



## **Executive Committee Teleconference Minutes**

Wednesday, 6 September 2017, 8:00-10:00 EST

Executive Committee members: Carol Batchelor (UNHCR), Jo Bourne (UNICEF), Tarald Brautaset (Norway, Chair), Dean Brooks (INEE), Stijn De Lameilliere (European Commission, representing Jean-Luis Ville), Alicia Herbert (UK DFID), Kerstin Holst (UNESCO, representing Svein Osttveit), Annina Mattsson (Dubai Cares), Joseph Nhan-O’Reilly (Save the Children), Nicolai Steen Nielsen (Denmark), Padraig Power (GPE), Evelyn Rodriguez-Perez (USAID), Yasmine Sherif (ECW Director), Nancy Smyth (Canada), Justin van Fleet (Office of the UN Special Envoy for Global Education), Fadi Yarak (Lebanon)

Observers: Jesper Andersen (GPE), Julia Dicum (Canada), Nina Papadopoulos (USAID), Ita Sheehy (UNHCR), Emily Todd (UK DFID)

ECW Secretariat: Elise Bijon, Daria Ng, David Hartstone, Johannes Kiess, John Solecki, Emily Travis

### **Welcome and Roll Call**

1. The Chair opened the meeting and took a roll call. He thanked ECW and Executive Committee members for the in-person meeting in July, in particular UNESCO for their generous hosting.

### **High Level Steering Group Agenda**

2. The Chair handed over to Emily Travis who thanked those who provided inputs to the HLSG agenda for the meeting on 19 September. She said an additional ten minutes to discuss fundraising had been requested by the HLSG Chair, which had been added as the sixth agenda item. Emily talked through the remaining agenda items before opening up for discussion.

3. The following comments were made by Executive Committee members in discussion:
  - The Secretariat’s consultation on the agenda in advance was welcome, and the inclusion of the HLSG decision paper was helpful.
  - The attention given to refugee issues in the agenda was welcome, one year on from the New York Declaration.
  - The importance of having the Minister of Education of Uganda was a great opportunity.
  - It would be helpful if an RSVP list for the HLSG meeting could be circulated.

4 The Chair confirmed the Executive Committee’s endorsement of the agenda, noting that it had been circulated to the HLSG, and asked if the Secretariat could update members on participation in the HLSG. The HLSG would receive the papers a week before the meeting.

### **ECW Added Value**

5. The Chair handed over to the ECW Director who presented the ECW added value paper, “Investing in Humanity: Understanding the Fund’s Added Value”. The Director said that the paper was requested after the Executive Committee meeting in July 2017, and that it necessitated a deeper analysis of ECW and the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS),

which was about changing the way we worked in crisis. The Director said the paper connected the dots between the WHS, ECW's five core functions, contemporary crises and broader reforms to link humanitarian assistance, recovery and development. The paper also mentioned needing less bureaucracy and more accountability in crisis response, with a stress on using the UN humanitarian and development coordination system to position education multilaterally in Education in Emergencies (EiE). For example, UNHCR had decades of experience as a lead agency for refugees and would naturally play a coordinating role, which was the case in Uganda. The Director's verbal presentation at the HLSG would include points from this paper, and have a key focus on results to date; the key focus and direction for ECW now was on delivering results.

6. The Chair said that the paper was useful, and that while it was not presenting anything dramatically new, it was a good summary of the challenges, approach and future direction. The Chair said the HLSG would be interested to see the results from ECW's country investments.
7. The following comments were made by Executive Committee members in discussion:
  - There was a suggestion on changing the title to something less generic.
  - The paper could include some more concrete country examples, including the results story, stocktaking, process, and with hints of what might be included in the mid-term reports of the Initial Investment experiences and challenges.
  - The paper could put issues of women and girls more upfront.
  - There should be a greater focus on protracted crises and more development language and perspective, alongside the humanitarian.
  - The paper could make a stronger case for EiE and how ECW would play a role in EiE, particularly in closing the funding gap.
  - The paper seemed too heavily weighted towards UN systems, which could raise questions about why ECW was not a window within the existing UN system.
  - There was a question about how the paper would be used.
  - There was concern about the paper being endorsed by HLSG as a guidance document through April 2018, when there were already operational manuals and procedures in place, and any changes to those documents would need to be reviewed by the Executive Committee.
8. The Director thanked members for comments, noting that the paper was originally meant to be only one or two pages and was not meant to be exhaustive. The Director said that in making revisions, she would go back to the WHS outcomes and incorporate as many changes as possible without changing the nature of the document. She said that it would be impossible for ECW to deliver on its five core-objectives and access humanitarian funding for EiE if it were to be removed from the UN humanitarian coordination structure in crises, since humanitarian funding envelopes were managed by the UN humanitarian coordinators and humanitarian architecture, and that the Government-led recovery/development process attached to UNDAF in protracted crises sat on major funding envelopes as well. She said it would be critical to balance bureaucracy and accountability in order to focus on results. The Director said a lot of funding had been allocated and disbursed to date without a strategy in place, without staff, and without systems in place to ensure results focus, so realignment and intensive work was needed to ensure investments would yield results and help deliver on ECW's mandate.

