



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



(FORMERLY ICEVI NEWSLINE)

October 2008

Message from the President

September 29, 2008

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to this issue of the ICEVI E-News. Much has happened since you received the last issue, and we hope the highlights that are contained in this issue will interest and update you.

Looking at the calendar on the day I am writing this message and at the date in October when this issue of ICEVI E-News is scheduled to reach your mailbox, I realize that both dates have special meaning.

Today, our Muslim members are celebrating Eid, marking the end of the Holy Month of Ramadan, and our Jewish members are celebrating Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. I know all ICEVI members join me in sending our warm greetings even though they will reach you a bit after the occasion.

This issue of ICEVI E-News is scheduled to go out to you on October 15th, which is White Cane Safety Day. I hope all of you are doing something special to mark this important day. I also hope you will take the time today to go to the website of ICEVI, www.icevi.org, or the website of WBU, www.worldblindunion.org, to read an important press release related to White Cane Safety Day and the current challenges being posed to blind travelers by the new generation of "silent vehicles."

The past six months have been very active for ICEVI with much positive activity related to the Global Campaign on Education for All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI). More organizations are becoming involved, and the program is underway in an increasing number of countries as you will see when you read on. With the appointment of an African Regional Coordinator, who will start in January, we look forward to much progress in that region in the year ahead.

We are very pleased with the increasing number of organizations that have stepped forward with tangible support for the Global Campaign. In July, I went to New York to meet with Arnt Holte, Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted (NABP). Arnt is a longtime friend and a member of both the ICEVI Executive Committee and the Global Task Force. His organization is committed to raising financial support for the Campaign, and, to that end, Dr. Mani and I will travel to Oslo this month to discuss the details of those fundraising initiatives. We thank Arnt and the Board of NABP for their commitment to this global initiative.

From my perspective, the hallmark of the Global Campaign is the spirit of cooperation and collaboration that has emerged within and between the growing number of national, regional and international organizations that are supporting ICEVI in this effort. Our roster of International Partner Members continues to grow each year.

It is with great pleasure that I announce today that the newest International Partner Member of ICEVI is the New York Institute for Special Education (NYISE). Many of you will know NYISE's Director, Dr. Bernadette Kappen, from her long-term involvement with ICEVI and as both the former chair of the ICEVI Technology Committee and as Regional Chair of North America-Caribbean. We welcome NYISE's involvement with ICEVI and the EFA-VI Global Campaign. Dr. Kappen will represent NYISE on the ICEVI Executive Committee and on the Global Task Force for EFA-VI. We extend a warm welcome and a vote of thanks to Dr. Kappen and the Board of Directors of NYISE.

After reviewing possible venues for the 13th World Conference in 2010, we have arrived at a decision, so please read on and begin planning for that occasion.

Both the World Blind Union (WBU) and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) held their General Assemblies during the past two months, and I had the pleasure of participating in and speaking at both events. I have also had meetings with the new leadership of both organizations, and I am happy to report that Maryanne Diamond, President, WBU and Christian Garms, President, IAPB are as determined as I am to find ways for our organizations to develop better approaches to sharing information and working together. As you will see, Deafblind International, at its recent Management Committee meeting in Würzburg, Germany, expressed their desire to work more closely with ICEVI and the Global Campaign.

At our upcoming Executive Committee meeting, ICEVI will make important decisions about our plans for the remainder of the current quadrennium and develop longer-term strategies for the years beyond.

Finally, I want to call your attention to a new collaboration we have undertaken with the Center for Inclusive Technologies at Pontifical Catholic University of Chile in Santiago, Chile. You will read more about this further on, but I want to encourage all of you to look at this very exciting new development.

As always,



Larry Campbell
President

ICEVI'S PARTICIPATION AT THE WBU GENERAL ASSEMBLY

In late August, the World Blind Union held its 8th General Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland. Both the organizational and program details were very well planned, and it was both an enjoyable and productive week for Larry Campbell, President, and Mani, M N G, Secretary General, who represented ICEVI. Larry made a plenary session presentation on the global campaign highlighting the critical nature of government involvement in this education initiative and the need to strengthen the partnership and working relationship between ICEVI-WBU at the international, regional and national levels. Larry and Mani also attended the meeting of the Africa region of the WBU and had discussions with many delegates to initiate actions for the implementation of the Global Campaign in their respective countries. While in Geneva, Mani and Larry had a very productive meeting with Maryanne Diamond, the newly elected President of WBU and Penny Hartin, WBU, CEO. ICEVI also participated in a meeting of the international members of WBU that was chaired by Larry, who is one of the two representatives of the international members on the WBU Executive Committee.

