

Executive Committee Paper: ECW Initial Investments Update

SUMMARY

Purpose

- The purpose of this document is to update the Executive Committee on the progress and status of ECW Initial Investments funded through the Multi-Year Window and Acceleration Facility.

Progress in April-June

- As of June 2017, \$14.5 million has been disbursed to ECW Initial Investments. Disbursements were made in April to Chad, Ethiopia, and Syria, and in June to Yemen and Global Partners.
- Following technical support missions from the ECW Secretariat to Chad and Yemen partners in March and April, these partners further strengthened their program designs in April-May to align to Secretariat feedback.
- During April-June, all grantees for country investments have been working on aligning monitoring of programs to the ECW Results Framework, which was approved after program proposals were originally submitted. Partners have also developed detailed implementation plans and mandatory gender analyses and plans.
- Grantees have taken country-specific actions to prepare for implementation of ground activities, for example by launching recruitment processes for ECW program managers (Ethiopia and Syria), completing a competitive selection of implementing partners (Chad), and preparing sub-contracts to transfer funds to the ground (Syria).
- In Syria the system strengthening component of the ECW Program already began in March (through the first Education Dialogue Forum). Work has subsequently continued on various system strengthening strands and progress will be presented at the next Forum meeting in mid-July.
- The first mid-term reports with results for Chad, Ethiopia, and Syria will be due in October (6 months after signature of grant agreements).
- In the next months, with more staff dedicated to grant management and M&E, the Secretariat plans to conduct visits to countries in order to ensure integration of ECW's five core objectives in delivery on results, including repositioning education within the humanitarian architecture and raise political commitment, ensure effective coordination within the multilateral coordination architecture in emergencies, optimize the catalytic role of ECW in generating funding from humanitarian envelopes, strengthen capacity and accountability. The Secretariat is also looking at risk at the portfolio level – work that will be taken further with additional staff as well as guidance from the relevant Task teams.

Background

- The High Level Steering Group (HLSG) agreed during the launch of ECW in May 2016 that a number of Initial Investments should be developed to serve as deliberate pilots, allowing the fund to learn by doing. These should demonstrate a contribution to increasing children and youth's access to safe, quality education and illustrate the principles of greater coordination and innovation in the delivery and catalytic financing of education in emergencies.

- The Initial Investments were subsequently developed in parallel to the ECW operational and results framework, governance arrangements, and establishment and staffing of the ECW Secretariat. In order to learn from this pilot phase, and upon request from HLSSG, a paper on lessons learned from the Initial Investments process has been developed under the auspices of the Task Team led by GPE staff on Initial Investments.
- Initial Investments to the Multi-Year Window were reviewed and approved in January-February 2017. Given a number of observations attached to the approval, partners in Chad, Syria, and Yemen were requested to address these in order to ensure full alignment with ECW objectives. The investment to the Acceleration Facility was approved in April. The Task Team led by GPE on Initial Investments was also asked by HLSSG in September 2016 to explore a possible investment in Lebanon. Dialogue with the Ministry of Education in Lebanon is ongoing on the development of a concept note.

CHAD

Program focus

The ECW Chad Program (\$10 million/two years) will provide equitable education services in underserved regions of the country while simultaneously increasing services to displaced populations, in response to the strain put on the education sector by multiple humanitarian crises in neighboring countries (CAR, Sudan, Nigeria). The interventions will directly benefit refugee, returnee, and displaced children, as well as children in the host communities and will meet critical gaps in current humanitarian efforts. The ECW Chad Program links to programs being funded by other partners such as GPE and helps to sustain gains made through such investments. The key outcomes of the program are:

- **Outcome 1: By 2019, community teachers provide quality teaching according to pedagogical standards.** To include: provision of grants to 250 community teachers; distribution of pedagogical guides in parallel with regular teacher training; use of an innovative EduTrac SMS tracking tool in pilot areas to facilitate monitoring and test its effectiveness; paying the salaries of 327 contract teachers before their inclusion in the payroll of the Ministry of Education (these have thus far been funded by a GPE program, which is now closing).
- **Outcome 2: By 2019, parent associations have increased financial and material resources and strengthened capacity to provide a better school environment.** To include: identification and implementation of income generating programs; functional literacy and vocational training courses to parents and out-of-school youth, especially women; training to parent associations on financial management of the school, allowing them to manage school grants; construction and equipping of 126 classrooms in Southern and Eastern parts of the country.
- **Outcome 3: By 2019, the Ministry of Education is prepared to deal with crises or disasters during the implementation of the next Education Sector Plan.** To include: supporting the Ministry to develop a contingency plan for the education sector, which is currently lacking, and ensuring this is included in the next Education sector plan.

