

Executive Committee Meeting – Minutes

Wed 31st May 2023, Lillehammer, Norway

Annex A - list of participants

Annex B - agenda

Annex C - PowerPoint presentations

Annex D - pre-ExCom and post-ExCom technical meetings

Annex E - Management response to the internal audit

Annex F - TORs for the Refugee Reference Group

1. Welcome

- The Chair opened the meeting -- the first in-person ExCom meeting since Dubai in 2020 – and reflected on what a difference it makes to be back together in person.
- The Chair welcomed everyone, including those online, and thanked Norway for hosting. She reminded participants of the actions taken during the last virtual meeting, including:
 - Non-objection for the next phase of the staffing plan, with recruitment now under way
 - Invitation for ExCom members to share expressions of interest to become the next ExCom Chair
- The Chair went on to outline the items on the agenda (see annex B) and noted that we would begin the meeting with the ExCom Succession.

2. ExCom Succession

- The Chair reflected on her first meeting in 2016, where the ECW governance structure was first established. ECW has moved a long way since then, and the UK has been proud and privileged to be involved for so many years, as co-chair and as chair.
- It is now time for a new chair, as set out in the Operational Manual. An email was sent out to ExCom colleagues on 6th April to submit their application. One joint co-chair application was received, from Germany and Norway.
- The Chair asked ExCom if there were any objections to this bid. No objections were shared, and thus the application was approved by ExCom. Germany and Norway expressed their commitment to their new roles.
- The Executive Director gave a speech and shared a video to thank the current Chair for her inspiring leadership and unwavering commitment. ExCom members offered heartfelt thanks.
- The Chair thanked ExCom as well as her FCDO colleagues for their support and said that ECW would always be important to her.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS/DECISIONS

- Germany and Norway were confirmed as the new ExCom Co-Chairs

3. Executive Director's Remarks

- The ECW Executive Director began with an update from the recent mission to Chad (which was complemented by a video) and gave an overview of the urgent needs of children both in Chad as well as other refugee-hosting countries impacted by the Sudan crisis. She thanked

colleagues on the ground for all of their efforts and called on ExCom for further top-up funding. The Deputy Director will go on mission to CAR in June.

- The Executive Director then invited Dr Kyok to provide an update on the urgent situation in South Sudan, and he outlined the high numbers and needs of returnees in the north. The Executive Director will go to South Sudan to launch the Multi-Year Resilience Programme (MYRP) in June.
- The situation in the Middle East is also deteriorating and ECW is exploring what can be done to support refugees in the region in collaboration with UNWRA. A proposal for country MYRPs in response to the regional situation related to UNRWA refugees (similar to the regional response to the Sudan crises) will be submitted to ExCom in due course. The Chair provided additional reflections on Lebanon, where the collapse of the education system is affecting both refugees and Lebanese young people. The needs are great, and there are considerable geo-politics at play in the region.
- The Executive Director explained that all of these responses demonstrate why education is lifesaving and sustainable both at once – within learning environments we can provide the entire package (Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, school-feeding, academic learning, water and sanitation etc). Investing in education means a holistic and continued approach to education amidst the crisis.
- The Executive Director concluded by saying that as we reposition ECW and capitalize on the success of the HLFC, we need to lift up the ECW Secretariat so that it is commensurate with these elevated levels of ambition. Many staff at ECW have been there now for over five years and as the organisation grows and moves to the next level, staff need themselves to be offered levels commensurate to their growing responsibilities and mobility to move upwards. ExCom have always been very supportive of requests for new posts – something for which the Secretariat are very grateful. We would therefore now like to lift up some key strategic positions elevate them to the next grade to match the level of performance and responsibilities. Thus this is not about creating new positions, it's about upgrading posts to match the actual work of staff and the new structure of ECW. The Executive Director indicated that the Secretariat will come back to ExCom in due courses with a full analysis and proposal of the proposed upgrading plans.

During the discussion, the following points were highlighted:

- ExCom members recognized the hard work of the lean Secretariat and the increasing complexity of their work, however they raised questions about the staffing proposal as it is outside of the staffing review approved in 2022. ExCom is keen to avoid micromanaging and just wants to understand the rationale, and ensure alignment with UN process and gradings to ensure overall coherence.
- ExCom members also thanked the Executive Director and the Secretariat for their hard work, and for focusing on forgotten crises such as South Sudan.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS/DECISIONS

- The Chair noted that this was an important reminder of the reality of the situation in Chad, South Sudan and the Middle East.
- The ECW Secretariat will share a proposal in due course about staffing and grading of posts which takes into account the initial feedback raised by ExCom on this item.