THE NYISE - THE NEWEST INTERNATIONAL PARTNER MEMBER

The New York Institute for Special Education (NYISE) has become the 8th International Partner Member (IPM) of ICEVI. The other IPMs are Asian Foundation for the Prevention of Blindness (AFPB), cbm, Organización Nacional de Ciegos Españoles (ONCE), Sightsavers International, Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted (NABP), Perkins School for the Blind and the Vision Australia.

SELECTION OF THE EFA-VI AFRICA REGIONAL COORDINATOR

An interview to select the EFA-VI Regional Coordinator for the Africa Region was held at the African Blind Union (AfUB), Nairobi, on 23rd September 2008. Dr. Elly Macha, Executive Director, AfUB; Wilfred Maina, Regional Chairperson of ICEVI Africa Region; Ronnie Graham, Regional Director, Sightsavers; and Mani, M N G, Secretary General, ICEVI, constituted the selection committee. Four short-listed candidates were interviewed by the committee, which reviewed their professional experience, initiative to work for the EFA-VI campaign, team-building ability, communication skills, etc. Mr. Bernard Mogesa, who is currently serving as Education Services Manager at the Kenya Society for the Blind, Nairobi, was unanimously selected for the job. Congratulations, Bernard! Bernard will take up his new post on 1st January 2009.

JOMTIEN – THE VENUE OF THE 13TH WORLD CONFERENCE OF ICEVI

We are pleased to announce that the 13th world conference of ICEVI will be held in Jomtien, Thailand from 8 to 13th August 2010. The Education For All movement originated at a meeting of Ministers of Education convened by UNESCO, UNICEF and The World Bank in Jomtien in 1990. It is quite symbolic that ICEVI will hold its 13th World Conference at the same location some 20 years later to draw the attention of the world to the educational needs of all children with visual impairment. The Thai Host Committee, consisting of organisations of the Thai Blind Union and voluntary organizations, is headed by Pecharat Techavachara, President, Foundation for the Employment Promotion of the Blind in Thailand. The conference will be held at the Hotel Ambassador City, Jomtien, which has excellent facilities at a beautiful seaside location. Do mark your calendar to join your colleagues from around the world and be prepared for an excellent conference and a relaxed time. Watch the ICEVI website, www.icevi.org, and the next issue of *The Educator* for the Call for Papers and information on registration and costs.

PROGRAMME COMMITTEE OF THE 13TH WORLD CONFERENCE

A Programme Committee, headed by Dr. Jill Keeffe, First Vice-President of ICEVI, has been formed for the 13th world conference of ICEVI. Other members of the committee include Kathy Huebner and Lucia Piccione, Regional Chairpersons of North America & Caribbean and Latin America, respectively; Elly Macha, Executive Director, African Union of the Blind and M.N.G. Mani, Secretary General, ICEVI. The Programme Committee will meet in Bangkok on the 25th November to formulate the theme and structure of the conference.

MOU FOR EFA-VI IN PAKISTAN AND NEPAL

ICEVI is happy to inform the readers of *E-News* that Memoranda of Understanding are being signed in Nepal and Pakistan to implement the EFA-VI Global Campaign. In Nepal, it will be signed by the Director of Education, and the campaign will be implemented through the Ankur Foundation for Inclusive Education with the guidance of the National Task Force. In Pakistan, the Additional Secretary to the Ministry of Social Welfare and Special Education has already signed the MOU, and the campaign will be monitored through the Council of Community Development. Involvement of the government is a critical aspect of our strategy to assure that the work accomplished by the EFA-VI Global Campaign on behalf of children with visual impairment is part of the broader education system and is truly sustainable. Activity reports for the campaign implementation will be posted on the website of ICEVI and also disseminated through ICEVI publications.

MUCH CAUSE FOR CONGRATULATIONS

This issue of E-News brings with it words of congratulation to many of our colleagues!

