



The global fund for education in emergencies

Executive Committee Meeting – Minutes

Thursday 17 March 2022

Summary of the outcomes of the meeting

Welcome

The Chair

- Welcomed participants and recalled key points and outcomes from the last ExCom teleconference on 22 November 2021 such as the approval of ECW's 2022 Annual Workplan and Operational budget, the addition of Myanmar back on to the list of priority MYRP countries, and the approval of ECW's initial funding target of USD 1 billion, which had since grown to USD 1.5 billion as suggested during recent Strategic Plan consultations. The USD 1.5 billion will need to be approved by ExCom.
- The Chair thanked Germany for their ground-breaking contribution to ECW with an additional 200 million Euros, transforming ECW into a billion-dollar fund (USD 1.1 billion in the Trust Fund).
- Before giving the floor to the ECW Director for a global update, the Chair outlined the agenda for the meeting as follows:
 - 1) Director's Update
 - 2) Ukraine FER and Related Investments
 - 3) Update on the Development of the Strategic Plan
 - 4) ECW High-Level Financing Event
 - 5) Drafting of UNICEF Hosting Agreement
 - 6) Organisational Evaluation
 - 7) HLSG Agenda and Planning
 - 8) AoB

1- Director's update

The ECW Director provided an update to the ExCom on ECW's recent progress and priorities:

- She thanked Germany for their historic contribution and their ExCom representative for her instrumental role in securing this contribution.
- The Ukraine FER was released the day before the ExCom meeting with thanks to the ExCom's non-objection. The Ukraine Minister of Education called on the international community to help Ukraine raise the USD 25 million target set out in the Humanitarian Response Plan prepared by the Education Cluster amongst others. Through the FER, ECW was able to provide a fifth of the total amount of funds requested to aid the grantees and sub-grantees responding to the crisis and partners are highly encouraged to provide top ups to reach the target set, especially as the needs on the ground were far greater than initially expected. The Secretariat circulated the note from the Ukraine Ministry of Education after the meeting.

- At the time of the meeting, close to four million people had fled Ukraine into neighboring EU countries including 350 000 women and children who have sought refuge in Moldova, a non-EU country. ECW and partners such as Theirworld, USAID and FCDO are currently planning an upcoming joint-mission to Moldova.
- On the upcoming SG's Transforming Education Summit, the Director noted that there were unfortunately no references made in the concept note to education in emergencies and protracted crises and ECW and its UN and civil society stakeholders, all operating within the education and EiEPC spheres. Parties concerned called for the note to be revised to reflect these additions or to involve these actors in the consultations process.
- The Director further thanked the ExCom for its tremendous support since ECW's inception and credited the ExCom for transforming ECW into a billion-dollar fund providing quality education to children and youth who have needed it the most.

2- Ukraine FER & Related Investments

The Chair handed the floor to Graham Lang, Chief of Education, to deliver an update on the investments in Ukraine.

- The Chief of Education thanked the ExCom for their non-objection to the Ukraine FER with such a short turnaround time. The request differed from the standard requests submitted by the Secretariat as the approval was based on indicative actions and assumptions made in a complex environment. As agreed, the Secretariat will only disburse funds once it receives clearer information on the operating environment and context.
- The current context presents many uncertainties, and it is important to highlight that Ukraine has been in a protracted crisis since 2015. The assumption of the Secretariat and key actors on the ground is that current events will further exacerbate the existing crisis and the needs will continue to grow beyond the end of the FER requiring an extended period of support.
- The Secretariat was thus seeking the ExCom's non-objection to add Ukraine on the list of MYRP countries as a priority country by integrating the FER response into a longer-term resilience plan.
- The Secretariat will also be launching a FER in Moldova and is working closely with UNHCR on the refugee response. ECW is currently planning a visit to the region and will update ExCom as planning progresses.

The Chair opened the floor for questions and comments:

- **Education International** endorsed both decisions and noted its support to the people of Ukraine. The plight of refugees was of great concern, but especially that of international migrants, most of them students from Africa and the Middle East, as they have faced racism and have been prevented from accessing the EU and neighboring countries. Education International stressed the need to address both the issues that Ukrainians faced, and the discrimination foreign nationals were subject to.
- **USAID** commended ECW's rapid action on Ukraine through its FER response and asked how the Secretariat would ensure that ExCom members are kept up to date on its interventions as they develop.
- **Germany** commended ECW's rapid response and fully supported establishing a MYRP following the FER.

