

**EDUCATION CANNOT WAIT  
GUIDANCE NOTE  
SELECTION OF GRANTEES - FIRST EMERGENCY RESPONSE (FER)**

**Part I – Principles and Roles and Responsibilities**

This guidance note supports education partners to undertake an open and transparent selection of grantees. The selection process is guided by the principles of **inclusion, transparency, openness, effectiveness, efficiency, and speed**. The process is designed to mitigate and avoid conflict of interest during grantee selection based on the specific country context.

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

<b>ECW Secretariat</b>	ECW Secretariat provides guidance on the process, but is not directly involved in the selection of grantees. During the Quality Assurance Review of the FER Application, the Secretariat will ensure that the process adheres to the general principles established by ECW.
<b>In-Country Coordination Entity<sup>1</sup> and Leads<sup>2</sup></b>	The decision about which organizations should receive funding is made at country level via a process facilitated by the ‘Coordinating Entity’ under the guidance of the in-country ‘Coordination Leads’. Country Leads should facilitate and manage the process, participating in selection processes as observers, but not implicate themselves in the decision-making process.
<b>Independent Grantee Selection Committee</b>	To ensure that the selection process is fair and transparent, a temporary grantee selection committee is established to select grantees. Members could include: a) Government representation (where possible); b) Donor or Development Partner Group representatives; c) the Education Cluster and/or Refugee Response WG; d) UN, International or national NGO representatives

**Part II - Process**

Once the ECW Secretariat has informed a country about its eligibility to apply for a FER, a series of sequential steps must take place. While the following components are based on good practice to ensure a fair, open and transparent process, in-country coordination entities have the flexibility to adapt this process to their specific context.

**1. Outline the selection process**

The Coordination Leads of the Coordination Entity, should outline and agree on the process for development of the FER application, including the process for the selection of grantees. Where possible, Government should be included in the process and other relevant coordination groups, such as the Donor or Development Partner Group, the Education Cluster and/or Refugee Response WG<sup>3</sup>, and Local Education Group should be informed and regularly kept updated on the selection process and relevant outcomes.

**2. Establish an independent grantee selection committee**

The Coordination Leads should establish a temporary, independent group of various stakeholders to select grantees. This committee could include the following organizations, depending on the country context: a) Government representation (where possible); b) Donor or Development Partner Group chairs; c) Refugee Response WG (where applicable); and e) UN, International or national NGO representatives that will not submit an application. In-country Coordination Leads should participate as observers and advisors of the process and support documentation of events. The selection committee will have two main responsibilities: 1) Reviewing

<sup>1</sup> The ‘Coordinating entity’ refers to the coordination mechanism designated to coordinate preparation of the FER application (e.g., the Education Cluster or EiEWG) in a given context.

<sup>2</sup> Individuals and their hosting organizations in coordination roles within the Education Cluster, EiEWG or UNHCR

<sup>3</sup> Specific to the country context

Expressions of Interest; and 2) Reviewing full applications and making recommendations for the selection of grantees. Organisations represented on the selection committee are not eligible to receive funding. Country Leads should facilitate and manage the process, participating in selection processes as observers, but not implicate themselves in the decision-making process

### 3. Establish the scope of the FER

Before the grantee selection process can begin, the Coordination Entity must agree on the scope of the programme. Generally, FERs align with established plans or strategies such as Cluster Strategy, Refugee Education WG Strategy or HRP. The scope of the programme should also consider any thematic guidance or target groups that have been highlighted by ECW. This should inform the development of the eligibility and selection criteria which should be agreed upon, documented and circulated to all relevant stakeholder groups. Suggested Criteria could include:

Criteria for Expression of Interest	Criteria for Grantee Proposal Selection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical expertise in Education in Emergencies</li> <li>• Demonstrated capacity to deliver</li> <li>• Proven experience in receiving, disbursing and accounting for funding of similar levels passing through to international and local organizations</li> <li>• Demonstrated ability to undertake programme monitoring of sub-grantees and deliver high-quality narrative and financial reports</li> <li>• Previous/existing experience in the targeted zone(s) and field presence</li> <li>• Cost-effectiveness of grantee management function</li> <li>• Legally registered in the country</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic relevance, including response to specific thematic and targeting requirements,</li> <li>• Programmatic and technical relevance (based on the response plan),</li> <li>• Capacity to deliver,</li> <li>• Management and monitoring capacity,</li> <li>• Engagement with coordination mechanisms,</li> <li>• Budget provisions are appropriate, and</li> <li>• Cost effectiveness.</li> <li>• HACT approved (can be done once selected but prior to agreement)</li> </ul>

As per ECW’s Accountability Framework on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls, partnership with women CSOs that have experience in provision of education and/or can aid with the delivery of services and gender specific component in the FER is required as one of the mandatory performance indicators.

