



The global fund for education in emergencies

Executive Committee Meeting – Minutes

Thursday 2 September 2021

Summary of the outcomes of the meeting

Welcome

- The Chair welcomed participants, including the representative from Global Citizen, who had recently joined ECW's ExCom, and summarised the points of discussion and outcomes from the last ExCom meeting in March:
 - ExCom's approval of the 2021 and 2022 budgets along with the Results Framework for the extended strategic period (2021-2022).
 - The ExCom received updates on ECW's Programmatic response to Covid-19 and its Organisational Evaluation.
- The Chair outlined the agenda as follows:
 - 1- Update on Afghanistan
 - 2- Programmatic Update
 - 3- Financial Sustainability and Resource Mobilisation
 - 4- Annual Results Report 2020
 - 5- HLSG
 - 6- AoB

1- Update on Afghanistan

The ECW Director gave an overview of ECW's approach and response:

- ECW is developing a first emergency response for Afghanistan with the amount of 4 million USD, which will be submitted to the ExCom for approval since it exceeds the approval threshold within the delegated authority of the ECW Director.
- The proposal will be forthcoming, and a short turnaround time is anticipated. ECW needs to move fast partially because of the needs, but also to make a strong statement to not stop Girls' Education.
- ExCom members interested in joining the ECW Director on a mission to Afghanistan are very welcome and should confirm their interest. The purpose of the mission is to meet the authorities and emphasize that girls' primary and secondary education should not be affected. It will be an all-female composed mission.
- ECW has been operating through partners, civil societies, and UN agencies in some areas under the Taliban even before August 15th. Our aim is to continue these investments and to keep expanding them. In addition to the FER, to support the longer-term needs in bridging the development and humanitarian sectors, the MYRP interventions will be reprogrammed to adapt to the evolving needs.

The Director also provided the following updates:

- ECW is now a USD 1.7 billion fund, combining the global Trust Fund and the in-country resources leveraged (USD 1billion).
- Thanks to colleagues from Denmark and partners such as the MFA, Save the Children and LEGO, ECW recently conducted a very successful mission to Denmark, meeting with the Danish Development Minister and the LEGO Foundation. The Director expressed gratitude to the LEGO Foundation for its earmarked funding for Afghanistan and Haiti.

- Partners interested in having their ministers or HLSG representative make a funding announcement on stage at the Global Citizen event on the 25th September, please let the Secretariat know in advance. This is a great platform to make the statements in addition to the HLSG or the ExCom meetings.
- The Director expressed appreciation to Norway, Germany, the UK and France for either providing secondments or support staff to ECW. The Director encouraged all partners to do the same.

Zeinab Adam, ECW Country Lead for Afghanistan gave a presentation on ECW's investment in Afghanistan, current priorities, and plans. The following points were highlighted:

- ECW's multi-year resilience programme (MYRP) in Afghanistan focuses on reaching crisis affected, underserved and out of school girls and boys living in hard to reach locations, including in the Taliban areas, even before August 15th.
- The MYRP program has reached 142,000 students at the pre-primary and primary levels, but also with accelerated learning programs including adolescents, of which 58% are girls.
- ECW's Afghanistan rapid response consists of a) advocating together with donors and partners for the protection of girls' education, b) ensuring the rapid development of a first emergency response, and c) reprogramming and scaling up the MYRP ([refer to the presentation circulated with the minutes](#)).
- With respect to funding needs, the Education in Emergencies Working group (EIEWG) has communicated an overall funding need of USD 42 million with the need for seed funding through a FER in the amount of USD 10 million to prioritise the emerging priorities.
- In regard to the MYRP, the estimated funding needs for reprogramming and scale up is around USD 30 million. The latter figure takes into account the depreciation of the Afghanistan currency, increased commodity and services process and program level inputs of around 25%.
- Furthermore, the risk implications to the investments have been taken into consideration. The ECW Secretariat and the grantees are escalating risk monitoring under the five identified risk categories and mitigation measures are put in place.