- **UNHCR** commended ECW for its support to refugees and echoed Education International's comment whilst assuring the ExCom that the High Commissioner would ensure that the response is equitable for all refugees fleeing Ukraine. As the lead partner implementing the response in Moldova, UNHCR advised to slightly delay the launch of the Moldova FER to enable the recently established working groups and coordination mechanism to properly assess the needs.
- **The Youth Constituency** also echoed Education International on the importance of addressing racism directed at African youth in the EU and drew attention to the important work of Ukrainian youth activists and youth-led organisations in responding to the crisis in Ukraine.
- The Global Education Cluster thanked the ECW Secretariat for the excellent collaboration on the Ukraine FER.

The following responses were provided to the above questions and comments:

- The ECW Director reinforced the points made by colleagues and assured the ExCom that as a human rights-based fund, ECW will never make any distinction between the children and youth it serves and will do everything in its power to prevent this from happening.
- The Secretariat will meet internally to discuss and decide how it will communicate with ExCom on these decisions moving forward.

The Chair:

- Reiterated that no minority groups should be overlooked within the responses and provisions made by partners.
- **Noted that no objections were received to add Ukraine on the list of priority MYRP countries.**
- Summarised key points made including the need to ensure inclusion in refugee responses, the request to delay the timing of the Moldova FER and the Secretariat's commitment to update the ExCom on next steps.

3- Update on the Development of the Strategic Plan

The Chair handed the floor to Rachel Besley, A/g Chief of Strategic Planning and Accountability, to provide an update on the steps taken on the development of the Strategic Plan since the last ExCom meeting in November ([See PowerPoint presentation for details](#)):

- The consultation process was divided into three phases: i) consultation phase which will soon come to an end and which is focused on planning and stakeholder consultations; ii) responding to reflections and feedback through the Reflections and Aspirations paper; iii) final drafting and endorsement of the Strategic Plan.
- The ExCom were shown the integrated timeline that was presented at the November 2021 ExCom meeting. It identifies key milestones for the Strategic Plan and the Organisational Evaluation. Both workstreams were on track and expected to meet planned timelines.
- The Secretariat talked through some of the modifications that were made between January-March regarding tasks performed under the Strategic Plan workstream, in particular in relation to the consultation process. The planned milestones from April onwards under both workstreams remain unchanged (as presented at the November 2021 ExCom meeting).
- Looking ahead, some of the key elements to be agreed with ExCom over the coming weeks will be:

- The HLSG Note outlining the broad strategic direction of ECW over the next 4 years, drawing on the consultation feedback gathered. This will present an opportunity for HLSG members to engage with the development of the Strategic Plan.
- An ExCom Strategic Planning workshop is proposed in May 2022, which would dock in between the circulation of the Reflections & Aspirations Paper and the first draft of the Strategic Plan due in June. It will present an opportunity to collectively workshop some outstanding points and build consensus on a way forward before the substantive draft is prepared.
- The Reflections and Aspirations paper will be circulated to the ExCom on 14 April.

Joseph Nhan-O'Reilly, ECW's Strategic Planning Advisor (Consultant), thanked the ExCom for their feedback and contributions towards shaping the next strategic plan and delivered a presentation which reflected some of the insights provided through the consultations process. These insights were grouped and captured into five key areas ([See PowerPoint presentation for details](#)):

