

## **Executive Committee Teleconference - Minutes**

Tuesday, August 28, 2018 9:30am-12:00pm EST

### **Participants**

**Executive Committee:** Nancy Smyth (Canada - Chair), Yasmine Sherif (ECW Director), Camilla Fossberg (Norway), Alicia Herbert (UK DFID), Rudolf Huber (Germany BMZ), Pdraig Power (GPE), Evelyn Rodriguez-Perez (USAID), Justin van Fleet (Office of the UN Special Envoy for Global Education), Eline Ruisendaal (Netherlands), Stijn De-Lameillieure (European Commission), Joseph O'Reilly (SCF), Thomas Ostermann (Denmark) Jo Bourne (UNICEF), Sven Osttveit (UNESCO), Laura Davison (on behalf of Dean Brooks, INEE)

**Observers:** Nina Papadopoulos (USAID), Kelly Loewer (US State Department/PRM), Tara Painter (Canada), Emma Spicer, (UK DFID), Alice Kunz (GIZ), Linda Jones (UNICEF), Maja Lasic (UNHCR), Emma Wagner (Save the Children), Neryl Lewis (Australia)

**ECW Secretariat:** Zeinab Adam, Nasser Faqih, David Hartstone, Lucy Earle, John Solecki, Johannes Kiess, Graham Lang, Anouk Desgroseilliers, Aida Orgocka, Niladri Bhattacharjee, Sylvia Chen, Michael Corlin, Dagmar Kunzmann Briefel

**Apologies:** Margriet Schreuders (Dutch Postcode Lotterie), Dean Brooks (INEE), Fadi Yarak (Lebanon)

---

### **1. Welcome and Roll Call**

- The Chair opened the meeting and thanked everyone for the support she and ECW have received since the last meeting in July, in particular Dean Brooks for standing in at the last minute to chair the previous meeting.
- The Director thanked the ExCom Chair for her support and introduced Michael Corlin, who is newly seconded from Denmark to the ECW Secretariat. The Director also welcomed Camilla Fossberg as the new representative from Norway.

### **2. Financial Update**

- The Director referred to the figures in the financial update and highlighted that the focus for 2018/19 is on 11 Country MYRPs. \$95.2 million is approved of which \$71.2 million has been disbursed through Initial Investments, First Response and the Acceleration Facility. \$23 million has yet to be disbursed. The Director highlighted that this represents a delivery rate of 75.4% by the ECW Secretariat to the field.
- She further highlighted that the goal for 2018/19 is to close the funding gap of \$252 million, so that ECW can deliver what it promised. She emphasized that this amount is ¼ of the original ambitious target of \$1 billion USD. Thus, while the revision of the original targets was a much necessary exercise, she cautioned not to continue to reduce targets as this would not be a logical direction in building a global fund for EiE. In this regard, she alerted ExCom that more new pledges are needed to meet ECW's objectives.
- Among the Initial Investments, all were progressing very well, though challenges remained in the Initial Investment for Yemen. ECW is working closely with UNICEF, and together with GPE, UNESCO and other partners, in providing support and identifying solutions.
- As for the Acceleration Facility, the \$2.7 million inter-agency investment is now on track and this was a very positive development. She also outlined four strategic investments under her delegated authority to reposition Education in Emergencies and serve the broader education community: 1) coordination & humanitarian funding attached to the

IASC coordination structure and funding envelopes through the Global Education Cluster; 2) protection and the international normative framework towards accountability through the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack; 3) policy and standard setting through wide ownership led by INEE; and, 4) gender and girls' access to education through the implementation of the ECW Gender Strategy. As for the bulk of the Acceleration Facility window funds, a task team has been established to develop the Acceleration Facility Strategy. Graham Lang can be contacted for more details.

- The Chair thanked the Director for the update and opened the floor for questions:
- GPE inquired whether it was possible to not only report on disbursements to recipients but also utilization rate of funds by recipients. The Secretariat appreciates this request, but would like ExCom to note that ECW can only report on utilization rates of grantees every six months, after receipt of their financial reports.
- **Action: The Chair concluded this item with the request for ECW to include information on the utilization rate in future updates [as these become available with the six monthly reports] and to attach a one-page financial update to the minutes.**

