

**Education Cannot Wait Executive Committee Paper: Activation of First Response Window, April 2017**

1. Education Cannot Wait has, to date, launched five Initial Investments, testing the Multi-Year Window and the Acceleration Facility. The Secretariat proposes that the remaining ECW window – for First Response - be activated immediately, to test its four modalities and to provide urgently-needed education support to a range of humanitarian crises.
2. The goal of the First Response window is to provide early support at the onset or escalation of a crisis, and to reduce the impact of the crisis on education. The Operational Model sets out four modalities for the First Response window:
  - i. Provide a small initial provision of funds to an appeal at the onset of a crisis
  - ii. Provide matching funds for crises with a coordinated humanitarian response
  - iii. Fund specific project proposals from pre-accredited organizations
  - iv. Fund needs assessments
3. **Emergency response contingency:** Given ECW's design as a fast and responsive mechanism for education in emergencies, the Secretariat proposes holding a \$30 million emergency response contingency for 2017-18, allowing the Secretariat to respond early to rapid-onset or rapidly deteriorating crises and to inject funds quickly where particular opportunities and needs arise. This will help ensure ECW is able to respond quickly and flexibly, and will be tested over the year and assessed as part of the full ECW strategy process.
4. **Proposal for First Response allocation:** Deducting the Initial Investments and \$30 million emergency response contingency, there remains \$20 million of the first year funding which the Secretariat proposes to allocate immediately to meeting emergency education needs through the First Response window.
5. We recommend this be allocated to the highest priority crisis situations, with investments under each of the four First Response modalities. We want to test all four modalities and learn lessons for future investments and for the development of the full ECW strategy. A range of crises would allow ECW to quickly reach children and youth in different contexts, while supporting engagement in several countries which might lead to further financing, including through the ECW Multi-Year window and from non-traditional donors, as well as supporting lesson-learning from a range of crisis contexts.

## Stage 1: Crisis selection

6. **Methodology and crisis selection:** To select the highest priority emergencies, the Secretariat has undertaken an assessment of crisis-affected countries, considering current funding levels for education, education needs and the severity of the crisis situation. See [Annex 1](#) for the methodology, scoring and ranking of crisis countries.
7. The crises assessed are those on OCHA's list of 2017 crises. The methodology includes assessing the proportion of funding to refugee response plans and humanitarian education appeals; assessing educational equity through proxy indicators – the percentage of out-of-school children and the Gender Parity Index; and assessing the severity of the crisis using INFORM<sup>1</sup>, a global risk assessment index. We judge that this methodology provides a rigorous, objective assessment of highest priority need, but envisage analysing and refining this methodology (as needed), as part of the First Response strategy, incorporated into the full ECW Strategy in 2018.
8. The proposed First Response allocations (Para 12 below) use the country scoring from the methodology and are focused on countries where ECW is not already operating and where the context allows us to test the four modalities, and privilege forgotten crises. So, for example, South Sudan is not included since it is traditionally *relatively* well-funded against humanitarian appeals, including for education. One sudden onset emergency was included to test the 'initial injection' first modality, while two other recent escalations in crisis are prioritized within the second modality. There are options on how many crises to fund under the second modality, set out in paragraph 12.
9. As set out in the Operational Model<sup>2</sup>, the Secretariat will use the ECW First Response window activation to support catalytic investments and engagement, wherever possible. This includes using funds to support the establishment or strengthening of an education response which will then attract wider funding; strengthening advocacy to draw attention to lack of or under-funded education plans, particularly in forgotten crises; incentivising others' funding of education in humanitarian plans/appeals; and leveraging non-traditional financing. For example, we judge there may be appetite and capacity from foundations and private sector organizations to fund specific, smaller projects and needs assessments.

## Stage 2: Proposal and grant agent selection

10. **Proposals and grant agents:** The next stage after country selection is to identify specific proposals and grant agents. The Secretariat will work with coordinators

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<sup>1</sup> INFORM is a global, open-source risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters, managed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Team for Preparedness and Resilience and the European Commission. Its methodology includes an assessment of a country's hazard and exposure; vulnerability; and lack of coping capacity. ([www.inform-index.org](http://www.inform-index.org))

<sup>2</sup> ECW Operational Model: Pages 9-12; Paras 1-32

(of the humanitarian response plan, refugee response plan or cluster) in-country to identify the best proposals from existing appeals, or request proposals from pre-accredited partners in-country (depending on the modality). We will prioritise achieving a diverse range of First Response partners. The Executive Committee will be asked to approve any allocations over \$3 million, or where UNICEF is the grant agent (as set out in the ECW Governance Model<sup>3</sup>).