- Support for and recognition of ECW's achievements to date – ECW has effectively achieved its primary function of drawing political attention to education in emergencies and delivering results with speed and agility. ECW has also effectively provided 'proof of concept' since its inception and partners have recognised the value of ECW's advocacy in this field.
- Growing needs related to education in emergencies – The continuation or often, spike in conflicts, combined with heightened needs due to climate emergencies have only reinforced ECW's 'raison d'être'. This was further demonstrated through ECW's COVID-19 FER investments.
- Support for education in crisis which reinforces ECW's purpose. Partners expressed great support for the FER window and for education to be further supported in first humanitarian responses. Given the growing number and impact of emergencies and crises, ExCom members noted the need to affirm the FER window in the next Strategic Plan, to ensure that sufficient or increased funding is available and to commit to improvements. The MYRP window, where the bulk of ECW investments go to and which the theory of change contributes to the most, received the most feedback from partners and the most support. For many, the MYRPs represent a critical 'mission add' and specifically provide funding to ECW to support work around the nexus and multi-year funding. A key question that has emerged from consultations is whether it will be feasible to close the financing gap that ECW rightly identifies through fully costed MYRPs. Suggestions received ranged from ECW needing to do more to this end and improve reporting on how funding is aligned and contributing to its MYRPs, to funding which incentivises policy on the ground further to support programming. This incentivisation could lead to big catalytic changes which could impact more children than the direct programming provided by ECW.
- **Impact for children**- This could be addressed if ECW could commit to improving learning in its new Strategic Plan and will most certainly be achieved through the Secretariat's planned work through the Acceleration Facility. Partners identified key thematic priorities, which are consistent with the current thematic priorities.
- **Operations**- Much support was received for ECW's diversification of grantees and for localisation. Some questions warranted further reflection and decisions around benchmarks, activities and indicators in the next strategic period. The ExCom also strongly recommended that more support/staff be provided to the Secretariat across the various strands to absorb the increased workload.

The Chair opened the floor for questions and comments:

- **Education International** - Stressed that much broader consultations with constituencies such as the teacher constituency were still needed and offered to organise a discussion with teachers and teacher union leaders from some of the countries affected by emergencies, conflicts and climate change. Education International highlighted that no references were made to teachers in the current Strategic Plan and this was key to improve learning in the next Strategic Plan. Furthermore, as conflicts are spreading, it is important for ECW to not only respond in terms of financing, but also in terms of advocacy for schools to be safe from attack. Education International concluded by underlining that the Organisational Evaluation and its findings must be made available early enough to use these results and lessons learned, so that they are incorporated into the new Strategic Plan.
- **EU** - Thanked the Secretariat for the consultations it led and for the survey recently circulated. The proposed retreat in May was welcomed and key to determine what the funds raised will aspire to achieve. The EU proposed to either merge the retreat and June ExCom meeting or to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for the ExCom and their HLSG representatives to review and input to the proposed draft before its endorsement at the September HLSG meeting. The EU underlined its willingness to include HLSG members early enough in this process to ensure their strategic guidance is provided throughout. For the best political buy-in, ECW must ensure it demonstrates that it is politically relevant. The EU therefore recommended to review the narrative to ensure that ECW is able to demonstrate it is linked to the bigger political challenges that are a priority such as gender, climate change and the digital divide.
- **Norway** - thanked the Secretariat for its work on the Strategic Plan development and welcomed the proposed retreat in May. Norway echoed the EU on providing both the ExCom and HLSG representatives with the opportunity to provide their inputs throughout the process and requested to form small working groups to discuss key issues given the short turnaround time until the Strategic Plan is endorsed. This could, for example, include working groups that will support the development of the result framework and overall budget. Norway highlighted climate change and quality education with the inclusion of teachers and youth as priorities.
- **Denmark** noted that ECW's overall value add in relation to country and global level engagement is to balance out and enable change on the ground and to galvanise global support for education in emergencies. This strongly links to the accountability discussion in terms of quality assurance of results. It is important to define where ECW stands in the accountability chain. Denmark welcomed the request to integrate the policy-level as a useful component to the strategy. Some proposals from Denmark included emphasising the peace component and localisation more in the MYRPs and FERs to drawing on the positive work of the Gender Reference Group to set more ambitious targets around gender equality and girls' education and integrating these elements into the new Strategic Plan.
- **Finland** echoed previous calls for HLSG members to be given sufficient time to provide strategic and substantive contributions to the Strategic Plan process and raised concerns about the short time ExCom will have to review all the documentation before it is submitted to HLSG representatives. Finland also welcomed setting up smaller working groups to work through the documents and asked that the Secretariat provide a briefing to ExCom once all inputs are consolidated.
- **Germany** thanked the Secretariat for the helpful presentations and consultations. Since ECW has grown so much since its inception, the new Strategic Plan must be different from the existing Plan and be elevated to a higher level to reflect ECW's position. Germany also called for all relevant information to be circulated early enough to allow the different units in ministries to review and support ECW throughout the process. It is important that ECW also take into account the

evaluation outcomes and priorities such as climate, gender and leaving no one behind by reaching the most vulnerable.