### 3. Afghanistan Multi-Year Resilience Programme

- The Chair summarized that the Afghanistan MYRP has been through both internal and external reviews and that no objections have been received from ExCom. Some questions have been raised over whether a grant agent can also act as an implementing partner (IP). The Chair handed over to Zeinab Adam who clarified that this was the case with the Initial Investments and safeguards are provided, as the in-country Steering Committee determined allocations. An additional short notice on grant “agent” [should read ‘grants manager’] selection will be circulated with the minutes. Zeinab Adam reiterated that ECW would like approval from ExCom that a grant “agent” [should read ‘grants manager’] can also be an implementing partner, since allocations are determined by the Steering Committee. In this way, implementation capacity is not lost but rather utilized.
- The Chair opened the floor for discussion:
- UNICEF thanked ECW for providing the clarification and reiterated that this should be looked at in more detail during the upcoming ECW retreat. Protocols around decisions made at the country level would help in timely communications with the field. UNICEF further requested that the terminology be clarified, as ‘grant agents’ are not mentioned in the operating model. There needs to be an understanding of different types of models that might be considered for the MYRPs and how financing will be managed.
- USAID supported the efforts to reduce any perceived or actual Conflict of Interest, welcomed the suggestion to clarify this matter during the retreat and emphasized that the selection should drive competition.
- Norway did not have a specific comment on Afghanistan but asked to clarify the process for grants approval.
- The Director advised that ExCom makes decisions on proposals from 3-20 million USD. As such, the year 1 seed fund approvals (for the first year) for Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Uganda could and should be done in EXCOM.
- Save the Children accepted the rationale set out by ECW that grant agents [manager] can be IPs and reiterated that this issue requires clear processes that need to be outlined in forthcoming documents, including provisions on the composition and functioning of steering committees.

- DFID also had questions on governance and design and agreed that these questions can be addressed at the ExCom retreat.
  - The Director highlighted that the established coordination system was designed to prevent conflict of interest and ensure collective decision making in-country on allocations based on comparative advantage, added value, capacity, and credibility (HACT). All donors, government, UN and NGO partners – both humanitarian and development - were involved at the country level and working through established coordination/allocation structures with a steering committee for allocations, as this is one of ECW's strategic objectives and added value. One of the reasons that EiE was often neglected in humanitarian crisis was that it had not been able to claim its rightful role in the humanitarian coordination system and its thereby linked funding envelopes and priority setting. In this regard, the Director reiterated that ECW will need to move towards The New Way of Working and establish this position in the humanitarian coordination structure in humanitarian settings. In the New Way of Working, this structure is expected to bridge to – and prioritize - development sectors and the SDGs, and ECW was seeking to set an example through repositioning SDG4 and EiE in crisis countries.
  - Zeinab Adam noted that the operating manual and grantee manual are currently being updated and codified to reflect clear processes and that ECW is already testing multiple strategies as each MYRP is different. She further explained that ECW asks ExCom to approve the seed funding of \$12.3 million for year 1 to move forward.
  - The EC noted that it would be useful to show the total funding of a program vs the seed funding provided by ECW. The EC is happy to proceed on Afghanistan, taking note that governance issues will be discussed at the retreat.
  - UNICEF supported this approach and suggested HLSG could delegate the update of the operating model to ExCom, (it was originally approved by HLSG). This could be suggested in AoB at the HLSG meeting in September.
  - The Chair concluded the discussion and summarized that ExCom:
    - a) **Approved the MYR programme proposal for Afghanistan and the release of year 1 seed funding of US\$12,302,729 with future tranches to be approved and released subject to availability of funds and satisfactory performance and implementation of the MYR programme.**
    - b) **Noted that an additional \$3.3m contribution from Sweden (the first tranche of a \$10m contribution) will also be released to support the MYR programme**
    - c) **Noted that the operational model will be updated and further discussed at the November ExCom retreat.**
- 4. ECW Financial Hosting Decision**
- The Chair explained that ExCom members had the opportunity on their last call on 20 July to put their outstanding questions to both potential financial hosts (UNICEF and MPTFO) and that they have also received some additional written materials summarizing presentations given on that call. She underlined that ideally ExCom should reach a decision by consensus and opened the floor for comment.
  - DFID noted that they had had a preference for MPTFO but recognized consensus was moving towards UNICEF. DFID did not think that a vote would be productive and suggested that ExCom drive as much Value for Money as possible from UNICEF as financial host, maximizing on concessions and plugging the loophole on bilateral funding.

- GPE supported DFID's way forward and underlined the importance of maximizing the opportunities for leveraging further concessions and stronger performance, and to revisit when the hosting comes up again.
- USAID agreed with driving the efficiency with UNICEF for the time being and revisiting the financial hosting at an appropriate time.
- The Chair noted that UNICEF has shown openness and willingness to open a dialogue for a more effective and efficient financial hosting arrangement. She summarized that based on the discussions with UNICEF FSO and subsequent phone calls, ExCom has reached a decision by consensus to **remain with UNICEF as financial host, noting this arrangement must be accompanied by a strategy to maximize the relationship with UNICEF to make sure that it is efficient and performing appropriately.**
- The Chair underlined her willingness to play a role in supporting this, and invited others to offer their support. The hosting decision in 2021 will be the time to revisit how well ECW has been able to work with UNICEF.