Maryanne Diamond (Australia) was unanimously elected President of the World Blind Union for the quadrennium 2008-2012 at its General Assembly in Geneva. Maryanne brings a lot of experience and dynamism to the organization. She stated in her acceptance address that all “documented partnerships” that WBU has with other organisations should be converted to “living partnerships”. ICEVI congratulates Maryanne and looks forward to working closely with her over the next four years.

Two other close friends, allies and members of the ICEVI Executive Committee were also elected to office at the WBU General Assembly.

Arnt Holte represents the Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted (NABP) on the Executive Committee of ICEVI and was elected the first Vice-President of the World Blind Union. Arnt, who has extensive experience working in developing nations, has already added great value to the implementation of the Global Campaign.

Enrique Perez, who represents ONCE - a strong supporter of ICEVI and the ICEVI-WBU Global Campaign - on the Executive Committee of ICEVI, has been re-elected Secretary General of the World Blind Union.

ICEVI is happy that three of the five table officers of WBU are serving on the executive committee of ICEVI, which augurs well for establishing collaboration between the two organisations.

We also want to extend our congratulations to Christian Garms, a member of the ICEVI Executive Committee, on his election as President of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) at the IAPB General Assembly in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Christian is a member of the ICEVI Resource Mobilisation Committee of the Global Campaign and one of the major architects of our Business Plan. Congratulations Christian!

Finally, we would like to congratulate our President, Larry Campbell, who in August was the recipient of the Takeo Iwahashi Award presented by the Nippon Lighthouse for the Blind for his contributions to improving the lives of blind and visually impaired persons in the Asia region. Larry was presented this award at the WBU General

Assembly in Geneva by Mrs. Akiko Iwahashi, the daughter-in-law of the late Takeo Iwahashi.

ICEVI AT THE Dbl COUNCIL MEETING

When the council of Deafblind International (DbI) recently met in Würzburg, Germany, ICEVI was represented by the 2nd Vice President, Harry Svensson. At the meeting William Green, the president of DbI, clearly stated that DbI needs to take a more active role in the EFA-VI Global Campaign. The council decided to appoint Bernadette Kappen, Vice-President of DbI, as their representative on the Executive Committee of ICEVI as well as the Global Task Force of the EFA-VI Global Campaign. Welcome on board Bernadette!

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS OF ICEVI IN BANGKOK

ICEVI will hold a number of meetings in Bangkok in November 2008. The Programme Committee of the 13th world conference of ICEVI will meet on the 25th November. On the 26th, a full-day meeting of the Regional Chairs will be held to make specific regional plans for ICEVI activities in the region. Some regions have already started implementing EFA-VI through focus countries, and others are on their way. The meeting will also review the existing strategies of the campaign and lessons learnt in carrying the campaign forward. The ICEVI Executive Committee meeting will take place on the 27th and 28th November. The newly constituted Finance Committee of ICEVI will meet on the 29th to review the existing financial administration. On the 30th, the Research Committee of ICEVI will meet. As the EFA-VI Global Campaign aims at documenting evidence of good practices, the research committee will assist the focus countries in developing appropriate tools, designing research and evaluation studies, etc.

100 YEARS OF SERVICE OF CBM

cbm, previously known as the Christoffel Blindenmission, is a worldwide organisation serving persons with disabilities. This year, cbm celebrates 100 years of service to blind and other disabled persons. Founded in 1908, the organisation currently serves more than 1000 education, rehabilitation and medical projects throughout the world. cbm has been and continues to be one of ICEVI's longest-standing and most generous supporters. ICEVI joins the cbm family in celebrating this historic occasion. During the upcoming Executive Committee meeting in Bangkok, we will mark this occasion with a special dinner to honor cbm, and the staff of its regional office in Bangkok will be our special guests. ICEVI extends our thanks and very best wishes

to cbm and its staff and partner organizations throughout the world. We look forward to many more decades of collaboration with this great organization.

MEETING IN TAJIKISTAN

Hans Welling and Bhushan Punani, the Regional Chairpersons of ICEVI Europe and West Asia regions, respectively, visited Tajikistan in September 2008 and discussed the possibilities of motivating parents and disabled peoples' organisations to get involved in educational services for persons with visual impairment. Though Tajikistan belongs to the ICEVI West Asia region, Europe region has come forward to explore the possibility of providing technical help, which clearly demonstrates inter-regional networking.