4. Turning the promise of the Strategic Plan into action

- The Deputy Director gave a brief overview of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan and reflected on ECW's role after the Transforming Education Summit (TES) and High Level Financing Conference (HLFC) and looking ahead to the UN Climate Change Conference (COP28) and the Global Refugee Forum (GRF). He presented a summary of progress against the 2023 Annual Workplan, which operationalizes the Strategic Plan, and explained that in the meeting today we would focus on a few priority/flagship areas (see PowerPoint and briefing notes for full details).

- The Chief of Monitoring and Evaluation gave the first presentation focused on 'Learning Outcomes'. He presented the updated global figures, an overview of the latest work in the MYRPs, and recent findings from Burkina Faso (report to be shared forthwith). Looking ahead, he set out the targeted capacity strengthening plans to measure learning outcomes in seven MYRPs, to assess 'what works' in four MYRPs, and to support online platforms for evidence and learning.
- The Chief of Monitoring and Evaluation then presented ECW's progress regarding the nexus. He reflected that the efforts to meet needs, reduce vulnerabilities and advance the New Ways of Working cut across all of ECW's areas of work. He explained how ECW are conceptualizing the nexus for the strategic period through 5 key result areas (stronger systems for data and evidence generation, sharing and use, stronger planning and programming, better coordinated financing and resource mobilization, stronger localization and stronger leadership and coordination). He then gave practical examples of progress made to these result areas through ECW's work on gender.
- Lastly, the Chief of Monitoring and Evaluation presented the work underway to advance financing data -- through the MYRPs, through the data and evidence work, and through global advocacy. Work is ongoing to develop the partnerships and scope of work needed for the proposed Financing Observatory.
- The Deputy Director then gave an update on the work to strengthen the MYRPs. Any new and/or renewed MYRPs will align with the vision and commitments in the Strategic Plan and Evaluation Management Response. Priority work underway includes recruitment of the Country Programme Managers, the finalization on the new MYRP template and manual, and piloting the new processes for MYRP renewals. This work is ongoing and supported by a cross-secretariat working group, as well as the Education Technical Reference Group (ETRG) and Gender Reference Group (GRG).

During the discussion, the following points were highlighted:

- Several ExCom members commented that they felt reassured by the concrete steps to turn the Strategic Plan into action, and thanked the Secretariat. Members appreciated the presentations and the updates provided.
- USAID congratulated the Secretariat on the work underway, particularly regarding learning outcomes. Given the importance of sharing impact for advocacy efforts, they asked how all colleagues can share what they're doing and learn from one another. Is there scope for an ExCom committee for example, to tap into that learning and advocacy together, and ensure more robust reporting on this. The Chief of Monitoring and Evaluation responded that this is something that could definitely be explored. ECW currently use the Annual Results Reports, but are keen to find a way to share more in depth results – perhaps through a learning agenda report, and through ongoing collaboration with INEE regarding knowledge sharing platforms.
- UNICEF and the World Bank both offered support for the learning outcome work and flagged the opportunity to connect on 'the 'Commitment to Action on Foundational Learning'. UNICEF reflected that we should not be making investments that do not have an impact on learning.
- Several ExCom members raised the importance of psychosocial support and social emotional learning (PSS-SEL) when it comes to learning, while Education International encouraged the Secretariat to think beyond numeracy and literacy alone and to also think about problem solving, creativity etc. INEE reminded members that INEE is a technical professional network available to all, and thanked ECW for their engagement in both the Steering Group and the Working Groups. He urged members to build on the existing ecosystems (e.g. building on the work of the teachers working group, the PSS-SEL working group, and the Initiative for Strengthening Education in Emergencies Coordination (ISEEC)).
- The World Bank congratulated ECW on their work on data, recognizing the huge gaps and challenges with data in the sector. They encouraged ExCom to support Educational

Management Informational Systems (EMIS) in countries where they are engaging given the data gaps – perhaps even having a few blueprint EIEPC countries.

