



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



**(FORMERLY ICEVI NEWSLINE)**

**OCTOBER 2014**

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## Message from the President

Dear Colleagues

I am glad to be able to tell you that the venue for the WBU-ICEVI General Assemblies in August 2016 has now been agreed. It will be the Rosen Centre, Orlando, Florida, USA and we are pleased with the disability friendly facilities there. Feedback from the joint assembly held in Bangkok in 2012 has been taken into account in planning the programme, and I am happy to be able to say that a whole day will now be devoted to paper presentations by professionals and parents. The Joint Programme Committee will meet in April 2015 to plan the event in detail.

The ICEVI meetings planned for October 2014 in conjunction with the IDP Africa Forum in Kampala, Uganda had to be postponed on account of the Ebola epidemic in some countries in West Africa, so we will convene the ICEVI meetings in London in April 2015 instead. We are proposing to register all regions of ICEVI as legal entities with their own constitution in London alongside the world body, and this will be discussed by the Regional Chairs and the Executive as part of this series of meetings.

We are extremely happy that Dr. Aubrey Webson, Editor of The Educator, has been appointed the Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations. The Perkins School for the Blind will continue to assist with the publication of The Educator and we are looking forward to welcoming Mr. Dave Power, the new CEO of Perkins to our EXCO meeting in London.

The Global Campaign on Education for All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI) continues to make good progress. In the countries where EFA-VI is underway, the number of children with visual impairment newly enrolled since the inception of the campaign in 2007 is now over 100,000. ICEVI acts as the catalyst, but we owe this success to the collective efforts of the national governments, International Non-Governmental Development Organisations (most of whom are our International Partner Members), local NGOs and organisations of the blind. Though we depend on many stakeholders for gathering the student data, we have detailed information on capacity building programmes organised directly by ICEVI and we are happy that more than 38,000 teachers and parents have participated in our courses.

ICEVI is now partnering with mainstream organisations to lobby on disability issues. We were the only organisation representing the

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disability sector at the Asia Pacific Regional Conference on Education held in Bangkok in August and we took every opportunity to stress the need for inclusion of children with disabilities in the mainstream education system. In this issue, you will find the Bangkok Statement issued by the Ministers of Education emphasising inclusion and the role of technology in furthering the education of children with disabilities.

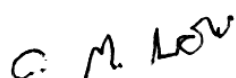
Thanks to the efforts of our colleagues from the World Blind Union (WBU), we now have the Marrakesh Treaty which dismantles copyright barriers to the international transfer of information in accessible formats and should make it easier for students with visual impairment to access the materials they need for study. But we cannot relax until enough countries have ratified the treaty to bring it into force and make it generally applicable.

I am also glad to report that our ICEVI East Asia region and the Special Education Centre of the South East ASEAN Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to organise joint capacity building programmes for teachers. It is proposed to organise programmes on mathematics, early intervention, multiple disabilities, technology and low vision in 2015 and we want to use this partnership to lobby for more opportunities and rights for persons with visual impairment in the region.

You will also be pleased to know that the Nippon Foundation has agreed in principle to extend the higher education project being implemented in Cambodia, Myanmar, Indonesia, Laos, Philippines and Vietnam for the period 2015-2018 and we will be submitting a formal application soon. The new phase of the programme will aim at creating welcoming and inclusive universities for persons with visual impairment and at the development of soft skills designed to promote employment opportunities.

In summary, July–October 2014 has been another successful quarter for ICEVI. Further news about developments within ICEVI will be published in the January 2015 issue of *The Educator*.

I take this opportunity to wish you all happy holidays and a very happy, healthy, peaceful and successful 2015.



**Colin Low**

President, ICEVI

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## **WBU-ICEVI GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2016 UPDATE** *(also published in the WBU Bulletin)*

The WBU-ICEVI Joint Assembly will be hosted by the National Federation of the Blind in the United States at the **Rosen Centre Hotel** located in **Orlando, Florida** and will take place from **Thursday, August 18<sup>th</sup> to Thursday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016.**

It should be noted that these dates include the entire Assembly events comprising the following:

- Thursday August 18 – WBU Executive meeting and other WBU Pre-Assembly committee meetings
- Friday August 19 – Monday August 22 – WBU General Assembly
- Monday August 22 – ICEVI Paper presentations (ICEVI will also join the plenary for the WBU GA closing ceremonies)
- Tuesday August 23 – Wednesday August 24 – Joint WBU/ICEVI concurrent sessions
- Thursday August 25 – ICEVI General Assembly

The Rosen Centre has been used for a number of years by the National Federation of the Blind to hold its annual conventions (of close to 3000 delegates) and so the hotel is very accessible to our needs and the hotel staff are very familiar with serving blind and partially sighted persons. All Assembly events and accommodations will be located in the same venue. The hotel is well laid out and easy to get around; there are also lots of restaurants, some shopping and other attractions close by and it is very easy to walk on the footpaths around the hotel area.