- **Switzerland** pointed out that the global education architecture has changed since ECW's inception in 2016 and it is important to take this into account in the new Strategic Plan whilst also reflecting what is ECW's unique selling point within the overall education landscape. Switzerland also wished to see ECW sharpen its profile against GPE which now also responded to crises and requested further information on ECW's added value in terms of its response towards displacement (IDPs and refugees) and climate change. Other priorities for Switzerland include protection and the triple nexus. Switzerland called for further focus to be placed on SDGs 4.1 & 4.2 and the fulfillment of the right to free, universal pre-primary, primary, secondary education as the core of SDG4 and particularly for crisis-affected children/youth at risk. ECW should ensure that its work is focused, reinforces localisation and grows from a fund to an EiEPC lobbying movement.
- **The UK** supported an in-person meeting in May as achieving consensus before drafting the Plan, which will be important but also echoed the EU's point on the final drafting stage which will be another important point to reconvene. The UK welcomed setting up smaller working groups, the focus on FER funding and increasing the Secretariat's capacity and expertise. Furthermore, it is important that ECW's role within the education system and coordination on the ground is addressed in the new Strategic Plan.
- **The Netherlands** underlined youth and skills development as priorities and asked if both elements could be further integrated into ECW's responses. The Netherlands wished to also see more emphasis placed on pedagogical processes in regard to what is effective for academic outcomes and skills development, and on domestic financing. The Netherlands echoed Denmark's point on focusing more on the peace component of the nexus since ECW operates in crisis settings. Peace is a cross cutting issue and, in this regard, should be integrated in all training curricula.
- **UNHCR** echoed many points made by colleagues on further supporting teachers, learning outcomes and results. It is important to understand where ECW fits in the overall education architecture since the many changes that have taken place, but also its relationship with GPE on the ground and vis a vis coordinating mechanisms which are complex to bring together. That said, ECW does play a critical role in doing so and UNHCR welcomed its continued work with ECW around refugees and recognised the Fund's efforts to address legal and status barriers that refugees face and to allow space for these reflections and finding tailored solutions within the Strategic Plan process.

In response to the above questions and comments, the following answers were provided:

- The ECW Director thanked the ExCom for their valuable inputs and emphasised that the Secretariat and its partners are building the new Strategic Plan based on lessons learned and successes of the current Strategic Plan, whilst also ensuring it is elevated to a new level, as ECW has grown exponentially. ECW is also determined to involve both the ExCom and the HLSG in the planning process. However, the Secretariat does not encourage setting up new working groups at this stage of the process. Although it can be further strengthened, ECW's added value has been clear and demonstrated for some time now. ECW is a Fund, not an implementor, and its working relationship with GPE has gone from strength to strength especially since collaborating on Afghanistan and Myanmar. Nevertheless, ECW's added value relates to its position within the UN system and its mandate to address the HDP nexus, which is its strongest added value and gives it a unique agility in the sector. The Secretariat stands ready to update the ExCom separately on its joint work with GPE should this be required.

- ECW's Senior Strategic Planning Advisor (consultant) confirmed that the Secretariat will speak to the teachers constituency as part of ongoing consultations. Colleagues who have not done so yet are kindly asked to complete the survey circulated by the Secretariat as it represents a vital input into the process. ECW does have standing advisory groups such as the Gender Reference Group and has worked with Secretariat focal points to ensure they feed into the process. Ahead of the possible workshop in May, ExCom members are strongly encouraged to provide any specific feedback or strong recommendations about the issues raised to the Secretariat. The Reflections and Aspirations Paper will represent an important point in this process and the workshop to consolidate and agree on a position.

