

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Advancing Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls in Emergencies and protracted crises

August 2022

The Request for Expressions of Interest consists of this cover page and the following section

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Terms of Reference

This RFP will use a two-stage application process. The first stage is an Expression of Interest (EoI). Shortlisted applicants that pass the EoI stage will be invited to submit a full proposal. The criteria for assessment for the EoI stage and full proposal stage are detailed in this RFP.

A complete application consists of:

- A. Acceleration Facility Expression of Interest Application (Technical EoI)
- B. Eol Budget template (Financial Eol)

For shortlisted applicants (after the conclusion of the EoI stage), a complete full application will consist of:

- A. Acceleration Facility Application (Technical proposal)
- B. Budget template (Financial proposal)

Eol Submission requirements

Deadline: September 15, 2022

Subject Line: ECW AF Eol: [Insert Organisation]

Email: rfp@un-ecw.org

The technical and financial proposal should be submitted as separate PDFs in one email.

Incomplete EoIs received after the deadline will not be considered. Full proposal submission requirements will be communicated to applicants that are shortlisted once the EoI stage comes to a conclusion.

An online orientation on this RFP and how to apply will be held as follows:

Date: September 01, 2022 **Time:** 3-3:45pm CET

Registration link: https://unicef.zoom.us/s/98149819170

The orientation will be held in English with closed captioning. For updated information about this RFP, please visit the Education Cannot Wait website at: https://www.educationcannotwait.org/news-stories/featured-content/RFP_Gender_Equality For questions about this RFP, write to: rfp@un-ecw.org

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1. Introduction

1.1. General

Proposers must strictly adhere to all the requirements of the RFP and the guidance of the RFP template. No changes, substitutions or other alterations to the requirements stipulated in the RFP may be made unless in writing by Education Cannot Wait.

Proposers acknowledge that all obligations stipulated by the RFP will be met, unless otherwise specified. All instruction, terms of reference and other requirements will have been read and understand by the submitting organization.

The submission of a proposal does not constitute or imply the acceptance of any proposal by Education Cannot Wait. No binding contract, including a process contract or other understanding or arrangement will exist between the Proposer and Education Cannot Wait and nothing in or in connection with this RFP shall give rise to any liability on the part of Education Cannot Wait unless and until the Contract is finalized by Education Cannot Wait and the successful organization. Education Cannot Wait is under no obligation to award a contract to any Proposer as a result of the RFP.

Education Cannot Wait may, at its discretion, cancel the requirement in part or in whole.

As a UNICEF hosted fund, Education Cannot Wait adheres to UNICEF policies on fraud, corruption, unethical practices.

Information relating to the examination, evaluation, and comparison of Proposals and the recommendation of contract award shall be treated with appropriate confidentiality.

Proposers should not have been engaged, directly or indirectly, in the preparation of any part of this RFP document or Annexes.

1.2. Eligibility

This RFP is open to all international organizations that can provide the requested goods/services/works and are legally constituted or represented in the country where the services will be delivered. Applicants must have been HACT¹ assessed as being either "low" or "medium" risk (in all localities of implementation, not only at HQ level), be able to register at the United Nations partner portal and pass the core assessment and PSEA² assessments. Other parties may receive funds as implementing partners of direct grantees in line with the direct grantees' policies on sub-grants.

1.3. Cost of proposal

The cost of preparing a proposal, attendance at any pre- meetings or oral presentations shall be borne by the proposers, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the solicitation process. The Proposer shall not in any way include these as a direct cost of the assignment. Proposals must offer the services for the total requirement; proposals offering only part of the services will be rejected unless the option of submitting a proposal for any or all lot/s of the requirement has been expressly stated in the terms of reference/statement of work

1.4. Amendments to the solicitation of documents

Education Cannot Wait retains the right to amend the RFP documents during the solicitation period. Any amendments to the RFP will be noted on ECW's website.

Any errors that are identified in the RFP by potential applicants should be addressed to ECW via the submission email address.