#### 5. HLSG meeting on Sept 25<sup>th</sup>

- The Director thanked ExCom for the decisions taken today that will allow ECW to move forward, particularly in Afghanistan. She explained that the Uganda Plan facilitated by ECW for refugees and host-communities will be launched on September 14 in Kampala, and that the ECW-proposed funding for this MYRP was to be submitted to the Secretariat shortly and then shared with the Interim Panel for review, hence the EXOCM approval. She also advised that the Bangladesh MYRP proposal is expected to be ready around the same time. In order to bring these three MYRPs as approved by EXCOM to HLSG, she suggested an ExCom call prior to HLSG.
- The Director then outlined the HLSG draft agenda, highlighting that only 55 minutes are available for the meeting, since the UN Secretary-General will use the room at 8 am.
- Norway asked if Mark Lowcock could speak at either the beginning or end of the meeting and inquired whether there would be time for members to make comments.
- The EC appreciated the strategic approach reflected in the agenda and proposed that Mark Lowcock outline ECW's role within the UN's approach to the New Way of Working, including in pilot countries. The EC requested that the Director's update at HLSG considers how MYRPs are complementary to the work of GPE and bilateral programmes of ECW donors.
- USAID welcomed the draft agenda and suggested ECW take advantage of high-level attendance with more time for their interventions. USAID further suggested challenging HLSG members to engage in innovative financing and other strategic action in support of ECW.
- The Chair confirmed that it was practice at HLSG to provide space for participants to make brief interventions as a part of each agenda item.
- The Director thanked ExCom for the valuable comments. She advised that following the standard update on ECW's progress, USG Lowcock will build on this and provide an introduction to the HLSG discussion on the humanitarian-development nexus, reflecting on ECW's contribution. The HLSG will conclude with RM (including innovative financing) and its required approvals.
- **Action: Secretariat to finalize HLSG agenda in line with ExCom suggestions.**

## 6. Resource Mobilization Strategy, Approach to Innovative Financing and fundraising targets, (for submission to and approval by HLSG)

- The Chair reiterated that the draft document was well received at the Jul 10 meeting and appreciated the work on the revisions. She explained that ExCom needed to be comfortable with its content and approach in order to put the Strategy to HLSG for approval.
- Nasser Faqih thanked the Chair and explained that ECW's proposed Resource Mobilization target for the First Responses, acceleration facility as well as the 11 MYRP to be launched in 2018-19 is a total of \$252 million excluding the resources which needs to be aligned with the MYRP at the country level, and is estimated at approximately 500 million USD. The targets for 2018-2019 presented today as well as the forecasted targets beyond 2019 and until 2021 will be integrated into the RM strategy final draft, which will be submitted to the HLSG for approval.
- ECW already developed the ToRs for an expert to formulate the Case for Investment proposed during the July ExCom meeting. This was done with the help of several committee members as well as the ECW advocacy group. These ToRs were advertised in July and a capable consultant was already identified for the task, and work on the document will begin in first week of September.
- The completed document will present the case for mobilizing 252 million at the Global level and aligning 500 million at the country level. It will serve to strengthen the advocacy and resource mobilization efforts of ECW and its community of partners. ECW expects that the Case for Investment will also include a section on the MYRPs as a model presenting a funding and financing framework in crisis.
- ECW aims to have a draft by October that can be shared with ExCom prior to the retreat on 8-9 Nov. The document could also serve as a source for a mini pledging event in early 2019. Nonetheless, ECW will have some more inputs to share from the work-in-progress on the case to update the HLSG in September.
- DFID congratulated ECW on the update. On innovative financing, Save the Children asked ECW if it could take advantage of existing UN approaches, and highlighted other ongoing efforts on impact bonds.
- UNICEF is generally happy with the targets and the content of the revised RM strategy but requested clarification of funding to financing windows other than MYRPs. UNICEF encouraged ECW to seek support for replenishment from the HLSG, consider regional mini pledging events, and bring in the private sector.
- GPE considered the new targets to be more realistic goals for 2018/2019 and suggested stretching amount to also cover 2020/21.
- The EC and Save the Children echoed the suggestion to consider funding needs up until 2021 to cover the full Strategic Plan period.
- Norway highlighted that the resource mobilization targets are much clearer but cautioned that both the Resource Mobilization Strategy and Approach to Innovative Financing may be ambitious and have resource implications for the Secretariat.
- The Director confirmed that the replenishment event would ideally need to take place in the 1st Quarter of 2019. She reminded everyone that the list and number of priority countries has been approved by HLSG, while agreement had been reached with ExCom on the mode of operationalization 2018/2019. She advised that working with the private sector is challenging in crisis contexts, since incentives for investments in countries like Syria or Yemen were much smaller than in a stable development setting. She explained that ECW has already attracted several new donors and underlined the importance to align ECW with the humanitarian system to tap into

