



**EDUCATION  
CANNOT  
WAIT**

# ACCELERATION FACILITY STRATEGY

2019 - 2021

Photo: UNICEF/ Vlad Sokhin.

# CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	2
<b>1. OVERVIEW</b>	4
<b>2. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	7
Strategic Objective A: Identify, foster and scale-up Innovations	8
Strategic Objective B: Strengthen Systemic Capacities	10
<b>3. CONTRIBUTING TO GLOBAL PUBLIC GOODS</b>	13
<b>4. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES</b>	14
<b>5. OPERATIONAL MODALITIES</b>	16
<b>6. INDICATIVE BUDGET</b>	19
<b>7. MANAGEMENT &amp; IMPLEMENTATION</b>	20
<b>8. MONITORING</b>	22



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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As the ECW Strategic Plan 2018-21 highlights, the objective of ECW is to help address the systemic problems which persist in the response to Education in Emergencies<sup>i</sup> and Protracted Crises (EiEPC). This will then enable national governments and implementing agencies to do more of what they currently do well so that these existing actors can expand and extend their collective work to deliver high-quality education services to reach 8.9 million girls and boys by 2021.

To contribute to achieving this objective, the overall goal of the Acceleration Facility is therefore to provide a flexible financing mechanism to fund strategic initiatives which will tackle a prioritized subset of these systemic barriers, namely: insufficient funding; weak political will, policies and programmatic guidance; the lack of up-to-date quality data and analysis; and inadequate EiEPC response and coordination capacities (with limited capacity around gender responsive and inclusive approaches).

The impact of these efforts will feed into investments from ECW and other actors to ensure that more girls and boys and youth in crisis contexts are reached more quickly with quality, inclusive and gender-responsive education. This in turn will ensure that their learning outcomes, psychosocial health and general wellbeing are improved.

The primary vehicle through which ECW will pursue this goal is by financing initiatives that increase the efficiency, effectiveness, equity and impact of investments under its other two financing windows – the First Emergency Response and Multi-Year Resilience Programme. The Acceleration Facility will complement these actions by also investing in the wider EiEPC ecosystem to help strengthen humanitarian education preparation and response mechanisms, increase financing, support risk-informed, gender responsive and inclusive education programming and bridge the humanitarian-development gap.

Evidence and knowledge accumulated as a result of all these efforts will be translated into tangible policy, programming and advocacy actions for wider use and application in EiEPC contexts. They will be disseminated and promoted through existing knowledge platforms, networks and regional/sub-regional entities specifically designed for EiEPC. This will contribute to global public goods<sup>ii</sup> in this field, both in terms of advancing good practice in gender responsive, inclusive and quality education programming as well as strengthening EiEPC entities such as: the Global Education Cluster; the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies, Education Sector Working groups; the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack; the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development; and other networks facilitated by the Global Partnership for Education.

This Strategy outlines how ECW will achieve this goal of helping to address some of the key systemic issues facing EiEPC. It has been developed through extensive consultations with stakeholders, including members of ECW's Executive Committee, and is aligned with ECW's Strategic Plan 2018-21, Gender Strategy 2018-21 and other foundational documents such as the Overseas Development Institute and Boston Consulting Group reports.

The Strategy prioritizes two strategic objectives which work across the humanitarian and development fields and which address protection, gender and inclusion as cross-cutting themes:

- **Identify, foster and scale-up innovations** in both programming and financing.
- **Strengthen systemic capacity** at national, regional and global levels to prepare for, and respond to, sudden onset and protracted crises.

By 2021, the combination of the implementation of actions under each of these objectives will result in: increased and more effective financing from innovative modalities; the design and implementation of more effective, innovative, gender-responsive and inclusive programming approaches; better quality and more up-to-date data and analysis; and strengthened EiEPC response and coordination capacities.

The Strategy will be operationalized through a combination of modalities, depending on the specific actions to be funded under each strategic objective. Requests for proposals will be issued in situations where several potential partners are operating and where ECW's time-frames allow for such a process. In contexts where existing initiatives and specialized organisations are already in place, targeted support will be provided through developing partnership agreements to strengthen their ability to serve the EiEPC community and its ability to deliver results on ECW investments in-country. An implementation plan accompanies this strategy and outlines how it will be operationalized and what specific investments will be supported over the 2019-2021 period. Progress against the Strategy will be monitored against a set of indicators related to each of the strategic objectives.

The budget of the Acceleration Facility can be up to five per cent of ECW's overall investments. For the 2019-2021 period, the indicative budget is estimated at a total of approximately US\$23.4 million (2019: \$5.7m; 2020: \$7.7m; 2021: \$10m)<sup>1</sup> divided roughly equally across the two objectives. These figures are linked to ECW's ability to reach its resource mobilization targets. A light mid-term review of the strategy will be conducted in 2020, so that the strategy, actions and operational modalities can be revised in light of progress.

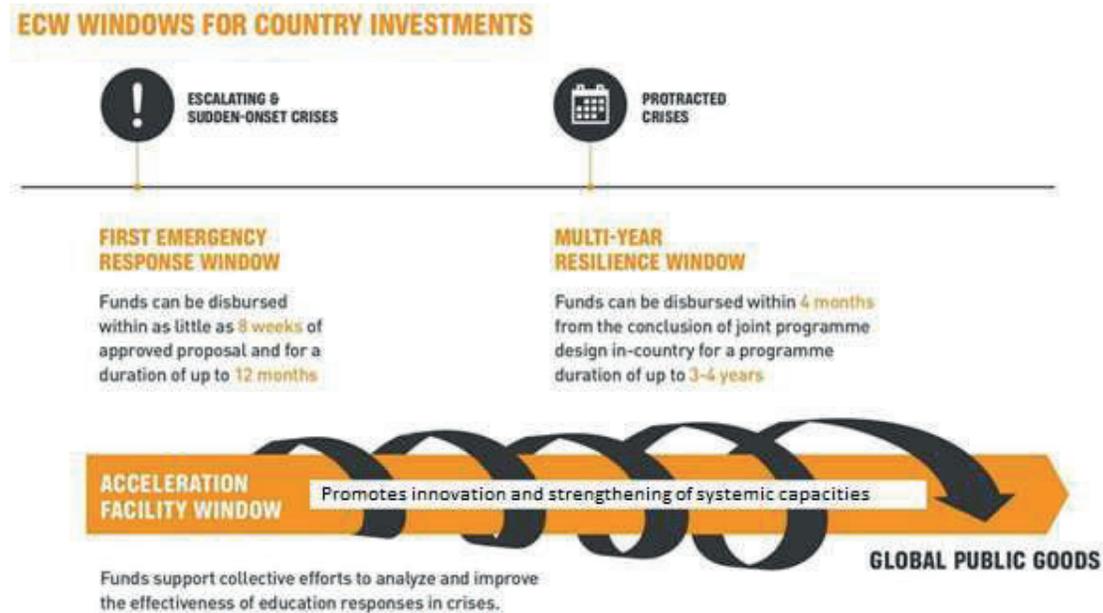
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<sup>1</sup> These figures are consistent with the Case for Investment paper to be presented to the High Level Steering Group in April 2019, which update those approved in September 2018.