1.5. Withdrawal of submission

Applicants may request to withdraw their submission by writing to the ECW Secretariat. Once a proposal has been withdrawn, it cannot be resubmitted during the same RFP solicitation period.

1.6. Language of the proposal

It is expected that the proposal will be submitted in English. The submitting organization is solely responsible for the cost of any required translation.

1.7. Proposal currency

The proposal must be submitted in US Dollars (US\$).

1.8. Review and selection process

After the deadline has passed, no additional applications will be considered. The ECW Secretariat will review each submission to first assess if the proposal is complete. All complete applications will be reviewed against a set of technical and financial criteria as outlined in the Terms of Reference. The proposal(s) receiving the highest technical and financial score will be selected to continue to a full application stage. Education Cannot Wait retains the right to ask for clarification and modification to pre-selected applications. All organizations will receive an email informing them of the outcome of the selection process. Education Cannot Wait will not provide individual organizations information regarding the decision-making process or feedback on their application.

1.9. Award and contracting

The selected organization(s) may be asked to submit additional information and undergo further assessments. Organizations that pass the Expression of Interest stage will be invited to submit a full proposal. An award is not considered official and binding until a grant confirmation letter is signed.

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2. Terms of Reference

2.1. Background

The Education Cannot Wait (ECW) fund was established during the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 to help reposition education as a priority on the humanitarian agenda, usher in a more collaborative approach among actors on the ground and raise additional funding to ensure that every crisis-affected child and young person is in education and learning. ECW is a multi-stakeholder fund that funds education in emergencies and protracted crises. ECWs day-to-day operations are carried out by the Secretariat. The fund is administered under UNICEF's financial, human resources and administrative rules and regulations, while operations are run by the fund's own independent governance structure.

ECW is currently implementing its first strategic plan and Gender Corpus (Gender Strategy, Policy & Accountability Framework) for the period 2018-2022. ECW's strategic plan designed three different funding/program modalities that together aim to achieve a set of collective education outcomes: (i) the First Emergency Response (FER) investment window/modality supports education programs immediately in sudden-onset or escalating crises; (ii) the Multi-Year Resilience Program (MYRP) investment window addresses longer-term needs through a multi-year joint program in protracted crises affected countries, enabling humanitarian and development actors to work together; (iii) the Acceleration Facility (AF) focuses on innovation, capacity development and the creation of global public goods for the education in emergency sector to address key priority systemic obstacles.

ECW's mission is to reach with education the most marginalized girls and boys of all ages in all their diversity in emergencies and protracted crises with holistic education services whilst putting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls at the forefront of its investments through close collaboration with a range of partners, donors, United Nations agencies, I/NGOs, civil society actors, including local women and girls' organizations, to fund, design, implement, monitor and evaluate locally-driven gender equitable EiEPC interventions.

The impact of the COVID-19 crisis on girls' education constitutes an unprecedented setback on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), not only SDG 4 and 5, but all the SDGs. There is growing evidence that educational outcomes of displaced children are significantly reduced, and refugee girls are most left behind, with increased challenges to access remote learning due to a preexisting gender divide. In many parts of the world, the consequences of the covid-19 pandemic compounded with conflict and climate change have worsened the situation of refugee children and youth, particularly adolescent girls. Due to school closures and the economic hardships related to the pandemic, negative coping mechanisms such as child marriage have dramatically increased. According to UNFPA, the pandemic may cause an additional 13 million child marriages by 2030. Attacks on schools and school related gender-based violence are also part of the lived experiences of refugee children and adolescents, including girls. Without girls' education, the cycle of poverty cannot be broken. Evidence shows us that a child whose mother can read is 50% more likely to live beyond the age of 5 and twice as likely to attend school themself. They are also 50% more likely to be immunized. Educating girls is therefore critical to the COVID-19 recovery plan.