The Chair noted the Secretariat's proposal to host a retreat on the Strategic Plan in May and the interest it has generated from ExCom members before handing the floor to Marco Grazia, Director, Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and Education in Emergencies, World Vision, to deliver an update on how the CSO constituency is planning its work in support of the Strategic Plan process and the MYRP investment window ([See PowerPoint presentation for details](#)):

- World Vision, on behalf of the CSO Constituency organised a workshop with the ECW Education Team early February with the objective to discuss challenging lessons learned experienced by ExCom members. In the absence of a feedback mechanism, World Vision promoted the initiative to document all the feedback that INGO's wished to convey to ECW through World Vision. The reflections series which resulted from the workshop was also linked to the MYRP evaluation report.
- The database is a structured continuous mechanism for partners, including implementing partners, that was created to document feedback provided to ECW and allows a two-way feedback from the field to global levels. This tool is currently only used internally and by INGO members who may choose to remain anonymous. It captures what are the resulting actions by ECW on proposed issues, the time to respond and the result of the feedback proposed.
- Feedback is meant to be constructive and inform corrective action -there are currently 20 entries, about 50% of which are of an operational nature and often related to the selection of grantees.
- The INGOs activated a task force which coordinated with ECW, GEC and UNHCR and agreed to focus the first workshop on the MYRP grantee and sub-grantee process as the first priority to be discussed.
- The workshop resulted in three key outcomes: a synthesis report which outlined actions and recommendations for ECW, inputs to the MYRP manual based on lessons learned and to the Strategic Planning process.

4- High-Level Financing event

As the co-host alongside Kenya of the successful GPE replenishment campaign in 2021, the Chair, on behalf of the UK, took the opportunity to provide some reflections and insights on organising a replenishment event of this scale. Key points and lessons learned:

- 1- The bulk of the work for hosts and co-hosts lies in political lobbying rather than simply providing a venue.
- 2- The Fund and its co-hosts will need to agree on an ambitious, yet realistic, target which will need to be clearly communicated
- 3- The timing for the communication of objectives is crucial. Script and messaging must be properly coordinated and clear. Joint messaging is also effective.

- 4- A clear strategy is needed in terms of raising financing and which roles are allocated to those involved.
- 5- Mechanisms to follow up and keep all informed must be clear and put in place.
- 6- Co-hosts need to be credible and show leadership in terms of their pledges and must come in with substantive contributions.
- 7- The lobbying strategy must be absolutely clear with the understanding of how to work through different layers of decision making.
- 8- Proper allocation and distribution of work to focus on all aspects of the campaign, i.e. geographical finance, governance, comms. etc.

The ECW Director thanked the Chair for her briefing and guidance. The objective of the High-Level event will be to harness political support and to raise adequate funds to see through ECW's Strategic Plan. The campaign and higher target will be about enabling ECW to reach all the set targets and scale-up as suggested by ExCom members during consultations. The target of USD 1.5 billion is realistic. Switzerland followed by Germany and Norway all came forward to offer to host and co-host the event for which the Secretariat was very grateful. It is indeed essential that all parties involved understand the process and what it entails.

The Chair noted that although the UK will not be a co-host, it will still play a part in supporting the event and ECW to reach its target. The Chair handed the floor to Nasser Faqih, Chief of Strategic Partnerships and Resource Mobilisation, to deliver an update on the planning process to date:

- Recent consultations reflected the high expectations of donors and partners and the critical need for ECW to respond to crises rapidly, effectively and substantially. The Secretariat shares this commitment and responsibility towards its partners, children whose learning has been impacted and all countries who are caught up in crises and emergencies to meet its duty to respond. This has somewhat added a layer of pressure and responsibility to ensure that the next Strategic Plan is right and meets all the criteria. Financing the Strategic Plan over the next period and reaching the set targets needs to remain a priority for all.
- The Secretariat has received generous offers from Switzerland, Germany and Norway to work together in leading on the High-Level Financing event, along with two to three countries from the global south.
- The ambitious target set has emerged from internal exercises and discussions, feedback received from consultations with the ExCom, recent evaluations and also considerations with regards to increasing the capacity of the Secretariat, where to increase the FER location and expand the outreach of the MYRPs. This led to a higher target of at least USD 1,5 billion than the originally set USD 1 billion, which would fall short of meeting ECW's commitments.
- The Secretariat has taken note on understanding the target set and communicating it early on in the replenishment process as this will enable ECW to frame the campaign accordingly.
- The co-hosts and ECW Secretariat leading this initiative will conduct more internal discussions to define the correct approach to be taken, and how to work more effectively to capture all opportunities. A more detailed brief will be provided to the ExCom once these details are available and before any public announcements are made, which will in turn present opportunities to highlight the campaign that ECW will be embarking on.
- ECW and its co-hosts call on all ExCom members to champion this opportunity as a shared responsibility. ExCom members will play a key role at two different levels: i) first as contributors of resources and policy pledgers, and to this end, members are encouraged to begin thinking about what they wish or are able to contribute to ECW in terms of funding for the next period, ii)