Progress - highlights

- A disbursement totaling \$3.5 million was made to the grantee in April. Following a technical support mission from the ECW Secretariat to the country in March, partners further strengthened the program's Theory of Change in April-May and aligned to Secretariat feedback for example by reducing the infrastructure component in the program by roughly half.

- In April-May, partners also completed a competitive selection of implementing partners as advised by the ECW Secretariat mission, developed the required M&E framework to align results to the ECW Results Framework, and completed the mandatory gender analysis for review by the Secretariat.
- A final quality assurance discussion will take place with the grantee in early July and implementation of ground activities is expected to begin over July-August, with the first mid-term report with results due in October.

ETHIOPIA

Program focus

The ECW Ethiopia Program (\$14.8 million/two years) aims to improve access to conflict-sensitive, risk-informed, and inclusive primary and secondary education for host and refugee children in Gambella and Benishangul-Gumuz regions by 2019. The ECW Program development process made space for the Ministry of Education and Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) to come together to work through how to deliver a program collaboratively. Under the auspices of the ECW program this collaboration will be institutionalized in order to clarify roles and responsibilities for planning, delivery, and monitoring of education services for refugee children. The key outcomes of the ECW Ethiopia Program are:

- **Outcome 1: Increased enrollment in primary and secondary education for refugee and host community children and adolescents in the targeted regions.** To include: construction and/or rehabilitation of education facilities, specifically 157 primary and secondary school classrooms; provision of school improvement grants and supplementary reading materials.
- **Outcome 2: Greater integration of host and refugee education service governance, data and information management at regional, woreda and facility levels.** To include: establishment of coordination mechanisms between Ministry of Education and the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs, in support of joint planning at federal, regional, and Woreda levels; development of joint annual costed education sector plans; refugee school data collection and inclusion in the 2017-2018 EMIS data.
- **Outcome 3: Improved capacity of the education sector (individual/institutional; officials) to respond to refugee and host community primary and secondary educational needs.** To include: 314 new refugee teachers recruited, trained and deployed to built/expanded facilities; in-service Teacher Education Programme developed; 900 primary refugee school teachers trained in delivery of an instructional pedagogical package.
- **Outcome 4: Increased host and refugee community participation in education.** To include: community mobilisation/ dialogue meetings in targeted communities; technical support and capacity development to school-based management bodies to 36 refugee and refugee-hosting schools.

Progress - highlights

- The grantee is currently in the process of recruiting an ECW Coordinator to assist in taking forward the ambitious collaboration between the Ministry of Education, the Administration of Refugee and Returnee Affairs, UNHCR, Save the Children and UNICEF and aims to have this person on board in July.
- A disbursement totaling \$4.5 million was made to the grantee in April. In April-May partners have further developed the required M&E framework, aligning results to the ECW Results Framework, as well as developed the mandatory gender analysis.

- A final quality assurance discussion will take place with the grantee in July and implementation of ground activities is expected to begin over July-August, with the first mid-term report with results due in October.

SYRIA

Program focus

The ECW Syria Program (\$15 million/two years) is a comprehensive education program to address access, quality, and system strengthening across the whole of Syria. The program is driving a more inclusive approach across humanitarian and development actors, education authorities, and local community organizations and schools. An Education Dialogue Forum, established under the auspices of the ECW Syria Program, is a formal structure for coordination and information-sharing between the Syria Education Development Partners Group and Whole of Syria, a UN humanitarian coordination mechanism – two coordination structures that did not previously have a strong working relationship. Education is subsequently being looked at as a potential model for enforcing the continuum of humanitarian and development work in other sectors of the Syria response. The key outcomes of the ECW Syria Program are:

- **Outcome 1: Strengthened capacity of the education system to deliver a timely, coordinated and evidence-based education response.** To include: establishment of an Education Dialogue Forum to ensure unified approaches to systemic challenges facing the education sector in Syria, including stipend/incentive scales, curriculum, pathways to accreditation, and data collection, analysis and dissemination; capacity development for 850 education actors; and establishing/strengthening 300 school-based governance systems.
- **Outcome 2: Improved access for girls/boys to equitable education and learning opportunities.** To include: social protection services to the most vulnerable children; back-to-learning and community mobilization campaigns; establishing temporary learning facilities; delivering education supplies and teaching materials; and strengthening non-formal education which provides pathways to formal education. 65,000 Out of School Children will access safe and protective learning environments.
- **Outcome 3: Improved quality and relevance of formal and non-formal education within a protective environment.** To include: capacity development and support to teachers and education personnel; supplementary materials supplied; teaching and learning frameworks developed based on life skills and citizenship; and a learning assessment tool for literacy, reading and numeracy skills developed and piloted.

