18th February 2011 and discussed the modus operandi of collaboration between both the organizations. ICEVI is guiding its regional chairs to work with the local Lions Clubs to initiate education programmes that would facilitate additional enrolment of children with visual impairment.

Global Networking and Advocacy Initiative of ICEVI

As a part of global networking and advocacy of ICEVI, Lord Low and Larry Campbell visited the offices of UNICEF and World Bank in February 2011 to highlight the importance of educating children with disabilities under the overall Education for All initiatives. It is proposed to contact the country and regional offices of UNICEF, UNESCO, and World Bank with a view to include education of children with disabilities in the overall national / regional initiatives. This networking will also help ICEVI to work very closely with Governments for the smooth implementation of the EVA-VI Campaign. The World Bank has been requested to include education of children with disabilities as an integral part of the national plans under the Fast Track Initiatives. ICEVI believes that its flagship programme “EFA-VI Global Campaign” has potential for replication in developing countries to make education for all a reality and therefore, working with global networks and inter-governmental organizations is imperative.

ASEAN Institute on Disability and Public Policy

ICEVI is closely involved with the development of the **ASEAN Institute on Disability and Public Policy**. This initiative of the American University in collaboration with the Nippon Foundation will encourage graduate students to register for the online master’s programme. The students are expected to come for a contact programme at the Mahidol University, Bangkok and they will be

assisted by top quality experts from different Universities around the World. A dream team formed for this purpose included Larry Campbell, the Immediate Past President of ICEVI during his tenure as the President of the Organisation. A joint signing ceremony was held at the Mahidol University, Bangkok on 4th April 2011 and 8 organisations signed a joint memorandum of understanding to mark the commencement of this programme. The signatories are:

- **Prof. Banchong Mahaisavariya**, Dean, Mahidol University
- **Dr. Louis Goodman**, Dean, American University
- **Dr. Astrid Tuminez**, Vice-Dean, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy
- **Dr. Gerard Buckley**, Rochester Institute of Technology
- **Prof. Piyasakol Sakolsatayadorn**, President, Mahidol University
- **Mr. Shuichi Ohno**, Executive Director, Nippon Foundation
- **H.E. Mr. Tanin Kraivixien**, President, APCD
- **Dr. M.N.G. Mani**, Secretary General, I C E V I

It is gratifying that the Nippon Foundation besides supporting the development of this initiative has also come forward to support disabled individuals to undergo the Masters programme under IDPP. IDPP is certainly a landmark development in the field of disability and it is expected to assist hundreds of young people with disability to develop leadership qualities, which will eventually help them involve in formulation of public policies and programmes.

Japan Tragedy-Impact on Special Schools for the Blind – Message from ICEVI colleagues in Japan

March 11 14:46 was during school hours so all the blind students, teachers and staff members were safe in earthquake-resistant buildings located distances from costal area. However, like many other school-age children, there are blind students who lost their relatives or whose houses were washed away by the tsunami. (Hundreds of children in general lost their parents.) March is the end of school year in Japan but the blind schools in affected areas decided not to hold their graduation or year-end ceremonies.

At Iwate School for the Blind, some students and staff members lost their relatives living along the coast. The school building was damaged, but the school is planning to open the new school year as scheduled in April. At Miyagi School for the Blind, like in Iwate, some students and staff members lost their relatives living

along the coast. There are even students whose houses were washed away or smashed down. The school building was also damaged. Miyagi is the most severely affected prefecture, and the school will not be able to open its program until the last week of April.

At Fukushima School for the Blind, in the prefecture now famous for the nuclear plant, some students living not far away from the plant are evacuated to the neighboring Niigata Prefecture or even to Tokyo. Whether day students will have transport access to the school is quite uncertain due to lack of fuel and delay in resumption of public transport services. The school suffered damage of teaching materials and assistive technology equipment such as CCTV. (The earthquake shook very hard in north-south direction and so even if an institute is hundreds of kilometers away from the seismic point, equipment and materials may still be badly damaged.) Next to this blind school is a regular high school now used as a rescue center, and massage teachers are volunteering there as masseurs.

At Ibaraki School for the Blind, although the place is hundreds of kilometers to the south the damage is considerable in general and we still need some time until they have their public transportation back. Day students may not be able to commute to school after the school starts this week.

Contribute to The Nippon Foundation / CANPAN, Northeastern Japan Earthquake & Tsunami Relief Fund

The Nippon Foundation, which is closely associated with the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) in promoting higher education for persons with Visual Impairment in the East Asia region is at the forefront of assistance activities in support of those affected by the Earthquake/Tsunami of 11 March 2011 that hit the northern part of Japan. The Nippon Foundation is now accepting donations to establish a fund for the emergency relief/reconstruction projects. The donations can be made online by credit card on their following website:

<http://www.nippon-foundation.or.jp/eng/>

ICEVI constituency expresses its solidarity and support to the people of Japan at this time and we request our members to contribute to the above Relief Fund and also spread this message to their contacts.

IISE, Trivandrum, India – Message from the Organisers

The International Institute for Social Entrepreneurs (IISE) welcomes participants over 22 years of age whom have overcome significant life challenges ranging from vision impairment, disability, poverty, war, discrimination and exploitation. What IISE is looking for are motivated and dedicated individuals who have the potential to start and run a social project. Interested candidates can contact the organisation through its website <http://www.bwb-iise.org>

RESEARCH - Theme of July 2011 issue of The Educator

The July 2011 issue of The Educator, ICEVI's official magazine, is devoted to the topic Research. Those interested in making contributions to this issue are requested to contact the editor Aubrey Webson (Aubrey.Webson@Perkins.org), the guest editor Kay Alicyn Ferrell (kay.ferrell@unco.edu) or the associate editor M.N.G. Mani (sgicevi@vsnl.net) for details. From July 2011, the Perkins School for the Blind will assume responsibility for the editorial work of The Educator and also in identifying writers for subsequent issues.

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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