EFA-VI FIJI FORUM

The EFA-VI Fiji Forum was organised in Suva, Fiji on 6-8th October, and the event was coordinated by Frances Gentle, Regional Chairperson, Pacific region. Maryanne Diamond, President, WBU; Jill Keeffe, First Vice-President, ICEVI and Setareki Macanawai, Chief Executive, Pacific Disability Forum participated in the meeting along with representatives of the Government of Fiji led by Ms Emi Rabukawaqa, Madame Permanent Secretary, Fiji Ministry of Education and a number of voluntary organisations. The Forum has evolved a plan of action that will make Fiji one of the focus countries for the implementation of the EFA-VI Global Campaign in the Pacific Region.

ICEVI COLLABORATES WITH THE CENTER FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE TECHNOLOGIES

The Center for the Development of Inclusive Technologies (CeDeti) of the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile in Santiago and ICEVI are now collaborating on the further development of an open source program developed by a team at CeDeti led by Dr. Ricardo Rosas. Developed originally in Spanish, the program has now been translated into English, and we hope a Vietnamese version will soon be available.

ICEVI is assisting CeDeti to test and develop the program with the assistance of the Overbrook School for the Blind, the Jernigan Institute of the National Federation of the Blind (USA) and the Sao Mai Computer Center for the Blind (Vietnam).

The English language Beta 3 version is called "Jumping Letters" and introduces reading to the blind child using an approach that is fun and engaging for the child as well as his siblings, other family members and teachers. The program facilitates

learning of the Qwerty keyboard, the Braille cell and the Perkins braille keyboard. It also offers the child many tales and stories to hear and practice with a voice synthesizer.

The system has been developed around an inclusive philosophy, which makes it an attractive approach when being used with both sighted and visually impaired children. CeDeti and ICEVI hope to be able to demonstrate this fun new learning tool at upcoming meetings and conferences. We also hope to soon develop a "users' forum" on the website of ICEVI. For free, you can download the English Beta 3 version from www.cedeti.cl/jumping-letters.

NEW NEXT GENERATION PERKINS BRAILLER

57 years after the launch of the original Perkins Braille, Perkins School for the Blind has introduced the new **Next Generation Perkins Braille**, which retains all of the features that made the Classic Perkins Braille the most widely used braille writer in the world, plus incorporates new features users have been asking for. Congratulations to the Perkins for this achievement. For more details, log onto the website www.PerkinsBraille.org

JULIET! WE WILL REMEMBER YOU

Juliet Stone, from the United Kingdom, was active within ICEVI Europe throughout the 1980's and 1990's. She died peacefully in hospital on September 30th 2008. As an expert in teacher preparation and an authority in Early Childhood Intervention and in Mobility, she was invited to speak at many international ICEVI conferences and workshops and was a Keynote Speaker at the 1992 ICEVI World Conference in Bangkok. A natural teacher and communicator, she provided input that was invariably clear, often amusing and always full of practical advice based on her extensive personal experience. A woman of great personal charm, Juliet always put the needs of others first. Those of us who knew her will remember her dearly, and her legacy will remain in the hearts and minds of the generations of teachers and children she inspired.

NEW JOURNAL ON ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY

A new professional journal, *International Journal of Orientation & Mobility*, has come out. More information can be found on www.ijorientationandmobility.com.

BRILLE – THEME OF THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE EDUCATOR

The theme of the January 2009 issue of *The Educator* will be “Braille”. Dr. Cay Holbrook, one of the members of the Publication Committee, will be the guest editor for this issue, and Harry Svensson, the Second-Vice President and Mani, Secretary General, ICEVI, will be the Editor and Associate Editor respectively. Those interested in making contributions may contact Harry at harry.svensson@spsm.se or contact the ICEVI Secretariat at sgicevi@vsnl.net.

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:



ICEVI Secretariat

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

3, Professors' Colony, Palamalai Road, S.R.K. Vidyalyaya Post
Coimbatore – 641 020, INDIA

Phone: 91-422-2469104, Fax: 91-422-2693414

e-mail: sgicevi@vsnl.net, Visit us at www.icevi.org