secondly, ExCom are empowered to play a key role through their HLSG members – both levels can champion the cause and influence other donors and the wider community of contributors to make substantive pledges to ECW, through any type of opportunity that will help multiply the efforts.

- On coordination, the Secretariat and co-hosts will share a stakeholder analysis bilaterally with concrete asks for each ExCom member detailing the help they can provide.
- The Secretariat and hosts welcome the ExCom's proposals and feedback on the above approach.

The Chair opened the floor to questions and comments:

- **GPE** noted that its Secretariat remains available to share its experience and lessons learned from the GPE replenishment campaign with ECW Secretariat and partners as needed.
- **Switzerland** thanked the Chair for the UK's feedback on the GPE replenishment event and explained that the model discussed with the co-hosts and ECW, was the proven model of the GRF held in Switzerland in 2019. The GRF also promoted a distributed model where all partners played a key role and were heavily relied on to reach agreed targets.
- **Norway** thanked the Chair for her insights and is pleased to support and co-lead the High-Level Financing event. Norway noted the point made on the heavy lift needed on advocacy and political support and underlined that all opportunities ahead such as the Transforming Education Summit, UNGA, etc. must be used as effective platforms to promote the campaign.
- **Germany** thanked the UK for the helpful advice provided and noted the great opportunities ahead. Germany stands ready to receive advice and feedback from all partners and called for countries from the global south, youth, and foundations to play an active role to reach set targets.
- **Finland** asked whether the finance target is due to be announced alongside the new Strategic Plan. Finland also stressed that the target must remain clear and set, and welcomed further information regarding Germany's recent financial pledge and whether it contributed to closing the existing financing gap of USD 400 million or was destined towards the new Strategic Plan.
- **Ireland** welcomed proposals to set a target early on and ahead of finalising the new Strategic Plan as it was important to set a figure immediately in order to determine which targets needed to be set and where they should be pitched. Ireland stressed that the target must be tied into a timeframe attached to the new Strategic Plan.
- **Norway** noted the new funding target of USD 1,5 billion and asked if the ExCom would be receiving more detailed information on how the target was reached and what it encompasses as it was crucial to soon get this target approved by all and announced externally.

In response to the above questions and comments, the following responses were provided:

- The ECW Director reiterated that the target was amended following Strategic Plan consultations with ExCom members who all encouraged ECW to scale-up and aim higher. Germany's recent contribution changed the landscape and brought ECW into a different league and partners were now no longer dealing with a start-up fund but rather a matured and experienced fund with a proof of concept.
- The Secretariat will develop a forecast based on the analysis of the bilateral discussions with the ExCom and will share it with the ExCom for consideration.
- On the target, ECW previously estimated an amount based on maintaining the same levels across its different windows of funding. However, following internal discussions, feedback received, looking at the needs for the MYRPs going forward, stepping back from the

conservative targets set during the COVID-19 crisis and reinstating the level of funding originally set for the MYRPs, the target naturally changed and grew. To this end, the Secretariat kindly called on ExCom members to approve the target set as it will likely come out to a very similar ask once the Strategic Plan is finalised.

The Chair concluded and summarised the discussion into three key points: i) targets must be set soon and not change and more detailed information regarding the mobilization target should shortly be sent to ExCom for their approval; ii) The announcement of this target could be made publicly alongside the launch of the Strategic Plan in September, following ExCom and HLSG's approvals; and iii) information about the Strategic Plan and targets need to be communicated to HLSG members as soon as possible.

