

International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment



Interim Report

Our International Partners and Members of the Executive Committee

































Message from the President and CEO



Dear ICEVI Members, Partners and Colleagues,

We live in extraordinary times that require new and innovative approaches to ensuring children with vision impairment or other disabilities have access to quality teaching and learning opportunities. National governments have taken drastic measures to limit transmission of the coronavirus and ensure health systems have sufficient capacity to provide patients with quality care. In many countries, schools have closed and online and distance learning structures established.

When national emergencies strike, we usually seek comfort and support in our family and community networks. However, the very nature of the COVID-19 pandemic requires us to maintain physical distancing and limit the number of people we meet. Loved ones, clients and colleagues who are predisposed to contracting the coronavirus are safer in isolation rather than inclusive settings. This has forced us to change the nature of our interactions and how we work and socialise. The COVID-19 pandemic has raised our awareness of the essential connections between education, health, and family and community services. Within the context of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), the pandemic has highlighted the connections between enjoyment of liberty and security (Article 14), and provision of equitable quality education (Article 24), safety and protection from situations of risk (Article 11), and full and equal access to health and other services without discrimination on the basis of disability (Articles 9, 11 and 25). In a Disability Royal Commission issues paper on emergency planning released by the Australian Government (April, 2020), new and increased barriers to receiving quality education were identified. These barriers include limited access or availability of the internet and accessible information and communication technologies (ICT), with flow-on effects for learners with disability in accessing education programs via video conferencing and online learning and communication. The Australian Government also identified the need to provide parents and families with additional educational supports to assist their children with disabilities during periods of home schooling.

In several of our ICEVI regions, the Regional Presidents and Committees are providing direct support to children, parents and caregivers during school and community lockdowns. Support needs vary across each region, and ICEVI responses have included provision of information and webinars for teachers, nutrition and learning resources for families, and establishment of parent networks using social media to support each other and share their stories and knowledge. The challenge remains, however, to reach and support families of children with vision impairment in under-resourced communities, where education, health, rehabilitation and ICT services are limited. In this regard, a collaborative partnership between ICEVI partner organisations has resulted in the creation of an information booklet for families and professionals supporting children with vision impairment and multiple disabilities (MDVI) or deafblindness in under-resourced or remote communities. The booklet has been translated into multiple languages and will be released in hard copy and digital formats during the online meeting of the ICEVI Executive Committee in June 2020. ICEVI will prioritise similar initiatives in the future, and will explore expanding the country champions' programs to empower a greater number of young people with vision impairment to become independent learners and education advocates. ICEVI will also prioritise partnerships with our member organisations to provide parents and caregivers with the required knowledge and skills to effectively support their children's learning within home and community settings.

We acknowledge with thanks our members and partners who have promoted knowledge sharing, collaboration and education innovation during the global pandemic. COVID-19 has sharpened our awareness of the importance of community and professional collaboration. The knowledge acquired during this time will be absorbed into new ways of thinking about quality education and how it is achieved.

Frances Gentle

M.N.G. Mani

ICEVI presents an Annual Report every year and a Quadrennial Report at the end of each Quadrennium. As 2020 was to be the year of the General Assembly, we had been preparing a Quadrennial Report covering the key activities of ICEVI for the last four years. However, due to the unexpected COVID-19 Pandemic which has adversely affected the entire world, the planned General Assembly has been postponed to 2021. As a result, the current term of the ICEVI officers has been extended until May 2021 and the planned Quadrennial Report will be replaced by a Quinquennial Report covering the five-year period of 2017-2021. Consequently we are presenting the current report in the form of the Interim Report for the period October 2019 to June 2020.

Under this extraordinary condition of uncertainty around the world, our regions are doing their best to network with education leaders and teachers, students with visual impairment, and parents. ICEVI is thankful to the tremendous support being extended by our international members and partners. With this background we are happy to present this Interim Report covering key activities since the EXCO Meeting held in Ethiopia in October 2019.

