

# The Educator



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July 2024

# ICEVI

## *Special Issue*

A Publication of



The International Council for Education of  
People with Visual Impairment

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**LES DOIGTS QUI REVENT (Typhlo & Tactus)**

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## Message from the President and CEO



Dear Members, Partners, and Friends,

As we approach the ICEVI World Conference and General Assembly in Ahmedabad, India, in November 2024, we take this opportunity to highlight some important details that will be tabled at the General Assembly. The General Assembly takes place at the conclusion of each ICEVI quadrennium and provides a forum for information sharing and decision-making about the organisation. In this issue, we present the draft World Conference program and General Assembly schedule, together with the 2021 Memorandum of Understanding and Articles of Association and the proposed amendments. The advance circulation of these materials enables due consideration and discussion by the ICEVI constituency.

We sincerely thank members of the Executive Board and colleagues who have served on the various committees for the Conference and General Assembly. We thank Dr. Bhushan Punani, Ms. Sian Tesni, and members of the Host and Programme Committees of the World Conference for the time and energy they have invested in planning the conference logistics and preparing an impactful and engaging program. We also thank Dr. Punani and members of the Resolutions Committee who undertook the substantive review of the 2021 Memorandum of Understanding and Articles of Association. These two documents form the ICEVI constitution and set out the fundamental rules and regulations governing ICEVI. The aim of the review is to ensure the constitution remains relevant, effective, and aligned with the structure, priorities, and operational needs of the organisation.

We extend our thanks to Prof. John Ravenscroft and members of the Nominations Committee who have prepared the slate of candidates for the Principal Officer positions of President, First and Second Vice Presidents, and Treasurer. In accordance with the Articles of Association, the Principal Officers are elected each quadrennium and act on behalf of ICEVI and the Executive Board. Our special thanks are extended to Prof. Kay Ferrell and members of the editorial team of *The Educator* who have ably managed the newsletter's biannual publication throughout the quadrennium.

Our final thanks are extended to leadership and staff of the Blind Peoples Association (India) and Sense International India, the host organisations of the World Conference and General Assembly. We look forward to joining them in welcoming you to the conference and sharing knowledge and ideas about current research and practice in education of children and young people with visual impairment.

**Frances Gentle**, President; and  
**M.N.G. Mani**, Chief Executive Officer

# ICEVI GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND REGIONAL MEETINGS 2024: Programme Schedule

The constitution of ICEVI clearly says that the General Assembly should be conducted at the end of every term of the ICEVI executive board. Until 2002, ICEVI board had a 5-year term that was called Quinquennium. Since 2002, a 4 year Quadrennium is being followed and the principal officers are elected once in 4 years. One exception since 2002 is an extended period of office for the principal officers by 2 years that is from 2010 to 2012. In the year 2010, the World Conference and General Assembly were planned to be conducted in Jomtien, Thailand and that had to be abandoned due to some security reasons. Therefore the ICEVI Board extended the term of principal officers by 2 years until 2012.

In 2012, the ICEVI General Assembly was conducted in conjunction with the WBU-ICEVI Joint General Assemblies in Bangkok, Thailand. The General assemblies since then included the 2016 General Assembly held in Orlando, USA and the 2021 Assembly organised in the virtual format. The General Assembly that had to be held in Madrid, Spain in 2020 had to be called off due to the Corona pandemic and instead it was conducted virtually in June 2021. However, the General Assembly decided not to extend the Quadrennium and therefore the Principal Officers were elected for the period 2021-2024 only. The present General Assembly will be electing the principal officers for the period 2024 to 2028.

As per the constitution of ICEVI, all members of the executive board and 12 delegates drawn from each of the 7 regions of ICEVI will serve as the delegates in electing the Principal Officers of ICEVI and also in conducting all businesses at the General Assembly. Constitutional Amendments are always part of the General Assembly and the amendments adopted in the Assembly remain in vogue until further amendments are adopted by the subsequent General Assemblies. In addition to these, the General Assembly reviews the financial position of the organisation and also discusses the future plans particularly with those of ICEVI regions.

The tentative program of the 2024 General Assembly is presented as follows:

## November 17, 2024 (Sunday)

### REGIONAL MEETINGS: 09.30 to 11.30 A.M.

Regional meetings give an opportunity for all participants of the particular regions to come together and review the activities organised during the quadrennium and also consider the possibilities of networking within the countries of the regions. Four of the seven regions, namely Africa, Latin America, Europe and Pacific are legal

entities and they elect their own regional boards as per the regional constitutions and the regional presidents thus selected serve as members of the ICEVI executive board. The other three regions namely East Asia, North America and the Caribbean and the West Asia regions elect their boards at the General Assembly. The matters discussed in regional meetings also serve as key discussion points at the larger General Assembly too.

## **ICEVI GENERAL ASSEMBLY: 02.00 to 04.00 P.M.**

*The tentative program of the General Assembly is as follows:*

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Proceedings</b>
1	<b>Welcome</b>
2	<b>Moment of Silence to remember those professionals and members of ICEVI who passed away since the last General Assembly</b>
3	<b>Presidential Address</b>
4	<b>Report by the CEO/Secretary General</b>
5	<b>Presentation by Treasurer</b>
6	<b>Resolutions and Amendments</b>
7	<b>Report of the Nominations Committee</b>
8	<b>Introduction of new POs and Presidents of ICEVI regions</b>
9	<b>Address by new POs and the Regional Presidents</b>
10	<b>Vote of Thanks and Closing of the General Assembly</b>

A delegate of the General Assembly nominated by the respective regions need not attend in person to vote. In case such a delegate is not able to attend the GA in person, a proxy vote can also be given on his/her behalf to the Regional President concerned.

# Proposed Amendments to the Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association

Based on meetings with the Principal Officers and Regional Presidents, the ICEVI Resolutions Committee proposes the following amendments to the ICEVI Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association. The recommendations are drawn from the Executive Board resolutions during the Strategic Review of 2023, and the Governance Framework approved by the Executive Board in October 2019.

***Draft, July 2024***

## Part 1: Proposed Amendments to Memorandum of Association dated June 2021

**Clause 1: No change**

**Clause 2: No change**

**Clause 3: The Objects for which the Council is established**

**Comment 1:** The Resolutions Committee proposes the following new Sub-Clauses 3.1 to 3.4:

### **Proposed changes:**

**The Objects for which the Council is established are:**

**(new) Sub-Clause 3.1** To be regarded as, and see itself as, a global membership network of organisations and individuals, concerned primarily with the sharing, promotion and dissemination of knowledge and expertise, promoting equal access to education, and influencing/advocacy with external stakeholders, such as multilateral institutions, governments and United Nation Agencies.

**(new) Sub-Clause 3.2** To convene in-person and online conferences, general assemblies, and meetings where feasible, taking account of the time and funds required for such activities.

**(new) Sub-Clause 3.3** To make/facilitate connections within and beyond the membership network with the purpose of influencing policies at national, regional, and international levels.

**(new) Sub-Clause 3.4** To build, coordinate and support the membership, including raising the profile of ICEVI.

**Clause 4: No change**

**Clause 5: Benefits to Members and Directors**

**Comment 2:** The Resolutions Committee proposes the following new Sub-Clause 5.4:

**(new) Sub-Clause 5.4** Conflict of Interest: A Director(s) of the Executive Board, or a person(s) determining ICEVI policies and procedures, must not treat the legal entity assets as personal assets. Personal assets and legal entity assets must be segregated, and any conflicts of interest made clear to the Executive Board.

**Clause 6: No change**

**Clause 7: No change**

**Clause 8: No change**

## **Part 2: Proposed Amendments to Articles of Association dated June 2021**

**Clause 1: Membership**

**Sub-Clauses 1.1 to 1.3: No change**

**Comment 3:** The Resolutions Committee proposes the following new Sub-Clauses 1.4 and 1.5:

**(new) Sub-Clause 1.4:** The Membership scheme shall be periodically reviewed by the Executive Board with a view to diversification and expansion, both to generate increased income and to strengthen ICEVI's credibility, connections, reach, expertise, knowledge, and action that members bring. Such reviews will include a review of Executive Board membership and member liabilities.

**(New) Sub-Clause 1.5:** Dual Membership: Any person or organization shall be eligible to seek membership at the global and regional levels of ICEVI by following the respective membership rules and procedures.

**(New) Sub-Clause 1.5:** New Categories of Membership: New categories of Membership in the organization shall consist of Network Partner, Emeritus or Honorary Member and such other category or categories as deemed proper by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

**Clause 2: Regional Structure**

**Sub-Clauses 2.1 to 2.9: No Change**

**Comment 4:** The Resolutions Committee proposes deleting Sub-Clause 2.10 as it is an exact duplication of Sub-Clause 2.6.

**Comment 5:** The Resolutions Committee proposes the following new Sub-Clause 2.10:

**(New) Sub-Clause 2.10:** Each region to acquire legal entity status or to associate with another legal entity located in the region. Each Regional Board will develop a regional constitution and/or byelaws and policy documents that are directly aligned with the mission and values of ICEVI. Each Regional Board will establish and maintain a regional website (if sufficient regional capacity to maintain); and manage its own planning and control cycle.

**Comment 6:** The Resolutions Committee proposes the following new Sub-Clause 2.11 and 2.12:

**(New) Sub-Clause 2.11 National Focal Points:** Where feasible, each region will identify an individual or organization that will serve as the region's National Focal Point. A clear set of roles and responsibilities will be established for the National Focal Points, including responsibility for raising the profile of ICEVI in the countries within the region, expanding membership, and informing the Executive Board, Regional Boards and wider constituency about issues or trends within the context of education for people with visual impairment.

**(New) Sub-Clause 2.12** The Regional Boards will be assisted to prepare specific activity proposals that may be submitted to the International Partner Members of ICEVI and other key funding agencies for direct support to the regions, with settlement or discharge by the relevant region.

### **Clause 3: General Assembly: No Change**

### **Clause 4: Executive Board**

#### **Sub-Clauses 4.1 (a), (b) and (d): No Change**

**Comment 7:** The Resolutions Committee proposes to remove Sub-Clause 4.1 (c) Founding Members and 4.1 (e) Umbrella Organisations.

**Comment 8:** The Resolutions Committee proposes establishing two new membership categories, "Emeritus or Honorary Member" and "Network Partner".

**(new) Sub-Clause 4.1 (c) Network Partner** – One representative of World Blind Union and any other umbrella group, organization, coalition, alliance, or consortium that is aligned with the mission of ICEVI. Membership and voting rights on the Executive Board will be established through reciprocal memoranda of understanding with each Network Partner.

**(new) Sub-Clause 4.1 (e) Emeritus or Honorary Member** – An individual or organization which is recognised for their substantial contribution to the mission of ICEVI and/or its areas of focus. This membership category is advisory or ceremonial in nature. These members may attend meetings of the



Executive Board and provide input on proposed motions or other subjects but when a motion is made, seconded, and voted on, they must refrain from voting (i.e., these members have a voice but not a vote).

**Comment 8:** The Resolutions Committee proposes adding new Sub-Clause 4.1 (f) to clarify the voting rights of Executive Board members.

**(new) Sub-Clause 4.1 (f) Voting rights:** Each International Partner Member, Principal Officer, and Regional President has one vote on the Executive Board. Voting rights of Network Partners will be established through reciprocal memoranda of understanding with each Network Partner.

**Sub-Clauses 4.2 to 4.11: No Change**

### Clause 5: Principal Officers

**Sub-Clauses 5.1 to 5.4: No change**

**Comment 9:** The Resolutions Committee proposes changing the term “Chief Executive Officer/CEO” to “Secretary General”, as approved by the Executive Board in 2024.

**Sub-Clause 5.5 Amended wording:** The Secretary General will normally attend meetings of the Principal Officers and Executive Board unless asked to withdraw while matters relating to their position as Secretary General are discussed.