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

- **Education International** echoed the Director's message on vigorously defending the educational rights of girls or women and pointed out that although primary and secondary education are important, early childhood education and tertiary education should not be forgotten. Education International also stressed the need to not forget teachers. Their salaries should continue to be paid and their security should be guaranteed.
- **European Commission** inquired about the operating context, the scope for activities and the way forward.
- **Finland** asked for further clarification on the USD 30 million requested for reprogramming and scaling up the MYRP and whether the new needs are for the whole three-year period of the extension.
- **The Youth Representative** stressed the importance of affected populations and youth voices' participation through a feedback mechanism under the "community owned space".
- **Denmark** followed up on the situation on the ground concerning girls' current access to schools and asked how it was impacting ECW's ability to implement.
- **UNICEF** updated its presence and activities in Afghanistan and pointed out that barriers to girls' access to education have been exacerbated. UNICEF stressed the importance for the international community to discuss how to maintain sufficient support to public school teachers by providing salaries and incentives to enable the schools to reopen and/or continue. UNICEF also noted that one of the priorities was to put in place the real time monitoring systems to get the data from the field.

In response to the above questions/comments, ECW's Country Lead for Afghanistan explained:

- The operating context in Afghanistan is challenging and the current situation on the ground is very fluid. While some staff of international NGOs have left the country, national NGOs are still on the ground,

starting some movement to get out there and collect data. The UN and ECW will remain to deliver through its partners.

- Two out of the nine provinces that ECW's multi-year resilience programme is operating in have resumed operations. When it comes to going to school, girls and female teachers are acting under a "wait and see" approach. The proactiveness to allow girls in schools and female teachers engagement varies widely across provinces. Schools have opened in some locations, but very small number of girls are going to the school.
- The current multi-year programme has been extended from the end of 2021 until the end of 2022 to enable the catch up of school days lost due to COVID-19 but also for the students to complete the academic years around both the warm and cold climates. The additional funding is requested to cover those needs till the end of 2022.
- The Education in Emergency Working Group (EIEWG) members, including the MYRP coordination staff have communication channels to understand the needs of students, parents and communities so that the needs of the affected populations are fed into the response in both the FER and the MYRP.

2- Programmatic Update

Graham Lang, Chief of Education, gave a programmatic update on all three investment windows:

- Since January, ECW has responded to 11 different emergencies with grants under the First Emergency Response (FER) window to 18 different grantees, amounting to \$13.5m. Grants are in the pipeline for Haiti, Afghanistan and potentially Madagascar. The ECW Secretariat is also systematically following up on the FER evaluation management response to ensure that agreed actions are implemented as planned.
- Work is underway in the development of the eight new Multi-Resilience Programmes (MYRPs) scheduled for 2021, with Iraq already having been approved back in July. For the remaining seven, ECW anticipates submitting these to ExCom for approval as follows: October – Haiti; November – Burundi, Lebanon and Libya; December – Pakistan, Sudan and Cameroon.
- Renewals of existing MYRPs are also underway with Bangladesh expected to be submitted to ExCom later this month. Renewals of existing MYRPs in CAR, Afghanistan and Uganda will be undertaken in 2022.
- Finally, on the Acceleration Facility, a total of 18 initiatives amounting to \$8.4m were agreed in principle earlier in the year. To date two-thirds of these grants have been approved. The remaining grants, including core support for the Global Education Cluster and initiatives on measuring holistic learning outcomes and data collection for children with disabilities scheduled for submission in Q4 2021.

3- Financial Sustainability & Resource Mobilisation

Michael Colin, Chief of Finance and Operations, provided a financial and operational update ([refer to PowerPoint presentation](#)):

- ECW has its HQ in New York and a programme office in Geneva centered around the Geneva Global Hub for Education in Emergencies. Staff may be outposted as deemed necessary and submitted to ExCom as part of budget.
- The programme budget for 2021 is USD 237.3 million Programme expenditure is expected to be \$225.6M (5% below the target) and the operational budget expected budget of USD 10.6 million (4% lower than the budget). The estimated administrative percentage is at 4.7%. The Main risks are delayed MYRPs or inability to receive the agreed funds (i.e. Afghanistan). More information can be found in the monthly financial overview and Michael Corlin can be contacted for further information.
- The balance at the end of 2021 will be of USD 28 million at the end of 2021 but for the year of 2022 there is a resource mobilization gap of USD 132 million to fully implement the planned activities. Therefore, there is an urgent request for funding.