Executive Committee Meeting in Ethiopia

The ICEVI Executive Committee (EXCO) Meeting was held in Ethiopia in October 2019 in conjunction with the much anticipated Africa Forum. The original plan was to hold the Africa Forum in 2017, and was postponed until October 2019 due to unavoidable circumstances. ICEVI generally takes advantage of such events as the Africa Forum to bring together its constituency from the region to discuss strategies for education of children with visual impairments in the entire region. The CEO and Principal Officers determined that the EXCO meeting for 2019 should also take place in conjunction with the Forum. ICEVI members took an active interest in the ICEVI specific activities and also the entire Forum by providing academic as well as financial contributions. A series of ICEVI initiated activities conducted at the Forum require special mentioning.

One of the days of the Africa Forum, the 9th October, was exclusively focussed on education. ICEVI took the lead in organising the deliberations of this day. The ICEVI Executive Committee members who have specialisation in their respective areas such as Curriculum Development,



Teacher Preparation, Early Intervention,
Mathematics, Technology or Multiple Disabilities,
organised technical sessions which were highly
appreciated by the participants. Prior to the Africa
Forum the full Board of the ICEVI Africa region
met at the conference venue and discussed
strategies to strengthen educational activities
throughout the region.

With ICEVI Africa Region registered in Nairobi as a Non-Governmental Organisation, members of the Regional Board felt that the legal entity would provide tremendous opportunities to connect with local stakeholders and funding organisations that are aligned with the priorities and activities of the Africa Region. The Board also emphasised the importance of partnering with the World Blind

Union and African blindness organisations to advocate for adoption of the Marrakesh Treaty and copyright changes by governments in the Africa Region so that a far greater number of accessible books and educational materials will be available for students with visual impairment.

ICEVI also used the opportunity to network with the international and regional organisations that were present at the Africa Forum and expressed an interest in taking an active role in the ICEVI Africa Region. The Regional Board also discussed the possibility of ICEVI assuming a larger role in organising the next Africa Forum in 2023. The ICEVI Principal Officers and key members of the Africa Regional Board will continue their discussions and updates will be available going forward.

Reconnecting with ICEVI Partners

Dr. Frances Gentle, President; Dr. Mani, CEO; and Dr. Kay Ferrell, Regional President of the North America and the Caribbean Region, visited the Hadley Institute for the Blind in November 2019. The Hadley Institute for the Blind was the first international organisation to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with ICEVI in 2003, soon after the ICEVI Golden Jubilee Conference. At that time, Hadley and ICEVI launched a joint program called 'INDEPTH', meaning 'ICEVI Network Distance Education Program Through Hadley'. The purpose of the program was to facilitate online training opportunities for teachers around the world using the Hadley learning materials. Many teachers from the ICEVI regions enrolled in the INDEPTH program and made use of the online learning facility, especially at a time when ICEVI was preparing for the launch of the WBU-ICEVI Global

Campaign on Education for All Children with Visual Impairment (EFA-VI) in 2006.

The Hadley Institute for the Blind and ICEVI have decided that the connection between the two organisations should be further strengthened through establishment of a network of parents. Following the visit in November 2019, the ICEVI team has held further discussions with Julie S. Tye, President, Hadley Institute and Hadley staff. It is anticipated the collaboration will be finalised before the General Assembly of ICEVI in 2021, and Julie Tye will deliver a presentation on progress in developing the parent network. In response to this initiative, we are delighted that that Hadley Institute for the Blind has renewed its organisational membership with ICEVI.

The ICEVI team also visited the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) in Kentucky, Louisville. Extensive discussions were held with Dr. Craig Meador, President, and key APH leaders on



potential future collaboration in vision impairment education. It was agreed to link the ICEVI regional networks with the extensive learning resources of APH, for the benefit of children with visual impairment and their families. We are pleased to welcome the American Printing House for the Blind as an organisational member of ICEVI, and have invited Craig Meador to deliver a presentation at the forthcoming General Assembly. We look forward to connecting APH with the ICEVI

Regional Presidents to improve understanding of the regional and country-specific learning and resource requirements of children and young people with visual impairment.

ICEVI has plans to reconnect with other leading organisations in the field of vision impairment to discuss the mission of ICEVI and possible areas of synergy in our efforts to support and promote equitable quality education for all children and young people around the world.

