

ICEVI Pacific Update August 2009

Dear ICEVI Members and friends

I would like to provide you with an update on the activities of the ICEVI Pacific Committee in recent months.

ICEVI Committee Membership

The ICEVI Committee consists of the following members:

Frances Gentle (Chair)	Karen Stobbs (NZ)
Jill Keeffe (Immediate Past Chair)	Arnold Koima (PNG)
David Rice (Public Officer)	Roslyn Sackley (representative of Australian indigenous people with vision impairments)
Tricia d'Apice (Secretary)	Rukhmani Joseph (Fiji)
Kevin Murfitt (WBU Pacific-Oceania)	Barbara Farouk (Fiji EFA-VI National Task Force)
Paul Pagliano (SPEVI)	Mareselina Tabalilai (Fiji EFA-VI National Task Force)
Paul Manning (Parents of Vision Impaired NZ)	
Setareki Macanawai (Pacific Disability Forum)	

We would like to thank the following four people who have recently left the Committee for their support and contributions over the past couple of years:

Sandie Mackevicius (Former SPEVI President)	Gayle Skinner (AAPVI)
Doreen Roebeck (Samoa)	James Aiwa (PNG)

This year, ICEVI Pacific has focussed its efforts on implementing the EFA-VI global campaign in the Fiji Islands. Fiji is the first focus country in the Pacific to receive comprehensive support in implementing the EFA-VI campaign. The priorities chosen by the Fiji National EFA-VI Task Force for this year are (i) promotion of school enrolments of children who are blind and with low vision across all regions in Fiji, (ii) training of two braille transcribers in computer generated braille production, (iii) establishing a braille production centre in the Fiji Ministry of Education, and (iv) capacity building of the Fiji organisation of parents of children with vision impairments. An overview of each of these priorities is presented below.

Promoting school enrolments. During September 2009, ICEVI Pacific will be working in partnership with the Fiji Ministry of Education in providing a training program in braille

education and curriculum access in four of the nine education districts of the Fiji Islands. Participants in the training program will include senior ministry staff, teachers, parents, representatives of people with disabilities, children with vision impairments and members of school communities. The special education staff of the Fiji Ministry of Education are optimistic that the training program will result in greater enrolments of children with vision impairments in community schools throughout the Fiji Islands.

Computer generated braille transcription. During October 2009, two staff members of the Fiji Ministry of Education will be receiving intensive training in computer-generated braille transcription in Sydney. The training will be provided by State Braille and Large Print Service, NSW Department of Education, and accommodation will be provided by the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children.

Braille production centre. ICEVI and AusAID will be supporting the establishment of a braille production centre in the Education Resource Centre of the Fiji Ministry of Education Curriculum Development Unit. The main purpose of the braille production centre is to produce Fiji's national examinations and curriculum materials in braille for distribution to all primary and secondary students who are blind.

Workshop for parent organisation. During August 2009, Paul Manning, the Executive Officer of PVI NZ (Parents of Vision Impaired New Zealand) partneed with the Fiji Society for the Blind in providing a capacity-building training program for Fiji parents of children with vision impairments. With Paul's support, the parent association has expanded from a Suva-based support group to a national support group. Paul's report on the workshop can be found on the ICEVI Pacific website.

Many thanks to everyone who has joined ICEVI during the current quadrennial period. We hope to see you at the 13th World Conference in Thailand, from 9-13 August 2010 (see ICEVI's website, www.icevi.org for details).

Vinaka and best wishes

Frances Gentle, Chairperson, ICEVI Pacific