



The global fund for education in emergencies

Executive Committee Meeting – Minutes

Tuesday 12 May 2020

Please find the list of participants in the attached Annex

Summary of the outcomes of the meeting

1. Welcome

- The Chair welcomed participants to the call and explained that this was an ad hoc meeting to update the group on ECW's response to COVID-19.
- She thanked the ECW Secretariat on the successful HLSG and expressed appreciation towards members in attendance. The Chair then outlined the agenda items:
 1. Update on FER response to COVID-19 and Funding Gap
 2. ECW MYRP Note on Reprogramming, Recovery and MYRP Funding Gaps
 3. Update on the Appendices to the Operational Manual
 4. Agenda for the June ExCom Meeting
- Before handing over to the ECW Director, the Chair highlighted ECW's USD 50 million appeal and encouraged all partners currently assessing their potential engagement or support to this emergency to follow the LEGO Foundation and DFID's leading example. She voiced Canada's continued efforts on this front.

2. Update on FER response to COVID-19 and Funding Gap

- The ECW Director provided an introduction on the exceptional and urgent context which led to the meeting. She highlighted the following:
 - A first appeal of USD 50 million was launched by ECW to respond to the COVID crisis. This campaign has been supported by a consortium of 25 CSOs, who have been very powerful advocates in resource mobilisation efforts for ECW and the driving force to its success. In this regard, she stressed the importance of ensuring that CSOs are able to access funding for programming in country.
 - UK DFID and LEGO Foundation have pioneered the COVID response by donating respectively 5 million UK pounds and USD 15 million. She also thanked Denmark for frontloading 100 million DKK in already committed funds to the response, Switzerland for pledging USD 4.6 million to the Afghanistan MYRP, contributing to the recovery phase once activities resume in the aftermath of the crisis, and acknowledged USAID's efforts to allocate USD 2.3 million to Burkina Faso.
 - At the same time, the Director stressed that this emergency funding was delivered by a mere 20% of ECW's strategic donor partners. Although it was wholeheartedly appreciated, it simply was not enough given the immense scale of the crisis. ECW's appeals are not merely general appeals but need their own dedicated governance constituency to jointly prioritize education in crisis, which is one of the purposes of ECW. The UK and Dubai Cares were commended for repeatedly topping up the First Emergency Responses that had emerged over the years in Africa and Asia. This was precisely the level of commitment and response needed at the onset or escalation of a crisis, when all stakeholders need to join forces to overcome the challenges of education being underprioritised. She underlined

these were collective RM efforts among all ECW constituencies committed to EiE and ECW's mission.