Meeting with UNICEF officials

The ICEVI team consisting of Frances, Kay and Mani held a meeting in November 2019 with Rosangela Berman Bieler, Senior Advisor, and Julie De Barbeyrac, Program Coordinator of the Children with Disabilities Program Division of UNICEF. Discussions included progress in implementing the UNICEF Accessible Digital Textbook initiative, the ICEVI online instructional mathematics videos and Start-up teacher training curriculum in visual impairment. It was agreed that ICEVI and UNICEF would publicise their online educational resources across their networks. The UNICEF officials emphasised the relevance and usefulness of the mathematics instructional videos

to class teachers of all children. The ICEVI team took the opportunity to invite Rosangela Berman Bieler and her UNICEF staff to take part in the May 2021 WBU-ICEVI General Assemblies.



Promoting education for children with Multiple Disabilities or Deafblindness

The ICEVI Executive Committee, during its meeting in Ethiopia in October 2019, formed a task force headed by Katie Holland, Executive Director of Perkins International, to develop an information booklet promoting education and social inclusion of children with vision impairment and multiple disabilities (MDVI) or Deafblindness. The booklet presents the perspective of the child with MDVI or DB, and the target audience includes parents and education, health and community-based

rehabilitation (CBR) professionals supporting families in rural and low income communities where educational and health opportunities may be limited. The task force consisting of Katie Holland, Frances Gentle, Deborah Gleason, Sian Tesni, Mirko Baur and Nandini Rawal, as planning to launch the booklet in multiple languages during the virtual ICEVI EXCO meeting on 29th June 2020. ICEVI is grateful to Perkins International and Perkins School for the Blind for taking lead in this

important project. Through our collaborative efforts, we hope to connect children and families with the transformative power of education.

In November 2019, the ICEVI team consisting of Frances Gentle, Mani and Kay Ferrell met with Dave Power, CEO and President, Perkins School

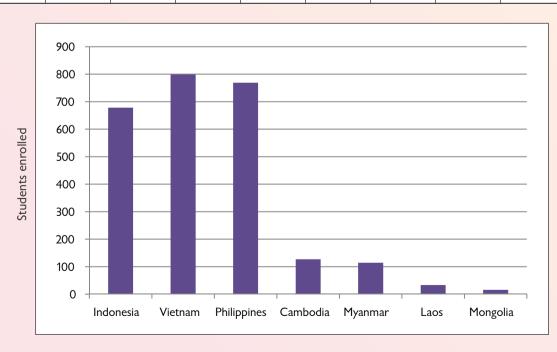
for the Blind; and Katherine (Katie) Holland, Executive Director of Perkins International. Discussions included Perkins-ICEVI collaboration to further strengthen service delivery for Children with Multiple Disabilities or Deafblindness. We look forward to moving the discussions into tangible initiatives in the post-COVID period.

Yet another year of progress in Higher Education

The Higher Education program of ICEVI, with the substantive support of The Nippon Foundation, is achieving its targets in the focus countries of Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Mongolia,

Philippines, and Vietnam. Between 2006 and October 2019, more than 2500 students with visual impairment have been assisted to complete their graduation in various areas and the details are as follows:

Country	2006-07	2006-11	2006-14	2006-15	2006-16	2006-17	2006 - Dec. 17	2006-18	2006-19
Indonesia	250	385	480	609	631	637	644	660	678
Vietnam	28	354	470	563	630	689	736	757	799
Philippines	32	460	489	671	710	726	732	751	769
Cambodia	4	14	22	52	83	91	91	105	127
Myanmar	-	-	29	54	69	88	88	114	114
Laos	-	-	7	16	19	25	25	33	33
Mongolia	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	14	16
Students enrolled	314	1213	1497	1965	2142	2256	2324	2434	2536

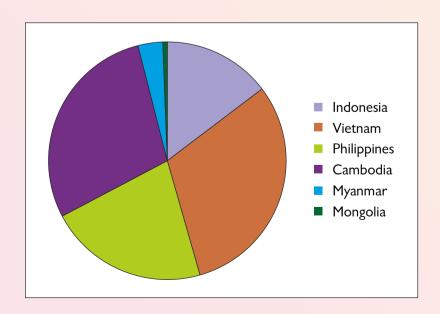




The higher education projects continue to expand educational opportunities for students with visual impairments and higher education enrolments are growing steadily in the implementing countries. During the early years of the project, funds were used for the creation of resource centre facilities through higher education institutions. In recent

years, the project partners have started using local resources and influencing stakeholders, including Governments at the country level, to create the required facilities for increasing the admission of students with visual impairment in the higher education institutions and also ensuring sustainability.