**Clauses 6 to 12: No Changes**

## Part 3: Amendment to Material that is not part of the Constitution but appears on the website and other literature:

**Note:** Vision statement modified as Goals.

- 1. Modified Mission Statement:** The International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) is a membership organization with a mission to promote access to inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all people with visual impairment.
- 2. Modified Values:** We believe that all people with visual impairment and their families have the right to:
  - provision of a full range of educational services and to be included in the educational programs of their respective countries and communities (*Extra comment from EXBO member: Delete “of their respective countries and communities”*)
  - Receive early intervention, early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education.



- Support by teachers and other professionals who are properly trained.
- Provision of reasonable accommodation for their needs,
- Provision of accessible educational materials, enhanced technology, teaching methods and programs that are of a high standard and conform to best practices.
- Live in environments that are free of barriers, social stigmas, and stereotypes.
- Lead productive lives, according to their aspirations and capabilities, without discrimination and based on equal opportunity. *(Extra comment from EXBO member: Add “Are able to” at the beginning of the sentence)*

### 3. **Modified Goals:**

**Goal 1:** Promoting access to quality education for people with visual impairment including those with partial sight/low vision, blindness, deaf blindness, and additional disabilities.

1. *"People with visual impairment including those with partial sight/low vision, blindness, deaf blindness, and additional disabilities have access to quality education."*
2. *"Campaign for access to quality education" to "Promote quality and accessible education."*

**Goal 2:** Influence governments and other relevant stakeholders' implementation of the SDGs and UNCRPD in education of people with visual impairment to ensure no-one is left behind by marshalling ICEVI structures, members, and collaborative partnerships.

1. *"Governments and other relevant stakeholders implement the SDGs and UNCRPD in the area of education of people with visual impairment."*
2. *"Influence governments and other relevant stakeholders' implementation of the SDGs and UNCRPD in the area of education, to ensure no one is left behind, and in particular to ensure that ICEVI structures and members are part of a collaborative partnership that ensures the educational needs of people with visual impairment are met."*

**Goal 3:** Improving networking, information sharing and collaboration at national, regional, and global levels.

### 4. **New Proposed Functions:**

Within the context of its Mission, Values and Goals and of ICEVI's priorities and sustainability, the main functions/roles of ICEVI are to:

- a) Provide leadership and governance to the network, both at the global and regional levels
- b) Provide management and support to members through networking, communications, facilitating collaboration, and convening (e.g.) conferences, seminars, meetings.
- c) Identify initiatives and projects (e.g., research, partnerships, advocacy) of value to ICEVI's target audiences, bringing expertise, playing a guiding, and supporting role in project development by the ICEVI Regional Boards through collaboration with members and non-members.
- d) Occupy a position of leadership and influence in the field of education for people with visual impairment.
- e) Guide/lead projects as important to future proofing and flexibility.

**5. Development of Capacity & Competence:**

In support of the core functions, ICEVI should develop capacity and competence, at both global and regional levels, in:

- a) Network leadership, governance, strategy, and fiscal management.
- b) Risk management.
- c) Network orchestration, coordination, and management.
- d) Enabling two-way support and development between ICEVI global, regional, and national representatives
- e) Support with project Identification, application, oversight, and administration, as required by ICEVI Regional Boards.
- f) Internal (network) and external-facing communications
- g) Taking care of the ICEVI brand and reputation
- h) Making and maintaining connections
- i) Advocacy (including collection and collation of data/evidence
- j) Fundraising/organisational sustainability
- k) Sufficient knowledge and experience in the field of education of people with visual impairment to engage with experts, identify and guide programmes and represent ICEVI at the global and regional levels.

**6. Complementary Mechanism:**

- Find an appropriate balance between digital (website, other social media) and in-person communications and activities.

- Improve communication both between ICEVI members and between ICEVI members and the leadership (at all levels).
  - Enable members to make connections, address issues, access and share resources, without going through the ICEVI formal structures or using up volunteer time.
  - Expand ICEVI's reach to beneficiary groups (teachers, parents, policy makers) through establishing stakeholder networks.
  - Raise ICEVI's presence and profile through this increased activity and improved website.
  - If no regional website is available, the above information should be submitted to the ICEVI Secretariat for publication on the ICEVI global website.
7. Building **fundraising capacity** needs a proper plan to not compete with the members for the same funds; Should be in line with member organisations and not draining common sources of funding or projects.
8. **Financial Policy:** ICEVI should have the **infrastructure** in place to comply with all regulations set in the UK regarding a charity organisation.
- a. A fiscal management policy of ICEVI should include the following:
- Assignment of authority for necessary and regular financial actions and decisions
  - Authority to spend funds, including approval, cheque signing.
  - Assignment of authority to enter into contracts.
  - Responsibility for maintaining accurate financial records and frequent reporting.
  - Reimbursement of expenses
  - Treasury - bank accounts, triple A (system) banking only, types of deposits, etc.

**Note:** ICEVI shall not hold any real estate property, stocks, or bonds; ICEVI will not borrow or lend any money.

- a. The project funds to Global ICEVI and to the Regions are designated in nature and will not be used for administration going forward when ICEVI starts using International Partner Membership Fee for the overall administration including that of the CEO position, ICEVI meetings, Auditor Fee, etc.

# ICEVI Memorandum of Association - June 2021

COMPANY No. 4521195  
The COMPANIES ACTS 1985 and 1989

COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE AND NOT HAVING A  
SHARE CAPITAL

## **MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION OF PEOPLE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT**

1. The name of the company (hereinafter called "the Council") is the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment.
2. The registered office of the Council will be situated in England and Wales.
3. The objects for which the Council is established are:-
  - 3.1. To be a global association of individuals and organisations that promotes equal access to appropriate education for all visually impaired children and youth so that they may achieve their full potential.
  - 3.2. To establish and maintain regions and support their activities;
  - 3.3. To convene a General Assembly at the end of each term;
  - 3.4. To promote cooperation with local, national, regional and global governmental and non-governmental organisations active in or related to the education of people with visual impairment;
  - 3.5. To influence governmental and United Nations agencies with respect to the education of people with visual impairment;
  - 3.6. To promote a positive image of people with visual impairment;
  - 3.7. To promote involvement of persons with visual impairment and their families in educational policy and planning.
  - 3.8. To support and promote member and partner networks at global and regional levels of the Council.
4. In order to facilitate the exchange of expertise and professional knowledge and skills, the Council shall have power to:
  - 4.1. Promote local, regional and global networks;
  - 4.2. Promote training courses, conferences and meetings at a local and regional level;

- 4.3. Promote local, national, regional and global communication;
  - 4.4. Publish a global journal and regional newsletters through the internet and otherwise;
  - 4.5. Promote local and regional special interest groups and their inter-regional linkages;
  - 4.6. Do all such lawful things as may assist in carrying into effect the objects of the Council.
5. Benefits to Members and Directors
- 5.1. In this clause "director" means a member of the executive board as provided for in the Articles of Association.
  - 5.2. The property and funds of the Council must be used only for promoting the objects and do not belong to members and there shall be no distribution of any profit whether by declaration of dividend or otherwise.
  - 5.3. Notwithstanding the previous sub-clause members including directors may be reimbursed in respect of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses (including hotel and travel costs) actually incurred in running the Council.
6. The liability of the members is limited.
7. Every member of the Council undertakes to contribute to the assets of the Council, in the event of the same being wound up while he/she is a member or within one year after he/she ceases to be a member, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the Council contracted before he/she ceases to be a member and of the costs charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributories amongst themselves such amount as may be required not exceeding £1.
8. If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Council there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever the same shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Council but shall be given or transferred to some other body having objects similar to the objects of the Council and which shall prohibit the distribution of its income or property among its members to an extent at least as great as is imposed on the Council, under or by virtue of clause 5 hereof, such body to be determined by the members of the Council at or before the time of dissolution, and in so far as effect cannot be given to the foregoing provision, then to some other charitable body.

We the persons whose names and addresses are subscribed are desirous of being formed into a company in pursuance of this Memorandum of Association.

*June 2021*

# ICEVI Articles of Association - June 2021

COMPANY No. 4521195  
The COMPANIES ACTS 1985 and 1989

COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE AND NOT HAVING A  
SHARE CAPITAL

## ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION OF PEOPLE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

### 1. Membership:

- 1.1. Membership of the Council is open to any individual or non profit organisation subscribing to the objects of the Council as laid down in the Memorandum of Association.
- 1.2. Members shall pay an annual subscription as shall be determined from time to time by the Executive Board. Subscriptions shall reflect the diversity of the financial resources available to different organisations and in the different regions of the Council.
- 1.3 The Council has different classes of membership. Voting and non-voting rights are defined by the Executive Board in the Bye-Laws.

### 2. Regional Structure:

- 2.1. The basic structure of the Council is a regional one and the members of the Council are primarily members of a region. The Executive Board shall determine the number of regions into which the Council is divided and the countries making up each region.
- 2.2. The Regional Members shall elect from the region a Regional President to act on behalf of the region on the Executive Board of the Council and one or more Regional Deputy Presidents to support him/her in implementing the activities of the region.
- 2.3. The Regional Presidents shall be responsible for establishing a Regional Board of not less than 5 members. Representation on the Regional Board shall reflect the diversity of the region.
- 2.4. The Regional Board shall be responsible for ensuring that the region meets the terms of reference to operate under the ICEVI name and logo, as defined in the Bye-laws.

- 2.5 The titles of the Regional Presidents and any Deputy Regional Presidents are designated by each region according to the Constitution, customs and traditions of the region.
- 2.6. The Regional Boards shall appoint delegates with voting rights to the General Assembly using a process which respects diversities within the region. The number of delegates per region shall be laid down in the Bye-laws.
- 2.7. The Regional Boards may seek approval from the Executive Board to establish national bodies of ICEVI in specific countries, providing the Regional Board has determined that such national structures would be sustainable and will strengthen the mission, vision, values and strategy of ICEVI.
- 2.8. The Regional Presidents shall report regularly to the President of the Council on an agreed schedule.
- 2.9. If a Regional President is unable to fulfil his/her duties, one of the Deputy Regional presidents shall take over by agreement among themselves. If neither the Regional President nor any of the Deputy Regional Presidents is able to fulfil these duties, the Regional Board in association with the Regional President shall take decisions about the continuation of the region's work.
- 2.10. The Regional Boards shall appoint delegates with voting rights to the General Assembly using a process which respects diversities within the region. The number of delegates per region shall be laid down in the Bye-laws.

### **3. General Assembly:**

- 3.1. A meeting of the General Assembly shall be held at the end of each term.
- 3.2. Those entitled to vote at the General Assembly shall consist of the Executive Board, not more than two Deputy Regional Presidents from each region and the other delegates with voting rights appointed by the Regional Boards in accordance with the Bye-laws.
- 3.3. At a General Assembly, there shall take place a business meeting at which the Regional Presidents and Principal Officers shall present a report on their activities during the past term and their plans for the next term. The business meeting shall elect the Principal Officers of the Council, who shall be the President, the First Vice-President, Second Vice-President and the Treasurer. The Immediate Past President is also a Principal Officer.

- 3.4. The General Assembly may also include a professional conference, which non-delegates may attend.
- 3.5. At a business meeting of the general assembly, a quorum shall be one third of the members entitled to be present and to vote.

