



HLSG Decision Paper

1. ECW Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Paper: ECW Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Background – The Strategic Plan

- The development of ECW’s first four-year Strategic Plan has taken six months (October 2017-March 2018). The process was facilitated by the ECW Director and Secretariat through inclusive and comprehensive consultations with the Strategy Task Team and Executive Committee.
- As the Strategic Plan is the opportunity to re-assert ECW’s identity, the ECW Secretariat referred back to documents which best encapsulated the research and analysis that led to its creation, including papers from the Overseas Development Institute, Boston Consulting Group, the Grand Bargain and the New Way of Working.
- These guiding documents have shaped the Strategic Plan based around the principles upon which ECW was founded and reiterated the fact that ECW’s purpose is to help address the systemic problems which persist in education in emergencies.
- The Strategic Objectives and Results in the plan are therefore directly linked to ECW’s five core functions and the programmatic approach embraces the concept of collective education outcomes.
- The Strategic Plan maintains that 8 million crises-affected children and youth should be reached by 2021 through ECW supported interventions. The proportion of the resources required to be raised directly by ECW versus funds leveraged by other entities and actors, will be discussed at the next HLSG meeting in September.
- A number of separate, supporting documents, referred to as Attachments (some of which will be updated as the plan progresses) have been finalized and should be read in conjunction with the Strategic Plan as follows:
 1. Theory of Change
 2. Collective Outcome Results Framework
 3. ECW Risk Management Note and Corporate Risk Framework
 4. Financial Projections and Implications
 5. Methodology for Country Prioritization
 6. Gender Strategy

- A number of additional stand-alone documents (referred to in the Strategic Plan) will be finalized in Quarter 3 of 2018 as follows:
 - A. Implementation Plan
 - B. Gender Policy
 - C. Resource Mobilization Strategy
 - D. Communications and Advocacy Strategy
 - E. Monitoring methodologies and plans
 - F. Capacity Development Framework
 - G. Accountability Matrix

ExCom established a Strategy Task Team to support the Secretariat, and have discussed the Strategic Plan at three successive meetings. It has put questions to the Secretariat, asked for clarifications and provided inputs and comments throughout the process. At its last meeting on 27 March 2018, an agreement was reached to recommend the following decision to be taken by the HLSG:

ExCom requests the HLSG to:

- 1. Approve the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, including the Country List, incorporating any comments from HLSG.**
- 2. Take note of the Attachments**
- 3. Note that a further discussion on resource mobilization targets and associated implications will be on the agenda of the next HLSG meeting in September in New York.**

2. ECW Hosting Review

Paper: Education Cannot Wait Hosting Review, Final Report, 20 March 2018

Background

- The Hosting Review was initiated in 2017, following a decision to review ECW's hosting at UNICEF after one year of operation.
- The review was carried out by an independent consultant firm, Mokoro, and was funded and managed by DFID. It concluded in March 2018 after a broad consultation process. The consultants considered a wide range of possible permanent hosts, proposed criteria for selection, and provided a short-list of contenders for more detailed consideration.
- The shortlist included UNICEF, GPE, the World Bank (separately from GPE), and an alternative UN configuration that would bring in UNOPS and/or the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO).

Main conclusions and recommendations of the final report

- (a) The initial choice of UNICEF to host ("incubate") ECW was appropriate, reflecting a strategic choice to ensure strong links to existing UN humanitarian architecture.
- (b) UNICEF should remain as physical and administrative host, avoiding disruption for ECW during its incubation period, which will last through the first ECW Strategic Plan to 2021.
- (c) Financial hosting should be transferred to the MPTFO. The report suggested this could be financially advantageous to ECW, and would mitigate both real and perceived conflicts of interest.

ExCom discussed the report on 9 March and on 27 March 2018. The main points were:

1. Broad agreement that the incubation period with UNICEF should continue until 2021.
2. Due to uncertainties within the World Bank on their trust fund policy, and the possibility that GPE may decouple from the Bank, it is not possible at this time to make a fair assessment of a permanent host.
3. Permanent hosting options should be considered in relation to ECW's performance in the period up until 2021. This will be covered by a summative evaluation scheduled to begin in 2020.
4. ExCom did not conclude on whether to recommend the transfer of financial hosting to MPTFO and requested more time to consider the timing and transaction costs of the transfer, and the financial benefits. The Secretariat will provide a note with more detail on these issues to ExCom at their next meeting in July.

ExCom requests the HLSG to approve the following:

- 1. The extension of ECW's incubation (physical and administrative hosting) at UNICEF until 2021.**
- 2. The deferment of the choice of permanent host of ECW until the end of the incubation period. A decision will be reached on permanent hosting through the evaluation scheduled for 2020/21.**
- 3. ExCom will take a decision regarding the transfer of financial hosting to MPTFO at the next ExCom meeting in July.**