# 1. OVERVIEW

The ECW Strategic Plan 2018-21 provides the framework within which this Strategy is situated and to which it contributes. The diagram below illustrates the linkages between the Acceleration Facility and ECW's two other financing windows.



## Overarching Goal

Fixing the system to reach over 75 million children and youth<sup>2</sup> affected by emergencies and protracted crises by 2030 will require more than piecemeal reform. The problems to be addressed are *systemic* and this was the principal reason as to why ECW was created<sup>3</sup>. With this rationale in mind, the goal of the Acceleration Facility is therefore:

***To make strategic contributions to addressing priority systemic barriers so that existing actors can expand and extend collective work to deliver high-quality education services in crises.***

The impact of these efforts will feed into investments from ECW and other actors to ensure that more girls and boys and youth in crisis contexts are reached more quickly with quality, inclusive and gender-responsive education.

## Strategic Approach

This goal will be achieved through financing initiatives that strategically contribute to addressing a prioritized subset of the main systemic issues. The rationale for prioritising these, is that there are a multitude of systemic obstacles and associated national and global response gaps in EiEPC<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> ECW defines “children and youth” as those aged between 3-18 years old

<sup>3</sup> Taken from the ODI Report, Proposing a Fund for Education in Emergencies, May 2016

<sup>4</sup> See page 13 of ODI Report, idem

Given the capacity of the ECW Secretariat, the likely budget envelope and to ensure meaningful impact, the Acceleration Facility will focus its efforts on the systemic issues which have the greatest linkages with ECW's other investment windows.

Four key priority systemic issues will thus be addressed over the period 2019-21. These are summarised in the table below.

#### Priority Systemic Obstacles to be addressed by the Acceleration Facility

1. **Insufficient funding** to cover all education needs across all crises
2. **Inadequate capacity** to lead, coordinate and deliver effective, innovative, gender responsive and inclusive EiEPC response and recovery efforts, both nationally and internationally
3. **Lack of up-to-date quality data and analysis** to inform decisions on education response
4. **Weak political will, policies and programmatic guidance** to ensure the delivery of high-quality, inclusive EiEPC services

These four systemic obstacles will be addressed through targeted actions grouped together under two strategic objectives as follows (outlined in more detail in section 2 below):

- **Identify, foster and scale-up innovations** in both programming and financing (targeting systemic obstacles 1 and 2)
- **Strengthen systemic capacity** at national, regional and global levels to prepare for, and respond to, sudden onset and protracted crises (targeting systemic obstacles 2, 3 and 4)

Out of the four systemic obstacles outlined above, investments to address the second one on inadequate capacity to lead, coordinate and deliver EiEPC response and recovery efforts (which will span both strategic objectives) will be prioritised and thus it is anticipated that a larger proportion of funding will be allocated to these initiatives (see indicative budget in Section 6). In common with the rest of ECW's programming, issues relating to gender, protection, inclusion and equity will cut across these strategic objectives and this approach is outlined further in Section 4 – Cross-Cutting Themes.

The efforts supported by the Acceleration Facility will eliminate or reduce these targeted systemic barriers so that national governments, implementing agencies and existing actors can expand, extend and enhance their on-going collective work to deliver high-quality, gender responsive and inclusive education services in EiEPC contexts. This in turn will help address the humanitarian-development nexus by building resilience and promoting risk-informed sector planning.

It is important that the initiatives to be funded by the Acceleration Facility are rooted in the field and link in (as the diagram on the previous pages shows), where possible, to ECW's two other funding modalities. The main approach therefore through which ECW will pursue the goal of the Acceleration Facility is by financing initiatives that increase the efficiency, effectiveness, equity and impact of its investments under the First Emergency Response and