5- Drafting of the UNICEF Hosting Agreement

The Chair handed the floor to Nazim Khizar, UNICEF Deputy Director for Financial Reporting and Grants Management to deliver an update on UNICEF's hosting agreement with UNICEF:

- When the SOPs were developed last year, the two outstanding items were the costing methodology and budgets and remaining was the hosting agreement. Most of the work on the development of the agreement is nearly completed and a final draft will soon be available. However, there is a slight delay in sharing the draft and issuing it as all hosted funds are currently going through an internal audit exercise.
- UNICEF has agreed to not circulate the Hosting Agreement before the internal audit report is published with its recommendations, in order to address any featured elements that impact the Hosting Agreement. This will be at the very latest the end of April/early May.
- The Hosting Agreement will address: the administrative framework, the responsibilities, mandates, the structure and relationship with UNICEF, the status of the Secretariat, the roles of UNICEF as a Host, Fund custodian, grant recipient, a steering committee member, and also discussing the HR elements, the status of the personnel, Head of Secretariat, the financial measures, grant agreements and why different types of agreement are being used and, finally, the general provisions and oversight mechanisms including the audit investigations.
- UNICEF stands ready to brief the ExCom further once the Hosting Agreement is finalised.

The Chair opened the floor for questions and comments:

- **Norway** – noted that the hosting agreement will be important to formalise the relationship between UNICEF and the hosted funds but stressed the importance of coherence between the Hosting Agreement and the other key documents such as the standard contribution agreement (SCA) and ECW's Operational Manual. ExCom would also require sufficient time to provide inputs and have a discussion on the Hosting Agreement before it is finalised.
- **Germany** - echoed Norway's request on receiving the documentation as soon as possible in order to be given enough time to review the details.

In response to the above questions, UNICEF confirmed that it remained flexible on the timing ExCom members will need to proceed to reviewing all the documentation before signing it. UNICEF further noted that all documents will be coherent and drafts will be shared with the different Secretariats soon to provide feedback.

6- Organisational Evaluation

Stephen Lister, Mokoro, delivered a presentation on the Organisational Evaluation Inception Report, which was circulated to the ExCom ahead of the meeting ([Please refer to the PowerPoint presentation](#)).

- The Inception Report benefited from over 200 comments from Education Technical Reference Group (ETRG) members and guests; the Advisory Group for the Organisational Evaluation (consisting of FCDO, Norway, EU, Plan, Dubai Cares) as well as the ECW Secretariat.
- As per the ECW Evaluation Policy, the Advisory Group for the Organisational Evaluation cleared this revised version of the Inception Report and recommends the Inception Report to be approved by the ExCom.
- As previously noted at the November 2021 ExCom meeting, it is challenging to fit the findings of the Organisational Evaluation into the Strategic Planning process timetable. The Evaluation has dovetailed as much as possible into this process and previous evaluations which has presented numerous benefits and positive interactions.
- Many of the issues shared during the Strategic Plan presentation resonated with those drawn up in the Inception Report. The evaluation presents different opportunities for consultations as it marshals the evidence behind elements to be communicated and tries to identify the interconnections between the elements.
- The Inception Report did not present findings but it set up the platform and the analytical framework for the Evaluation. The Evaluation scope and TORs were very broad. Mokoro were asked to look at the systemic outcomes and the beneficiary outcomes at a broad level, and to look into the Secretariat and the Fund's governance bodies.
- Mokoro took part in various briefings with ECW and undertook preliminary consultations with some ExCom members, which were not part of the Evaluation but part of the orientation.
- Methodology: want to emphasise that the theory-based approach and the organisational fitness were the two methodological aspects used through this Evaluation.
- The Evaluation looked at ECW's three levels of operation: i) The global level - the overall architecture and how ECW fits into and complements it; ii) The operational level- what ECW is doing on the ground in different countries through its FERs, MYRPs and the Acceleration Facility; iii) and in between the organisational and institutional level or 'institutional fitness' – how well is ECW as an organisation configured in order to deliver both on the global level and through its operations.
- Mokoro presented a diagram setting out elements of organisational fitness based on the consultations during the inception phase, which echo elements from the Strategic Plan consultation such as the Secretariat's structure, size, locations, HR and gender and equity, organisational culture, systems and processes for resource mobilisation, grants management, monitoring and learning and the hosting arrangement.
- With the theory of change, Mokoro also pulled out elements of how ECW works, and elements of organisational fitness (refer to slide 10). The numbers address assumptions concerning how ECW works and has achieved the results that it has. In many evaluations, assumptions are considered as completely external elements that are simply constraints. ECW is different in that it is an organisation which is trying to change the environment in which it works, and therefore

the assumptions that are being looked at are what can be called success factors or the things that need to work well in order for ECW to achieve its results.