For individual country responses, there is no fixed limit on the number of grantees. ECW is committed to diversification (ensuring a balance between UN agencies and NGOs, increasing reach to the most vulnerable and promoting sustainability), though efforts should be made to avoid fragmenting funds across a large number of grantees.

#### *Consortium Partnership Approach*

- ECW is committed to the localization agenda as established in the Grand Bargain. ECW encourages applications from international organisations leading local consortia (See Page 4 for guidance).
- Grantee selection committees are encouraged to apply additional weighting to grantee proposals that are consortium. ECW recommends that at least 20% of funds are allocated to consortia-based approaches in order to promote the participation of local organisations.

### 4. Solicit and review expressions of interest

The process and timeline for selecting grantees, as well, as Eligibility and Selection Criteria is developed through an inclusive process by the Coordinating Leads and shared with relevant stakeholder groups for endorsement. Based on the agreed selection criteria, interested organizations that meet these criteria should be requested to submit a brief Expression of Interest (See Box 1 on page 3 for additional guidance). The grantee selection committee should review each EOI against the criteria and identify organizations that should be invited to develop full applications. To facilitate a rapid selection process, weighted scores should be applied to these criteria together with a short explanation of how the score itself should be determined. Consortia-based approaches with local NGOs should receive increased weighted scores. Results of this process should be shared with Coordination Leads for announcement.

## 5. Solicit and review full applications

Eligible organizations should be requested to submit full applications based on the FER template (See Box 1 on page 3 for additional guidance). Using the agreed selection criteria, the grantee selection committee should review each application and rate the application. The grantee selection committee should inform the Coordination Leads of the results. To facilitate a rapid selection process, weighted scores should be applied to these criteria together with a short explanation of how the score itself should be determined.

## 6. Announcement of results

The Coordination Leads will announce the results of the selection process to all relevant stakeholders. This formal announcement allows for the full FER application to be completed and then submitted by the Coordination Leads to the ECW Secretariat. A period of 24 hours should be given to all partners to allow for any objections to the proposed selections and allocations.

### Part III. Documentation and Quality Assurance Review

Documentation of the process is essential and should be submitted along with the application. Documentation may include: Terms of Reference, Meeting Minutes, List of organizations contacted, EOI, Email correspondences, particularly about process and decision-making; outcome documentation on EOI and Proposal review. During ECW's Quality Assurance Review of the application package, the Secretariat will review the process and ensure that it adheres to the general principles. Where the context justifies an alternative approach, the Secretariat will rely on multiple types of documentation.

#### Box 1 – Additional Guidance on EOI and Full Application submissions

##### A) *Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI)*

- The purpose of an EOI is to rapidly assess interest of organizations in applying for a project.
- The EOI should have two parts. The first part outlines the purpose of the EOI, explains the eligibility criteria and the submission instruction. The second part is a basic template (no more than 1 page) that allows for an organization to describe how it meets the criteria and provides additional detail on its experience, geographical coverage, and capacity to deliver in a specific context. This could be structured as a series of questions that organizations answer.
- The EOI should be shared by the Coordination Leads. Completed EOIs should be sent to the grantee selection committee either using a customized email address or to an agreed focal point within the grantee selection committee.
- The grantee selection committee should develop an assessment matrix to review each EOI. This should include weighted values for each criteria to determine a ranking.

##### B) *Call for Applications*

- The Coordination Leads should contact organizations selected to complete the full application with the FER Part II template and instructions on submission.
- Completed applications should be sent to the grantee selection committee. The same submission process as used during the EOI can be applied.
- The grantee selection committee should develop an assessment matrix to review each application. This should include weighted values for each criterion to determine a ranking.
- Once the grantee selection committee has made its final selection, the results should be shared with the Coordination Leads

## EDUCATION CANNOT WAIT FER GRANTEE SELECTION CHECKLIST

The following checklist summarizes the grantee selection process. It is an indicative list that can be adapted to the country context. It offers a general overview of good practices in the process.