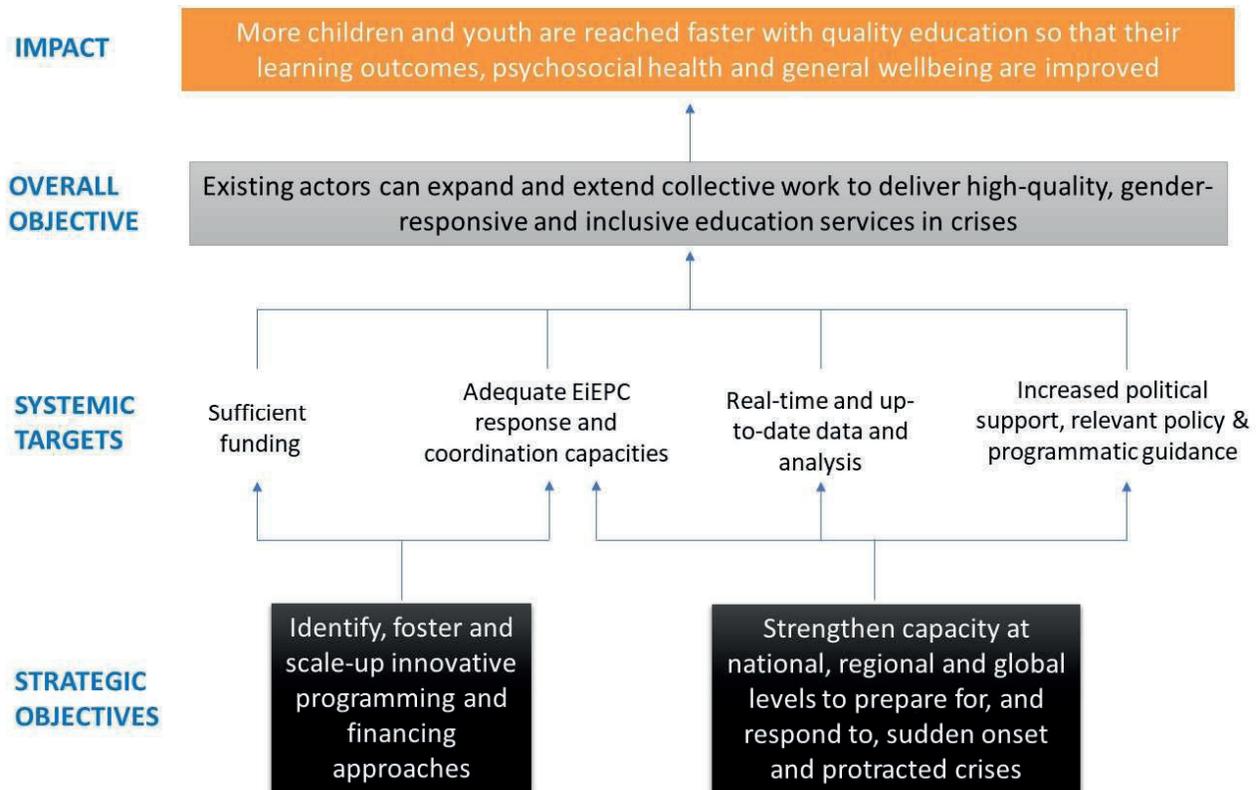
Multi-Year Resilience Programmes. This however does not preclude ECW investing in the wider EiEPC ecosystem to help strengthen humanitarian education preparedness and response mechanisms and raise additional funding. This Strategy retains the flexibility to support work which contributes to that bigger picture.

ECW will capitalize on existing and emerging global systems, networks and regional structures to disseminate and share evidence and lessons learned and promote these systemic changes for these to be taken up by other stakeholders elsewhere. This will include working closely with (a) the Inter-agency Network of Education in Emergencies (including its various thematic working groups); (b) the Global Education Cluster; (c) the Global Partnership for Education (through its Knowledge and Innovation Exchange); (d) the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative; (e) the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development; (f) the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack; and (g) Humanity and Inclusion, inter alia.

The catalytic investments that ECW will make through this facility are aligned with its five strategic objectives and core functions: (a) increasing political commitment and financing for education in emergencies, (b) improving joint planning and responses, (c) strengthening capacity to respond and improving accountability, (d) leveraging additional financing, and (e) bridging the humanitarian-development gap and promoting the localization agenda.

### Theory of Change

The Theory of Change which underpins this Strategy is based on a logical series of arguments which link the outputs from the strategic objectives, through to the changes in the systemic obstacles and on to the impact. This is outlined in the diagram below:



The outputs of the efforts supported to reach these targets will also contribute to the global EiEPC evidence-base through the production of, and investment in, global and regional public goods. This is explained further in Section 3 below.



## 2. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The two strategic objectives outlined above in the Theory of Change are explained in further detail below, together with some indicative strategic actions that illustrate the approaches and kinds of initiatives which could be funded. The rationale for this approach is that it outlines in broad terms the key objectives and, rather than prescribing a fixed set of strategic actions, gives flexibility as to how the objective will actually be achieved.

It is important to highlight that both strategic objectives contribute to the systemic target of ensuring adequate capacities to lead, coordinate and deliver effective, innovative, gender responsive and inclusive EiEPC response and recovery efforts (Systemic Obstacle 2). The first objective achieves this through supporting the identification of, and support to, innovative approaches focussing primarily on the programmatic content of responses. The second objective is more geared towards helping to strengthen systemic capacities around coordination, data and policy development.

The summary of the Strategic Objectives and the systemic obstacles which they address is shown below:

### Strategic Objective A: Identify, foster and scale-up Innovations

Addressing Systemic Obstacle 1: ***Insufficient funding to cover all education needs across all crises***

Addressing Systemic Obstacle 2: ***Inadequate capacity to lead, coordinate and deliver effective, innovative, gender responsive and inclusive EiEPC response and recovery efforts, both nationally and internationally***

### Strategic Objective B: Strengthen Systemic Capacities

Addressing Systemic Obstacle 2: ***Inadequate capacity to lead, coordinate and deliver effective, innovative, gender responsive and inclusive EiEPC response and recovery efforts, both nationally and internationally***

Addressing Systemic Obstacle 3: ***Lack of up-to-date quality data and analysis to inform decisions on education response***

Addressing Systemic Obstacle 4: ***Weak political will, policies and programmatic guidance to ensure the delivery of high-quality, inclusive EiEPC services***

A set of indicators related to these systemic obstacles which will enable progress against the strategy to be monitored is outlined in Section 8. Systemic Obstacle 2 (across the two objectives) is the priority obstacle to be addressed.

## Strategic Objective A: Identify, foster and scale-up Innovations

### *Addressing Systemic Obstacle 1: Insufficient funding to cover all education needs across all crises*

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ECW seeks to close the \$8.5 billion funding gap needed to reach 75 million children and youth in EiEPC by 2030. Relying predominantly on existing donors and traditional sources of funding risk falling short of this target. New, innovative financing models need to be rigorously pursued to diversify the funding base and bring more and better funds to support EiEPC efforts.