- Multiple members noted the helpful articulation of the nexus and the practical approach being taken. Norway commented that senior principals could make good use of this work and that it would be useful for advocacy efforts. UNICEF suggested use of a nexus diagnostic tool to promote nexus rigor in all MYRPs. UNESCO suggested that the Acceleration Facility look at testing the evidence and global goods produced in different nexus contexts – could the second-round focus on the operationalization of tools and resources with a focus on nexus implementation, through the ISEEC initiative.
- The EU noted that ECW is in unique position to support partners in defining, exploring and implementing the nexus. Keen to turn global discussions into concrete engagement and ownership at the country-level, for example, supporting local partners with systematic analysis of what the nexus means, capturing good practice case studies, ensuring engagement of key partners throughout the MYRP development. Encouraged ECW to learn from good examples like Uganda and South Sudan, but also from less successful examples.
- Members appreciated the clear approach to the MYRP portfolio. The EU asked if it could be rolled out more quickly and suggested refining the role of grant agent to help streamline efforts. The UK asked how to ensure new programme manager positions join up on the ground and explained they are keen to know about the renewal process and the criteria for withdrawal and handover. Norway highlighted that it is important that the exit strategy work is inclusive – how can all voices contribute and leverage the education clusters on the ground. The Deputy Director noted that a lot of the work on MYRP portfolio is being done with the ETRG and GRG. He noted that this raises an important point about how the ETRG and GRG feed into ExCom, identifying a gap in ExCom’s awareness of work happening at this level. There is a need to improve this information flow.
- Members reflected that not all issues had been covered today – Finland and Germany asked about progress on disability inclusion, and Education International, the UK and Germany asked about progress regarding teacher support. Education International proposed a dedicated reference group to develop a policy framework on teachers in EIEPC, and Germany affirmed that teacher support would be an important part of their Chairmanship. Germany, Education International, and FCDO, also highlighted the importance of localization to all of this work. The Deputy Director explained that progress was underway across these areas (e.g. operationalization of the disability policy and accountability framework), but due to time constraints the team had had to focus on a limited number of areas today. He reassured ExCom that all of the commitments are being mapped and tracked. The Deputy Director flagged the need to prioritize given capacity constraints, and explained that localization was indeed a priority and would be the next Request For Proposals under the AF. He also reminded colleagues that there would be a side event focused on localization the next day.
- UNICEF noted that with such a lean secretariat, even more important to think through how to mobilize the engagement of ExCom members so that for example they can take on particular elements. Similarly the UK supported the pragmatic point about sequencing given the number of priorities. Also keen to look at governance and accountability, and how Reference Groups are set up, any gaps, and how they connect with ExCom.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS/DECISIONS

- The Chair reflected that so often Strategic Plans sit on a shelf, and so it is very reassuring that it is indeed guiding everything ECW does. She also noted the significant progress and real breakthroughs in key areas such as the nexus. The Chair encouraged future updates on other important areas such as disability and inclusion and teacher support and encouraged colleagues to join the conversation on localization tomorrow.

- The Chair also highlighted the important points raised about capacity and encouraged members to take forward the discussion about how to leverage the expertise of the ExCom, given how lean the Secretariat is.
- The ECW Secretariat committed to revisiting the information flow from the ETRG and GRG to ExCom.
- The ECW Secretariat will also follow up on specific technical issues raised in the discussion, such as with the EU on collaboration on the in-country nexus work, and with UNICEF and the World Bank on foundational learning.

5. Resource Mobilization

- The Chief of Resource Mobilization shared ECW's Resource Mobilization plans and led a discussion about efforts to mobilize the additional \$670m needed to fully implement the Strategic Plan (see background paper and ppt for full detail). He explained the different approaches needed to increase the level of support from existing donors, to bring in new institutional partners, to increase funds from the private sector, and to advance opportunities for in-country RM.
- The Chief of Resource Mobilization also reflected on lessons learned from the HLFC, particularly regarding private financing from the Zürcher Kantonalbank partnership. He noted that with the right high level political incentives, innovative private sector solutions are there to be brokered.
- He shared a matrix to discuss how to further engage ExCom and HLSG in these efforts, building on, for example, recent work with FCDO, Denmark, Sweden and Dubai Cares. He noted that different options and ways to engage will suit different actors and contexts differently - he explained that the matrix will help the RM team to liaise with ExCom and the HLSG in the most effective way.