- All stakeholders were encouraged to work collaboratively and holistically at every level to overcome the challenges posed by this crisis.
 - The first FER responses were now activated in-country and funds disbursed in April. The second roll out for the next round FERs was anticipated for June and will be dedicated, to refugees with a focus on children with disabilities, adolescent girls at secondary level and MHPSS.
 - USD300 million was required to fund the implementation of the MYRPS in 2020/2021. In light of the pandemic, this estimation will evidently rise when recovering from the crisis to ensure the resumption of the MYRPS.
 - Joint and strengthened advocacy amongst the education community was strongly encouraged to collectively elevate education and unlock resources. The Director welcomed the meeting recently convened between the World Bank, the Education Commission and UNICEF.
 - A guidance note outlining ECW and GPE's complementarity was underway and will be ready in in June.
- Graham Lang, Chief of Education, provided an update on the technicalities of the process, the content of the FERs and the emerging plans for phase II. The following points were raised [refer to presentation circulated with minutes]:
 - A total of USD 23 million was rapidly disbursed to 55 grantees across 26 countries within a period of 9 days between the receipt of initial applications and the first disbursements of funds.
 - The application process consisted of country partners, facilitated by the relevant coordination mechanism, initially submitting an application together with the budget and the results framework. The ECW Secretariat provided detailed feedback on this package across the range of technical areas as part of the quality assurance process. Grantees then revised their applications by taking into account the feedback provided and submitted a final application package comprising application, updated results framework and budget (matching the final allocations), detailed implementation plans and risk assessment matrices.
 - Since the receipt of the final applications, the ECW Secretariat has done a detailed analysis of the kinds of interventions being supported by the 55 grantees. These include communications campaigns and activities, distance education, school feeding, teaching and learning supplies, protecting and training teachers, MHPSS, support to caregivers and enhancing WASH facilities.
 - The ECW Secretariat is now planning the second phase of the COVID-19 FERs. Countries that were not covered under the first phase but featured on the target MYRP list (Iraq, Haiti, Libya), and refugees will be targeted under this scheme, including children with disabilities and adolescent girls in secondary education, as well as MHPSS, as previously announced by the Director.
 - The Education Technical Reference Group were convening a meeting during the week in which the details and technicalities of the process and content of the FERs alongside lessons learned for the next steps would be further discussed.
 - Nasser Faqih, Chief of Partnership briefed the ExCom on the funding gap as a result of the invoking of FER Window. Nasser highlighted the following:
 - The current deficit for the emergency fund stood at USD 29 million and as our focus will further shift onto refugee populations and the most marginalised, the needs and subsequent resources will increase. It was thus crucial to replenish the FER window.
 - ECW engaged with a wide array of partners ranging from governments of ExCom representatives, private sector and foundations but has also reached out to new donors

such as Japan, Finland, South Korea, UAE, Qatar, France and Finland to ensure they are well-briefed on ECW's response and ready to potentially join this effort.

- Looking ahead of the COVID-19 crisis and the USD 50 million appeal in response, it was also important to ensure that ECW through its MYRPS and other investments was ready to engage and support efforts through the recovery phase or to respond to emerging crises.
 - An estimated USD 300 million dollars were required for 2020/2021 to finance the MYRPs through the Global Trust Fund, and USD 700 million to USD 1 billion were estimated for in-country resource mobilisation against existing MYRPs. Meeting such targets could only be achieved through strong collaboration and funding from all stakeholders.
- The EU commended ECW for the speed and agility demonstrated but noted the potential lessons to be learned. The EU queried on the possibility of a documentation of good practices selection process of countries and grantees ahead of activating the second phase.
 - In response to the above intervention, the Chief of Education explained:
 - ECW's two-fold approach to lessons learned for the first phase of the FERs. Immediate feedback had been taken into account resulting in updated FER applications and quality assurance mechanisms and in parallel a more structured approach, through the ongoing FER evaluation, where ECW's COVID response will be taken into account. This would provide a more systematised and well analysed lesson learned as part of the ongoing FER evaluation.
 - A two-track process was undertaken by the ECW Secretariat back in March. ECW first contacted all its current grantees to ascertain the situation on the ground, the impact on education and the key needs. The decision was then taken to invoke the FER window in all of the countries in which ECW has existing investments. The FER application process was then launched through ECW's each country level EiE coordination mechanism such as the Education Cluster, EiE Working Groups and Refugee Coordination Groups.

3. ECW MYRP Note on Reprogramming, Recovery and MYRP Funding Gaps

- Graham Lang, Chief of Education provided a briefing on the MYRP note on reprogramming:
 - He recalled the note had been developed as a follow up to a request made at the HLSSG in April. The note had been circulated to all HLSSG members and to ExCom.
 - The programmatic interventions outlined in the MYRP paper were not designed to be prescriptive – they were simply meant to guide grantees as to potential areas which could be supported under any reprogramming requests. The ECW Secretariat would be happy to share any reprogramming requests and discuss these in more detail in the MYRP Reference Group.
 - He underlined that the note did not refer to no-cost extensions however documents sent out alongside the note (reprogramming request and a budget form) to all MYRP grantees allowed them to request this. The note was furthermore used as a basis for communications with pre-COVID FER grantees and Acceleration Facility partners to adjust activities and explore no-cost extensions.
 - The ECW Secretariat welcomed the feedback provided by CSOs on the note and sought to address all points. As the note had already been circulated to all grantees, he suggested to convey any reflections on the note to grantees through a separate joint call.