### *Indicative Strategic Actions*

ECW will explore and implement financing opportunities as laid out in the ECW Approach to Innovative Financing which was approved by the ECW High-Level Steering Group in September 2018. ECW aims to serve as a catalyst to stimulate and fund new and innovative financing solutions. The approach will focus on:

- Mobilizing resources by implementing ideas surfaced through an innovation challenge and exploring alternative financing models (eg Islamic finance); and
- Financing modalities that help manage delivery risk and bring together and empower different financing and implementation partners such as impact bonds and related forms of outcome investing; and
- Exploring concessional finance which can contribute to education outcomes in Middle Income Countries impacted by refugee influxes, natural disasters, or sub-national conflict through collaboration with the International Finance Facility for Education and Multilateral Development Banks; and
- Addressing unpredictable funding needs for First Emergency Responses through contingent finance, parametric insurance, access to capital and risk transfer to the markets; and
- Piloting new innovative financing modalities including those intended to lift barriers associated with gender discrimination, and other intersecting inequalities such as age and disability.

At the same time, the approach recognizes that new ideas and financing opportunities will be evaluated and considered as they emerge, because innovation requires an adaptive approach, agility and continual learning.

***Addressing Systemic Obstacle 2: Inadequate capacity to lead, coordinate and deliver effective, innovative, gender responsive and inclusive EiEPC response and recovery efforts, both nationally and internationally***

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There is limited evidence on how to deliver holistic and quality learning in EiEPC, or how to scale effective education innovations in these challenging environments. In addition, there are a limited number of actors operating in the field of innovation in EiEPC who could enter into a partnership quickly without a lengthy contracting process.

***Indicative Strategic Actions***

The Acceleration Facility will work with existing partners to: support evidence building and the identification and curation of promising innovations which could support teaching and learning in crises with limited humanitarian access; evaluate the extent to which they are having an impact as well as how, for whom, under what conditions and at what cost (or understand limits to this ambition); and help efficient approaches and successful innovations to access resources and expertise to go to scale. Actions in support of this approach may include:

- Developing a partnership with actors who have expertise and a track record in building the evidence on education innovations and improving accountability in EiEPC settings. For example, the Humanitarian Education Accelerator, funded by DFID and implemented in partnership by UNICEF and UNHCR. This is currently supporting five innovations to scale and generating evidence on the process and impact.
- Identifying promising education innovations and tools for the provision of holistic, quality, gender responsive and inclusive education. These will focus on innovations which: Bring learning to children and youth who do not have/would otherwise not have had access or been able to use existing learning materials; support male and female teachers; relate to data, including sex and age disaggregated data; and focus on education sector governance including between EiEPC settings, host communities and governments.
- Evaluating innovations which have been identified, both in terms of the process of scaling (how to do this successfully) and in terms of the impact of the innovations.
- Supporting cohort development and training which could include support for: monitoring, evaluation and research; strengthening gender responsive and inclusive approaches; and for organizational capacity building.
- Funding successful innovations to take them to scale. A number of innovations may be selected and given funding to scale them up. This will complement the cohort development and training outlined above.
- Investing and strengthening the evidence base around promising innovative approaches to create a global good. This aspect will build on the evidence and information generated from the actions above to coordinate and disseminate findings of what works with respect to education innovation impact and scaling, creating a useable library of resources for stakeholders looking at innovative and inclusive approaches to EiEPC.

## Strategic Objective B: Strengthen Systemic Capacities

***Addressing Systemic Obstacle 2: Inadequate capacity to lead, coordinate and deliver effective, innovative, gender responsive and inclusive EiEPC response and recovery efforts, both nationally and internationally***

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The development of high quality joint multi-year programmes assumes that EiEPC actors at country level have sufficient capacity to coordinate, develop, implement and monitor robust plans which embrace best practices and innovative solutions. Yet, for a variety of reasons, capacity is sometimes limited and/or over-stretched in crisis situations, with short-term planning and financing constraints often promoting a tendency to focus on inputs.

### ***Indicative Strategic Actions***

The Acceleration Facility will invest in strengthening capacity for response and recovery, working with partners to identify and fill capacity gaps in specific crises and supporting broader global efforts to increase capacity across the education sector. These efforts may include:

- Strengthening coordination and accountability mechanisms at country level via the Global Education Cluster. The Cluster approach is based on the principles of partnerships and accountability, by working within the framework of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle. This framework establishes accountabilities through a transparent, collaborative process which ensures their application through commitments and policies to affected people.
- Supporting global partners such as UNHCR, the Global Education Cluster and the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies to strengthen their capacities to be able to rapidly deploy experts to support the development of effective, risk-informed, gender-responsive and inclusive Multi-Year Resilience Programmes. This expertise will be able to support both the process of developing Cluster/Education in Emergency Working Group strategies and ECW-facilitated plans as well as building the capacity of local partners on the technical content. For example, support to ensuring that forcibly displaced people are included in national education plans, and better integrated with longer-term plans for education services and that issues related to gender, and inclusion are properly addressed.
- Strengthen capacity to deliver education outcomes through new and innovative ways of planning, financing, and implementing education programmes including: mobilization of global and local capacity for technical and strategic engagement such as gender, inclusion and protection mainstreaming within EiEPC; strengthening gender capacity at country level to improve coordination and gender responsive programming; developing training packages and facilitating access to training opportunities to build capacity in relation to the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of gender responsive and inclusive approaches to EiEPC; and developing and/or disseminating existing tools, guidelines, and checklists to support partners to design, deliver, and evaluate gender responsive and inclusive approaches.
- Develop a mechanism for identifying and mobilizing gender expertise to support countries implementing Multi-Year Resilience Programmes.

### ***Addressing Systemic Obstacle 3: Lack of real-time and up-to-date data and analysis to inform decisions on education response***

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In EiEPC contexts, national governments and local authorities are often side-lined in the design of assessment tools and ineffective and at times parallel information systems exist, leaving gaps in data collection and analysis. Lack of regular data collection, leaves in-country actors unclear on the scale of crises, particularly those that change rapidly, as well as data on teachers and quality of programmes and their impact.

This situation is compounded by insufficient analysis of existing data and assessments, with tools that tend to be too narrow, focusing on access and primary education, rather than the full range of needs. Data is often ineffectively used, making it difficult to communicate priorities and needs and there is a limited amount of research in this area and lack of application of lessons from existing research.