During the discussion, the following points were highlighted:

- Members highlighted the challenging RM environment. UNICEF asked ECW if they are struggling, as others are, for funding for forgotten emergencies. Resources are increasingly being directed to a limited number of high-profile countries. How can we ensure this is needs based, and not about what is in the news. The UK agreed, and asked how ECW will make difficult decisions about prioritization given the difficult environment. Encouraged colleagues to consider the greatest return on investment.
- Members were appreciative of the lessons learned re private sector engagement and noted interest in supporting these efforts. INEE flagged that some private sector actors are starting to leave, while others continue to champion EIEPC, asking how can we learn together and organize collectively so that we collaborate to build that momentum.
- Members also discussed the different strategies presented. GPE encouraged pragmatism, for example, considering the level of efforts vs the likelihood of success with private sector targets, and considering whether annual commitments are 'safe' or likely to shift away from education. GPE also highlighted the importance of clarity on how existing funds are translated into specific numbers of MYRPs, as donors want to know impact (ie what will extra X million mean). The EU echoed that the best way to raise funds is to demonstrate results and show relevance to the donor by targeting their interests and priorities. World Vision encouraged colleagues to unpack the role of Civil Society Organizations in RM efforts generally, and specifically in the run up to HLFC and TES. In addition WVI asked clarity for the older generation of MYRPs where grantees had the specific commitment to mobilize additional resources and if this will be aligned with the new approach that gives a role to ECW secretariat in mobilizing additional resources for MYRPs.
- Members offered their support for these fundraising efforts. GPE stated their readiness to support and highlighted the recent collaboration in key markets e.g. Japan and G7. The EU explained they would be happy to follow up re key approaches and actors. Education

International noted that while they don't have funds they do have advocacy clout, for example their 'Go public, fund education' campaign and RM efforts ahead of HLFC, happy to discuss more advocacy opportunities and efforts.

- USAID commented that we need to ensure high-level field colleagues understand the importance of their government funds to ECW and GPE. Recommend that when we're getting ready to launch a MYRP in-country ExCom members invite their ambassadors in-country to attend launch and show that all behind this (help justify budgets but also help in-country RM efforts).
- Education International highlighted the importance of domestic financing, and encouraging governments to commit funds to education (e.g. payment of teacher salaries).
- Canada would be interested to hear more about the strategies around ringfenced money, e.g. humanitarian and climate, and what can be done to access and support.

The ECW Secretariat responded with the following comments:

- The Chief of Resource Mobilization noted that he is optimistic that with the right people and partners we will be able to mobilize the resources needed, and particularly sees real potential with this innovative finance niche. He recognized the importance of civil society efforts and thanked partners for advancing the agenda in multiple contexts. He also agreed that we need to define the in-country contributions to MYRP outcomes in a better way, and noted that the Financing Observatory would help.
- The Executive Director encouraged ExCom members to work with the Secretariat in connecting with private sector in their respective countries and to use MYRPs as an example of working across the humanitarian-development nexus.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS/DECISIONS

- The Chair reflected that is it an important reminder of the tough fundraising environment and the importance of maintaining momentum and demonstrating results, while also making tough decisions to ensure we are supporting forgotten crises. She reminded ExCom that we all need to support RM efforts – including in-country colleagues such as ambassadors and high commissioners. Let's raise visibility at post.
- The Executive Director committed to the following in response to the discussion:
 - Inviting the relevant ambassadors to the South Sudan launch, and implementing this approach for all MYRPs from now on
 - Developing a standard logo that includes all ExCom members to increase visibility
 - Sending out travel plans every 3 months to support planning and visibility
- The Chief of Resource Mobilization will work ExCom to further develop the RM matrix and will continue to liaise with CSO colleagues.

6. Evaluations

- The OIC for the Strategy, Planning and Accountability team provided ExCom with an update on the Management Response to the Organizational Evaluation (which was approved by HLSC in April 2023, after inputs and review from ExCom). He explained that the majority of the actions are in progress (56), with 10 now complete. He reminded ExCom that the evaluations, Strategic Plan, Results Framework and Work Plan are all aligned, and that the team will continue to track and report on progress to ExCom.
- The OIC for the Education team then provided an update on the MYRP Evaluation. 13 actions are now complete, 8 are on track, and 7 have transitioned to the organizational evaluation due to overlap/alignment. He explained that the Management Responses have become institutionalized into ECW's work. All of the recommendations are being implemented (some are clear, some need to be phased), but 80% of these should be completed in Q3 (largely through

the updated MYRP manual). The OIC for the Education team recently briefed the ETRG and GRG on the MYRP manual and template work, and will do the same for the CSO constituency.