#### **4. Executive Board:**

- 4.1. The business of the Council between General Assemblies shall be conducted by an Executive Board, which shall consist of:
- a) the Principal Officers of the Council, namely
    - the President;
    - the Immediate Past President (or other person appointed by the Executive Board if the Immediate Past President is unable or unwilling to serve);
    - the First Vice-President;
    - the Second Vice-President
    - the Treasurer;
  - b) the seven Regional Presidents representing Africa, East Asia, West Asia, Europe, Latin America, North America/Caribbean, and the Pacific;
  - c) one representative of each of the Founding Members of the Council as follows:
    - American Foundation for the Blind
    - Perkins School for the Blind
    - Royal National Institute of the Blind;
  - d) one representative of any international non-governmental organisation which supports the objects and plans of the Council and makes a significant financial contribution to its work, the level of such contribution to be determined by the Executive Board from time to time as part of the dues structure of the Council.
  - e) one representative of each of the following umbrella Organisations:
    - International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness
    - Deafblind International
    - World Blind Union.



The Executive Board may also invite to any of its meetings the Chairperson of any Standing Committee or Working Group established by the Executive Board.

- 4.2. The Executive Board shall ensure that the regions meet the Code of conduct and terms of reference to operate under the ICEVI name and logo, as defined in the Bye-laws.
- 4.3. The Executive Board shall evaluate regional developments in terms of the Council's policy, the global targets set for the term and regional plans.
- 4.4. The Executive Board shall keep under review the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Bye-laws of the Council.
- 4.5. The Executive Board shall appoint the members of the Programme, the Nominations, the Finance, the Publications and any other global Standing Committees of the Council.
- 4.6. A Regional President who shall be appointed by the Executive Board shall act as Chairperson of the Nominations Committee. When a member of the Nominations Committee wants his/her name to be considered for one of the Principal Officer positions, he/she shall send a letter of resignation to the Chairperson of the Nominations Committee, who in turn will consult the President and have a substitute appointed in the place of the member who resigned from the Committee.
- 4.7. The President is ex officio a member of the Programme Committee.
- 4.8. The Treasurer is ex officio Chairperson of the Finance Committee.
- 4.9. One of the Vice-Presidents shall be the ex officio a member of the Publications Committee.
- 4.10. The Executive Board shall have power to appoint paid staff on a contractual basis in order to further the work of the Council.
- 4.11. At a meeting of the executive board, a quorum shall be one third of the members entitled to be present and to vote.

## **5. Principal Officers:**

- 5.1. The Principal Officers are the executive officers of the Council who shall act on behalf of the Council and on behalf of the Executive Board. They shall report on their activities to the Executive Board and the General Assembly, and shall meet as necessary. Three shall be a quorum.
- 5.2. Each of the Principal Officers, in addition to the duties of their post, shall have specific duties as agreed amongst themselves from time to time.

- 5.3. Each Principal Officer is authorised to act on behalf of the Council on condition that the action is based on the Memorandum and Articles of Association or Bye-laws of the Council; its policy, custom and practice; or a decision of the Executive Board or of the Principal Officers.
- 5.4. If the President is unable to discharge his/her responsibilities, the First Vice-President shall take over responsibility from the President. If for any reason he/she is or becomes unable to do this, the Second Vice-President shall take over.
- 5.5 The Chief Executive Officer will normally be in attendance at meetings of the Principal Officers and Executive Board unless asked to withdraw while matters relating to his/her position as Chief Executive Officer are discussed.

## **6. Terms of Office:**

- 6.1. All office holders shall take up their positions at the end of the General Assembly at which they were elected. Elections or appointments taking place between General Assemblies shall have immediate effect.
- 6.2. All office holders shall remain in post until the end of the next General Assembly after their election or appointment.
- 6.3. Ad hoc appointments shall come to an end when the task for which they were made has been completed, but in any event not later than the end of the next General Assembly after they were made.
- 6.4. The terms of office of the Regional Presidents are determined by the Regional Constitution, whereas the elected Principal Officers of the Council should normally serve in the same position for no more than two full terms.

## **7. Alternative Methods of Decision Making:**

- 7.1 With the prior agreement of the President, a member of any organ of the Council may validly participate in a meeting of that body through the medium of telephone or video conference or any other form of electronic communication equipment, provided that all persons participating in the meeting are able to hear and speak to each other throughout such meeting. A person so participating shall be deemed to be present at the meeting and shall accordingly be counted in the quorum and be entitled to vote. A resolution passed at any meeting held in such manner and signed by the Chair of the meeting shall be valid and effective as if it had been passed at a meeting of that body duly convened and held.

7.2 A postal ballot may be used for deciding any question which requires decision within any organ of the Council. Ballot papers, clearly stating the proposal to be voted on, shall be sent to all persons entitled to vote on the matter in question. All means of written communication may be used.

## **8. Finance:**

The Council's financial year runs from 1st January to 31st December. The accounts of the Council shall be subject to annual audit by a qualified auditor and the Principal Officers shall appoint an external auditor for the purpose. The audited accounts shall be presented to the Executive Board who shall have responsibility for approving the financial report. The Executive Board shall also approve the annual budget of the Council.

## **9. Use of the Council's name:**

9.1 The use of the name of the Council for any purpose, including fund raising, income generation or the production or sale of publications, irrespective of whether initiated and/or executed by members of the Council, is only permitted if authorised in writing by the Principal Officers.

9.2. The ICEVI Executive Board reserves the right to withdraw agreement to be identified as an ICEVI region, should the Executive Board deem there has been a failure by the Regional Board to meet the Code of Conduct and terms of reference for use of the name and logo of ICEVI.

## **10. Amendment of Articles of Association and Bye-laws:**

10.1. These Articles of Association may be amended by the General Assembly.

10.2. Proposals for amendment of the Articles of Association shall be recommended to the General Assembly by the Executive Board.

10.3. Proposals for amendment of the Articles of Association shall be published in the Council's journal and on the Council's website not later than three months prior to the General Assembly at which they are to be discussed.

10.4. Amendment of the Articles of Association shall require a two-thirds majority of the votes either of the members present and voting at a General Assembly or voting in a postal ballot, provided in each case that not less than 50% of those entitled must have voted in order for the proposal to be carried. In the event that less than 50% of those entitled shall have voted, a second ballot on the same proposal may be organised not earlier than two weeks and not later than six months after

the first ballot. In this event, not less than 25% of those entitled to vote either at a General Assembly or in a postal ballot must have voted in order for the proposal to be carried.

10.5. The Executive Board may change or add to the Council's Bye-laws by a simple majority on a recommendation of the Principal Officers made not later than three months before a meeting of the Executive Board or a postal ballot on the same. The quorum for votes on such recommendations shall be two-thirds. If there is no quorum, a second ballot may be organised not earlier than two weeks and not later than six months after the first ballot. For the second ballot on the same proposal, the quorum shall be 50%.

10.6. The text of any changes to the Articles of Association or any additions or changes to the Bye-laws, together with the result of any vote, shall be published in the next issue of the Council's journal following their agreement and on the Council's website.

## **11. Dissolution of the Council**

On the winding up and dissolution of the company the provisions of the Memorandum of Association shall have effect as if repeated in these Articles.

## **12. Miscellaneous:**

In cases for which there is no clear provision either in these Articles of Association or in law, the Executive Board shall decide issues according to the spirit of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Name

Address

Description

Name

Address

Description

*June 2021*

# ICEVI General Assembly 2021 (Virtual) - MINUTES

12.30 – 02.00 P.M. MADRID TIME

29-06-2021

As the 2024 General Assembly will be reviewing the work of ICEVI during the Quadrennium 2021-2024 and also consider the constitutional amendments for endorsement, we present below the minutes of the General Assembly held in 2021 for ready reference. The minutes also provide details of the outgoing principal officers and regional presidents and also those who assumed office in 2021. The detailed minutes of the 2021 General Assembly are as follows:

1. Dr. Frances Gentle, President, ICEVI who presided over the General assembly welcomed the delegates.
2. The following 8 key contributors and many friends of ICEVI at the regional level and also at the national levels had passed during the Quadrennium.
  - **William G. Brohier**, Past President, ICEVI
  - **Susan Jay Spungin**, Past Vice President, ICEVI
  - **Ken Stuckey**, Editor, ICEVI's History Book, 2002
  - **Mrs. Panagiota (Betty) Leotsakou**, Past Regional President, ICEVI Europe Region
  - **Dr. James Aiwa**, Past Regional President, ICEVI Pacific Region
  - **Mr. A.K. Mittal**, WBU Representative on ICEVI Executive Committee
  - **Professor N.K. Jangira**, ICEVI Awardee, India
  - **Dr. Elly Macha**, Deputy Regional Chair, ICEVI Africa region

Ms. Nandini Rawal, ICEVI Treasurer, paid tribute and led the ICEVI General assembly in observing a minute silence to mark our respect to the departed souls.

### 3. **Report on Finances and Presentation of Audit Report of 2019:**

Ms. Nandini Rawal, Treasurer, ICEVI, thanked the international partner members of ICEVI and The Nippon Foundation for their continued support in the past and especially at the recent time of the Covid pandemic. The

quadrennial report of ICEVI which was sent to the delegates as a separate attachment included the audited report of ICEVI for the year 2019. The Treasurer informed that the audited report of 2020 was also under process. As per the report on finance, the opening balance in 2021 stood at US\$ 599,522, which is healthy. This included a reserve fund of US\$ 200,000, which ICEVI has been maintaining for many years. More than 80% of funds ICEVI received from the international partner members and The Nippon Foundation was spent on direct project activities in the ICEVI regions. With the ICEVI regions becoming legal entities, there is a scope for funds mobilisation at the regional level for supporting project activities at the regional as well as national levels in the future. In summary, the financial position of ICEVI presented at the General Assembly was healthy and ICEVI EXCO and the delegates thanked the international partner members, The Nippon Foundation, and organisational members for their support to ICEVI in furthering the cause of education for all children with visual impairment worldwide.

#### **4. ICEVI Constitutional Amendments:**

A brief note on the Governance Framework and the constitutional amendments was published in the January 2021 issue of The Educator and also circulated to the voting delegates of the General Assembly. Ms. Sabine Fijn Van Draat, who was the convener of the ICEVI governance committee, presented the following amendments:

### **Proposed amendments to the 2010 Articles of Association (AOA) and Memorandum of Association of ICEVI**

The 2010 Articles of Association (AOA) and Memorandum of Association (MOA) of ICEVI were endorsed in 2010. The Executive Committee proposes the following amendments to the AOA and MOA for endorsement by the ICEVI General Assembly, to be held virtually in June 2021. These amendments have come about as a result of the work of the ICEVI Governance Committee in developing a Governance Framework that was approved by the ICEVI Executive Committee in October 2019. The Governance Framework sets out the governance and administration processes of ICEVI at global and regional levels of the Council, and serves to ensure that all activities carried out under the ICEVI name and logo are compliant with the Vision, Mission, and Values of ICEVI, and also the ICEVI Code of Conduct and terms of reference.

**Note for readers:**

Please note that the proposed amendments are indicated in **bold** with double asterisks (\*\*) at the beginning and end of each proposed change. Additional comments are shown in purple colour and commence with the word “**Note**”.

## Articles of Association

**PROPOSED: That the nomenclature used in all articles be amended as follows:**

- The global body of the ICEVI be called **\*\*ICEVI Global\*\*** and the regions be called **\*\*ICEVI Regions\*\***
- The nomenclature **\*\*Secretary General\*\*** be changed to **\*\*Chief Executive Officer\*\***
- The nomenclature **\*\*Regional Chairperson\*\*** be changed to **\*\*Regional President\*\***
- The nomenclature **\*\*Regional Committee\*\*** be changed to **\*\*Regional Board\*\***
- The nomenclature **\*\*Executive Committee\*\*** be changed to **\*\*Executive Board\*\***

**Note:** The above proposed changes to the nomenclature will give greater distinction between the global and regional structures of the Council.

### 1. Membership

**Note:** As per the 2010 Articles of Association, membership is open to any individual or organisation subscribing to the objects of the Council as laid down in the Memorandum of Association.