#### ***Indicative Strategic Actions***

ECW will improve accountability and knowledge of 'what works' through investing in the collection and analysis of accurate, timely, sex- and age-disaggregated data and information on EiEPC, working with governments and other humanitarian and development partners to communicate needs, progress and investment opportunities. This may include:

- Supporting the improvement of system approaches for strengthening EiEPC needs assessments and analysis including assessment of gender and intersecting inequalities and psychosocial support.
- Supporting evidence generation and dissemination on what works, and what does not work, to improve learning outcomes for girls and boys in EiEPC. This could be done through supporting programmes working to improve the production and dissemination of evidence on learning outcomes as well as broader child development outcomes through EiEPC programming. This could also entail: support to organizations carrying out specific research and analysis in one or several countries; developing methodological briefs, conceptual frameworks and helping strengthen institutions and standards; as well as catalogue the gendered impact of programmatic interventions and preparation of case studies.
- Strengthening assessment of child and youth development outcomes through supporting the development of stronger measurement systems and tools for assessing holistic outcomes in the context of EiEPC. This will include investing in advancing assessments of socio-emotional competencies and psycho-social well-being of children and youth. Currently many of the existing EiEPC initiatives lack strong measures on child development at outcome level, and where they are integrated, the tools are often too complicated to be implemented in EiEPC settings. A special emphasis will be on supporting the development and implementation of stronger learning assessment systems at global, regional and country levels.
- Strengthening evidence generation and dissemination around gender responsive and transformative approaches. This may include investing in research to explore the links between gender responsive pedagogy and improved learning outcomes. It may also include exploring how best to capitalize on the opportunities that may be presented in crisis contexts to challenge underlying gender and power dynamics and promote transformative change.

#### ***Addressing Systemic Obstacle 4: Weak political will, policies and programmatic guidance to ensure the delivery of high-quality, inclusive EiEPC services***

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The lack of sufficient focus on education in crises leads to weak responses and insufficient investment. This in turn results in insufficiently rigorous, detailed and funded contingency strategies, needs assessments and implementation plans that could guide actors and donors. Certain groups, such as refugees or displaced people, are forgotten or excluded from their right to education and education facilities continue to come under attack during armed conflict and unrest.

#### ***Indicative Strategic Actions***

ECW seeks to shift education from the margins to the centre in priority setting, policy-making and financing and advocates for stakeholders to uphold the obligations spelt out in the United Nations Resolution on the Right to Education in Emergencies. Through advocacy and mobilization of political commitment, ECW is committed to support collective efforts to prevent, mitigate and respond to attacks on education and, when these occur, make clear that impunity will not be allowed to stand. Actions in support of these approaches may include:

- In line with ECW's advocacy strategy, support efforts to build and grow national, regional and international political support improved accountability mechanisms and processes designed to deliver more and better education in humanitarian crises.
- In line with the Global Compact on Refugees and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, support to global, regional and country level entities to advocate for the inclusion of refugees into national education systems and work implied therein, such as the development of costed, gender responsive and inclusive sector plans.
- Supporting the operationalization and contextualization of the INEE Minimum Standards.
- Contributing to initiatives working towards pathways for regional certification. For example, the Djibouti Declaration and Action Plan (2017), signed by IGAD member states includes a focus on developing pathways to certification that can be used anywhere within this region. A similar initiative, albeit with a potentially more global perspective, is being undertaken by UNICEF.
- Support to organisations such as the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack which advocates for the protection of students, teachers, schools, and universities from attack and calls for adherence to existing international law that protects education. Support could be given to amplify their efforts to strengthen international norms and standards, as well as country-level advocacy and policy development to end impunity for attacks on education by promoting and supporting a range of accountability measures.



### 3. CONTRIBUTING TO GLOBAL PUBLIC GOODS

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It is important to highlight that, in support of systemic changes, ECW defines global public goods as *entities* working within the EiEPC arena and *products* (see footnote ii). ECW will therefore:

- A. Invest in *entities* which are addressing the targeted systemic challenges (as outlined in section 2 above). For example, to ensure that any research becomes a global or regional public good, ECW will support the development of new, and strengthening of existing, knowledge sharing platforms and initiatives geared towards disseminating these research and evaluation products among a wider group of stakeholders, including national governments, programme staff and academia. This will also include support to initiatives strengthening the exchange of EiEPC data using common data formats, databases and terminologies. Coordination with the Global Partnership for Education's data quality and collection initiatives will be ensured to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication and/or overlap.
  
- B. Work through these entities and others to disseminate and promote *products* on the learning and evidence, as actionable knowledge, from the outputs of Acceleration Facility funded initiatives. Where possible, the generation of this actionable knowledge will be built into each investment under the Acceleration Facility. Thus, initiatives should be able to effectively carry out their planned activities, document the evidence and learning produced from these and then produce the necessary country/regional/global public goods. In the event that additional, unforeseen public goods and/or efforts to promote and disseminate these are required, the Acceleration Facility retains the flexibility to finance these up to a maximum of \$100,000.



## 4. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

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Implemented in the humanitarian-peace-development nexus, the Acceleration Facility ascribes to the position that the constituencies targeted by the two strategic objectives (outlined in Section 2 above) are potential agents of change. These include girls and boys, women and men living in (protracted) conflicts and disasters irrespective of characteristics that may exclude them from education, including disability, displacement status, age and ethnic minority status. ECW is committed to an approach to innovation in which key cross-cutting themes are mainstreamed as an integral part of innovative solutions and capacity building/strengthening. For the purposes of Acceleration Facility, the cross-cutting themes are protection, gender, equity and inclusion. Mainstreaming these themes contributes to more responsive investments and better meeting of needs because it takes into account specific issues that “cut across” various settings and impact on different levels of education.

### Protection

As the Strategic Plan highlights “ECW places protection at centre of its investments, encompassing the protection of students, teachers and schools. It supports interventions that ensure physical, psychosocial, and cognitive protection that can sustain and save lives, while also advocating for legal protection under international law”. The Acceleration Facility will contribute to this aim through ensuring that systemic protection issues are addressed directly, for example through supporting work on the Safe Schools Declaration as well as by embedding protection initiatives into each of the strategic objectives. For example, ensuring that innovative approaches also tackle protection issues and that strengthening data collection efforts encompass data and evidence around protection challenges.