- The Chief of Finance and Operations then presented the internal audit findings. The Internal Audit of UNICEF Hosted Funds was initiated September 2021, with the report for ECW released December 2022. ECW was assessed as satisfactory (the highest score) in terms of governance, risk management and control processes. The report set out recommendations in four areas (Governance Structure, Regulatory Framework, Staffing Management, and Grants and Grantees). The recommendations will be integrated in the work on the Hosting Agreement and Operational Manual. ExCom will be consulted on both Hosting Agreement and Operational Manual revisions.

During the discussion, the following points were highlighted:

- ExCom members acknowledged the amount of work and follow up that goes into the evaluations, and appreciated the consultative, positive and productive process. GEC commented that it was great to see a lot of the management response actions have been incorporated into the Strategic Plan and other operational work and noted that we can already see this in the updates to the AF and MYRPs. The UK found the audit update particularly useful, and are keen to see next steps re governance, the ETRG-GRG connection, performance review process etc.
- Norway appreciated the overview but noted the limited time for this agenda item. In future, recommended sharing those specific strategic areas where ExCom can give constructive feedback and use their experience. Finland suggested a focus on the recommendations targeted at ExCom.
- Norway asked to hear more on the progress of the First Emergency Response (FER) evaluation. They also asked if ExCom will prepare a management response to the audit and if it will be discussed with ExCom.
 - a. The ECW Secretariat explained that FER tracking is also happening. There are 19 recommendations, of which 15 are closed, with 4 transitioned to the organizational evaluation. A full update can be provided.
 - b. They explained that there is an internal UNICEF process for follow up from the audit. However, there is a lot of alignment across the recommendations and the Secretariat committed to sharing a management response after the meeting (see annex E).
- GPE recognized that across the three reviews, there is focus on the GPE-ECW collaboration, and reassured ExCom that they are working closely together to respond to those recommendations.
- GEC noted that they have developed Standing Operating Procedures on engaging in FERs and MYRPs and look forward to working with UNHCR and others to build on these through the Operational Manual revisions.
- WVI reflected that the MYRP Management Response intersects with the recommendations from the CSO group -- some are captured in the MYRP manual work but not all. They would appreciate more follow-up on those recommendations, beyond the ETRG as the whole constituency is not represented there.
 - a. The OIC for the Education team shared that they would be holding a meeting with the CSO group on the MYRPs in the coming weeks. Reflected that there is a need to discuss what is possible, what's not, and why, so that everyone feels that their feedback is recognized.
- Finland asked what UNICEF HR collaboration looks and whether UNICEF staffing rules apply to ECW staffing.
 - a. UNICEF FSO explained that UNICEF HR policies and procedures apply to ECW staff members. A few exceptions (e.g. ECW staff are not subjected to rotation), where there

is a reason. Still things to be reviewed and discussed. Everything performance etc that applies to UNICEF staff applies to hosted funds. These are the systems we are paying for - ExCom group does strategic substantive decision making. UNICEF does the HR, admin aspects.

- The UK raised that ExCom are named as the risk holder on several points. Request to clarify ExCom role, liabilities and responsibilities.
 - a. New Risk Manager is reviewing and will follow up with ExCom soon.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS/DECISIONS

- The Chair noted that the Operational Manual update will be an important process – for ExCom to stay strategic but also make some much-needed updates (e.g. ensuring committees and reference groups feed into ExCom). Let's spend time to get this right at the strategic level.
- The ECW Secretariat will follow up with an update on the FER Management Response and on risk.

7. Update of the ECW Operational Manual and Operational Issues

- The Chief of Finance and Operations provided an overview of the process and timeline for updating the Operational Manual and explained the key opportunities for ExCom consultation and engagement. He reminded ExCom that the Operational Manual occupies the space between the legal documents (hosting agreement, SCA) and programmatic guidance. It has been essential in establishing overall governance procedures for ECW, but the assessments and evaluations (and their management responses) have highlighted that it is time for a review and update. ExCom will be consulted to provide input, reflections and strategic direction. See PowerPoint and background papers for full details.
- The UNICEF Deputy Director of Finance, Reporting and Grant Management then provided an update regarding UNICEF operational issues. He explained that there are currently four hosted partnerships within UNICEF. ECW is by far the largest in terms of share of revenue - this shows the success of ECW as a hosted partnership and is a credit to all involved. It also highlights the resource mobilization challenges that other colleagues are facing. He reminded ExCom that there are a few recommendations from the audit that UNICEF and ECW are working on together e.g. the hosting agreement, secondments, reporting and diversity. UNICEF have also been audited as host and will be implementing recommendations that may have implications for ECW. Lastly, he informed ExCom that the hosting agreement would be finalized by June 30th.

