



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



ICEVI E-NEWS

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Message from the President

Dear Readers,

Welcome to this October 2019 issue of ICEVI's bi-annual digital newsletter, E-News. The issue presents an overview of activities and events in 2019 that are of relevance to the ICEVI constituency. The issue includes updates on the ICEVI Paper Presentation Days that will take place during the WBU-ICEVI General Assemblies in Madrid in June 2020, as well as information about the activities of the ICEVI Governance Committee and the newly formed Committee on Children with Multiple Disabilities or Deafblindness. One exciting item is the launch of the ICEVI Mathematics Made Easy YouTube Channel, which contains around 180 instructional mathematics videos for teachers and families.

In working to achieve the Mission and Strategic Goals for the 2016-2020 quadrennium, ICEVI works closely with its partner members at global, regional and national levels. We value highly the contributions of our partner members, and our joint initiatives with the World Blind Union, Deafblind International, United Nations agencies, the World Health Organisation; and government, civil society, parent and disability organisations. With the release of its first Report on Vision in October 2019, the World Health Organisation has set out the global challenges and opportunities for collaborative efforts to support and advocate for the estimated 2.2 billion people worldwide who have vision impairment, including the estimated 1 billion with preventable blindness.

During 2019, we have contributed to the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets for education through membership in the WIPO Accessible Books Consortium, the Inclusive Education Task Group of the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC), the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), and our joint WBU-ICEVI membership in the Inclusive Education Task Group of the International Disability Alliance (IDA). Updates on the activities of these global organisations will be included in the first 2020 issue of E-News.

My sincere thanks to Dr Mani, ICEVI CEO, and the ICEVI Secretariat for their work in preparing this issue of the E-News. You are welcome to share this issue with others or to contact the ICEVI Secretariat if your colleagues would like to join the distribution list – email ceo201922@gmail.com. Past copies of the E-News are available for download from the ICEVI website – go to <http://icevi.org/enews/>.



Frances Gentle, President, ICEVI

Governance framework of ICEVI

The ICEVI Executive Committee appointed a Governance Committee to formulate a framework that makes explicit the interconnected governance and administration systems of ICEVI at global and regional levels. The work of the Committee commenced in early 2018, headed by the President ICEVI. Members include international partner organisations and representatives of the ICEVI regional committees. Since its establishment, the Governance Committee has reviewed the existing ICEVI Articles of Association (AOA), Memorandum of Association (MOA) and Bye-Laws, resulting in development of robust guidelines that lay a clear path for the future growth of ICEVI as an organisation consisting of global and regional structures. The governance framework was approved at the annual meeting of the ICEVI Executive Committee, held in Addis Ababa in October 2019.

The Committee is currently preparing a list of potential amendments to the existing AOA and MOA of ICEVI. This list will be tabled for discussion and adoption at the ICEVI General Assembly to be held in Madrid, Spain, in June 2020. The various AOA and MOA clauses that will require amendment in the light of the new governance framework will be posted on the ICEVI website and also circulated to the General Assembly voting delegates prior to June 2020. For more information about the governance framework and the potential amendments to the AOA and MOA, please view the ICEVI website in early March 2020.

ICEVI paper presentation days at the General Assembly

It is heartening that nearly 200 abstracts have been received for the two ICEVI Paper Presentation days during the joint WBU-ICEVI General Assemblies in Madrid, June 2020. The Programme Committee is working to accommodate as many presentations as possible so as to allow a wide range of speakers representing all regions. The Programme Committee has been unable to accommodate the abstracts for interactive workshops due to the high number of abstracts submitted. The Committee has suggested that the workshop content be presented in poster format. Authors whose abstracts were selected have received clear guidelines for

oral and poster presentations. With the variety of presentation topics, we look forward to an excellent General Assembly.

Through this newsletter, we also want to remind those who have received their abstract selection letters that the names of the presenters will be included only if they register for the General Assembly **before 10th March 2020**. Failure to register before this date will result in the removal of the presentations from the program schedule. The presenters cannot be included in the program schedule if they register after 10th March, even if they attend the General Assembly. We have stipulated this strict deadline as the final program schedule must be submitted for publication no later than 20th March. We therefore solicit utmost understanding from the presenters, and request your assistance in sharing these deadlines with anyone who is planning to make presentations on the ICEVI days.

Approval of the higher education project for 2020

We are pleased to inform our constituency that The Nippon Foundation has approved the proposal of ICEVI to continue its higher education projects in Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos PDR, and Mongolia. These projects have already facilitated the graduation of more than 2500 students with visual impairment in various disciplines. The recent thrust of the project has been to facilitate employment opportunities, and we are pleased to advise that more than 350 project participants with visual impairment have secured employment since 2016. We are grateful to The Nippon Foundation for supporting the higher education and employment project, which is having a profound impact on the lives of thousands of persons with visual impairment in the East Asia region. ICEVI and the Overbrook Nippon Network on Educational Technology (ON-NET) are currently working on a joint publication highlighting the project achievements and the positive impact created by The Nippon Foundation. This publication will be launched at the ICEVI General Assembly in June 2020.