### Gender Mainstreaming

Innovative solutions mean that boys and girls must have equal rights and opportunities in access, attainment of education and learning. Mainstreaming of gender in innovations and systemic capacity building happens at three levels: (1) organizational capacity and staffing; (2) programme design and delivery; and (3) accountability.

With regard to the nature of intervention, a gender impact assessment of innovation/capacity building needs to be completed, with the aim of avoiding reproducing discrimination on the grounds of gender and to promote equality between girls and boys, women and men. While some innovations/capacity building interventions may appear gender neutral in their content, in practice they may have a very differential impact on girls and boys, women and men, and thereby result in reinforcing existing inequalities. In a bid to overcome such challenges, all innovation and capacity building initiatives under Acceleration Facility will be designed, implemented and report on gender mainstreaming.

Regarding programmatic engagement, policy environments in crises contexts may not always be responsive to gender equality issues; these issues are often challenging to operationalize. Partners may not have the technical skills, or resources to integrate gender considerations into programming. The Acceleration Facility will invest tools and resources, including

checklists and mechanisms for mobilizing in country resources to mainstream gender in investments.

Lastly, on accountability, more responsible investments mean taking into consideration that the interests and needs of girls and boys, women and men can often be different, requiring different approaches. Reflecting on and responding to these through targeted approaches including addressing barriers to access to, and completion of, education is a key concern for Acceleration Facility investments. Annual gender reviews focusing inter alia on how investments in innovation and capacity building are impacting change will be one of the instruments through which ECW checks on the “health” of gender mainstreaming in investments. The ECW Gender Strategy and Policy and its Implementation Plan frame all these engagements.

## **Equity and Inclusion Mainstreaming**

Although not unique to crises, gender intersects with demographic markers, such as age, disability status or structures such as ethnic or sexual minority status to produce persistent, systematic inequality where certain groups are excluded from interventions because of social and cultural perceptions. Depending on resources and capacity, certain groups such as disabled girls, internally displaced ethnic minorities may be more vulnerable due to their invisibility or perceived importance in them gaining human and social capital. To counter this, equity and inclusion mainstreaming in innovations and capacity building will mean that such interventions will facilitate the recognition of ‘intersectionality’ thereby addressing cumulative and combined inequalities. Through impact assessment and targeted interventions, the Acceleration Facility will ensure that the needs of these vulnerable groups are addressed. Innovations that foresee built-in provisions for the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, use of affirmative action or targeted approaches will be supported and monitored to ensure that gains for one social category do not lead to losses for another.



## 5. OPERATIONAL MODALITIES<sup>iii</sup>

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The Strategy will be operationalized through a combination of two modalities depending on the specific actions to be funded under each strategic objective. The Section on Management and Implementation in Section 7 below outlines which actions employ the appropriate modality. All awards will be made using ECW's standard Grant Confirmation Letter (GCL) and Acceleration Facility Programme Document.

### **MODALITY 1: Requests for Proposals**

Requests for Proposals (RFPs) will be issued in situations where several potential partners are operating and where the time-frames allow for such a process.

#### ***Grantee Eligibility***

- a) ECW will maintain broad eligibility in this facility, allowing all types of organizations and entities to apply, where applicable to the project (e.g., academia, civil society, private sector), provided that they have been HACT assessed as being either "low" or "medium" risk. Other parties may receive funds as implementing partners of direct grantees in with their respective policies on sub-grants.
- b) Some RFPs may be more applicable to a select group or organization (e.g., specific organizations with particular mandates). RFPs will specify the qualifications required.
- c) All applying entities will need to demonstrate that they have the necessary capacity and capabilities to deliver on proposed projects within required timeframes.

#### ***Requesting and selecting proposals***

- a) The ECW Secretariat will issue an RFP and launch a proposal process for the strategic actions that have been identified as requiring an RFP. This will be done on a rolling basis throughout the period of the strategy.
- b) The ECW Secretariat may also issue a targeted RFP in response to a specific need that has been identified outside of the strategic planning process, if it is in the Acceleration Facility's scope.
- c) To provide ample time for applicants to prepare applications, the ECW Secretariat will share RFPs as early as possible and share forecasts of potential RFPs when possible (e.g., via the ECW website).
- d) External reviewers will score proposals for RFPs exceeding \$500,000 and the ECW Secretariat will review RFPs of \$500,000 or lesser value. RFPs reviewed by external reviewers will be recommended to the ECW Executive Committee for approval. The ECW Director will approve RFPs reviewed by the ECW Secretariat.
- e) The duration and maximum funding level of each grant will differ by RFP and will be clearly defined in the RFP.

- f) The criteria used to evaluate proposals will differ by RFP and will be defined in each RFP. These criteria will be informed by a set of clearly defined principles, including:
  - a. Potential for impact at a global or regional level,
  - b. Likelihood of implementation success,
  - c. Value for money,
  - d. Past performance of the applicant,
  - e. Capacity and capabilities of applicant.
  - f. Attention within the proposal to gender and other axes of marginalization and exclusion
  
- g) The ECW Secretariat will not accept unsolicited proposals but will share promising ideas included within unsolicited proposals with EiEPC partners to help facilitate other funding opportunities for these ideas.

### ***Funding proposals***

The Secretariat will retain the management flexibility to vary the grant design based on the specific needs of proposals – including but not limited to varying:

- a) The grant duration. As much as possible efforts will be made to ensure that grants align with the ECW Strategic Plan (and thus do not extend beyond the end of 2021).
- b) The fund disbursement frequency and requirements (e.g. upfront disbursement only, multiple stages based on results).

### ***Grantee Support***

- a) ECW's support in the Acceleration Facility will be focused on serving as a connector between grantees and other partners. It will leverage its network and provide relevant contacts where helpful.
- b) The Acceleration Facility's proposal process will be designed to ensure that the grantee has the capacity and capabilities to deliver on the project proposal with limited further support or has a clear plan to use the funds to build required capacity with particular attention to capacity in gender responsive and inclusive approaches.
- c) Beyond serving as a connector, ECW will also partner with private sector consortia to marshal in-kind support from the private sector for EiEPC. To facilitate this, the ECW Secretariat will share information on in-kind support opportunities with its network.