During the discussion, the following points were highlighted:

- ExCom members shared different reactions to the proposed Operational Manual update process. Some ExCom members advocated a for a lighter process that would require less staff time. Others urged caution and more time, given the importance of this work. USAID, for example, noted that ECW is a very different organization now than when the first Operational Manual was written. They noted that a lot of important issues (e.g. CSO representation, and the different roles of ExCom and the HLSG) still need to be worked through. GPE suggested a triage process to identify areas that could be quickly advanced by the Secretariat, versus priority issues for ExCom dialogue. Members agreed with a process that avoids ExCom wordsmithing the manual, but instead focuses on providing strategic direction.
- Participants identified several priority issues that they are keen to work through at the ExCom level. These included: Southern representation, the roles of ExCom and the HLSG, and the ongoing risk holder issue.

8. Terms of Reference for election of CSO members

- World Vision presented two items focused on ensuring stronger representation of southern voices: 1) the revisions to the Terms of References (ToRs) for selecting CSO representatives and 2) the governance position paper (see ppt and background papers for further details).
- World Vision noted that the Secretariat is seeking approval and feedback on the ToRs. WVI explained that the ToRs had previously included increased numbers of National NGPs and youth representatives (in line with the governance position paper), but that ECW recommended discussing these bigger changes during the Operational Manual revision process. Therefore, although there have been important tweaks, the updated TORs are not significantly different to the previous versions.
- At the same time, the INGO sub-group of the CSO group is looking for support to take forward the wider recommendations in the governance position paper. The paper encourages ExCom to reflect on who should be represented in ECW governance, what conversations are most relevant for southern voices, and how southern voices can be included. WVI reminded members that Civil Society are the only group represented by a constituency model - they are proposing a constituency model for the whole ECW governance, as well as increasing the civil society constituency to nine to allow for geographic spread.
- World Vision noted that these recommendations in the position paper will feed into the Operational Manual update. This has been discussed with the governance working group and was the focus of a dedicated meeting on day 1.

During the discussion, the following points were highlighted:

- Members expressed support for the overall ambition, i.e. increasing southern representation.
- Several ExCom members asked for clarification about today's discussion – to approve the ToRs and/or to discuss the proposed constituency model.
 - The Chair confirmed that today would be focused on approving the TORs. The wider discussion would come later, as part of the Operational Manual update.
 - Canada reminded ExCom that there would have been election for the four CSO representatives in February, but these have been delayed due to the HLFC. Need to urgently have these elections. Then follow up on the wider discussion and wider governance through the Operational Manual update.
- Norway questioned if the approval of the ToR would lead to an increase in southern voices. If the ToR is very similar, how will it create change. Several participants were keen to understand why different groups/individuals haven't been actively engaging to date. They urged ExCom to avoid repeating the same mistakes.
- GEC noted that they are supportive of reference to GEC in the ToR in terms of encouraging engagement, but note this should include all mechanisms (UNHCR, LEGS etc). They raised concerns about the 'independent election observer role' for GEC and INEE as set out in the ToR.
- UNHCR proposed a tweak to the TOR on youth language, expressing concerns that the current language would not encourage southern voices. They noted ECW will need to proactively seek out and support their participation, and the participation of others such as refugee led organizations. Several ExCom members echoed the need to support youth engagement in a positive, respectful, empowering way. The EU suggested exploring mentorship and accompaniment. Education International suggested looking at youth-based orgs so have an organization behind them. The Executive Director reminded ExCom of the effective youth participation at HLFC. She called for affirmative action to ensure strong young women impacted by crises have their voices heard.

- ExCom members were widely supportive of efforts to bring in more inclusive voices, but keen to discuss in detail what this could/should look like. ExCom members were keen to understand how ExCom will take forward the wider governance position paper presented by the CSO group.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS/DECISIONS

- The Chair summarized the discussion and noted that the ToRs are approved (with the tweaks suggested by UNHCR and GEC).
- The wider discussion on the recommendations from the CSO group regarding governance revisions, constituency models and increased southern engagement, will be taken forward at a later date and through the Operational Manual update. This may lead to future updates to the CSO ToRs.