Country	2015-16	2016-17	Apr-Dec 2017	Jan-Dec 2018	Jan-Dec 2019	Employment Till Date
Indonesia	39	-	-	09	-	48
Vietnam	27	27	24	13	10	101
Philippines	13	12	11	18	17	71
Cambodia	38	36	02	14	04	94
Myanmar	-	-	10	01	-	11
Mongolia	-	-	-	02	-	02
TOTAL	117	75	47	57	31	327





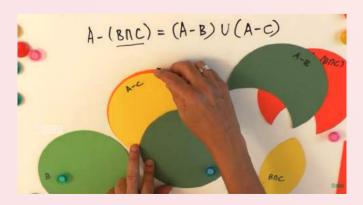
Mathematics Initiative

In the Annual Report for 2018-19, ICEVI announced commencement of its mathematics project with the support of The Nippon Foundation. The purpose of the project is to prepare open-access Mathematics Instructional Videos for the benefit of students and teachers. A workshop on this subject was conducted in conjunction with the Africa Forum in October 2019 and was attended by a large number of participants who found the Mathematics Instructional Videos extremely useful.

Although the project had the objective of preparing about 150 instructional videos by the end of 2020, the actual production of videos has exceeded this target and current expectations are that 175 videos will be produced. The videos cover all thematic areas of mathematics, cutting across the different grade levels of primary and secondary education. The videos can be accessed from the homepage of the ICEVI website – go to the ICEVI Math Made Easy YouTube Channel, https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrmcpSzNg 9EXLbqExtVIAQ.

The videos are presented under specific playlists, as per the following details:

S. No.	Playlists	No. of Videos
1	Algebra	8
2	Basic Operations in Mathematics	5
3	Decimals	2
4	Fractions	12
5	General	7
6	Geometry	29
7	Inequalities	6
8	Lines	12
9	Matrices	24
10	Multiplication of Numbers	10
11	Numbers	10
12	Set Theory	19
13	Tests of Divisibility	10
14	Trigonometry	22
	176	





ICEVI is extremely pleased that the instructional videos are considered as significant learning resources by teachers, parents and students with visual impairments. The importance of open access availability has been highlighted during the current COVID-19 pandemic, when schools around the world have been closed and children are learning

from home. The subscription to the ICEVI Math Made Easy YouTube channel is increasing and viewership is also steadily growing. ICEVI plans to prepare more videos soon after the lock down period is over and will upload them periodically for the benefit of the users.





Publication to recognise the positive impact created by the Nippon Foundation







The Nippon Foundation has been assisting the Higher Education Program of ICEVI and the technology initiative of the Overbrook Nippon Network on Educational Technology (ON-NET) for several years. These programs have benefited thousands of young blind and low vision students in many countries in the East Asia region. ICEVI and ON-NET are currently developing a publication highlighting the impact created by the Nippon Foundation initiative on the lives of persons with visual impairment. The publication includes details of the project outcomes, beneficiaries, case studies of individuals, and testimonials from different

stakeholders. The book will also be published in an accessible format, and we have already prepared more than 60 videos that will accompany the book.

We were planning to release the book at the General Assembly in June 2020, but with the postponement of the General Assembly, it has been decided to launch it at the General Assembly when it is conducted in Madrid, Spain, in May 2021. The book will also be uploaded on the ICEVI website for the benefit of professionals, parents and the general public.