11. **Pre-accreditation:** As set out in the Operational Model<sup>4</sup>, the Secretariat will, in the near-term, employ a practical approach of leveraging existing lists of pre-accredited organisations. Over time, the ECW Secretariat will set up and conduct its own accreditation process, to allow new actors to be eligible to receive direct funding. For now, the Secretariat, with the endorsement of the Fund Support Office, is proposing to fund through the First Response window only grant recipients that have been assessed through UNICEF's Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) procedures<sup>5</sup>. Only those implementing partners will be considered which have been deemed as having a well-developed financial management system and functioning control framework with a low likelihood of negative impact on the partners' ability to execute programmes and projects.
12. **Proposed countries for immediate First Response allocations:** Below are the proposed countries for First Response allocations, under the four modalities. Some include estimates of financing allocation, based on initial assessment of need and partners available. There are options for the number of crises to fund under the second modality, which would affect the allocation amount, set out below.

i. Initial provision of funds to an appeal at the onset of a crisis

*This modality is intended to allow ECW to provide a small initial provision of funds to an education appeal, with the aim of rapidly deploying funds to meet immediate education needs and to support up-front costs of establishing an education response.*

- **Peru (\$250,000):** Recent flooding has caused 100,000+ people to flee their homes and destroyed over 1000 schools. Early funding will allow ECW to observe the impact on the education sector's early response and engagement with humanitarian response planning and financing. No Humanitarian Response Plan. The Secretariat will liaise urgently with partners in Peru (primarily UNICEF and Save the Children as education coordinators), to identify grant agent and proposal.

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<sup>3</sup> ECW Governance Model: Page 5

<sup>4</sup> ECW Operational Model: Page 13; Para 39

<sup>5</sup> UNICEF's capacity assessment of the financial management capacity of non UN entities, in particular INGO/NGO implementing partners include 96 questions regarding internal controls at the entity in 7 categories: Implementing partner (structure and key entity controls); Programme management; Organizational structure and Staffing; Accounting Policies and Procedures; Fixed Assets and Inventory; Financial Reporting and Monitoring; Procurement and Contract Management.

ii. Matching funds for crises with a coordinated humanitarian response

*These are crises with a coordinated humanitarian or refugee response which include education, where ECW will aim to deploy additional funding without displacing existing donor funding, while leveraging additional financing for education.*

*We have identified a shortlist of seven high-priority countries that ECW could fund under the second modality of first-response funding, including two where there have been recent escalations in crisis. There are two broad options on how to approach this modality:*

- *Option 1: Fund 2-3 of these responses, going deep to drive comprehensive results and with a catalytic proposal to leverage additional financing to provide full funding for the response. Focusing on strategic impact in fewer crises might help demonstrate ECW added value more clearly.*
- *Option 2: Fund 5-7 of these responses, selecting the most catalytic components of the responses with proposed steps for leveraging additional funding. Some will have a high proportion of funding but all responses will have some level of support from ECW to help advance progress. This would help us to engage with more countries for learning and potential future investment, and could help to mitigate potentially limited absorptive capacity for a one-year injection of funds.*

*With both options, we would use ECW investments to seek “matching” funds from others, including non-traditional donors. We judge that some private sector organisations and foundations, for example, may be able and willing to fund individual projects within a response or needs assessments. ECW’s role will help to draw attention to needs, identify priority projects, and provide a bridge between non-traditional donors and the humanitarian appeals.*

- **CAR:** Humanitarian Response Plan, including education, in place, but no specific education proposals listed in Financial Tracking Services. (HRP Education appeal \$22m; 0% funded)
- **Somalia:** There are multiple unfunded education projects under the Humanitarian Response Plan. (HRP Education appeal \$26.9m; 31% funded)
- **DRC:** Humanitarian Response Plan, including education, in place, but no specific education proposals listed in Financial Tracking Services. (HRP Education appeal \$39m; 0% funded)
- **Niger:** There are multiple unfunded education projects under the Humanitarian Response Plan. (HRP Education appeal \$9.3m; 6.5% funded)

- **Sudan:** Humanitarian Response Plan, including education, in place but no specific education proposals listed in Financial Tracking Services. (HRP Education appeal \$50m; 0% funded)
- **Madagascar:** Recent cyclone has disrupted the education of over 80,000 students, on top of an ongoing and underfunded drought response. Humanitarian Response Plan includes only two unfunded (and approved) education projects by UNICEF (\$1 million) and Handicap International (\$150,000). (HRP currently \$2.6m; 0% funded).
- **Ukraine:** Recent escalation of the armed conflict has damaged school and interrupted the learning of approximately 5,000 students. Education continues to receive very little financing. (HRP currently \$7.6m; 12% funded)

*Madagascar and Ukraine are included due to recent disruption and escalation of crisis which is not reflected in the data and which would allow ECW to help prevent the likely accelerated deterioration in education.*

### iii. Specific project proposals from pre-accredited organisations

*This modality is intended to support high-priority, underfunded crises that require an immediate and targeted response. These contexts do not have a coordinated Humanitarian Response Plan that includes education. Through this modality, the Secretariat will fund pre-accredited organizations through a highly streamlined grant proposal process, including a request for proposals, and in consultation with coordinating entities on the ground.*

- **Uganda (Approx. \$2 million):** Uganda is covered by a refugee response plan and continues to receive the largest number of refugees.
- **Afghanistan (Approx. \$2 million):** A humanitarian appeal has been launched but education was excluded. ECW will aim to support and incentivise education to be included in revisions to the humanitarian appeal.

### iv. Needs assessment

- **CAR and Somalia:** Identified by the Education Cluster as requiring further support on assessments. The relatively small amounts of funding required may attract financing from smaller foundations or businesses.

## Questions for Executive Committee:

1. **Does the Executive Committee support the proposal to allocate \$20 million to the First Response window in 2017-18?**

- 2. Does the Executive Committee have views or recommendations on whether to fund fewer or more crises under the second matching modality?**
  
- 3. Does the Executive Committee recommend informing the High Level Steering Group in April of the decision to allocate \$20 million to high priority crises through the First Response window and proposing this as a public announcement linked to the HLSG meeting?**