9. The Director said that since the paper had been circulated for two weeks, she would appreciate if written comments on the paper be kept light touch, and comments were shared by the following day COB. This would allow time for the Secretariat to make revisions before HLSG distribution.
10. The Chair asked whether the Secretariat would come back to the Executive Committee on the multi-year Uganda program.
11. The Director said that some parts of the governance structure needed to be realigned, which would be decided during the strategy development process and endorsed by the Executive Committee and HLSG. All updates had been shared with Executive Committee members on a rolling basis regarding the Uganda mission. Most members had expressed support for the recommended multi-year framework, which was based on a consensus by the Ugandan government and partners on the ground who were calling for a comprehensive response to the crisis. She said not moving forward until the next Executive Committee meeting would delay the process and not reflect ECW's responsibility to respond with humanitarian speed. The Director suggested that Executive Committee members decide now on multi-year in Uganda.
12. The following comments were made by Executive Committee members in discussion:
  - It was not clear to all members that the documents sent on Uganda were for approval, as it had seemed more like sharing of information.
  - Uganda was approved as a First Response country using ECW's existing criteria, and in ECW's governance manual, it was always intended to look at the possibility of First Response countries shifting to multi-year.
  - The Secretariat should have leeway to make decisions about which First Response countries could shift to multi-year, but would need to be clear on the selection and why Uganda versus other countries.
  - With regards to what the funding would be paying for, the Executive Committee would need to ensure due diligence and that the investment was crisis sensitive, and so would require a decision point later once the program was developed.
  - There was a suggestion not to present Uganda as a confirmed multi-year investment at HLSG, but as an opportunity to be further explored, as the former would raise questions about why the other six countries were not selected and why other countries put forward were not considered.
  - The documents needed to be clearer about what the HLSG would be approving.
  - More clarity was needed on the size of the program in Uganda and assurance that enough money was set aside for the next eight months.
13. The Director said that multi-year programs would be a framework for pooled funding, and that not all funding would come from ECW's core funding. Instead, ECW would put in seed funding that would be part of a pooled funding approach. The Director may approve funding with a maximum threshold of US\$3 million under the current governance model. The Director said that multi-year investments would allow ECW to make a case for resource mobilization, do joint programming and attract new sources of funding, especially humanitarian funding. She asked for a no objection to develop a multi-year investment in Uganda in order to move forward speedily with a focus on results, on the understanding that the investment proposal would come back from approval, as needed.

14. The Chair thanked the Director for clarifying the funding approach in Uganda and said it was important to have full clarity on Uganda during HLSG with the Minister there.
15. The following comments were made by Executive Committee members in discussion:
- There were no objections on moving forward with a multi-year investment in Uganda.
  - There was a suggestion to add a few lines in the HLSG decision paper so the checks and balances would be clearer.
  - It was important for ECW to prove it could move speedily.
16. The Chair confirmed the Executive Committee's approval to moving forward to develop the Uganda multi-year program, and to presenting the paper at HLSG, with some revisions.

### **Resource mobilization approach**

17. The Chair handed over to Johannes Kiess (Innovative Finance Specialist, ECW Secretariat) to present the resource mobilization paper, "Investing in Education in Emergencies: Towards a Resource Mobilization Approach to ECW". Johannes said that while ECW's targets were ambitious, they were not unrealistic, but they would require support from everyone. He said the paper examined what was realistic over the next few years and provided different scenarios for funding. Johannes said that a large share of funding would still need to come from traditional donors and that ECW would need both humanitarian and development funding. He said that even if ECW's funding targets were achieved, it would just be a few percentage points of the total share and therefore not in competition with other funding mechanisms.
18. The following comments were made by Executive Committee members in discussion:
- The paper was a good starting point and it was understood that a more developed resource mobilization strategy would be developed alongside the strategy.
  - There was surprise at the funding scenario conclusion that 68% of funding would come from traditional donors through 2021, which was high.
  - There was a request for an update on private sector funding, beyond REACT, and the International Finance Facility for Education's (IFFEd) role, while acknowledging Dubai Cares' support.
  - There was a question on how ECW's resource mobilization would relate to the GPE Replenishment and to IFFEd.
  - There was question on how to understand and assess the 2021 funding target and whether funding received would be for ECW or for the EiE sector more broadly. ECW would need a rigorous method for assessing attribution, and therefore whether these targets were being met.
  - There was a request for more information on resource mobilization plans and on providing a mapping.
  - In line with the Education Commission's work, there would need to be an overall larger share of ODA committed to education, which would unlock more money for all funding mechanisms.
  - 97% of ECW funding was from traditional donors, so the 68% mentioned in the paper was less and meant ECW was looking at new or emerging donors.
  - IFFEd was in an early design phase with ongoing conversations with GPE and ECW.
  - ECW needed to provide more examples of innovative financing models and how funding could be brought in without wasted effort or duplication with other education funds.