The NFB was also able to negotiate a very favorable room rate for us at about \$125 per night per room, including all taxes. Please note, meals are not included in the room rate but the hotel has very good food service and there are lots of low cost options close by for breakfast and other meals. There will be a separate website set up in 2015 by NFB for Assembly registration, travel and local information.

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## **Vision Alliance Stand at the International Convention of the Lions Clubs**

Vision Alliance, a network of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB), ICEVI and the WBU put up an exhibition stand at the International Lions Convention held in Toronto from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> July 2014. Penny Hartin and Mani, CEOs of WBU and ICEVI attended the convention and interacted with the Lions Clubs of various regions to augment educational services for persons with visual impairment. They also organised a workshop on Vision Alliance which was attended by members of about 50 Lions Clubs from different regions of the world. In that session awareness about the Lions International's programme on education and rehabilitation was created and the Lions were urged to work with organisations like WBU and ICEVI at country and provincial levels to formulate education and rehabilitation programmes for persons with visual impairment. The momentum created at the Vision Alliance workshop will be followed up with the regional networks of ICEVI and WBU. The Vision Alliance is also planning to have discussions with the leadership of the Lions International to plan advocacy and capacity building programmes to support the cause of education of children with visual impairment.

## **Congratulations Aubrey**

Dr. Aubrey Webson, Editor of ICEVI's official magazine, The Educator and also a member of the ICEVI Executive Committee representing the Perkins School for the Blind, has been appointed as the UN Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda. ICEVI constituency congratulates Aubrey and we are sure his link with the UN will help us to push the disability agenda in mainstream programmes.

## **Indonesia Conference of ICEVI**

The Indonesia network of ICEVI organised a conference on multiple disabilities in Matram, Indonesia on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> October 2014, which was attended by teachers, officials from the Ministry of Education, representatives from the South East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO) and national NGOs. 68 delegates from Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and the United States of America attended the event and made professional

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contributions. The meeting of the Regional Executive Committee of the ICEVI East Asia region was also conducted in conjunction with this conference, which resolved to hold a regional conference of the ICEVI East Asia region in Bali, Indonesia in 2015. The Regional Organising Committee will meet in December 2014 to finalise the call for papers and logistics. More information on the event will be posted on ICEVI website [www.icevi.org](http://www.icevi.org) in January 2015.

### **ICEVI – SEAMEO SEN MOU signed**

ICEVI and the SEAMEO SEN (Centre for Special Education of the South East Asean Ministers of Education Organisation) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Malacca on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2014. The MOU was signed by Dr. Suwimon Udompiryasak, Regional Chair, ICEVI East Asia region and Datin Yasmin, Director of SEAMEO SEN in the presence of Dr. M.N.G. Mani, CEO, ICEVI, Dato Kulasegaran, Deputy Regional Chair of the East Asia Region, all faculty members and the media. The broad areas of cooperation between ICEVI and SEAMEO SEN are as follows:

1. SEAMEO SEN will seek ICEVI's technical guidance in the area of visual impairment including curriculum development, organising capacity building programmes and research.
2. Programmes in the area of visual impairment will be organised as joint activities of the SEAMEO-SEN and ICEVI and the certificates will also be issued jointly.
3. SEAMEO SEN will contact national governments too to look after logistics for organising national level capacity building programmes in collaboration with ICEVI.
4. It was proposed to organise 4 country level programmes of 5 days duration each (Mathematics in Vietnam, MDVI in Philippines, Early Intervention in Cambodia, and Teaching Methods in Myanmar) in 2015 and two regional level refresher courses on visual impairment (two weeks duration each) at the SEAMEO SEN Centre in Malacca. All these programmes will train nearly 200 master teachers in the East Asia region in 2015.

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5. SEAMEO will also use its Ministerial connections to get officers involved in policy decisions to attend the ICEVI regional conference in Indonesia in 2015.

SEAMEO will be organising its regional conference on Special Education in mid 2015 involving Ministers and officials from the ASEAN countries and ICEVI will play a key role in partnership with the SEAMEO SEN in making this event successful.

The ICEVI-SEAMEO SEN MOU is certainly another milestone in ICEVI's work and we are looking forward to constructive results through this collaboration.

### **Basic Course on Adaptive Mathematics for Learners with Visual Impairment organised**

A basic course on Adaptive Mathematics for Learners with Visual Impairment was held on 11<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> August 2014 at the Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Africa (CEMASTEA) Nairobi, Kenya. There were a total of 16 participants - 2 facilitators and 14 trainees. They were composed of Maths instructors from CEMASTEA and representatives from the Kenya National Examination Council and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development. Majority were Maths teachers from several special and integrated schools in Kenya, some of whom were visually impaired.