Nasser Al-Faqih, Chief of Partnerships, provided an overview of the resource mobilisation strategy. The following points were highlighted ([refer to PowerPoint presentation](#)):

- “*Together We Think Big*” is the guidance for the new RM strategy, following comments and recommendations from the partners.
- The new ask is of USD 1 billion. This ask is aligned with the New strategic plan for the period until end of 2025.
- The millstones set for 2021 and 2022 remain in line with the already set target of USD 400 million. New millstones are added to reflect the increase of USD 600 million to the overall ask during 2023, 2024 and 2025. This allow a longer planned runway and flexibility for donors to make their decisions and announce commitments.
- The calculated outlooks include a gradual increase in the funding for the MYRPs, whilst maintaining the current level of annual reserve for the FER and Acceleration facility windows. The increase in funding does not require alterations to the size and budget of the Secretariat.

Marco Grazia, INGO representative, provided an update on the EiE Campaign Champions Group, highlighting that a coordination group was formed under World Vision’s with a clear vision:

- The following upcoming moments for donors to announce contributions were highlighted: the Global Citizen Concert (Sep. 2021); the RewirEd Summit (Nov/Dec 2021) as possibility also for non-traditional donors; the Geneva High Level Advocacy Event (Mach / April 2022); the High-Level Finance Moment UNGA (September 2022). These, however, were not the only moments to announce pledges as there would be more possibilities and ECW can always arrange the space for donors to come in with more support.
- Next steps: ECW will develop a concept reflecting the expanded ECW ask and will share it with partners, and will mobilise a team for such a big campaign, prepare the next strategic plan for submission in 2022 and finally will work jointly with the ExCom and the CSO led campaign to prepare for the high-level finance moments.
- ECW’s asks to the ExCom (and HLSG) are as follows: Support ECW’s replenishment of USD 1billion (covering the next strategic plan until 2025), support ECW through the ExCom, HLSG, and Education Envoys to reach out to donors, especially to Asia and the Arab Gulf and technical and political support from the ExCom throughout the two big events next year.

The Chair provided a summary of the presented points and highlighted three crucial decision points (Location; Multi-year approach; timing and fundraising events) and opened the floor for questions and comments. Responses given by ECW which directly relate to one question can be found under the question.

- **Dubai Cares** provided an update for the RewirEd Summit, inviting ExCom members to register.
- **Global Citizen** plugged its event on September 25th, which would be aiming to reach over 1 billion people and will provide a moment for ECW.
- **Canada** asked for a clear understanding of the timeline of engaging ExCom, which should be closely attached and linked to the case for investment in order to facilitate the presentation to governments.
- **The Lego Foundation** appreciated the vision to raise the funding and asked how funding was going to be leveraged and aligned with other funding mechanisms, more specially how other donors would be motivated to allocate funding to EiE.
- **The EU, Finland** and **Germany** all welcomed the approach to learn from the success of the GPE replenishment.
- **Finland** expressed concern regarding the tight timeline to develop a new strategic plan in 2022, given that the MYRP evaluation was still to be discussed and the findings should be incorporated in the new strategic plan, which would take time. Finland suggested to push the replenishment event to 2023.
- **Finland, Ireland** and the **People’s Postcode Lottery** asked about the scope for the different events happening in 2022 and recommended that each event have a clear aim and separate identity for better distinction.

- **USAID** proposed a costed strategic plan, allowing a clear vision of when ECW would need more funding to prevent funding gaps and to better advocate for funding.
- **Ireland** welcomed the idea of linking the ask to the new strategic plan. Ireland sought a clear defined strategy from ECW regarding potential donors and who in the ExCom would support the outreach. Ireland also asked for a clearer definition of the USD 1billion.
- **Porticus** queried on what would be the alternatives to multi-year funding, and if it would be annual or bi-annual.
- **Peoples Postcode Lottery** offered support around the events taking place around the upcoming COP in Edinburgh.
- **Denmark** followed up on whether the funding gap was before or after existing funding commitments. Denmark noted that as ECW is working in emergencies, unforeseen events will lead to urgent requests. Furthermore, Denmark pointed out the importance of strengthening the HDP-Nexus and preventing further fragmentation, also from funding side. Denmark pre-announced that 75million DKK will be allocated to ECW starting from 2022, but that this has yet to be approved by the Danish parliament. Denmark greatly welcomed ECW joining the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, chaired by Denmark.
- **The EU** and **Germany** welcomed being informed about upcoming funding asks and stressed the importance of seeing the new strategic plan, and evaluation, as soon as possible in order to plan and advocate for funding.
- **The EU** recognised the need for an earlier event given the circumstances, even though it would not be ideal to have two replenishments in one year. The EU suggested to label the first event differently and to use the space of occurring crises for advocacy and fund raising. The EU stressed the importance of keeping the Nexus approach and using development funding for this purpose.
- **Germany** underlined that ECW's needs are clear and well noted, and supports the approach of thinking big.