- The evaluation questions presented were then simplified and organised in a way that would feed into the Strategic Plan thinking:
 - How relevant and coherent is the role of ECW (is ECW doing the right things)?
 - Is it doing things right (is it being effective)?
 - What are the main factors explaining successes and limitations?
 - How can ECW strengthen its positioning of performance over the next Strategic period?
- Mokoro will also conduct work on gender and equity as listed in the evaluation plan, which will lead to further key informative interviews and allow Mokoro to look into how ECW measures up to the IASC gender norms and into whether the theory of ECW's gender strategy is properly functioning in recent MYRPs.
- A key issue which was highlighted from both the evaluation and the Strategic Plan consultations was realism vs. ambition and whether ECW was smaller than predicted in the ODI paper. Mokoro was able to look into the process through which ExCom adapted its targets for ECW to strike a balance between what was realistic and what was necessary to fill the gap of children to be reached.
- Mokoro is planning to deliver a preliminary presentation of emerging findings (not final recommendations) on May 9th and will feed into the planned May retreat.

The Chair opened the floor for questions and comments:

- **Finland** thanked Mokoro for their presentation and asked how Mokoro will ensure there is no unnecessary overlap with the FER and MYRP evaluations, and how they plan on building on these evaluations and their findings.

In response, Mokoro confirmed that this strategic evaluation covered all aspects of ECW's operations. However, it would not repeat work previously done, and based on its TORs is mandated to draw on the findings of prior evaluations. A synthesis of findings is listed in the annexes, and for each of the evaluation questions in the report, the relevant findings were extracted from the FER and MYRP evaluation. For many of the questions, the findings from the FER and MYRP evaluations were a significant part of the evidence and formed the basis of the analysis.

7- HLSG Agenda and Planning

The Chair handed the floor to the ECW Director to brief on the preparations for the upcoming HLSG meeting:

- The next HLSG meeting will take place virtually on Thursday 21 April from 8.00-09.45 am EST. The invitation will be sent out on behalf of the HLSG Chair after the ExCom meeting. ExCom colleagues are kindly asked to ensure their HLSG representatives can attend.
- As requested, the meeting will focus on current and priority issues: Afghanistan, Ukraine and the Sahel. At the ExCom's request, the Director will also provide an update on the Strategic Plan development before handing over to HLSG members for their inputs and insights on the process and the upcoming High-Level Financing event.

- The agenda has remained light in order allow HLSG members to have time to provide substantive inputs and speak freely. In order to manage the speakers' list in this virtual meeting, requests to speak under any or several agenda items will need to be submitted in advance.

8- AoB

Dubai Cares' new ExCom representative, Mada Al Suwaidi, introduced herself and on behalf of the organisation offered to help ECW engage with governments and key partners in the Gulf.

9- Chair's Summary and Closing

The Chair thanked ExCom members for their participation and summarised key points and decisions of the meeting.

- No objections were received to add Ukraine to the list of MYRP countries and Moldova as a FER country.
- The ExCom approved Mokoro's Organisational Evaluation Inception Report.
- Positive discussions around the Strategic Plan which received substantial inputs that have all been taken into account.
- The Secretariat proposed to organise a Strategic Plan retreat with ExCom members in May. Dates for retreat and the next ExCom meeting will need to be confirmed.
- The ExCom Chair provided a briefing on behalf of the UK on the process of organising a High-Level Financing event. The Secretariat and co-hosts of the event will draw up a plan and further information regarding set targets will be shared with the ExCom for approval.
- The Secretariat will send an invitation for the upcoming HLSG meeting on 21 April shortly.