Welcome to our new organisational members

ICEVI is privileged to have 10 international partner members who are strong pillars of ICEVI activities at the global and regional levels of the organisation. ICEVI has initiated a membership drive across its seven global regions to encourage more organisational level members to support ICEVI's region-based activities. We are pleased to welcome three new organisational members in the North America and Caribbean region. These are the Canadian National Institute of the Blind, the Hadley Institute for the Blind, and the American Printing House for the Blind. We look forward to strengthening our collaboration with all members as we transition to the 2020-2024 quadrennium.

ICEVI Mathematics YouTube channel

At the time of writing, ICEVI has released 176 instructional mathematics videos via its dedicated YouTube channel called "ICEVI Math Made Easy". There are more than 575 current subscribers and the number of views has exceeded 11000. The Math videos cover a variety of topics, such as geometry, algebra, set theory, trigonometry, numbers, methods of teaching, and adaptation of instructional materials, and more videos will be uploaded in the days ahead. ICEVI is addressing the issue of mathematics education as a top priority as it is considered to be one of the most neglected areas in the blindness sector.

We invite teachers, parents and education leaders to make use of these valuable training resources to promote inclusion of children with visual impairment in mathematics education. ICEVI is committed to transforming exclusion into inclusion, so that children with visual impairment will have the essential mathematics knowledge to engage with other STEM subject areas in school, higher education and employment.

Those who have developed similar instructional materials or videos on mathematics and science for blind children are invited to send the same to the ICEVI Secretariat in order to disseminate them for wider use.

Committee on Children with Multiple Disabilities or Deafblindness

During the October 2019 meeting of the ICEVI Executive Committee in Ethiopia, a Committee was established to promote the human rights of children with deafblindness or multiple disabilities and visual impairment (MDVI). The Committee is chaired by Katie Holland of Perkins International, and membership to date includes ICEVI Principal Officers, and representatives from Deafblind International, CBM and Perkins. The Committee has held its first teleconference meeting in order to plan its area of focus and terms of reference. We are pleased that ICEVI and our partner members are directing our efforts to promote the rights of children who are marginalised and disadvantaged due to the severity of their disabilities and the lack of specialised knowledge of the professionals and families who support them.

UN Connections

Dr Frances Gentle, Dr Kay Ferrell and Dr M.N.G. Mani visited UNICEF Headquarters in New York in November 2019. Discussion with staff of the UNICEF Children with Disabilities Programme Division included joint collaboration in the area of curriculum development and production of instructional materials. The ICEVI Start-Up Teacher Training Curriculum and online mathematics instructions videos were identified as examples of resources promoting disability-inclusive education for children with visual impairment. The UNICEF staff expressed their willingness to promote the ICEVI online resources with their worldwide contacts. ICEVI is also exploring the possibilities of working with UNICEF in the area of digital technology.

Meeting of the Africa Regional Board

We are pleased to inform our constituency that the ICEVI Africa Regional Board has finalised registration in Kenya as a non-governmental organisation with legal status. Congratulations to Gertrude Oforiwa Fefoame, ICEVI Regional President; Martin Keiti, Vice-President; and all members of the Regional Board for their consistent efforts in securing

legal status and registration for the ICEVI Africa Region. The full Board of the ICEVI Africa region met in Addis Ababa in October 2019 in conjunction with the Africa forum. The Board pledged to work together to strengthen the activities of ICEVI in all member countries in Africa, to ensure that the agenda of quality equitable education is a high-priority in national programs. A number of resolutions were formulated by the Board, including organising country champion programs to empower young people with visual impairment to advocate for comprehensive services in the blindness sector. Members opined that registration of the Africa region as a legal entity provides them with opportunities to grow the organisation at the regional and national levels across the Africa continent. We shall include updates on the development of ICEVI Africa activities in future ICEVI publications.

The ICEVI Indonesian network

In response to the recommendation of the ICEVI Executive Committee to permit the ICEVI Indonesian network to register as a legal body in Jakarta, a meeting was convened in December 2019. The meeting brought together Ibu Sri Sudarsano; Aria Indrawati, the Regional President of ICEVI East Asia; and M.N.G. Mani, CEO, ICEVI, to establish the modalities for formal registration. The ICEVI Indonesian network will develop a national level Articles of Association, in accordance with the Mission and Vision of ICEVI. It is anticipated that formal registration of the network will take place in April 2020. ICEVI encourages other country-level networks or groups that work for the growth of ICEVI to consider registering as national legal entities. Such recommendations should come through the Regional Board of their respective ICEVI region.

ICEVI's participation in global and regional events

ICEVI's office bearers at global and regional levels of the organisation include some of the world's most experienced leaders and practitioners in the fields of vision impairment and blindness education. Each year, our office bearers represent ICEVI and/or their respective organisations at conferences, assemblies and meetings. These events offer the opportunity to build and strengthen collaborative partnerships and to share the efforts

of ICEVI and its partner members in promoting growth in education enrolment and completion rates for girls and boys with vision impairment, from early childhood to higher education.