### ***Coordination with Other Actors***

- a) Disseminating information regarding calls for proposals: During the Acceleration Facility's RFP process, global and in-country partners will be engaged to ensure wide advertising of the opportunity, aiming to increase the size and diversity of the applicant pool.
- b) Implementing projects and scaling solutions: ECW will encourage Acceleration Facility grantees to work with ECW partners and First Emergency Response and Multi-Year Resilience Programme grantees during implementation and scaling, where there is overlapping interest or focus.

## MODALITY 2: Targeted Support

In situations where there are not enough potential grantees performing the work identified as a priority in the strategy to justify an RFP process, the ECW Director may select a grantee provided that the grant is equal or less than the Director's delegated authority of \$500,000. Upon the recommendation of the Secretariat, The Executive Committee may approve targeted Acceleration Facility grants exceeding US\$500,000.

This modality will be employed where:

- There is already an existing, similar initiative/partnership, into which Acceleration Funds can be applied to expand the scope and/or the depth of the approach; or
- The partner organization to be funded is mandated as the only entity undertaking that specific function.

### **Grantee Eligibility**

- a) ECW will maintain broad eligibility for this modality, considering all types of organizations and entities with which to develop partnership agreements (e.g., academia, civil society, private sector), provided that they have been micro-assessed as either "low" or "medium" risk under the HACT Framework.
- b) All entities will need to demonstrate that they have the necessary capacity and capabilities to deliver on proposed projects within the required time frame.

### **Selecting Partners**

- a) Partners which have already been identified for specific strategic actions, using the three criteria above
- b) The ECW Secretariat retains the flexibility to select other partners who respond to the selection criteria but who may have not yet been identified.
- c) The Executive Committee may request the ECW secretariat to initiate a partnership and approve funding for a particular potential grantee.
- d) The ECW Executive Committee will approve grants exceeding \$500,000 and the ECW Director will approve grants of \$500,000 or less.
- e) The ECW Secretariat will not accept unsolicited proposals for funding but will review and share promising ideas included within unsolicited proposals with EiEPC partners to help facilitate other funding opportunities for these ideas.

### **Funding proposals**

The Secretariat will retain the management flexibility to vary the partnership design based on the specific needs – including but not limited to varying:

- a) The partnership duration. As much as possible efforts will be made to ensure that partnerships align with the ECW Strategic Planning period (and thus do not extend beyond the end of 2021)
- b)** The fund disbursement frequency and requirements (e.g., upfront disbursement only, multiple stages based on results)



## 6. INDICATIVE BUDGET

Strategic Objective A: Identify, foster and scale-up Innovations		2019	2020	2021	Total
Addressing Systemic Obstacle 1:	<i>Insufficient funding to cover all education needs across all crises</i>	\$ 650,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 1,450,000
Addressing Systemic Obstacle 2:	<i>Inadequate capacity to lead, coordinate and deliver effective, innovative, gender responsive and inclusive EiEPC response and recovery efforts, both nationally and internationally</i>	\$ 2,200,000	\$ 3,850,000	\$ 4,800,000	\$ 10,850,000
					<b>\$ 12,300,000</b>
Strategic Objective B: Strengthen Systemic Capacities		2019	2020	2021	Total
Addressing Systemic Obstacle 2:	<i>Inadequate capacity to lead, coordinate and deliver effective, innovative, gender responsive and inclusive EiEPC response and recovery efforts, both nationally and internationally</i>	\$ 1,250,000	\$ 1,542,500	\$ 1,982,500	\$ 4,775,000
Addressing Systemic Obstacle 3:	<i>Lack of up-to-date quality data and analysis to inform decisions on education response</i>	\$ 550,000	\$ 1,077,500	\$ 1,607,500	\$ 3,235,000
Addressing Systemic Obstacle 4:	<i>Weak political will, policies and programmatic guidance to ensure the delivery of high-quality, inclusive EiEPC services</i>	\$ 950,000	\$ 830,000	\$ 1,010,000	\$ 2,790,000
					<b>\$ 10,800,000</b>
Support learning and evidence dissemination		\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$300,000
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>		<b>\$ 5,700,000</b>	<b>\$ 7,700,000</b>	<b>\$ 10,000,000</b>	<b>\$ 23,400,000</b>

These figures are for indicative purposes only and the ECW Director and Secretariat reserve the right to adjust them according to the evolving needs and priorities to be supported by this strategy. In addition, as is outlined in Section 1, Systemic Obstacle 2 is the priority which is why it will receive a larger proportion of the available funding.



## 7. MANAGEMENT & IMPLEMENTATION

Accountability for the management of the strategic objectives and associated strategic actions will lie with ECW Secretariat. Identification of risks and mitigation measures for the Acceleration Facility will be incorporated into ECW's overall risk portfolio. Child-safeguarding measures will also be applied throughout the proposed actions.

Responsibility for the implementation of the Strategy will be divided across the Secretariat as follows:

### Strategic Objective A: Identify, foster and scale-up Innovations

<b>Systemic Obstacle</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Approach &amp; Funding modality</b>
<i>1. Insufficient funding to cover all education needs across all crises</i>	<i>ECW Innovative Finance Specialist</i>	<i>This work will be handled internally (mixture of modalities 1 and 2)</i>
<i>2. Inadequate capacity to lead, coordinate and deliver effective, innovative, gender responsive and inclusive EiEPC response and recovery efforts, both nationally and internationally</i>	<i>Senior Education Adviser</i>	<i>This whole part of Strategic Objective A will be contracted out (modality 2)</i>

### Strategic Objective B: Strengthen Systemic Capacities

<b>Systemic Obstacle</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Approach &amp; Funding modality</b>
<i>2. Inadequate capacity to lead, coordinate and deliver effective, innovative, gender responsive and inclusive EiEPC response and recovery efforts, both nationally and internationally</i>	<i>Senior Education Adviser</i>	<i>The majority of these actions will be undertaken by existing partners through targeted support (modality 2)</i>
<i>3. Lack of up-to-date quality data and analysis to inform decisions on education response</i>	<i>Senior Economist</i>	<i>The proposed actions will be handled internally (mixture of modalities 1 and 2)</i>
<i>4. Weak political will, policies and programmatic guidance to ensure the delivery of high-quality, inclusive EiEPC services</i>	<i>Senior Advisor on Coordination, Development and Strategic Planning</i>	<i>The proposed actions will be handled internally (mostly modality 2)</i>

As the responsibility for implementing this strategy lies across several of the ECW workstreams and will involve a mixture of requests for proposals and targeted support, the sequencing of activities will vary. In line with the cross-cutting themes of the Strategy, the implementation of both of the strategic objectives will be supported by the Education Specialist – (Gender) and the Education Specialist (Inclusive Education and Protection Specialist).