4. Update on the Annexes to the Operational Manual

- Michael Corlin, Chief Advisor provided an updated on the timeline for the finalization of the OM appendices:
 - The timeline for the individual appendices has been reviewed against the ECW workplan and ExCom members' priorities and updated accordingly.

- The list contained 16 appendices when it was last shared with the ExCom. Since then, the TORs for HLSG and ExCom were approved and the ECW GPE Collaboration and MYRP Template and Instructions were added. With 2 appendices being approved and 2 appendices added, the total number of appendices being worked on remained at 16.
- Over the course of the same month (May), the ExCom would receive 2 appendices for orientation (Appendix 3.4 Terms of Reference for the External Review Panel & Appendix 4.5 MYRP Template and Instructions) and 1 for approval (Appendix 5.1 Process for Updating Operational Manual).
- An updated overview of all appendices with status and timelines would be shared after the ExCom meeting.

During the open discussion, the following comments/questions were highlighted:

- UNHCR highlighted the severe impacts of COVID on education and especially on refugee and marginalised populations. UNHCR welcomed ECW's prioritisation of education for refugees and underlined that whilst the crisis was health related, distance education required greater focus.
- Denmark welcomed the MYRP note and followed up on references to cash assistance and MHPSS requesting some examples be provided on their administration and links to existing platforms. Denmark also raised gender transformative programming as an alternative under the gender response programming.
- Switzerland expressed appreciation for the note and requested if it could be translated into French in order to transmit on to country partners. Switzerland also suggested a joint-fundraising mechanism for ECW and GPE.
- Norway expressed full support for the note and noted the potential areas for reprogramming were relevant to ECW's mandate. Norway highlighted that, although flexibility should indeed be given to partners to allow changes to budget lines to fund other vital activities such as WASH, it was crucial to not reduce direct learning activities. Norway recommended keeping to threshold of 30% for any budget line changes.
- The UK asked if any additional donors were frontloading funding in response to COVID-19 and commended the ECW Secretariat for its resilience and hard work to deliver its response under the current circumstances. The UK also followed up on resource implications for the Secretariat given the significant COVID-related workload.
- The EU reiterated the importance of ensuring alignment with external funding mechanisms and expressed interest in the cross-country research and evaluation initiatives in this regard.

5. Agenda for the June ExCom Meeting

The ECW Director announced that the following ExCom teleconference will take place over two half days for 2.5 hours on 23 and 24 June. The agenda had been agreed with the ExCom Chair as follows:

23 June

- Update on COVID-19 response
- Financial overview
- Presentation on the annual report (An advance copy will be shared with ExCom members ahead of the meeting in order to present and discuss the key findings).
- Evaluation (ECW will provide an update on the ongoing FER evaluation, with information on how the evaluation is incorporating the most recent FER investments to the current COVID-19 pandemic, and update on the MYRP evaluation).
- Resource Mobilisation required for 2020/2021.

24 June

- Safeguarding and Management (This will be an opportunity for ECW to introduce to the new Child Safeguarding Manager and launch this strand within the fund).
- Update on the Acceleration Facility
- Election of the new ExCom Chair.

The ECW Director welcomed any feedback on the suggested agenda.

6. Conclusion

- The Chair thanked the Director and ECW Secretariat for the valuable updates presented. She called on all partners to advocate further for ECW's cause within their organisations and to seek what more could be done.
- She noted the positive support voiced for the MYRP note on reprogramming and noted the following points to be taken forward:
 - Request for a translated version to French of the MYRP note on Reprogramming
 - Request for further examples on how interventions/activities in the recovery phase will play out
 - Call for inputs to be fed into the Education Technical Reference Group.
 - Prioritisation of the finalization of OM appendices