19. The Chair said that the footnote on page 3 about ECW's aim to raise domestic finance when possible should be highlighted and recognized.
20. Johannes said that the paper was a first approach to look at different scenarios, recognizing that the funding targets were ambitious for everyone. All funding raised for ECW frameworks and investments would be counted – including resources raised through pooled funding for multi-year programs – and that ECW would want to bring humanitarian and education development stakeholders together on the ground to pool funding. A mapping of innovative finance was being developed and would be shared later.
21. The Director said that ECW's funding targets in the global context were not unrealistic, when just as much if not more money was spent on peacekeeping operations or other issues. On assessment, she said pooled funding would be counted, as counting only funding going to the Secretariat centrally would be unrealistic. She said the world's annual GDP stood at US\$78 trillion, so there was no reason to compete. The High Level Report on Humanitarian Financing prepared for the WHS offered hope and creative ways of accessing funds. Instead of competing, everyone should see how the report's recommendations could be applied. There was a need to bring humanitarian and development partners together as well as to examine the untapped potential in Gulf countries. She said there was a need to position education and SDG4 as central to emergencies, protracted crises and conflict prevention. The humanitarian funding gap was a clear illustration of the low priority that EiE was given. It was important to take a holistic approach to bring all in-country actors together for joint programming, as was being done in Uganda. This too would help reposition EiE in the multilateral system.
22. The Chair noted that the resource mobilization paper includes a guiding question for HLSG to discuss.

### **Guidance for HLSG discussion**

23. The Chair handed over to Emily Travis who presented the HLSG Decision Paper that would help guide the discussion at the HLSG meeting on 19 September. This paper pulled together the other papers and posed questions to help steer the HLSG discussion.
24. The following comments were made by Executive Committee members in discussion:
  - Paragraph numbers nine and ten about ECW's future country programs needed more clarity, picking up the points from the Uganda discussion earlier.
  - The Secretariat needed to be clear that it was helping with multi-year development and what that would mean in terms of human and financial resources.
  - More clarity was needed about why certain countries were selected and the criteria, as well as where the money was coming from for future investments.
  - Transparency on decisions was important to manage expectations and leave less wiggle room for HLSG to pitch countries with no criteria.
  - Cameroon, Kenya and Myanmar were mentioned in earlier discussions – and previously agreed by the HLSG as future investment countries – but missing from the paper.
  - On the section about advocacy, there was caution that some partners were first waiting for ECW's delivery of results, and that their advocacy for the moment would focus on EiE more broadly.

- Additional clarity would be needed on next steps assuming HLSG approval of the decisions, and on ECW's strategy process as well as the engagement level and timing of the Task Teams.
- The Chair noted that Gaza could not be characterized as an emerging crisis, so this line needed to be amended.

25. The Director said that the focus in the coming months would be on the investments made to ensure they were realigned and done well. She said ECW would be operating on a needs-driven basis irrespective of political reasons, as the humanitarian imperative and national ownership were important principles in order to deliver on ECW's mandate. Kenya, Myanmar and Cameroon would be included in the paper. The Director said that the strategy process would resolve many of the questions around selection and criteria. Invitations to the Task Teams would be sent out imminently.

#### **AOB**

26. The Chair handed over to Emily Travis to update on the hosting review timeline (given that DFID had to leave the teleconference).

27. Emily said that DFID had sent an email with a detailed timeline and process on the hosting review, which was now starting. In terms of next steps, a draft Assessment Design Report would be sent to the Executive Committee by Friday 29 September. An Executive Committee call would take place week beginning 9 October to discuss this report, and then again week beginning 20 November to discuss the final summary report and recommendations. DFID would send out more details for these calls, in due course.

28. The Chair concluded the meeting by thanking all participants.