An implementation plan accompanies this strategy and outlines in greater detail how it will be operationalized and what specific investments will be supported over the 2019-2021 period. Particular emphasis will be placed in 2019 on getting the innovations piece up and running (including innovative financing) together with investments in systemic capacity building through the Global Education Cluster and supporting improvements in data collection in EiEPC.



## 8. MONITORING

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Progress against this strategy will be monitored using a set of indicators related to each of the systemic obstacles to be addressed as follows:

### Outcome Indicators

All Acceleration Facility investments should contribute to the following longer-term beneficiary outcome indicators:

1. Percentage of ECW-supported programs with increased access to education for crisis affected children and youth (once two data points become available)
2. Gender parity index for primary/lower secondary completion rates in countries in protracted crises targeted by ECW
3. Percentage of ECW-supported programs with increasing survival, transition or completion of crisis-affected children and youth (once two data points become available)
4. Percentage of ECW-supported programs with increasing learning/skills outcomes for crisis-affected children and youth (once two data points become available)
5. Share of ECW-supported schools and learning environments meeting safe learning standards (once a standard indicator is approved)

### Systemic Indicators

At the intermediate level, AF investments should contribute to the following systemic outcomes and indicators:

#### **Outcome 1: Have we raised more funds through innovative financing?**

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*Indicator 1.1:* Proportion of funding raised and leveraged as a result of: i) innovative financing and ii) non-traditional and private sources

#### **Outcome 2: Have we identified, assessed and scaled up innovations in crises contexts and has this made a difference to children's learning?**

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*Indicator 2.1:* Percentage/number of innovations supported by ECW satisfying quality standards in terms of evidence, strategy and scalability (rubric indicator)

*Indicator 2.2:* Number of children reached through ECW-supported innovations

#### **Outcome 3: Have we increased capacity to lead, coordinate and deliver in crises?**

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*Indicator 3.1:* Proportion of ECW multi-year proposals developed through relevant humanitarian and development mechanisms and/or evidence of collaboration between humanitarian and development agencies.

*Indicator 3.2:* Percentage of cluster countries where cluster lead agencies have full time dedicated cluster staff (Coordinator and Information Manager)

*Indicator 3.3:* Percentage of ECW-supported countries with well-functioning learning assessment system (rubric indicator)

*Indicator 3.4:* Percentage of ECW-supported countries with quality standards defined and implemented consistent with the INEE minimum standards (rubric indicator)

*Indicator 3.5:* Percentage of ECW funding allocated to local and national responders as directly as possible to improve outcomes for affected people and reduce transactional costs, in accordance with the Grand Bargain commitment

*Indicator 3.6* Percentage of ECW supported multi-year programmes based on a quality<sup>5</sup> needs assessment and risk analysis

**Outcome 4: Have we contributed to ensuring that more timely, reliable and quality data in crises is available and being used to develop better programmes?**

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*Indicator 4.1:* Percentage of ECW-supported programs planning to measure/measuring affected communities' access to education.

*Indicator 4.2:* Percentage of ECW-supported programs planning to measure/measuring survival, transition or completion for crisis-affected children and youth.

*Indicator 4.3:* Percentage of ECW-supported multi-year programs planning to measure/measuring learning/skills outcomes of crisis-affected children and youth.

*Indicator 4.4:* Share of ECW-supported programs intending to measure/measuring protection outcomes.

*Indicator 4.5:* Percentage of ECW-supported multi-year programmes that monitor at least two collective education outcomes

*Indicator 4.6:* Percentage of countries in protracted crises targeted by ECW with EMIS providing disaggregated data (rubric indicator)

**Outcome 5: Have we increased political will and commitment and contributed to progressive policy developments?**

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*Indicator 5.1:* Percentage of countries in protracted crises targeted by ECW with gender-responsive education systems

*Indicator 5.2:* Percentage of countries in protracted crises targeted by ECW with inclusive education for children and youth with disabilities

*Indicator 5.3:* Percentage of countries in protracted crises targeted by ECW with policies regarding inclusion of refugees and internally displaced persons

*Indicator 5.4:* Proportion of humanitarian appeals that include an education component

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<sup>5</sup> Quality will be assessed using a set of criteria such as the following: done jointly and coordinated; including a risk analysis (conflict and/or disaster risk); based on voices of beneficiaries (AAP) and incorporating an implementation capacity assessment

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>i</sup> Education in emergencies refers to the quality, inclusive learning opportunities for all ages in situations of crisis, including early childhood development, primary, secondary, non-formal, technical, vocational, higher and adult education. Education in emergencies provides physical, psychosocial, and cognitive protection that can sustain and save lives. Common situations of crisis in which education in emergencies is essential include conflicts, protracted crises, situations of violence, forced displacement, disasters, and public health emergencies. Education in emergencies is a wider concept than 'emergency education response' which is an essential part of it.

<sup>ii</sup> ECW defines global public goods as both *products* as well as *entities* that can be used in a wide array of crises to improve response, build capacity and deepen the results of education in emergencies and protracted crises. They are non-rivalrous and have positive externalities such as research, data, tools and policies as well as capacities of organisations working in the EiEPC space.

<sup>iii</sup> The modalities outlined in this section will need to be reflected in the upcoming update of the ECW Operations, Governance and Financial Manual and are therefore subject to change depending on the outcomes of that process.