



International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment

Celebrating International Day of Persons with Disabilities, 3rd December 2023

The International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) joins the global community in celebrating the 2023 International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPwD). Building on the principle of “leaving no one behind”, the United Nations theme for IDPwD 2023 is “United in action to rescue and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for, with and by persons with disabilities”. The United Nations emphasise that preliminary findings from the forthcoming [UN Disability and Development Report 2023](#) indicate that the world is even more off-track in meeting several SDGs for persons with disabilities.

We call on the global disability community, their parents, service providers and other stakeholders to work together to progress Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its ten targets, to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". Progressing fulfillment of SDG 4 for children and young people with blindness, low vision, deafblindness, and multiple disabilities includes the following commitments and actions by national governments, education providers, and other stakeholders:

- Adoption of the twin-track approach to inclusive education, as recognised in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This approach requires adoption of education policies, legislations and laws, regulations and system-wide changes that enable all children to be included in mainstream schools and classrooms (track 1), and implementation of adjustments and modifications to the curriculum, instruction approaches and resourcing to meet the assessed requirements of individual children with visual impairment.
- Provision of child and family-centred early identification, early intervention and early education programs for young children with visual impairment, commencing at birth or at diagnosis of visual impairment.
- Recruitment, training, and retention of teachers who demonstrate knowledge of the physical, social and cognitive implications of visual impairment, and who possess qualifications in braille literacy, assistive technology, orientation and mobility, and life and social skill development.

- Provision of reading and writing technology, and timely access to books and educational resources in each child's required format (braille, large print, digital, audio).
- National ratification of the Marrakesh VIP Treaty and enactment of exceptions to copyright protections to permit the production and exchange of "born accessible" books within and across national borders.
- Make technology, technical devices and new teaching methodologies appropriate, affordable, available and accessible.

Together, we must advocate and demonstrate the benefits of early childhood and school education for children and young people with visual impairment, their families, local communities and broader societies.

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