Finalisation of the Governance Framework

As a part of the strategic plan for the 2017-2020 ICEVI quadrennium, a Governance Committee was established in 2017 with the objective of reviewing and clarifying the governance and administrative structures and processes of ICEVI at global and regional levels. Since its formation, the Governance Committee has conducted online meetings to discuss the structure and functions of ICEVI, its broad mission and vision, codes of conduct of office bearers, financial management, and membership structure. Through the process of discussion, the Committee developed a Governance Framework that sets out the governance principles and practices underlying and connecting ICEVI's global and regional bodies. The draft Governance Framework was tabled and endorsed at the ICEVI Executive Committee meeting held in Ethiopia in October 2019.

The ICEVI Executive Committee has requested the Governance Committee to review the current ICEVI constitution in light of the Governance Framework and the transition of several of the ICEVI regions to legal entities in their own right. The Committee has commenced work on developing a list of potential amendments to the ICEVI Articles of Association and Memorandum of Association. It is the requirement in ICEVI as per the existing constitution that any proposed amendments be published in The Educator, ICEVI's official magazine at least three months prior to the conduct of the General Assembly. Therefore, ICEVI plans to publish the proposed list of constitutional amendments in the January 2021 issue of The Educator for the benefit of the ICEVI constituency. More updates will be provided going forward.

Update on the Joint WBU-ICEVI General Assemblies











It is quite disappointing that the Joint General Assemblies of the World Blind Union and ICEVI had to be postponed due to COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has created uncertainty around the world, with cancellation or postponement of many

international events. It is within this context that the International Organising Committee for the WBU-ICEVI General Assemblies studied the situation carefully for over three months from January to March 2020 and made a collective decision to postpone the event to May 2021. It was a difficult decision as elaborate arrangements had already been put in place by ONCE, the host organisation, and the postponement also caused disruption to the plans of the World Blind Union and the ICEVI at global and regional levels.

Postponement of the Joint General Assemblies has ramifications for the tenure of ICEVI officers.

Members of the ICEVI Executive Committee have endorsed the proposal to extend the tenure of the Principal Officers and Regional Presidents until May 2021. While Europe, Pacific, Latin America and the Africa regions will elect their Regional Presidents in their local regional assemblies, the other three regions - the East Asia, West Asia and the North America & Caribbean - will elect their Regional Presidents at the ICEVI General Assembly in Madrid in May 2020. It is gratifying that all officers have agreed to continue in their positions for an additional year until the May 2021 General Assembly.

Postponement of the Joint General Assemblies has also impacted on the ICEVI Presentation Days. The ICEVI Program Committee will communicate with the abstract authors in the coming months to confirm their intention to present their papers in May 2021.

ICEVI is in close contact with ONCE and WBU and will provide periodic updates about the General Assembly through email, publications, the ICEVI website and the World Blindness Summit website.

West Asia Regional Conference



The ICEVI West Asia Region, in collaboration with the Sense International India, hosted a regional conference with the theme of "Inclusive Education: Leaving No One Behind" in Kathmandu, Nepal from 16 to 18 February 2020. Although a Regional-level Conference, the event attracted over 300 participants from 15 countries in the West Asia region and globally. The delegates appreciated the range of sessions provided, and the Plenary and Concurrent sessions were well-attended.

The major administrative tasks of the conference were undertaken by the Blind People's Association, Ahmedabad, under the leadership of Dr. Bhushan Punani, Regional President, West Asia region, Nandini Rawal, Treasurer, ICEVI, and Akhil Paul,

Director, Sense International India. The local host committee was guided by Mr. Birendra Raj Pokharel, Action on Disability Rights and Development (ADRAD-Nepal) and Mr. Madhav Prasad Aryal, Country Representative of ICEVI in Nepal.

It is noteworthy that Nepal was the first country in the West Asia region to implement the ICEVI-WBU EFA-VI Global Campaign and it was a fitting recognition of the efforts of the country that the Regional Conference of ICEVI and SENSE International India was held in Kathmandu.

Prior to the Regional Conference, ICEVI conducted a Workshop on Mathematics Instructional Materials in Kathmandu. The workshop was attended by



specialist teachers, general education teachers, teacher educators, and students with visual impairments. The participants found the Mathematics Instructional Videos prepared by ICEVI extremely useful. Most of them reiterated the need for ICEVI to organise similar workshops in the future in order to prepare master trainers who can popularise the teaching of mathematics to students with visual impairments.