- Relevant stakeholders in country are notified that an ECW FER application will be developed. Stakeholders can include Coordination Entity, relevant government representatives, Donor or Development Group representatives, the Education Cluster and/or Refugee Response WG, LEG membership and other relevant stakeholder groups as necessary.
- The process and timeline for selecting grantees, as well, as Eligibility and Selection Criteria is developed through an inclusive process by the Coordinating Leads and shared with relevant stakeholder groups for endorsement.
- An independent grantee selection committee is established comprising of members that are inclusive of various stakeholder groups, including but not limited to: a) Government representation (where possible), b) Donor or Development Partner Group chairs, c) the Education Cluster and/or Refugee Response WG (where applicable), and d) UN, International or national NGO representatives that are not submitting applications.
- An Expression of Interest is widely circulated using multiple and available communication channels. The grantee selection committee reviews each EoI against the established criteria and selects organizations to prepare full applications. Results of this process are shared with Coordination Leads to disseminate results.
- The grantee selection committee reviews full applications and selects grantees based on the agreed selection criteria. Results are documented and with the Coordination Leads.
- Consortium partnerships are considered in the grantee selection process and receive higher weighted scores
- The Coordination Leads inform all stakeholders of the results of the grantee selection process
- Each step of the process is documented and preserved with the Coordination Leads. Documentation can include: Terms of Reference, Meeting Minutes, List of contacted individuals and organization, eligibility and selection criteria, email correspondences, and scoring matrices and documents justifying selection of grantees at each stage. A file of all documents is submitted with the FER application.

## EDUCATION CANNOT WAIT GUIDANCE ON LEADING LOCAL CONSORTIA

Education Cannot Wait has stated its commitment to aid the localisation agenda. Although local organisations are not eligible for grants in its current structure, ECW is committed to supporting configurations that enable increased local action. For the FER COVID-19 Phase II allocations, ECW is encouraging applications from international organisations leading local consortia and is recommending that at least 20% of funds are allocated to consortia in order to promote the participation of local organisations.

As lead applicants, international organisations will be required to demonstrate compliance with the due diligence requirements [Sample [Template A](#) and [Template B](#)]. However, we will not require this for downstream implementing partners; rather, due diligence of downstream partners is at the discretion of the lead applicant. In order to facilitate the formation of local consortia in the limited timeframe, we are offering the following guidance to applicants who wish to form local consortia.

### 1. Scoping

Whilst we recognise the value of existing, established partnerships with a track record of cooperative programme implementation and impact, we actively encourage new partnerships that bring on diverse local partners with specific access, experience and expertise in refugee situations. A short, structured call for proposals can assist in identification of partners with the requisite track record, as well as encourage ideas and innovations that can enhance your proposition [[Sample Call for Proposal Template](#)]. As an alternative, partners can be approached through consultation with cluster and cluster partners who have mapped, scoped or selected local organisations at the programme, cluster or country levels. Consultations can also include rapid and remote networking, recommendations and references from other organisations.

### 2. Selection

Selection criteria should be contextualised and consider including organisations that range in the size, scale and scope of their operations. Setting a series of non-negotiable indicators can assist in minimising risks of selection in a short time frame: for example, (i) zero-tolerance for corruption or fraud; (ii) zero-tolerance for terrorist activities; and (iii) clear description or documentation of a system that ensures safeguarding issues are recognised, reported and referred. In all cases, it is advisable to accelerate selection to ensure that partners can play an active part in programme planning: we expect partners to be active co-creators rather than passive implementers.

### 3. Rapid Due Diligence

Due diligence should be adapted and differentiated to be as inclusive as possible for partners. We expect that due diligence requirements will be determined in part by the risk appetite of the lead applicant; however, we encourage lead applicants to consider how they can support and strengthen higher risk partners as a core component of consortium management. We advise that you focus on building an accurate representation of risk in a contracted timeframe: (i) ensure due diligence is proportionate in detail and length; (ii) ensure requirements are easy to understand and respond to; and (iii) recognise that administrative pressure can reduce or restrict involvement in programme planning [Sample [Template A](#) and [Template B](#)].

### 4. Partnership

Consider the creation of a simple, sufficient agreement to guide a rapid partnership process [[Sample Agreement](#)]. The agreement should set out clear expectations for how all consortium members are to contribute to proposal design and development and set out any support or structures that the lead organisation will offer to local organisations to accelerate this process. Proposal design and development should set out the respective roles and responsibilities of all consortium members, and proposed allocation of resources. Partner chain mapping can assist in clarification of the flows of information, resources and reporting requirements across the consortium [[Sample Mapping](#)].

Please reflect the consortia approach in the application template:

- [A] Requesting Organisation: Please specify [ORG NAME] consortium: Partner 1, Partner 2, Partner 3
- [E] Monitoring: Please include a line on downstream partner monitoring
- [F] Risks and Assumption: Please include risks and mitigation related to partner management
- [G] Child Safeguarding: Please include a line on how downstream partners will adhere to safeguarding standards