Some of the key events that the ICEVI office bearers attended during 2019 include the following:

- Launch of ICEVI and the Overbrook-Nippon Network on Education Technology (ON-NET) Text-to-Speech (TTS) software in the Burmese language with the support of The Nippon Foundation, Myanmar, January 2019.
- 12th International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance, including moderation of an Invited Session on the SDGs in the Global South, Australia, April 2019.
- International Forum of Educative Inclusion of People with Disabilities, Ecuador, May 2019.
- International Seminar on the 80th Anniversary of Education for the Blind in Thailand, May 2019.
- Mathematics Workshop in the Philippines, in collaboration with the Government of Philippines, Resources for the Blind, and ICEVI East Asia, Philippines, May 2019.
- International Disability Forum and Summit, organised by the National Government of Argentina, the International Disability Alliance (IDA), and the Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families (RIADIS), Argentina, June 2019.
- International Disability Alliance meeting, USA, June 2019.
- Meeting of the International Organising Committee for the 2020 Joint WBU-ICEVI General Assemblies, Spain, June 2019.
- 3rd International Conference on Special Education (ICSE) organised by the SEAMEO-SEN, Indonesia, July 2019.
- 17th Deafblind International World Conference, Australia, August 2019.

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- Meetings of Qingdao Education Bureau, Asian Foundation for the Prevention of Blindness, and the Qingdao School for the Blind, China, October 2019.
 - Meeting with UNICEF Children with Disabilities Programme Division, USA, November 2019.

Forthcoming regional events

The year 2020 will be a busy year for ICEVI. In addition to the June 2020 global General Assembly of ICEVI in collaboration with the World Blind Union, several regional events will take place before the end of the 2016-2020 Quadrennium. The West Asia region, for example, will hold its regional conference in Kathmandu, Nepal on 16 to 18 February 2020. This will be a joint regional conference in partnership with the Sense International. More than 400 participants have registered for the event and the registration is now closed. The ICEVI President and CEO will be at the conference and will discuss with our colleagues in Nepal the development of strategies for expanding educational opportunities for children with visual impairments. It is worthy of note that Nepal was one of the first focus countries which implemented the ICEVI-WBU Global Campaign on Education For All Children with Visual Impairment.

The Latin America region will be holding its regional conference in March 2020 in Dominican Republic. Latin America is also a registered ICEVI region and many international partner members who work in the region will be attending the regional conference, offering opportunities to plan coordinated efforts to strengthen ICEVI Latin America priority activities.

ICEVI awards

In every General Assembly, ICEVI recognises the outstanding services of individuals in the blindness sector. In the General Assembly in Madrid, ICEVI will present outstanding leadership awards to individuals from the regions on the basis of recommendations of the ICEVI Regional Boards. The Awards Committee is chaired by Mrs Nandini Rawal, Treasurer, ICEVI. Nominations should be directed to the ICEVI Regional President in the respective region, **no later than 15th February 2020**. Nominations

should include detailed information about the nominee's contribution to the blindness sector and their contribution to the ICEVI mission or objectives at the regional or national level.

Congratulations to ICEVI's award recipients

ICEVI congratulates President, Dr Frances Gentle, on her admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters, *honoris causa*, in recognition of her contribution to the lives of people with vision impairment in Australia and internationally. Frances was presented with the honorary degree at the December 2019 graduation ceremony of the Newcastle University (Australia) Faculty of Health and Medicine. In delivering the Occasional Address, she highlighted the work of ICEVI in promoting the rights of persons with vision impairment and other disabilities.

ICEVI also congratulates Gertrude Oforiwa Fefoame, our Regional President of ICEVI Africa, for receiving the Ghana National Leadership Award in recognition of her outstanding services for persons with disabilities. Gertrude is a tireless worker in this field, and her contribution is evident in the Africa region and also at the global level as a member of the UNCRPD Committee.

Congratulations are also extended to Dr Bhushan Punani, Regional President of ICEVI West Asia, who was recently conferred the Outstanding Leadership Award 2018. This prestigious award was bestowed by the President of India. Dr. Punani's contribution in the social sector is well known in India.

Inviting themes for the future issues of The Educator

Members of ICEVI are aware that Dr Kay Ferrell, the Regional President of the ICEVI North America and the Caribbean, is the newly appointed Editor of ICEVI's magazine, The Educator. The Publication Committee is inviting suggested themes for the future issues of The Educator, as well as articles or reports that are of relevance to blindness education and the field of vision impairment. Kay's contact details are included on the ICEVI website, www.icevi.org.

Obituary

ICEVI is saddened by the loss of Mr William Brohier who passed away at the age of 87 on 16th January 2020. Fondly known as Bill, William Brohier was President of ICEVI between 1987 and 1997, and a leading figure in the field of vision impairment in Malaysia and worldwide. During his presidency, ICEVI benefited from his passion and commitment to children who were disadvantaged due to blindness or low vision. Bill's leadership led to growth in interest of international organisations in ICEVI, and ICEVI becoming a convening organisation that presented a united voice on global issues in visual impairment and blindness education. The ICEVI constituency remembers the great contribution of Bill and records its deepest condolences to his bereaved family and colleagues.

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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