A video of the workshop along with participant testimonials were prepared and shared with the delegates of the Regional Conference. ICEVI plans

to organise the first master trainers' program on mathematics in early 2021.

It was also a fitting recognition to the West Asia Regional Conference that the January 2020 issue of ICEVI's magazine, The Educator, was fully devoted to the Regional Conference, with special reference to select presentations made at the conference. More details of the Regional Conference can be accessed from the websites of ICEVI global and ICEVI West Asia region. February 2020 was the beginning of the spread of the COVID-1 pandemic and it is gratifying that the 300+ participants were able to attend the conference in Kathmandu.



Emerging focus of Online Meetings

The COVID-19 global pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns have included restrictions to national and international travel. As a result, ICEVI has moved all meetings to online platforms, including meetings of the Principal Officers, Regional Presidents and special interest groups. Since March 2020, ICEVI has conducted conference calls at various levels of the organisation almost every week. We anticipate that online meetings will continue until the COVID-19 pandemic is under control and there is a relaxation of travel restrictions.

For the first time, ICEVI will conduct a virtual meeting of the full Executive Committee on 29 June 2020. Depending on the effectiveness of this online meeting, further meetings will be organised using the online platform. In the forthcoming EXCO meeting in June 2020, we will be discussing the potential impact of postponement of the WBU-ICEVI General Assemblies and the activities of ICEVI due to the pandemic. We plan to organise a second virtual meeting of the EXCO in November 2020, which will include an update on the General Assembly and tabling of the annual budget for 2021.

The ICEVI Audit Report is normally prepared by the ICEVI CEO and Treasurer by mid-July for submission to the Companies House, UK, by the end of September. Although most of the accounts of 2019 are ready, there will be a slight delay in undertaking the audit due to the current lockdowns in the United Kingdom. However, no additional delay is expected in the submission of the financial statements to Companies House. In recent years, we have included the Annual Audit Report in the ICEVI Annual Reports. We have not included the Annual Audit Report in this Interim Report for October 2019-May 2020. The Audit



Report will be included in the Annual Report and presented at the November 2020 meeting.

ICEVI opines that going forward, with or without a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic, we should develop expertise in using technology for online training, networking and communication. Some of the project partners of ICEVI and also the ICEVI Regional Committees have started using online platforms and social media effectively. ICEVI is currently documenting such practices and will publish a list of the most effective regional and national responses to COVID-19, especially responses that assist families in rural and underresourced areas to teach their children with visual impairment.

Emerging priority areas for ICEVI include empowering learners with visual impairment to access and maintain their education during future emergencies or pandemics, effectively using accessible information and communication technologies (ICT), and working with parents and carers. These priority areas emphasise strengthening the capacity of learners with visual impairment and their families to ensure education access continues in the face of unexpected emergency situations.

OBITUARY



We have lost two significant visionaries of ICEVI since the EXCO Meeting held in Ethiopia in October 2019. **Bill Brohier**, the Past President of ICEVI, passed away in April 2020 after a prolonged illness. ICEVI places on record its sincere gratitude to Bill for his tremendous contribution to ICEVI during his tenure as the President, including his establishment of collaborative partnerships with our international partners and the UN bodies.



Ken Stuckey, who was employed by the Perkins School for the Blind for over 30 years, was instrumental in recording the history of ICEVI to 2002. This publication is available on ICEVI website and is a significant contribution to documenting the Institutional Memory of ICEVI. Ken passed away in May 2020 and ICEVI is ever indebted to him for his mammoth task of documenting the history of ICEVI since its inception.

Bill Brohier and Ken Stuckey are closely connected with the history of ICEVI. To continue their work, Mani, ICEVI CEO, has commenced documenting the history and development of ICEVI since 2002 to the present, so that the full history of ICEVI will be known to members, organisations in the field of visual impairment, and the general public.

In summary, 2019 was very productive for ICEVI with innovation and diversification in program delivery at the Regional and Global levels. Despite the continued threat of the COVID-19 Pandemic in early 2020, ICEVI is committed to achieving its priorities in promoting and supporting equitable access to quality education for children and young people with visual impairment.

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