Progress - highlights

- The first Education Dialogue Forum (linked to Outcome 1) took place in March and began work on the system strengthening component of the program. In April-June partners subsequently worked on next steps that were agreed at the Forum, including producing ToRs and a roadmap for taking forward the work on standardization of stipends and framing a dialogue with all stakeholders on a Syrian curriculum. These will be presented and finalized at the next Education Dialogue Forum, taking place on 13 July in Amman.
- In April-May partners have further developed the required M&E framework, aligning results to the ECW Results Framework, and completed the mandatory gender analysis for review by the Secretariat. Partners have jointly agreed on the ToR for an ECW program manager to coordinate the program – the recruitment process is currently underway.

- \$3.9 million has been disbursed to the grantee as of June 2017, with a further payment (approx. \$1.3 million) expected in July to enable all necessary sub-contracts to be in place by September, which will allow implementation of ground activities to begin at the Hub level. The first mid-term report with results will be due in October.

YEMEN

Program focus

The ECW Yemen Program (\$15 million/two years) seeks to sustain access to quality education for children in areas most affected by the conflict. The ECW program brings together education authorities from the divided parties of Aden and Sana'a to jointly implement an education response that reaches children and young people throughout the country. The three components of the program are:

- **Component 1: Ensure education system continuity.** To include: printing and transportation of grades 1-3 manuals for 27,000 teachers and textbooks for 1 million students in grades 1-3 (2014 version); supporting the conduct of Grades 9 and 12 general examinations for the 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 school years.
- **Component 2: Sustain provision of educational opportunities for most conflict-affected children.** To include: provision of 275 temporary learning spaces (TLS) with appropriate water and sanitation facilities; provision of 25,000 pupils' desks in targeted schools and TLS; provision of education materials (2,024 whiteboards, 8,109 boxes of whiteboard pens, 50,000 boxes of chalk, and 40,500 school bag kits); offer alternative learning opportunities for 6,620 children through community-based classrooms.
- **Component 3: Mitigate impact of conflict on most affected children.** To include: training of 800 of teachers in 389 schools and TLS on child protection and violence prevention; provision of psychological support and promotion of peace culture and social cohesion for 1,000 teachers to benefit 50,000 children; provision of nutritious school snacks for 19,600 students.

Progress - highlights

- Following a technical support mission from the ECW Secretariat to Beirut in April, partners further strengthened the program design and coordination structure between partners. As a result the existing Program Management Unit in Sana'a will be paired with a new one in Aden, therefore involving partners from both parts of the country to a greater extent than before. The revised Program was given a final endorsement in late May.
- Since final endorsement, partners have been working on developing a detailed implementation plan, M&E framework (aligning results to the ECW Results Framework), and a mandatory gender analysis. Partners will submit these in early August for review by the Secretariat, after which ground activities are expected to begin shortly.
- A disbursement of \$1.9 million was made in June to the grantee.

GLOBAL PARTNERS (INEE, UNHCR, Education Cluster)

Program focus

This program (\$2.5 million/two years) is focused on strengthening education planning, response, and coordination for education in crisis-affected contexts. It will produce high-quality, global-level evidence, case studies, products, tools and recommendations to improve joint planning and response for

education in crises. Partners will undertake country-specific lessons learned case studies on coordination and joint planning/response in up to eight countries (including the four ECW initial investment countries); build an evidence base of what is working and not working; and produce guidance and tools to support improved coordination. These will be tested with partners in the field to help strengthen actual planning and response, and to refine the guidance and tools. Finally, the partners will provide recommendations on further work or changes needed at global organizational level or through further research, including through ECW's Acceleration Facility.

Progress - highlights

- The program was approved by the Recommendation Panel in April, and \$680,000 were disbursed to the grantee in June to enable the recruitment of a program manager to proceed.
- An initiation workshop for the program is planned for early August between all partners (travel and work schedules of the partners have prevented an earlier workshop date).