**PROPOSED: That clauses 1.1 and 1.3 of Article 1 be amended as follows:**

- 1.2. Membership of the Council is open to any individual or **\*\*non profit organisation\*\*** subscribing to the objects of the Council as laid down in the Memorandum of Association.
- 1.3. **\*\*The Council has different classes of membership. Voting and non-voting rights are defined by the Executive Board in the Bye-Laws.\*\***

**Note:** The nomenclature of Clause 1.2 has been changed.

### 2. Regional Structure



**Note:** Each ICEVI region is either registered as an NGO with a legal entity, or affiliated with an existing legal entity, within the region. The following proposed changes aim to ensure that regional activities carried out under the ICEVI name and logo are compliant with the Vision, Mission, and Values of ICEVI, and also the ICEVI Code of Conduct and terms of reference.

**PROPOSED: That the following clauses of Article 2 of the 2010 AOA be revised as follows:**

2.2. The Regional Members shall elect from the region a **\*\*Regional President to act on behalf of the region on the Executive Board of the Council and one or more Regional Deputy Presidents to support him/her in implementing the activities of the region.\*\***

2.3. The Regional **\*\*Presidents\*\*** shall be responsible for establishing a Regional Board of not less than 5 members. Representation on the Regional Board shall reflect the diversity of the region.

**Note:** The final sentence in clause 2.3 in the 2010 AOA has been removed, namely: “The immediate past Chairperson and any Principal Officer belonging to the region shall be ex officio member of the Committee.”

2.4. The Regional Board shall be responsible for **\*\*ensuring that the region meets the terms of reference to operate under the ICEVI name and logo, as defined in the Bye-laws.\*\***

2.5. **\*\*The titles of the Regional Presidents and any Deputy Presidents are designated by each region according to the Constitution, customs and traditions of the region.\*\***

**Note:** Clauses 2.5 to 2.9 of the 2010 AOA have been removed, as these articles are the responsibility of registered ICEVI regions, and also the regions that are affiliated with an existing legal entity with the region.

2.6. The Regional **\*\*Boards\*\*** shall appoint delegates with voting rights to the General Assembly using a process which respects diversities within the region. The number of delegates per region shall be laid down in the Bye-laws.

2.7. **\*\*The Regional Boards may seek approval from the Executive Board to establish national bodies of ICEVI in specific countries, providing the Regional Board has determined that such national structures would be sustainable and will strengthen the mission, vision, values and strategy of ICEVI.\*\***

**Note:** All other clause changes are to nomenclature only.



### 3. General Assembly

3.2. Those entitled to vote at the General Assembly shall consist of the Executive **Board**, not more than two Deputy **Presidents** from each region and the other delegates with voting rights appointed by the Regional **Boards** in accordance with **the Bye-laws**.

**Note:** All other clause changes are to nomenclature only.

### 4. Executive Board

**PROPOSED: That the following clauses and sections of Article 4 be revised as follows:**

4.1. (e) one representative of each of the following **umbrella Organisations**:

- International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness
- Deafblind International
- World Blind Union

4.2. The Executive **Board** shall ensure that **the regions meet the Code of conduct and terms of reference to operate under the ICEVI name and logo, as defined in the Bye-laws.**

4.10. The Executive **Board** shall have power to appoint paid staff **on a contractual basis** in order to further the work of the Council.

**Note:** Changes to other clauses and sections of Article 4 relate to nomenclature only.

### 5. Principal officers

5.5. The **Chief Executive Officer** will normally be in attendance at meetings of the Principal Officers and Executive **Board** unless asked to withdraw while matters relating to his/her position as **Chief Executive Officer** are discussed.

**Note:** Changes to other clauses of Article 5 relate to nomenclature only.

### 6. International Consultative Committee

**Note:** The current (2010) Articles of Association refers to an advisory body called the International Consultative Committee (ICC), which was expected to meet once a year with the Executive Committee. This committee was relevant when ICEVI and WBU jointly implemented the global campaign on education for all children with visual impairment, and organisations other than those present at the Executive Committee participated in the campaign. In the present context, there is no longer a need for the ICC.

**PROPOSED: That Article 6 be deleted in its entirety.**

**6. Terms of Office (Note: Article 7 in 2010 AOA.)**

**Note:** Clause 7.4 of the current (2010) Articles of Association states: Regional Chairpersons and International Members of the Executive Committee should normally serve for no more than two full terms.

**PROPOSED: That clauses 7.4 and 7.5 be combined and amended as follows:**

6.5. **\*\*The terms of office of the Regional Presidents are determined by the Regional Constitution, whereas the elected Principal Officers of the Council should normally serve in the same position for no more than two full terms.\*\***

**7. Alternative Methods of Decision Making (Note: Article 8 in 2010 AOA.)**

**Note:** Clause changes are to nomenclature only.

**8. Finance (Note: Previously Article 9 in 2010 AOA.)**

**Note:** Clause changes relate to nomenclature only.

**9. Use of Council's name (Note: Article 10 in 2010 AOA.)**

**Note:** The use of the Council's name as per the current 2010 Articles of Association pertains to fundraising, sale of publications and income generation through products.

**PROPOSED: That the following clause be added to Article 9**

9.2. **\*\*The ICEVI Executive Board reserves the right to withdraw agreement to be identified as an ICEVI region, should the Executive Board deem there has been a failure by the Regional Board to meet the Code of Conduct and terms of reference for use of the name and logo of ICEVI.\*\***

**10. Amendment of Articles of Association and Bye-laws (Note: Article 11 in 2010 AOA.)**

**Note:** Clause changes relate to nomenclature only.

**11. Dissolution of the Council (Note: Article 12 in 2010 AOA.)**

**Note:** No change.

12. **Miscellaneous** (Note: Article 13 in 2010 AOA.)

Note: No change.

### **Memorandum of Association**

The following amendments are proposed to the 2010 Memorandum of Association of ICEVI in order to eliminate any potential conflict of interest of Council Members.

**Object 3:**

**PROPOSED: To add an additional clause, in recognition of the importance of collaborative partnerships within the Council.**

**3.8. \*\*To support and promote member and partner networks at global and regional levels of the Council.\*\***

**Object 5, clause 5.3:**

The wording of Object 5, clause 5.3, in the 2010 MOA is as follows:

Notwithstanding the previous sub-clause members including directors may be paid interest at a reasonable rate on money lent to the Council and may be reimbursed in respect of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses (including hotel and travel costs) actually incurred in running the Council.

**PROPOSED: To delete the wording “be paid interest at a reasonable rate on money lent to the Council and may” from clause 5.3, so that the clause reads as follows:**

**5.3. \*\*Notwithstanding the previous sub-clause members including directors may be reimbursed in respect of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses (including hotel and travel costs) actually incurred in running the Council.\*\***

**Object 5, clause 5.4:**

The wording of a section of Object 5, clause 5.4, in the 2010 MOA is as follows:

Provided a director may receive a benefit where the Council makes a payment to a company in which he or she has a less than five percent shareholding.

**PROPOSED: To delete Object 5 of clause 5.4 in its entirety.**

For the endorsement of the amendments, ICEVI required a quorum of two third of delegates, that is 74. ICEVI had received endorsements from 85 of the 111

delegates and three have abstained. There was no opposition for the amendments proposed by the executive committee.

Therefore, the resolution that the “constitutional amendments proposed by the ICEVI executive committee in the Articles of Association (AOA) and the Memorandum of Association (MOA), which were published in the January 2021 issue of *The Educator* and also circulated to the delegates of the ICEVI General Assembly be approved.” was endorsed by the General Assembly.

## 5. Introduction of Regional Presidents and short remarks by them

The Latin America, East Asia, North America, Pacific and the West Asia regions of ICEVI had already elected their regional presidents for the Quadrennium 2021-24. The Africa region will have their election in November 2021 as per the Constitution of the ICEVI Africa region. Similarly ICEVI Europe will elect its regional president in the forthcoming Regional Assembly probably in 2022. The outgoing regional presidents and the incoming regional presidents of the ICEVI regions were requested to make brief statements.

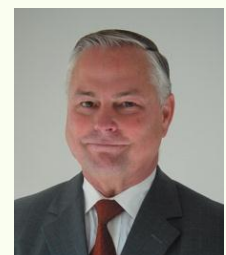
**Africa region:** The present regional president **Ms. Gertrude Oforiwa Fefoame** from Ghana had contributed significantly for the growth of ICEVI Africa region. It was in her tenure that the Africa region had become a legal entity. The regional president of the region for the forthcoming Quadrennium will be introduced to the ICEVI delegates once the Africa regional board meeting is over in November 2021 where the regional president is elected. Gertrude addressed the delegates of the General Assembly.



**East Asia region:** The current regional president **Ms. Aria Indrawati** from Indonesia was re-elected for the Quadrennium 2021–2024. Aria heads the region where one of the flagship programmes of ICEVI—The Nippon Foundation-supported higher education project was underway. Aria was also instrumental in registering the ICEVI Indonesia network as a legal body. Aria made her brief statement at the General Assembly.



**Europe region:** For the Quadrennium 2017-20, **Mrs. Panagiota (Betty) Leotsakou** from Greece was elected as the regional president. Due to the sudden demise of Betty in 2017, **Dr. Hans Welling**, the former vice president of ICEVI and also the regional president of the



Europe region was asked by the region to serve as the regional president for the rest of the Quadrennium. Hans has been a great supporter of ICEVI in various capacities. The regional president of the Europe region will be elected when its regional assembly is held probably in 2022. Therefore, Hans is continuing as the regional president until the new regional president is elected. Hans made a statement at the General Assembly.

**Latin America region: Ms. Cristina Sanz** from Argentina served as the regional president of the Latin America region and contributed significantly to its development. It was during her tenure as the regional president that the region was registered as a legal entity. ICEVI places on record its gratitude to the contributions made by Cristina.



**Mr. Julio César Canizález** from El Salvador has been elected as the new regional president of the Latin America region and ICEVI wishes him great success in his position. Julio made a brief statement at the General Assembly.



**North America and the Caribbean region: Dr. Kay Ferrell** from USA served as the regional president of the North America and the Caribbean region for the past two Quadrennium. Kay contributed significantly to ICEVI for a long time and her recent contribution was the development of ICEVI teacher training curriculum for inclusive education that can be accessed from the ICEVI website. Kay is also serving as the editor of ICEVI's magazine The Educator. ICEVI profoundly thanked Kay for her contribution and is pleased that she will continue her role as the editor of The Educator. Kay addressed the delegates of the General Assembly.



**Ms. Susan LaVenture**, who is an advocate of parents' moment at the global level, has been elected as the regional president of the NAC region for the Quadrennium 2021-24. ICEVI believes that her new position will provide impetus for strengthening the parents' movement within ICEVI. Susan addressed the General Assembly.



**Pacific region: Mr. Ben Clare** from Australia served as the regional president of the Pacific region for the Quadrennium 2017–20. Ben expanded the activities of ICEVI especially in the island countries of the region and contributed significantly in the area of technology. ICEVI placed on record its gratitude to Ben for his contributions for the growth of Pacific regional activities. Ben addressed the delegates of the General Assembly.





**Dr. Joanne Mosen** from Australia who is from the developmental field in the area of disability took over as the new regional president of the Pacific region. ICEVI hopes Jo will bring a new perspective to the regional development in the Pacific region. Jo addressed the delegates of the General Assembly.



**West Asia region: Dr. Bhushan Punani** from India served as the regional president of the West Asia region for many terms. With his legal background, he contributed significantly to ICEVI in framing policies. He also represented ICEVI in global forums and organised regional conferences in every tenure of his presidency. ICEVI expressed its gratitude to Bhushan and he addressed the delegates.



The West Asia region had elected **Mr. Birendra Raj Pokharel** from Nepal as its new regional president. Birendra is closely associated with ICEVI Nepal. Being an activist in the field, Birendra will certainly bring new momentum to the ICEVI West Asia region. Birendra addressed the General Assembly.