In response to the above questions and comments, the ECW Director and Chief of Strategic Partnerships provided the following answers:

- The new strategic plan will be jointly developed and owned by the ExCom and the Secretariat. ECW will provide a clear timeline for the development of the strategy as well as for internal and external consultations ahead of the next ExCom. The new strategy will build on the existing one which was now a proven model, and incorporate lessons learned, best practices and emerging priorities. As such it will be ready in 2022. The Director stressed that ExCom will be closely involved with the Secretariat in the new strategic plan.
- Leveraging and aligning funds lies within the donor's responsibilities and donors must lead the coordination amongst donors. ECW will ensure that the funding given to ECW is leveraged to reach the ECW objectives and targets. The leveraging of funds in-country will also allow ample space for alignment with other donors especially who have funding envelopes in-country, as well as with World Bank, ECHO and international finance institutions and other donors who don't contribute to the ECW's trust fund, but support in-country programming through bilateral agreements.
- ECW was constantly resource mobilising on an annual basis, since it needed both annual humanitarian as well as multi-year development funding. As such, ECW did not have one replenishment event every third year or similar but used several platforms and events throughout the year. In 2021/22, ECW will thus have several "replenishment" events.
- In view of this, ECW needs multiple events to reach humanitarian and development funding. It was highlighted that both events need different identities and different titles. The first one will be an early moment to allow donors who are ready to announce to come in and will have a strong advocacy effect for mobilising political commitment for EiE&PC. During the first moment, ECW will work closely with the Geneva Hub and the larger community of EiE partners. The second event comes later during the year allowing more time and flexibility for donors. The second moment planned in the margins of UNGA 2022 will allow for wider global participation and will establish a solid initiation for the 2023-2025 strategic plan

with substantial funding. This second event will have a stronger focus on multi-year funding and addressing the education nexus in protracted crises.

- The Secretariat agreed on the new strategic plan needing a costed component.
- The USD 1 billion includes the year 2021, as this was already part of the USD 400 million ask. ECW and ExCom members will discuss in more depth the role of the ExCom and HLSG in reaching new potential donors during the November meeting.
- The multi-year funding would be the framework, but within this framework donors are invited to contribute in a way that suits them best.
- With the focus on the multi-year funding, the FER window should remain well replenished and ready to act, allowing the ECW community to respond to urgent requests for unforeseen emergencies.
- ECW understands the need to have documents as soon as possible and recommends using the current strategic plan should it be required right away.
- The MYRP evaluation was currently with the adviser group and will be circulated in October. The organisational evaluation was advertised and the proposals were being evaluated.

The ECW Director thanked members for all the comments and especially thanked Denmark for the open pledge and LEGO for the rapid response to Afghanistan and Haiti. The Chief of Strategic Partnerships stressed the importance of dialog with civil society members considering the strategic and important role they play in mobilising more commitment and funding to EiE&PC, which also includes a critical role for youth leaders and youth based organisations.

Summary and key points:

- Office locations: ECW's offices are located in New York and Geneva; however staff will be outposted deemed necessary. Cost implications will be highlighted and discussed as part of the approval of the secretariat's budget in November.
- The ExCom agreed, in principle, to a multi-year funding approach. No decisions were made regarding the funding target. The ECW secretariat will provide more information and rationale for new fund-raising targets and replenishment events as a basis for discussion/decisions at the next ExCom meeting.
- ECW will present a plan outlining the process for the development of the new strategic plan which should build on relevant evaluations.
- Discussions around ECW's replenishment are ongoing and it was noted that organizing it on the margins of UNGA 2022 may be early.

4- Annual Results Report 2020

Christian Stoff, chief of Monitoring and Evaluation of ECW, presented key highlights from the Annual result report 2020. This included an overview of ECW investments in 2020, resources mobilized and leveraged, children and adolescents reached, and results achieved for those children and adolescents. Additional explanations were provided on the approach and method to tracking resources leveraged at country level, as well as improved ability to report on outcome-level results.

[\(refer to the PowerPoint presentation\)](#)

The Chair opened the floor for comments and questions:

- **The European Union** appreciated the details of the report and suggested to 1) share the report to the HLSG and 2) produce a shorter executive summary
- **The UK** indicated the report was excellent and agreed that it should be shared with the HLSG. Communication plan should be discussed (including for those with accessibility needs)
- **Porticus** thanked ECW for the report and for the achievements made on the ground, knowing the circumstances over the past year. Porticus highlighted that results were significantly lower than anticipated on ECW engagement in countries with inclusion policies and asked how ECW could strengthen its work on promoting more inclusive policies and practices in countries it operates.