- humanitarian and development resources, humanitarian funding envelopes and humanitarian pledging conferences, while also supporting the New Way of Working, bridging humanitarian and development actors towards the SDGs.
- The Director agreed with the suggestions made by GPE, EC and Save the Children and the importance of looking at the draft financial projections for the entire Strategic Plan period. In this regard, she expressed appreciation for GPE's offer at the last ExCom to share resources, documents and data bases that will facilitate ECW's efforts to mobilize resources for EiE, and looked forward to receiving those and working closely with GPE on resource mobilization. Similarly, IFFEd collaboration was appreciated, as complementarities were now being established, and joint resource mobilization was welcome.
  - The Chair suggested that ECW needs to further unpack the meaning of country leveraging for the reader. The Chair and the Director will discuss the targets for the full period beyond 2019.
  - The Chair summarized that ExCom has a broad agreement on the content of the RM Strategy, and that a final version for any additional comments will be circulated.
  - **Action: ECW will share the final version with ExCom prior to submitting to HLSG for approval.**

## 7. Portfolio-Level Risk Assessment

- The Chair briefly summarized that the portfolio-level risk assessment complements the Corporate Risk Framework approved by the Executive Committee in January 2018. It was developed by the ECW Secretariat in consultation with the Risk Task Team and includes a tool to identify and compare risks across and within countries where ECW is operational. The Task Team has since reviewed the risk framework several times. The Chair then asked if ExCom feels comfortable to approve this document.
- GPE, DFID, Norway and Canada broadly welcomed the document, and will follow up by email with questions on methodology, risk ownership, mitigation measures and the relationship with the Misuse of Funds policy.
- The Chair concluded that ExCom had voiced its broad appreciation for the draft Portfolio Level Risk Framework, and concluded that it will be approved subject to responses to questions to be sent to the Secretariat by September 14. It will be circulated back to ExCom by email for approval on a no-objection basis.
- **Action: ECW to incorporate comments from ExCom and recirculate.**

## 8. Update on governance retreat for ExCom

- The Director advised on the ECW Secretariat retreat, which had been very productive. She also advised that she and the Chair had discussed the broad outline of the EXCOM retreat: (a) take stock; (b) alignments to the governance module; (c) alignment to the operational process. The retreat will take place one hour outside New York and will benefit from a facilitator.
- USAID asked if ECW can provide a draft agenda in order to have an explicit understanding of the content and the deliverables.
- The Director invited ExCom members to send suggestions on the agenda within the three broad headings to the Chair and Zeinab Adam who will facilitate the retreat planning from the Secretariat side.

- The Chair invited interested ExCom members to volunteer to contribute to the retreat through drafting of papers and related preparations.
- **Action: ExCom members to express interest to the Chair and Secretariat (Zeinab Adam) to contribute and also to share inputs on the agenda. On the basis of this, the Secretariat will subsequently share a draft agenda.**

## 9. AOB and Close

- The Chair thanked Denmark for providing a secondee and summarized the **action points** from the meeting.
- Financial update: One-page financial update to be circulated with the minutes.
- MYRP Afghanistan: ExCom approved seed funding disbursement of \$12 million for the first Year 1, and will receive a note on grant agents with the minutes. Additional steps on decision making on grant agents [managers] and protocols at the field level will be dealt with at the retreat. Col will be discussed as a separate issue.
- ECW will provide details of the total funding needed for MYRPs alongside ECW's seed funding.
- Financial Hosting: financial hosting will remain at UNICEF. A strategy and process for further discussions to maximize efficiency and performance will be developed with the support of ExCom.
- HLSG Agenda: ExCom voiced agreement on the HLSG Agenda and provided suggestions on time for discussion on strategic actions and pledges.
- Resource Mobilization Strategy: ExCom broadly accepted the revised resource mobilization strategy and asked to present the period beyond 2019 and for more details on replenishment, clarification on resources to be raised in country and a revision of the funding share from emerging donors, prior to submitting to HLSG for approval.
- Portfolio Level Risk Assessment: ExCom approved the portfolio level risk assessment subject to comments that will be sent to the Secretariat by September 14. It will subsequently be circulated to ExCom on a no-objection base.
- ECW retreat: The Chair called for volunteers to help prepare retreat documents/background papers and to provide inputs on the agenda.

### **Next steps**

- A teleconference call will take place prior to HLSG in order to approve the MYRPs for Bangladesh and Uganda. The date will be communicated shortly. The Resource Mobilization Strategy will also be circulated for final sign-off.