## 6. Report of Nominations Committee

Andrew Griffiths, chairman of the ICEVI nominations committee shared with the voting delegates of ICEVI through mail, the slate of principal officers proposed for the Quadrennium 2021-24 with a request to endorse the nomination or provide any other suggestions. The proposed names were:

- **Dr. Frances Gentle** for the position of president,
- **Dr. Bhushan Punani** for first vice president
- **Ms. Sabine Fijn van Draat** for second vice president, and
- **Dr. Praveena Sukhraj-Ely** for the position of treasurer.

*Following is the summary of the responses received from the delegates before the stipulated deadline of 20 May 2021.*

- 88 endorsements approving the slate of principal officers were received, which is more than 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority of the ICEVI delegates.
- No opposition for the proposed candidates was received from any delegate.
- No alternative names were suggested for any of the four positions.

In the face-to-face General Assembly the principal officers are suggested by the nominations committee for endorsement and the delegates either

unanimously approve or may suggest candidates from the floor of the General Assembly. As this process is cumbersome in a virtual General Assembly the delegates were contacted by mail and requested for their written endorsement. The responses clearly indicate that the proposed slate of principal officers had already received overwhelming endorsement for their respective positions and technically elected to assume office for the next Quadrennium. The General Assembly endorsed the recommendations of the nominations committee and welcomed the new principal officers for the Quadrennium 2021 to 2024.

## 7. Short remarks by the new Principal Officers

Dr. M.N.G. Mani, CEO ICEVI, formally invited the President Elect and the new Principal Officers to make their remarks.

### **President: Dr. Frances Gentle (Australia):**

Dr. Gentle has been President of ICEVI for the past quadrennium and has been elected for her second term. She has contributed significantly to the field of education for children with blindness or low vision in Australia and internationally for the past three decades. She is also co-president of the South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment (SPEVI); and represents ICEVI on the Executive Committee of World Blind Union. Frances is a member of the academic and research staff at the NextSense Institute (formerly the Renwick Centre for Research and Professional Education within the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children's Renwick Centre in Australia); and holds conjoint positions with Macquarie University and the University of Newcastle. Dr. Gentle addressed the delegates of the General Assembly.



### **First Vice President:**

#### **Outgoing First Vice President: Dr. Praveena Sukhraj-Ely (South Africa):**

Dr. Praveena served as the First Vice President of ICEVI from 2016–20. She represented ICEVI and the World Blind Union (WBU) on the International Disability Alliance and also represented ICEVI on the Accessible Books Consortium and many other international bodies. Dr. Praveena addressed the delegates.



#### **Incoming First Vice President: Dr. Bhushan Punani (India):**

Dr. Punani has been elected by the delegates for the position of the First Vice President of ICEVI. He has a long and active history within ICEVI, is General Secretary of the Blind People's Association (India), and has significant

experience of advocacy on the rights of people with visual impairment. ICEVI believes that his vast administrative experience and legal background will auger well for the organisation. Dr. Punani addressed the delegates of the General Assembly.



### **Second Vice President:**

#### **Outgoing Second Vice President: Ms. Rima Canawati (Palestine):**

Ms. Rima Canawati has a long history with ICEVI and did significant work for increasing the involvement of ICEVI in the Middle East region. She also played a key role in the implementation of education for all children with visual impairment campaign in Palestine and contributed to policy statements of ICEVI submitted to global bodies.



#### **Incoming Second Vice President – Ms. Sabine Fijn van Draat (The Netherlands):**

Ms. Sabine Fijn van Draat has been serving on the Executive Committee of ICEVI for the past seven years, representing Royal Dutch Visio, one of the International Partner Members. She has led the work of the ICEVI Executive Governance Committee in the past quadrennium, which has successfully completed its work. She has extensive experience of development and working on inclusive education and is currently Coordinator of the Allied Charity Foundation. Sabine addressed the delegates of the General Assembly.



### **Treasurer:**

#### **Outgoing Treasurer: Mrs. Nandini Rawal (India):**

Mrs. Nandini Rawal is one of the most popular faces in ICEVI circles. Known for her excellent communication loaded with a sense of humour and poems, she served as the master of ceremonies for many international events of ICEVI. She served as the treasurer of ICEVI for the past many terms and brought clear financial structures that will strengthen ICEVI going forward. She is currently serving as the Executive Director of the Blind People's Association which is one of the premier organisations for persons with disabilities in India. Nandini addressed the delegates of the General Assembly.





**Incoming Treasurer: Dr. Praveena Sukhraj-Ely (South Africa):**

Financial management and accounting is one of the core job functions performed by Dr. Praveena Sukhraj-Ely on a daily basis as a Director in her employment with the National Department of Justice and Constitutional Development in South Africa. She has experience in a range of functions that are associated with the position of Treasurer. Her various positions in government and national and international NGOs will allow her to support ICEVI effectively during the next quadrennium. Dr Praveena addressed the delegates.



**8. Quadrennial Plans**

Dr. M.N.G.Mani, CEO ICEVI, informed the General assembly that the ICEVI regions will be preparing quadrennial plans outlining the priority activities that will be taken up by the regions during the period 2022 to 2024. He mentioned that the quadrennial plans will be prepared by involving the members of the regional boards, representatives of international partner organisations present in the regions, national stakeholders, parents, persons with visual impairment, and all other stakeholders. The quadrennial plans are expected to be ready by the end of September 2021 that will be consolidated thereafter and presented at the executive committee meeting of ICEVI that is likely to take place in December 2021. The detailed quadrennial plans will be posted on the ICEVI website and also shared with the ICEVI constituency.

**9. Words of Gratitude**

Dr. France Gentle, the President of ICEVI for the Quadrennium 2021 – 2024 and Dr M.N.G. Mani, CEO ICEVI, thanked all the delegates for making the General Assembly successful. They also placed on record the special appreciation of ICEVI to ONCE and the World Blind Union for the efficient conduct of the first virtual General Assembly. They also thanked all the international partner members, the former regional presidents, and their parent organisations for providing administrative support to ICEVI. Special thanks were extended to the staff of the former Treasurer of ICEVI Mrs. Nandini Rawal (Harmish Modi and Lalita) and the staff of the ICEVI Secretariat (M.R. Visvanathan, N. Velmurugan and B.M. Bhagath Singh) for their dedicated work in ICEVI. They hoped that there would be opportunities soon to meet in person and organise international and regional conferences of ICEVI that would strengthen the momentum going forward.

The General Assembly came to a close with thanks to the Chair.

## ICEVI General Assembly 2024: PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

The **ICEVI World Conference will be held in conjunction with the General Assembly on 14-17 November 2024 in Ahmedabad, India.**

The registration for the World Conference is underway and more than 250 participants have already registered to attend the conference in person. The local Host Committee is arranging invitation letters for those who have registered and also assisting participants in getting Visa. As the visa process takes considerable time, we request you to please register as early as possible.

The **early bird registration** for the conference is **USD 400 (USD 200 for Indians)** and the **deadline is 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024.** The registration fee will be USD 450 (USD 250 for Indians) thereafter.

The Program Committee has received over 200 abstracts for presentations and it is working on the program schedule that will be finalised before the end of September. In the meantime, the draft program schedule is presented in this issue to give an idea to the participants about the nature of plenary as well as concurrent sessions.

The Program Committee also states that the program schedule presented below is just the draft version and the final one may have variations to some extent from what is presented here. Those who have any concerns with their presentations may contact the program committee as soon as possible to consider the possibilities of accommodating changes, if required and also if possible.

We look forward to welcoming you in Ahmedabad and wishing you a great conference as well as the ICEVI General Assembly.



## “INCLUSION IN DIVERSITY: EQUITY AND ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL”

**14-16 November 2024 \* Ahmedabad, INDIA**

Sr. No	Day/time	Details	
<b>Day 1: 14 November 2024</b>			
	<b>8.30 – 9.30 am</b>	<b>Registration</b>	
<b>Inauguration PROGRAMME:</b>			
1.	9.30 – 11.00 a.m.	<b>Inauguration Programme</b>	
	9.30 a.m.	<b>Lamp Lighting</b>	By Guests and then they take their places on the Dais
	9.30 a.m.	<b>Prayer</b>	BPA Students with Disabilities
	9.33 a.m.	<b>Welcome</b>	Dr. Bhushan Punani, Chair Host Committee & ICEVI Vice-President
	9.38 a.m.	<b>Mementoes to Guests</b>	
	9.42 a.m.	<b>Programme Details:</b>	Ms. Sian Tesni, Chair, ICEVI Programme Committee
	9.48 a.m.	<b>ICEVI Global Perspective</b>	Dr. Frances Gentle, President- ICEVI
	9.55 a.m.	<b>Keynote Address</b>	Dr. Ami Upadhyay, Vice-Chancellor, BAOU
	10.10 a.m.	<b>Keynote Address</b>	Dr. Aubrey Webson, UN Ambassador for Antigua & Barbuda
	10.25 a.m.	<b>'My Experience of working with Deafblind people' Thematic Address</b>	Mr. Mirko Baur, President, Deafblind International
	10.35 a.m.	<b>Address Chief Guest 2</b>	
	10.45 a.m.	<b>Vote of Thanks</b>	
			<b>Master of Ceremony</b>
2.	11.00 – 11.30 a.m.	<b>TEA BREAK</b>	

3.	11.30 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.	<b>Plenary Session - P1</b>	
		<b>Inclusion – First-Hand Experience</b> (Presentation by Stakeholders)	
		<b>CHAIR: Dr. Frances Gentle, President, ICEVI</b>	
		P.1.1. Ms. Shrutilata Singh, Sense India	Reinventing Myself
		P.1.2. Mr. Frank Kat, Past - President, Deafblind International	Reaching the Unreached Through the Global Education Campaign
4.	1.00 – 2.00 p.m.	<b>LUNCH</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Mrs. Archana Bhambal, Technical Director – Inclusive Education, Sightsavers India</b>	
		C.1.1. Mr. Thuduwege Don Dhanapala, Sri Lanka	Teachers' Perceptions of Applying Universal Design for Learning Principles to Enable Students with Special Educational Needs in Sri Lanka to Access School Curricula
		C.1.2. Ms. Thanita Maneepong Thailand	Library Service Medias Toward Improvement on Literacy Skill of Students with Visual Impairment: A Case Study of Bangkok School for the Blind
5.	2.00 – 3.30 p.m.	<b>CHAIR: Mrs. Archana Bhambal, Technical Director – Inclusive Education, Sightsavers India</b>	
		C.1.3 Dr. Nigam Bhupendrabhai Pandya, India	A Study on The Status of Inclusive Education in Gujarat
		C.1.4. Mr. Om Prakash Choudhry, India	Disability Inclusive Initiative at State level Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya CWSN Hostels
6.	2.00 – 3.30 p.m.	<b>Concurrent Session: C 2</b>	
		<b>Early Childhood Intervention, Care and Education</b>	
		<b>CHAIR:</b>	
		C.2.1. Ms. Mandy Lau, Australia	Universal Early Intervention: Reach & Match's Approach to Inclusive Education
		C.2.2. Dr. Namita Susan Jacob, India	Story Books: Enhancing The Journey from Learning to Read to Reading To Learn