Developing knowledge in mathematics is one of the priorities of ICEVI and similar programmes will be organised in the Africa and other regions of ICEVI.

### **Math Workshop for trainers in India**

Mathematics is one of the weak areas in the education of children with visual impairment and the work done by ICEVI in producing a publication on Mathematics is widely appreciated by teachers, parents, children with visual impairment and professionals. The publication "Mathematics Made Easy for Blind Children" is on our website [www.icevi.org](http://www.icevi.org) and can be downloaded free of cost. There are requests to ICEVI from different regions of the world to organize workshops and

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therefore, there is a need to train master trainers to meet these demands.

To begin with, the ICEVI West Asia Region and the National Association for the Blind in India will be jointly organising a workshop in early 2015 to prepare master trainers for mathematics education. They will identify good subject experts who have communication skills and also connected with the disability sector to be trained over a period of about 3 weeks with the expectation that they would be available for undertaking assignments whenever there are external requests to conduct such programmes. For more details of the workshop, please contact Dr. Bhusan Punani, Regional Chairperson, ICEVI West Asia region. ICEVI is planning to organise master level training courses in mathematics in other regions of ICEVI to provide special impetus for the development of mathematics education among children with visual impairment.

### **Frances Gentle elected as President, SPEVI**

ICEVI congratulates Dr. Frances Gentle, its second Vice-President on her election as the President of the South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment (SPEVI). This will strengthen ties between ICEVI and the SPEVI in organising joint programmes in the Pacific region of ICEVI.

The Pacific EFA-VI Forum and SPEVI Biennial Conference will be held concurrently in Melbourne, Australia from January 9<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015. These two important educational events will provide opportunities for collaboration and information sharing among professionals and families who are supporting learners with vision impairment in Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Island countries and globally.

If you would like to attend both the Forum and Conference, please also register for the SPEVI Biennial Conference using the registration form that is included in the Conference Registration Brochure on the SPEVI website - <http://www.spevi.net/spevi/spevi-conference-2015.php>. The Registration Brochure sets out the registration fees and accommodation options.



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## **Postponement of IDP Africa Forum and ICEVI Meetings**

It is a pity that the Africa Forum has been postponed due to the Ebola threat in some countries in the West Africa region. One of the reasons for holding ICEVI events in conjunction with the Africa Forum is to reassure our commitment to the Africa Region, which is an important region of ICEVI for EFA-VI campaign and other networking activities. ICEVI will take part in the Africa Forum with full delegation whenever it is conducted.

## **Higher Education Programme Update**

Larry Campbell, President Emeritus and M.N.G. Mani, CEO, ICEVI had a meeting with Mr. Ohna-san, Executive Director, Nippon Foundation and his colleagues in Tokyo on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2014 to review the current progress of the ICEVI-Nippon Foundation Higher Education project and also to propose a new cycle of the project for the period 2015-18. While the new cycle of the project will continue to focus attention on the issue of creating inclusive and welcoming university environments for blind and low vision students and more positive university and public policies in higher education, ICEVI expects in years ahead to add to the current range of activities undertaken, by the project specific strategies for preparing students for and assisting them in securing gainful employment that is commensurate with their interest and educational background. ICEVI is also happy that the Government of Indonesia has passed a decree on higher education which facilitates Universities and higher education institutions to facilitate admission of students with disabilities. Congratulations to the Pertuni (Indonesian Association of the Blind) for playing a vital role in bringing this policy change. ICEVI will be working with other countries in the East Asia region to emulate this experience which will make Universities inclusive.

## **Work Plan of Regional Chairs**

The strategic plan of ICEVI lays importance on the development of ICEVI regions. The Principal Officers have evolved specific responsibilities for the regional chairs to strengthen ICEVI and the following expectations will assist the regional committees to identify the right person to assume the role of Regional Chair. The following

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descriptions will be deliberated further in ICEVI meetings and presented to the regional committees in the near future. The broad job descriptions proposed for Regional Chairs are as follows:

1. Preparation of country-specific implementation plans for the focus countries which implement the EFA-VI campaign.
2. Attending UN related meetings at the regional level at the request of the Principal Officers.
3. Preparation of progress reports for the EFA-VI implementation countries within the region. The format of the progress report will be suggested by the Principal Officers.
4. Providing input into the shadow reports of the countries which have ratified the UNCRPD.
5. Country level establishment of resource centres in a few countries – discussion with INGDO partners who are working in the regions to explore the possibility of establishing country-specific resource centres to support the implementation of the EFA-VI campaign activities. The resource centre may be an arrangement where an existing institute which has expertise in the area of visual impairment is promoted to establish capacity for training activities, material production etc.
6. Influencing teacher preparation programmes in countries within the ICEVI regions to include VI specific components in the existing curricula of training programmes.
7. Establishing Vision Alliance network consisting of IAPB, ICEVI and WBU in at least 2 countries in each region of ICEVI.
8. Organizing regional conference in each region of ICEVI.
9. Identifying good practices involving teacher preparation, use of technology, parents' involvement, government collaboration, methods of teaching low vision children, MDVI (Multiple Disabled Visually Impaired), working with other INGDOs, NGOs etc., in the countries where the EFA-VI campaign is underway.
10. Sending regional reports for The Educator, ICEVI's official publication.