9. AOB

UNHCR provided an update on the Global Refugee Forum, and a recommendation to create an ECW Refugee Reference Group.

- UNHCR acknowledged the commitment of ExCom members to supporting refugees and reminded them that the GRF would take place in December in Geneva. There will be an Education Campus Day on December 12th, and the GRF itself on 13th and 14th.
- The focus will be to find concrete efforts to operationalize the Global Compact and ensure responsibility sharing with host governments. The intention is to build on the energy from 2019, particularly now that education is more firmly embedded in the ecosystem. There are many members of the Education Alliance (160+ actors) and a number of task teams – UNHCR are happy to share more details via email.
- UNHCR are keen to support ECW in looking at the pledges made (both the GPE-WB-ECW pledge, and the pledge on secondary education), and the role of ExCom in supporting these and operationalizing them at country level. UNHCR hope to look at another joint pledge and lessons from 2019 and encourage fellow ExCom members to play a supportive and facilitative role. There are important opportunities for alignment (on nexus, finance tracking etc).
- UNHCR are also doing in-country work with ministries and colleagues, docked into the Call to Action which came out of the TES. They are also looking at doing additional pieces on Climate at the GRF linked to ReWired.
- In addition to this, UNHCR, as mandate holder for the refugee coordination mechanism, would like to move forward with the recommendation for an ECW Refugee Reference Group. There is now a ToR for review – the intention is to be catalytic and timebound, and to embed the reflexes and quality assurance needed for refugee issues into ECW's work. Once those reflexes and assurances are embedded the group can be disbanded. It will be a technical advice group, with a particular focus on including refugees in national systems. It will follow the steps as per the Operational Manual. Colleagues asked if this should be wider for all forcibly displaced populations, but UNHCR stressed the specifics on refugees given legal status and exclusionary practices. The TORs are attached as Annex F.

Update on ReWired from Dubai Cares

- ReWired will take place at COP28 in Dubai.
- COP itself will run from 30th Nov to Dec 2nd. Dubai Cares has put forward a proposal (being reviewed by COP) to host a High Level Leaders' Day on December 2nd, to showcase high level commitments.
- On Dec 8th there will be ReWired itself – the objective is to align commitments, agendas and financing among education and climate actors, focus on the intersection, and showing how education transformation can achieve climate ambitions. There is a proposal to develop an interactive space in an education pavilion with spotlight sessions showcasing innovations and

solutions. They have received lots of proposals, but they are just waiting on the greenlight from COP presidency.

- ExCom members are keen to collaborate and coordinate ahead of COP and ReWired to ensure strong messaging.

Update from WFP regarding the global food crisis

- WFP provided an update about the School Meals Coalition, an initiative led by France and Finland since 2021 in response to the pandemic (with schools closed, and 90% of children sent home, 370 million children lost access to meals as a result, as this important safety net disappeared). This jumpstarted an important conversation about school feeding and the food crises, and the initiative continues to grow – with 81 Heads of State and 89 partners – mobilizing country leaders and delivering results. For example, they have mobilized \$5m of additional domestic financing for school feeding. Unlike other coalitions it is not led by the UN or any specific sector, but by 12 countries, with partners supporting a multisectoral approach. But needs are growing – there were 388 million children in need before pandemic, and this has now risen to 418 million children – a sizeable increase. WFP thanked ECW and Dubai Cares for their support.

Update from INEE on the INEE Minimum Standards

- The updated INEE Minimum Standards are now in the copyediting phase, before going to the Steering Group for endorsement. INEE will share an update with ExCom very soon.

10. Chair's Summary and Closing

The Chair summarized the discussions and highlighted key decisions from the meeting, including:

- The appointment of two new co-chairs, Germany and Norway
- The approval of the CSO ToRs (with the agreed edits and the commitment to revisit the wider governance discussion during the Operational Manual update)

Looking ahead, the Chair set out the key dates for the rest of the year

- Next online ExCom meeting w/c 28th August online (now confirmed for Tuesday 22nd August)
- The in-person HLSG during UNGA (now confirmed for Wednesday 20th September)
- Next in-person ExCom meeting Oct/Nov date tbd, possibly in Denmark (now confirmed for 31st October in Billund)
- ReWired and the Global Refugee Forum in December

Lastly, the Chair closed the meeting by thanking colleagues for their participation and reminding them that the technical meetings would happen tomorrow. The Chair expressed gratitude that ExCom were really making use of the time together in person and moving agendas forwards.