		<b>C.2.3. Mr. Sanu Khimbaja, Nepal</b>	Empowering Learners: Home-Based Education for Children with Complex Disabilities - A Nepalese Perspective
		<b>C.2.4. Dr. Sujata Bhan, India</b>	School Readiness for Inclusive Education in Tripura, India
7.	2.00 - 3.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 3</u></b>	
		<b>Access to Education</b>	
		<b><u>CHAIR:</u></b>	
		<b>C.3.1. Dr. Birendra Raj Pokharel, Nepal</b>	Enhancing Access to Education for Learners with Visual impairment in Nepal
		<b>C.3.2. Dr. Anil Aneja, President, AICB</b>	Strategies for Enhancing Educational Access to Children with Visual Impairment.
		<b>C.3.3. Ms. Mercy Chingnunmuang, India</b>	Transition from Childhood to Adolescence for Persons with Deafblindness and Multiple Disabilities
		<b>C.3.4. Mr. Leki Chedup, Bhutan</b>	Facing Difficulties in STEM Subjects
8.	2.00 - 3.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 4</u></b>	
		<b>Inclusive Education – National Perspectives</b>	
		<b><u>CHAIR:</u> Mr Todd Reeves, ICEVI Board Member and Director, Overbrook School for the Blind</b>	
		<b>C.4.1. Mr. Madhav Aryal, Nepal</b>	From segregation to inclusion in Nepal
		<b>C.4.2. Mr. Mrinal Ray Madhav, India</b>	Approaches to Strengthen Inclusive Education Programme in close collaboration with the Govt. of India
		<b>C.4.3. Mr. Khandakar Jaharul Alam, Bangladesh</b>	Community Based Inclusive Education to promote the Educational Rights of Children with Disabilities in Bangladesh
		<b>C.4.4. Mr. Ezekiel F B Kumwenda, Malawi</b>	Enhancing Education through ICT and Adaptive Technology in Malawi
9.	2.00 - 3.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 5</u></b>	
		<b>Digital Empowerment</b>	
		<b><u>CHAIR:</u> Mr Marcel Janssen, ICEVI Board Member, Royal Dutch Visio</b>	
		<b>C.5.1. Ms. Vidhi Shah, India</b>	Emerging Job Opportunities For Persons with Visual Impairment in IT sector
		<b>C.5.2. Mr. Nalin Sathyan,</b>	Zendalona, Digitally Empowering the Visually

		<b>India</b>	Impaired through FOSS
		<b>C.5.3.</b> Dr. Sean Richards Tikkun, <b>USA</b>	Use of Bluetooth and Digital Tools for Improved Intersection Awareness
		<b>C.5.4.</b> Dr. Nathalie Lewi Dumont, <b>France</b>	Uses of Braille and Digital Technology in Reading And Writing Among French Blind or People with Severe Visual Impairment of Different Generations
10.	<b>2.00 - 3.30 p.m.</b>	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 6</u></b> <b>Strategies for Inclusion</b>	
		<b><u>CHAIR:</u> Dr. Jitender Aggarwal, Founder &amp; CEO, Sarthak Educational Trust</b>	
		<b>C.6.1.</b> Ms. Sanjana Zaman, <b>Bangladesh</b>	Exploring the Knowledge and Barriers Experienced by Primary Caregivers of Individuals with Multiple Disabilities and Deafblindness in Bangladesh
		<b>C.6.2.</b> Mr. Mitsunobu Matsuo & Hiroshi Katoh, <b>Japan</b>	Polyhedral Modelling System to Improve 3D Perception, Geometric Reasoning, and Creative Modelling of the Visually Impaired
		<b>C.6.3.</b> Mrs. Ditte Lise Juul Pedersen & Mrs. Dorthe Marie Degn, <b>Denmark</b>	How can the young people who are visually impaired in combination with other special needs (MDVI), develop their social competences to include them in communities?
		<b>C.6.4.</b> Gleydi Josefina Oropeza Pérez, <b>Venezuela</b>	Driving Equality: How Artificial Intelligence Can Promote the Inclusion of People with Visual Impairments
		<b>C.6.5.</b> Hazel Garro Aragón, <b>Costa Rica</b>	The Role of the Itinerant Support Teacher in Elementary and High School
11.	<b>3.30 - 4.00 p.m.</b>	<b>TEA BREAK</b>	
12.	<b>4.00 - 5.30 p.m.</b>	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 7</u></b> <b>Community Participation</b>	
		<b><u>CHAIR:</u> Ms Sian Tesni, Chair, World Conference Programme Committee</b>	
		<b>C.7.1.</b> Dr. Lydia Wangui Chege, <b>Kenya</b>	Nexus Between Personal Factors and Employment of Graduates with Visual Impairment from TVETS In Kenya
		<b>C.7.2.</b> Dr. Amiri Fatane, <b>Iran</b>	The Role of Media and Its Impact on Raising Awareness in the Field of Disability

		<b>C.7.3.</b> Satish Tripathi & Saumya Tripathi, <b>Nepal</b>	Arunodaya (Sunrise): Empowering Through Education for Children with Blindness
		<b>C.7.4.</b> Rita de Cassia letto Montilha, <b>Brazil</b>	Visual screening program, monitoring the visual behavior of babies and providing guidance to family members on early intervention
		<b>C.7.5.</b> Gladys Viviana Correa, <b>Argentina</b>	Empowering Youth Voices: Building the Council of Latin American Girls and Boys
13.	4.00 - 5.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 8</u></b> <b>Access to Literacy through Alternative Formats</b>	
		<b><u>CHAIR:</u> Dr. Diana Stentoft, General Secretary, World Blind Union</b>	
		<b>C.8.1.</b> Ms. Komivi Ayassou, <b>Togo</b>	Accessibility of Mathematics for Students with Visual Disabilities: Case of Algebra in Secondary School
		<b>C.8.2.</b> Mr. Chuthamas Puttrat, <b>Thailand</b>	Using Various Accessible Medias to Create an Understanding Toward Science Knowledge of Children with Visual Impairment of Bangkok School for The Blind
		<b>C.8.3.</b> Dr. Emily Hill White, <b>Australia</b>	How We Think Braille Literacy Learning Happens: A Hypothesised Developmental Progression
		<b>C.8.4.</b> Mr. Sudip Roy, <b>India</b>	Bridging Educational Gaps: The Impact of Accessible Textbooks on Visual Impaired Students
14.	4.00 - 5.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 9</u></b> <b>Access to Curricular and Extra-Curricular areas</b>	
		<b><u>CHAIR:</u></b>	
		<b>C.9.1.</b> Dr. Beula Christy & Ms. Shobita Sankar, <b>India</b>	A World Made Vibrant by Laughter - Unveiling the Power of Outdoor Recreational Programs for Children with Special Needs
		<b>C.9.2.</b> Mrs. Frouck Antje deBore, <b>Netherlands</b>	Framework of Universal Design; accessible environment is all about Visibility.
		<b>C.9.3.</b> Mr. Chintamani Hasabnis & Mrs. Abha Hasnabnis, <b>India</b>	Paintings for Persons with Visual Impairment
		<b>C.9.4.</b>	
15.	4.00 - 5.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 10</u></b> <b>Health and Related Issues</b>	
		<b><u>CHAIR:</u></b>	



		<b>C.10.1.</b> Dr. Dipti Sanjay Gandhi, <b>India</b>	Mental Health of Parents - An Important Service.
		<b>C.10.2.</b> Mr. Vishvendu Shastri, <b>India</b>	Assessing the Effectiveness of Mental Health Interventions for Individuals with Deafblindness/ Multiple Disabilities
		<b>C.10.3.</b> Mr. Mihir Jani, <b>India</b>	Reaching out to Women with Severe Mental Illness
		<b>C.10.4.</b> Ms. Urmimala Sengupta, <b>India</b>	Multi-stakeholder engagement in service delivery: from detection to education
16.	<b>4.00 - 5.30 p.m.</b>	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 11</u></b> <b>Access to Education</b>	
		<b><u>CHAIR:</u> Prof. Sanjay Singh, Vice Chancellor, Dr. Shakuntala Misra National Rehabilitation University, Lucknow</b>	
		<b>C.11.1.</b> Ms. Indah Lutfiah Indah, <b>Indonesia</b>	The Accessible Graphics and Matrix Learning in Mathematics for Students with Visual Impairment in Middle School and High School
		<b>C.11.2.</b> Dr. Odette Tumwesigye Niyisabwa, <b>Uganda</b>	The Future of Education for Learners with Visual Impairment in Uganda: A Visionary Learning Approach
		<b>C.11.3.</b> Prof. Yuli Rahmawati, <b>Indonesia</b>	Empowering Pre-service Teachers in Inclusive Education by Engaging Students with Visual Impairment in Science Experiments
		<b>C.11.4.</b> Prof. Bogusław 'Bob' Marek, <b>Poland</b>	Tactile Graphics for First Time Users: Making Sure That 'Accessible' Means 'Meaningful'
17.	<b>4.00 - 5.30 p.m.</b>	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 12</u></b> <b>Building bridges: Collaborating with Families and Communities</b>	
		<b><u>CHAIR:</u></b>	
		<b>C.12.1.</b> Dr. Shobha Odunavar, <b>India</b>	Community-Centric Inclusive Development: Empowering Families and Caregivers
		<b>C.12.2.</b> Mr. Bharat Patel, <b>India</b>	Community Based Inclusive Development Approaches
		<b>C.12.3.</b> Mr. Md. Azlis Sani & Mrs. Jamilah Kadir, Malaysia	Advancing Inclusive Education: Exploring the Potential of Inclusive Open Educational Resources (iOER) for Learners with Visual Impairments
		<b>C.12.4.</b> Mrs. Ishrat Jahan Rupa, <b>Bangladesh</b>	Breaking the barriers for children with severe and multiple disabilities through home-based



			education (HBE): a pathway for ensuring inclusive education rights
18.	<b>7.00 p.m. onwards</b>	Reception Dinner & Entertainment Programme	

Sr. No.	Day/ time	Details	
<b>Day 2: 15 November 2024</b>			
1.	<b>9.00 – 10.30 a.m.</b>	<b>Plenary Session - P 2</b>	
		<b>The Human Right to Education: International Perspectives</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Dr Shawn Piantoni, Secretary General, ICEVI</b>	
		<b>P.2.1.</b> Diane Bergeron, Women's Representative, World Blind Union	A World of Empowerment.
		<b>P.2.2.</b> Ms. Ana Peláez, ONCE and Chair of the UN CEDAW Committee	How to promote equality and prevent discrimination, violence and bullying of women and girls with blindness, low vision, deafblindness and multiple disability in education
		<b>P.2.3.</b> Ms. Gertrude Oforiwa Fefoame, Sightsavers, ICEVI Africa and Chair of the UN CRPD Committee	The role of the CRPD Committee in progressing the human right to education for children with vision impairment
		<b>P.2.4.</b>	
2.	<b>11.00 – 11.30 a.m.</b>	Tea Break	
3.	<b>11.30 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.</b>	<b>Plenary Session - P 3:</b>	
		<b>Foundations of Growth: Early Childhood Intervention, Care and Education</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Dr. M.N.G. Mani, CEO, ICEVI</b>	
		<b>P.3.1.</b> Dr. Frances Gentle, ICEVI and NextSense, <b>Australia</b>	The Journey of Visual Development and Play
		<b>P.3.2.</b> Mrs. Nandini Rawal, <b>India</b>	Preparing for Inclusion
		<b>P.3.3.</b> Ms. Sampada Shevde, <b>India</b>	Encouraging Early Communication Development in Children With MDVI
		<b>P.3.4.</b>	

4.	1.00 – 2.00 p.m.	<b>LUNCH</b>	
5.	2.00 – 3.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 13</u></b>	
		<b>Rehabilitation-The Entire Continuum</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Dr Emily White, President, ICEVI Pacific Region</b>	
		<b>C.13.1. Dr. Vassilis Argyropoulos, Greece</b>	Investigating Communication Skills in Children with Visual Impairment and Multiple Disabilities: Assessment and Intervention Programs
		<b>C.13.2. Dr. Jogitha, India</b>	Incidence of Strabismus in Patients with Cortical Visual Impairment in a Tertiary Eye Care Hospital In South India
		<b>C.13.3. Mr. Md. Jahangir Alam, Bangladesh</b>	OPD engagement in sustainable inclusive education for children with disabilities
6.	2.00 – 3.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 14</u></b>	
		<b>Navigating Low Vision and Accessible Technology</b>	
		<b>CHAIR:</b>	
		<b>C. 14.1. Ms. Polly Ellen Goodwin, Australia</b>	Audio Description for Young People: Adapting A US Initiative for The Australian Context: Sharing The Learnings On Why, Sometimes, Quantity Might Matter More Than Quality
		<b>C. 14.2. Mr. Samuel Foulkes, USA</b>	Braille Literacy and Tactile Learning: Developing Educational Materials for Students who are Blind or Low Vision
7.	2.00 – 3.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 15</u></b>	
		<b>Deafblindness and Multiple Disability and Visual Impairment (MDVI)</b>	
		<b>C. 14.3. Dr. Homiyar Mobedji, India</b>	Bridging the Gap-Affordable assistive Technology for Persons with Visual Impairment in Developing Countries
		<b>C.14.4. Mr. Jitendra Kumar, India</b>	Augmentative intervention explores the potential and inclusion of children with visual impairment– A case study from Jharkhand.