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## **ICEVI in Asia–Pacific Regional Education Conference**

ICEVI was invited by the UNESCO Office in Bangkok to attend the High level Asia-Pacific Regional Educational Conference (APREC) held in Bangkok on 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> August 2014. The meeting was attended by Ministers of Education of the countries in the Asia-Pacific region and key policy makers such as Secretaries and Directors of Education of member countries. Dr. M.N.G. Mani, CEO and Dr. Suwimon Udompiriyasak, Regional Chair, ICEVI East Asia region represented ICEVI at this meeting. The outcomes of the Bangkok Conference will have an impact in formulating the Beyond 2015 Agenda for Education, which will emerge at the World Education Forum to be held in Incheon, Republic of Korea in May 2015.

ICEVI also attended the Pre-conference Planning Meeting organised by the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) on August 5<sup>th</sup> at the same venue. Focused discussions were held at the pre-conference meeting on what to lobby for with the Ministers and policy makers that should find a place in the Bangkok Statement. This meeting was attended by about 25 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and ICEVI was the only organization representing the disability sector. ICEVI used this opportunity to highlight the EFA-VI Global Campaign and the IDDC movement in raising disability concerns in the mainstream programmes of Governments.

The CSO meeting came up with key recommendations to be included in the Regional Dialogue and the CSO members lobbied with various country delegations and Ministers to highlight Civil Society issues and within this group, ICEVI lobbied for disability issues. On 6-7 August, the Regional Dialogue on Education focused on six themes namely, 1) Lifelong learning for all, 2) Equity and equality, 3) Skills and competencies for life and work, 4) Quality of teachers, 5) Information and communication technologies (ICTs) for education, and 6) Governance and financing. ICEVI lobbied with delegates who attended these sessions to raise disability concerns wherever possible. The reports of the thematic sessions included recommendations for giving emphasis to education of children with disabilities in the mainstream education and these recommendations were presented to the Ministers

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of Education, who joined the dialogue on the 8<sup>th</sup> August. Many Ministers were present for the whole conference from 6<sup>th</sup> and ICEVI used that opportunity to meet most of them to lobby for disability issues.

ICEVI is happy that the Bangkok Statement endorsed by the Ministers of Education of the Asia-Pacific region, which has the largest number of persons with disabilities, includes statements concerning their education. While inclusive education features in many places, the section on "Equity and equality" makes specific reference to disability and the text, which was approved by the Ministers, is as follows:

### **"6.2: Equality and equity**

We commit ourselves to addressing all forms of marginalization, as well as disparities and inequalities, especially gender and inequality, in access to education and learning processes and outcomes, including in conflict and crisis situations. The needs of people with disabilities should be further emphasized at all levels of education. Focused and effective actions must be taken to remove barriers to equal opportunities and to level the playing field for those who are disadvantaged and marginalized."

"The section 6.5 states as follows:

### **6.5 Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for Education**

The use of ICTs is crucial to improve access to education, in particular in remote areas, to enhance quality by supporting teaching and learning, and to strengthen educational management. Therefore, we will assure that ICTs are fully utilized to achieve the post-2015 education agenda."

The Civil Society Organizations present at the meeting mostly include the National Coalitions on Education who are working with the Global Campaign for Education and they are also willing to campaign for disability issues at the national level. It is time to link the EFA-VI country level campaigns with these National Coalitions on Education for effective lobbying with the Governments.

### Advisory Board Meeting of IDPP

ICEVI took part in the Advisory Board meeting of the Institute on Disability and Public Policy (IDPP) held in Kuala Lumpur on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2014. ICEVI also participated in the Inclusive Education Multistakeholder Roundtable on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2014 and made a presentation on the global campaign on Education for All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI).

### Potential topics for The Educator

ICEVI has been focusing on thematic issues such as inclusion, teacher preparation, technology, early intervention, low vision, Braille literacy, etc., for The Educator and the past issues can be accessed through the website of ICEVI [www.icevi.org](http://www.icevi.org). Those who have suggestions with the new topics for the future issues of The Educator may contact **MNG Mani** ([sgicevi@vsnl.net](mailto:sgicevi@vsnl.net)), Associate Editor.

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

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