- **Norway** thanked ECW and mentioned they would share written comments on the report. It was suggested that ExCom should be given more time and opportunities to comment on the report before HLSG's approval. Norway appreciated the information of the report but suggested to shorten the report and focus more on key results. Norway acknowledged that the percentage of children with disabilities among children reached had increased and encouraged ECW to continue prioritising them in its investments.
- **Denmark** noted that the report was comprehensive, agreed with Norway's observations and suggested more time to review the report before ExCom would meet. A more comprehensive presentation of the key achievements could be done for next year's report as well as an analysis of the challenges and reflections of improvements. It was further suggested to discuss how to increase the attendance of the ministers to the HLSG and revisit the agenda for the HLSG meeting. In this regard, the crisis in Afghanistan could be added to the agenda.
- **Education International** thanked the Secretariat and suggested to only present the executive summary to the HLSG. It has been suggested to report also on the quality of the teacher trainings and to what extent the teachers were consulted on ECW's programmes.

In response to the above points, the Chief of Monitoring and Evaluation provided the following answers:

- The team was grateful for all the comments and was available to engage in further discussions on the results, challenges and lessons learned. Such discussions could take place as needed within the ETRG and/or on a bilateral basis with interested partners. With respect to discussions around lessons learned, ECW was planning to conduct further analysis to identify common challenges and lessons learned as reported in grantee reports, and organize learning events to discuss those in more detail as part of global and regional knowledge sharing across grantees and programmes.
- ECW acknowledged that the report was lengthy but highlighted that ECW needed to report on its result framework and all areas covered by it. ECW would consider and discuss with partners ways to shorten the report where possible.
- With respect to the opportunities to provide feedback, ECW clarified that the advance draft report was shared at the end of June 2020, requesting ExCom comments over one week. Comments provided by three ExCom members were received and integrated into the revised report, which then went for the final proofreading, layout and design production process.
- In terms of next steps around the report launch, ECW mentioned that the Communication package for the report would be shared with ExCom in the week of 20 September. The launch of the report would take place in the week of 27 September.

Summary and key points:

- The ExCom requested more time in the future to review and discuss the report and ensure that comments can be taken into consideration before the HLSG's approval.
- The Secretariat will aim to develop a shorter report and focus more on key results. There were no objections to ExCom endorsing the report.

5- HLSG

The ECW Director provided a run through of the agenda of the upcoming HLSG meeting on 27 September:

- The ECW Secretariat noted the clear and urgent request to address the situation in Afghanistan at the HLSG meeting. The Director confirmed it will feature as an agenda item.
- HLSG members will receive a briefing by the newly appointed Eminent-Person on the Grand Bargain, and localisation, which is of high priority to ECW's strategic partners, and local empowerment and national ownership which are key to its success.

- Although an executive summary of the Annual Results Report 2020 will be sent to HLSG members, the full report will also be sent in order to showcase the whole results and the great amount of work that went into producing it. Hardcopies will be sent to all members. It is also key that HLSG members are the ones who endorse it. The Director also noted that the draft Annual Results Report was shared with ExCom members two months prior to the ExCom meeting. The Annual Results Report will not be launched through one big event this year but will be launched digitally and in several ensuing events.
- And finally, Resource Mobilisation, which is the most strategic agenda item for ECW as a global fund would be on the HLSG agenda.

6- AoB

The Chair invited ExCom members to deliver any further questions or comments:

- USAID raised concerns in regard to a proposed possible ECW Champion due to sensitive media issues related to him and agreed to have a separate follow up conversation on this matter with the ECW Director and Secretariat.

Chair's Summary and Closing

- The Chair thanked ExCom members for their participation and summarised the meeting, noting the addition of Afghanistan to the HLSG agenda as a priority.
- The Chair reminded ExCom members to communicate to the Secretariat any pledges to be announce at the HLSG and asked that interventions by HLSG members be kept at two minutes.
- The next ExCom meeting will virtually take place in November and will touch on the Secretariat's budget approval, ECW's staffing update and follow up points from the resource mobilization discussion.
- The Chair noted the importance of donor advocacy to encourage and call on other donors to prioritise EiEPC