		<b>CHAIR:</b>	
		<b>C.15.1. Mrs. Krupa Velani, India</b>	Making Inclusion Happen
		<b>C.15.2. Mrs. Anuradha Mungi, India</b>	Using Extracurricular Activities to Enhance Communication and Social Skills for Inclusive Education
		<b>C.15.3. Dr. Phoebe Aoko Okungu, USA</b>	Strategies, Techniques and Accommodations Used in Providing Orientation and Mobility Services to Individuals who are Deafblind: A Systematic Review
		<b>C.15.4. Dr. Nora Griffin-Shirley &amp; Dr. Devender Banda, USA</b>	Using Single-subject Designs in the Field of O&M for Children with Visual Impairment and Autism
8.	2.00 – 3.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 16</u></b>	
		<b>Empowering educators: Training teachers and professionals for success</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Prof John Ravenscroft, President, ICEVI Europe Region</b>	
		<b>C.16.1. Mrs. Darija Udovicic Mahmuljin, Croatia</b>	Empowering Change: The Model Program Approach for Inclusive Education in Children and Youth with Multiple Disabilities and Sensory Impairments
		<b>C.16.2. Mr. Praveen Kumar Gurunath, India</b>	Empowering Out-Of-School Children with Disabilities Through Disaggregated Data, Personal Social Support, Teacher Training and Use Of Braille
		<b>C.16.3. Ms. Nastja Zlajpah &amp; Ms. Monika Pust, Slovenia</b>	Adapted Social Games: Innovative Approaches to Teaching People with Visual Impairment
		<b>C.16.4 Dr. Shreeram Mittal, India</b>	The Roles of Special Educators In Ensuring Equity And Equality Of Education For Children With Disabilities
9.	2.00 – 3.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 17</u></b>	
		<b>Access to ICT and Adaptive / Assistive Technology</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Mr Julio Cesar Canizalez, President, ICEVI Latin America Region</b>	
		<b>C.17.1. Dr. Pisit Progoestaporn, Thailand</b>	Integration of adaptive and assistive Technologies toward learning accessibility for Visually-impaired Students in Bangkok School for the Blind
		<b>C.17.2. Mr. Hunny</b>	Empowering Inclusive Education: AI's Role in

		Bhagchandani, <b>India</b>	Accessible Learning Environments
		<b>C.17.3.</b> Prof. Francis Boe, <b>France</b>	L'intelligence Artificielle (AI) Brings Technologies That Transform the Daily Lives of Blind People
		<b>C.17.4.</b> Ms. Elena Gasto, <b>Spain</b>	Evaluation of the accessibility of educational ICT content. Reasonable adjustment.
10.	<b>2.00 – 3.30 p.m.</b>	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 18</u></b> <b>Families, Women and Inclusion</b>	
		<b>CHAIR:</b>	
		<b>C.18.1.</b> Ms. Bhavika Shah, <b>India</b>	Enhancing Sexual and Reproductive Health of women and girls with Deafblindness
		<b>C.18.2.</b> Mrs. Fahima Khatun & Mr. Ashiqur Rahman Amit, <b>Bangladesh</b>	Impact of Visual Impairment on Familial Dynamics: A Case Study
		<b>C.18.3.</b> Ms. Maartje Diете Dierick, <b>Netherlands</b>	Inclusion in Diversity: Common When Possible. Making Participation Possible! Regular Where Possible, Adjusted Where Necessary. And Adjusted When Necessary.
		<b>C.18.4.</b>	
11.	<b>3.30 – 4.00 p.m.</b>	<b>Tea break</b>	
12.	<b>4.00 – 5.30 p.m.</b>	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 19</u></b> <b>Partnering with Families and Caregivers: Building a Supportive Network</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Ms Vimal Thawani</b>	
		<b>C.19.1.</b> Ms. Nichapa Akethanapisan, <b>Thailand</b>	Role of Family with the Potential Development of Children with Visual Impairment Enable to Live Independently: A Case Study of Bangkok School for The Blind
		<b>C.19.2.</b> Prof. John Ravenscroft, <b>UK</b>	An Evaluation of Support for Parents/Caregivers and Children with Cerebral Visual Impairment in the Community: An Exploratory Study.
		<b>C.19.3.</b> Prof. Tiziana Battistin, <b>Italy</b>	Giving Voice to Siblings of Children with Visual Impairment
		<b>C.19.4.</b> Mr. Rashmikant Mishra, <b>India</b>	Online Training of Parents and Stakeholders

13.	4.00 – 5.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 20</u></b>	
		<b>Shaping change: Advocacy and Influencing in Education</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Ms Katie Holland</b> , ICEVI Board Member, Perkins School for the Blind/Perkins International	
		<b>C.20.1.</b> Ms. Rashmi Maruvada & Ms. Annapurna Maruvada, <b>India</b>	Challenging Myths and Misconceptions: Advancing Reasonable Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities in India
		<b>C.20.2.</b> Ms. Carey Philips, <b>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</b>	Planning for all: Trinidad And Tobago Blind Welfare Association's Response To The United Nations' Situational Analysis Of The Rights Of Persons With Disabilities.
		<b>C.20.3.</b> Ms. Bridget Longla, <b>Cameroon</b>	Advancing Inclusive Education: The Pioneering Digital Library Initiative for Learners with Visual Impairments in Cameroon
		<b>C.20.4.</b> Mariana de Jesus Gallegos Navas, <b>Ecuador</b>	The Application of Universal Design for Learning- CBM Project Guatemala
	<b>C.20.5.</b> Rita de Cássia Fuentes Luz Suenaga, <b>Brazil</b>	Legal Frameworks for Education In Brazil	
14.	4.00 – 5.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 21</u></b>	
		<b>Climate Change, Disaster and Impact on Children with Visual Impairment and Multiple Disabilities</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Mr Mirko Baur</b> , President, Deafblind International	
		<b>C.21.1.</b> Mr. Molemisi Kono & Ms. Remiyya Badru, <b>UK</b>	The impact of climate change on eye health in Africa
		<b>C.21.2.</b> Md. Sazzad Kabir, <b>Bangladesh</b>	Unveiling the challenges and prospects during COVID-19 Pandemic: an exploratory study on the persons with deafblindness
		<b>C.21.3.</b> Ms. Alice Nabbanja, <b>Congo</b>	Rebuilding Educational Systems in Countries affected by War, Emergencies and Natural Disasters
	<b>C.21.4.</b> Mr. Parag Namdeo, <b>India</b>	Fellowship of Interns with deafblindness	
15.	4.00 – 5.30 p.m.	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 22</u></b>	
		<b>Empowering futures: Vocational Training, Employment and Adult Life</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Ms Aria Indrawati</b> , President, ICEVI East Asia Region	

		<b>C.22.1.</b> Ms. Virginia Castellano, <b>Spain</b>	The transition from inclusive education to the labour world
		<b>C.22.2.</b> Ms. Teresa Antony Alappatt, <b>India</b>	Building Essential Work Skills for Children with Multiple Disabilities
		<b>C.22.3.</b> Dr. Bharat Joshi, <b>India</b>	A study on Inclusive Work Environment for the people with disabilities
		<b>C.22.4.</b>	
16.	<b>4.00 – 5.30 p.m.</b>	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 23</u></b>	
		<b>Charting Tomorrow: Policy Innovations for Inclusive Education</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Mr. Akbar Mehfuz Alam</b>	
		<b>C.23.1.</b> Mr. Akbar Mehfuz Alam, <b>India</b>	Policy Considerations for IE in India
		<b>C.23.2.</b> Ms. Mereoni Daveta, <b>Fiji</b>	An Overview of The State of Educational Inclusion for Children Who Are Blind or Vision Impaired in The Pacific.
		<b>C.23.3.</b> Ms. Janet Cloaninger, <b>USA</b>	Advocating For the Lifelong Education of Individuals Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired: Policy Perspectives
		<b>C.23.4.</b> Mr. Martin Kieti, <b>Kenya</b>	Improving access to ICEVI training materials for quality and inclusive education of people with visual impairment in Africa
17.	<b>4.00 – 5.30 p.m.</b>	<b><u>Concurrent Session: C 24</u></b>	
		<b>Transforming Community Resources into Catalysts for Change</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Mr Uttam Kumar, Deputy Director, Sense International, India</b>	
		<b>C.24.1.</b> Ms. Kochaporn Buphakosum, <b>Thailand</b>	Social Network and Community-based Support for Potential Development of Visually Impaired students: A case study of Bangkok School for the Blind
		<b>C.24.2.</b> Dr. Dharmendra D. Jena, <b>India</b>	Empowering Children with Visual Impairments: The Crucial Role of Community-Based Eye Hospitals in Education and Disability Welfare
		<b>C.24.3.</b> Ms. Lara Michelle Anderson, <b>Australia</b>	Future Thinking in the Service Design for Working in Children, Young People and Families in the Community
		<b>C.24.4.</b> Mr. Nirmal Verma & Mr. Vinayak Sandhavakar, <b>India</b>	Significance of ICT and other assistive devices in filling the gap on education of Children with Visual Impairment

Sr. No.	Day/time	Details	
<b>Day 3: 16 November 2024</b>			
1.	9.30 – 10.15 a.m.	<b>Plenary Session - P 4: Technology - The Ultimate Equalizer</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Ms Ana Peláez, ICEVI Board Member, ONCE</b>	
		<b>P.4.1.</b> Prof. Maria Soledad Cisternas Reyes, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General on Disability and Accessibility	Universal Accessibility in the Era of Digital Transformation
		<b>P.4.2.</b> Dr. Lisa Wados Verne, Vice-President, BENETECH, <b>USA</b>	Benetech Accessibility Training to Promote Education Equity
2.	10.15 - 11.00 a.m.	<b>Presentation on DIASY</b>	
		<b>P.4.3.</b> Mr. Dipendra Manocha, Director of Developing Countries Programme, <b>India</b>	Technology-The Great Leveller
		<b>P.4.4.</b> Mr Richard Orme, CEO, DAISY (Through Video)	Visionary Learning
3.	11.00 – 11.30 a.m.	Tea Break	
4.	11.30 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.	<b>Plenary Session - P 5: Panel Discussion Rights and Roles of Persons with Visual Impairment</b>	
		<b>CHAIR:</b>	
		<b>P.5.1.</b> Dr. Bhushan Punani, First Vice President ICEVI and Executive Secretary, Blind People’s Association, <b>India</b>	The Power of Human Rights Laws in Promoting Equity in Education for Children with Vision Impairment: Indian Human Rights Commission
		<b>P.5.2.</b> Dr. Praveena Sukhraj-Ely, Treasurer – ICEVI and Chief Director: National Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities in the Presidency in South Africa, <b>South Africa</b>	International Declarations and Commitments within the Contours of Sustainable Goal 4: “Promoting inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

		<b>P.5.3.</b> Mr. Santosh Rungta, Chair, World Blind Union, Asia, <b>India</b>	Rights And Roles of Persons with Visual Impairment
		<b>P.5.4.</b>	
5.	<b>1.00 – 2.00 p.m.</b>	Lunch break	
6.	<b>2.00 – 3.30 p. m.</b>	<b>Plenary Session - P6: Reaching Beyond &amp; Making a Difference</b>	
		<b>CHAIR: Mr R N Mohanty, CEO, Sightsavers India</b>	
		<b>P.6.1</b> Mr. Sachin Rizal, <b>India</b> & Mr. Jacob Mathew, Meredith Prain, <b>Australia, International Communication Rights Alliance</b>	Collaborating to Uphold Communication Rights
		<b>P.6.2.</b> Ms. Kinnari Desai, Accessibility Expert, Blind People's association	The Change that You Seek Begins with Self
		<b>P.6.3.</b> Mr. Akhil Paul, Executive Director, Sense <b>India</b>	A Changing World for Persons with Deafblindness and Multiple Disabilities
		<b>P.6.4.</b>	
7.	<b>3.00 – 4.00 p.m.</b>	<b>ICEVI AWARDS</b>	
8.	<b>4.00 – 5.00 p.m.</b>	<b>Concluding Ceremony</b> Chief Guest :	
		<b>Stage Function:</b> 1. Welcome: 2. Message to take home: 3. Award ceremony 4. Report of Resolutions Committee 5. Vote of Thanks	
9.	<b>5.00 p.m.</b>	<b>High Tea</b>	

The ICEVI publishes a biannual magazine "The Educator" which carries research and useful articles and the editor will contact you in case your presentation is considered appropriate for one of the future issues of The Educator. Hope to see you at the Conference!



# UN Civil Society Conference in Support of the Summit of the Future

9th - 10th May 2024

**Gertrude Oforiwa Fefoame**

*Regional President, ICEVI Africa Region and Chair of the UNCRPD Committee*

The summit was held at the United Nations Office in Kenya on 9-10 May under the title “**Shaping a Future of Global and Sustainable Progress.**” This is the first of its kind in Africa. It was reported that 2,500 in-person participants came from 110 countries.

The overview was to drive a shared vision for reinvigorated multilateralism, which would create a better world and a brighter future for all.

All six Co-Facilitators for the Summit of the Future and its outputs, namely the Pact for the Future: Germany and Namibia, the Declaration on Future Generations: Netherlands and Jamaica, and the Global Digital Compact: Sweden and Zambia, were present. It was also gratifying to see the UN Secretary-General and President of Kenya, in addition to many of the UN Heads of Missions in Kenya.

*The conference highlighted the following key areas:*

- Inclusive Participation
- Support for multilateralism approaches in tackling global challenges and
- Call to action for concrete action and collaboration to address urgent humanitarian crises, advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and promote peace and justice worldwide, climate change, gender equality, human rights, and youth empowerment.

*Below are highlights summarized in two major areas:*

- ▲ Participation and Observations.
- ▲ ADDITIONAL GENERAL INFORMATION.

## **PARTICIPATION AND OBSERVATION**

The summit was characterised by plenary sessions, workshops and interactive dialogues. Workshops were on the 9th, while the 10th was for the interactive dialogues.

My main aim was to advocate for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all discussions, with a special emphasis on the education of individuals with disabilities in general and particularly persons with visual impairment, as well as children and young people with additional disabilities. In collaboration with other disability rights advocates, we are committed to ensuring that global leaders make both the outcomes and the preparatory processes of the Summit inclusive and accessible for all persons with disabilities. Our ongoing efforts aim to foster deliberate inclusion at every stage.

I had the privilege of participating as a panellist in my dual roles as Chair of the CRPD Committee and representative of ICEVI at a side event. This event was jointly organised by the Global Stakeholder Group for Persons with Disabilities, United Disabled People Kenya (UDPK), International Disability Alliance (IDA), CBM Global Disability Inclusion, and Sightsavers (Equal World campaign). The discussion was centred on the topic: **'A Seat at the Table for 1 Billion Persons with Disabilities: Building a Truly Inclusive Future for All'** and was co-sponsored by UNICEF, ESARO, UN-Habitat, World Blind Union, and the Women's Major Group. Although ICEVI was not initially included on the event flyer due to a delay in announcing our participation, the moderator acknowledged ICEVI as one of the organisers at the start of the event. During the discussion, I focused on accessibility and quality inclusive education, using these themes to underscore ICEVI's commitment to addressing the exclusion faced by persons with disabilities.

The other workshops attended were: "Co-creating the future: children's experiences toward a greener, fairer and happier world" and "Let's have an ambitious pact of the future: Why democracy and security in Africa and Geneva multilateral agenda matter".

On the second day of the programme, several coalitions were formed to advance various proposals for global governance reform. The first coalition I joined focused on child rights participation, organised by UNICEF and Save the Children. The session featured both adult and child speakers, including representatives from various parts of the world, some attending in person and others online. They discussed key issues such as discrimination in education and violence. Particular attention was given to the challenges faced by children with disabilities. I emphasised the critical importance of inclusive, quality education for all, especially for minority groups such as children who are blind and deafblind.

The second coalition focused on underrepresented communities and had a similar structure.

Registration was conducted for both sessions, but there was uncertainty about how follow-up processes would be managed. Concerns were raised in both coalitions about whether these groups were replacing existing Stakeholder CSOs, and whether their goals were specific or general, achievable or merely aspirational. Although some explanations were provided during the group discussions and the plenary session, they lacked sufficient clarity.

Together with the UN Taskforce of the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC), the CRPD Committee, and the International Disability Alliance (IDA), we will follow up to assess how effectively these efforts can be utilised to advance our agenda. During the plenary sessions, the extent to which disability was featured was limited but not entirely absent. Disabilities were mentioned occasionally, typically within the context of discussions about vulnerable groups. The overarching commitment was to inclusivity for all countries and peoples across all segments of society, ensuring that no one is left behind, including children, persons with disabilities, older persons, indigenous peoples, and other vulnerable groups.

During the summit, I seized the opportunity to engage in informal discussions with teams from Sightsavers, UDPK, CBM International, Ecumenical Disability Network, and WBU, with whom ICEVI Africa has project partnerships. We convened to align our messages and ensure consistency in our inputs. Despite efforts to reach representatives outside the disability fraternity, the tightly packed program made this challenging. However, during an evening refreshment session, I managed to find some time for informal conversations with attendees from Sierra Leone, Costa Rica, and Brazil.

Concerns about the floods affecting many parts of the world, including Kenya and Brazil, were prevalent throughout the summit. Additionally, a significant event occurred in the afternoon before the summit's close—a demonstration by representatives from Palestine demanding a ceasefire and peace.

The summit's co-facilitators outlined each segment's next steps and encouraged ongoing advocacy. They noted that they are open to listening and stressed the importance of collaborating with states. They also announced a pre-summit before the upcoming Summit of the Future in September, urging civil society organizations (CSOs) to participate actively.

I also had the pleasure of meeting with the newly appointed Administrator Project Assistant of the Africa Office. Although brief, it was a welcoming interaction that added a personal touch to our professional relationship.

## ADDITIONAL GENERAL INFORMATION

Some additional discussions from the conference were:

- **Participation and Inclusivity:** Civil society emphasised the critical need for direct participation in shaping the future agenda, calling for the inclusion of marginalised voices and the recognition of systematic barriers to participation.
- **Conflict and Peace:** There was a strong call for redirecting military spending towards social infrastructure. The discussions also focused on the significant impact of armed conflict on vulnerable populations, including older persons and those with disabilities.
- **Technology and Human Rights:** The conversation centred on the necessity of a human rights-based approach to technology. Emphasis was placed on bridging the digital divide and ensuring equitable access to digital resources and opportunities.
- **Youth Empowerment:** Youth participation and inclusion were prioritised, with suggestions to integrate youth indicators into national plans and establish mechanisms for meaningful youth involvement in decision-making processes.
- **Global Governance Reform:** Proposals were made to improve participation within the United Nations and to reform global governance structures to enhance transparency, accountability, and equitable representation.
- **Shrinking Civil Space:** Concerns were expressed about the global reduction in civil space with calls for increased support for civil society and meaningful engagement of youth across United Nations frameworks.

### UN Secretary-General Speech Summary

António Guterres acknowledged the crucial role of civil society in promoting peace, justice, and sustainable development despite the risk's activists face. He outlined several global crises, including challenges in sustainable development, frequent conflicts, widespread poverty, increasing inequality, and climate change effects. Critiquing the international system as outdated, he called for substantial multilateral and international financial systems reforms to align better with current challenges. Guterres advocated for the creation of a new emergency platform, improved governance of emerging technologies, and a refreshed approach to peace and security. He underscored the importance of civil society's ongoing involvement and advocacy, expressing optimism about the future driven by civil society's efforts. He urged civil society to engage with national governments and advocate for ambitious commitments at the upcoming Summit of the Future.

## President of Kenya Speech Summary

The president emphasised that development should not be solely the responsibility of the executive or those in power. Instead, it should be a collective effort involving politicians, the government, the opposition, civil society, NGOs, and various community groups. He stressed the importance of adopting an inclusive approach to tackle national cohesion and inequality challenges.

## Conclusion

I wish to highlight that the first revision of the Pact for the Future has been released, featuring two references to persons with disabilities. However, the fight for disability inclusion must continue until disability is recognised as a cross-cutting issue, with firm commitments across multiple areas, such as implementing inclusive quality education. This effort must also ensure that policies are developed through effective consultation with representative organisations of persons with disabilities, including those representing children and other partners.

Our participation in the summit has reinforced the essential role of disability advocacy in shaping a truly inclusive global agenda. By integrating the perspectives of those with disabilities, we aim to dismantle systemic barriers and champion policies that ensure equal opportunities for all. This endeavour aligns with our organisation's mission to advocate for the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities at every level of decision-making. As we push forward, let's continue to ensure that our initiatives are not only inclusive but also transformative, addressing the root causes of inequality and exclusion.

## Suggested Actions

- **Strengthen Multilateralism:** Civil society, youth, indigenous peoples, governments, and UN agencies must collaborate to address global issues effectively.
- **Actionable Steps for Climate Justice:** Transition from rhetoric to concrete actions, focusing on climate justice and sustainable development.
- **Empowerment and Inclusion:** Ensure inclusive participation at the decision-making table and invest in initiatives that promote long-term economic stability and prosperity for all, not just a privileged few.
- **Debt and Poverty Alleviation:** Address national debt and poverty with fair economic policies, and ensure equal access to quality education, healthcare, and fair employment opportunities.
- **Sustained Engagement Post-Summit:** UNCSC participants are expected to continue addressing the issues raised, maintaining momentum and ensuring follow-through beyond the summit.

- **Civil Society's Role at the Summit of the Future:** Engage civil society in the upcoming Summit of the Future to drive progress on key issues and strengthen multilateralism.
- **Reform of Financial and Security Structures:** Advocate for significant reforms in the international financial architecture and the United Nations Security Council to better address current global challenges.
- **Interactive Dialogues and Coalitions:** Foster interactive dialogues between civil society and impact coalitions to support and advocate for member states on specific reforms.

Our organisation's participation in the summit is a pivotal step toward broader systemic change. Moving forward, it is imperative that we maintain and even intensify our efforts to influence global leaders. We must ensure that the inclusivity we advocate for reaches all corners of society, particularly those most often overlooked. Leveraging our experiences and insights from the summit, we are positioned to advocate for substantial and enduring improvements in the lives of people with disabilities.