While some progress has been made, to develop new policies and programmatic guidance in the field of gender equality and women and girls' empowerment in EiEPC with the development of tools such as the INEE Guidance Note on Gender Equality or the EiE-GenKit, the ECW MYRP Evaluation highlights that there is still an urgent need to support and strengthen capacities of EiE actors on these new standards through the ECW MYRPs investment window to ensure that more girls and boys and adolescents in crisis contexts

are reached more quickly with quality, inclusive and gender-transformative¹ education. Systemic gaps such as the lack of gender analysis of the differentiated needs, roles, and capacities of girls, boys, and female teachers, available at the onset of emergencies to inform the design of gender-transformative interventions and the lack of resources and models to foster meaningful partnership between the traditional EiE sector and local women organizations to increase enrollment, retention, and learning outcomes of the most marginalized girls.

Since June 2021, ECW became a member of the <u>GBV Call to Action on Protection from GBV in Emergencies</u>, committing to ensure that all ECW-supported FERs and MYRPs include GBV risks in the gender analysis and GBV risk mitigation measures in the programmes. However, grantees often need in-country technical support to ensure GBV risk mitigation measures and safe referrals are conducted as per the IASC GBV Guidelines (2015).

Thus, this RFP is for programmatic work to be funded through ECW's Acceleration Facility window in support of new ECW's MYRPs (see Annex A for list of priority countries) to ensure that new investments advance gender-transformative education in EiEPC.

2.2 Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this RFP is to identify organizations that will be able to:

- Develop, pilot and/or deliver resources, initiatives and services that advance gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in and through ECW-supported MYRPs in crisis and displacement settings
- Provide technical support and capacity strengthening to MYRP grantees and country teams to advance gender equality and empowerment of women and girls through the MYRP design process and implementation.

By piloting or delivering these interventions and services the RFP also seeks to develop globally-relevant public goods and evidence that can be used to expand access to gender-transformative safe and inclusive quality education in emergencies and protracted crises.

The objective of this RFP will be to map gender-transformative EiEPC interventions through ECW MYRPs and develop training materials and public goods targeting EiEPC practioners. It will also look at developing resources on gender-transformative measurement of EiEPC.

2.3 Alignment with the Acceleration Facility Strategy

This RFP is in line with the ECW Acceleration Facility Strategy 2019-2022. The Acceleration facility prioritizes two strategic objectives:

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

¹ ECW acknowledges that all EiEPC interventions should aim to be gender-transformative but this is a goal to work towards. Given the short-term funding for FERs, these investments aim to be gender-responsive to address the differentiated needs and capacities of boys, girls, men, and women. For MYRPs, although they aim to address gendered systemic barriers, numerous factors, including context, resources, and capacity, may influence where MYRPs are gender responsive at minimum or gender transformative at best. As such, ECW is committed to ensure its investments are, at minimum gender-responsive.

This RFP calls for proposals that respond to one or both of these strategic objectives.

The Acceleration Facility Strategy states that the Acceleration Facility will provide a flexible financing mechanism to fund strategic initiatives which will tackle a prioritized subset of **systemic barriers** to quality education in EiEPC, namely:

- **insufficient funding** for interventions related to gender-responsive and gender-transformative education in education in emergencies and protracted crisis;
- weak political will, policies and programmatic guidance related to the delivery gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in and through education in emergencies and protracted crisis;
- the lack of up-to-date quality data and analysis on the differentiated needs of women, girls, men and boys with regards to education in emergencies and protracted crisis;
- **inadequate EiEPC response and coordination capacities** for the delivery of gender-responsive and gender-transformative interventions.

It is intended that proposals funded under the Acceleration Facility feed into investments from ECW, particularly MYRPs, 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.

2.4. Scope of work

ECW is looking to establish partnerships with experienced partners that have expertise in one or more of the five focus areas listed below, have strong relationships with local and national organizations on the ground, and have the capacity to sub-grant to local and national organizations.

We are seeking partners with capacities to work closely alongside MYRP grantees in emergencies and protracted crises. Eols should highlight how the prospective grantees are going to engage and support the development and implementation of ECW's MYRPs and how they will be supporting the MYRPs to deliver gender-equitable interventions.

Proposals under this RFP should consider that ECW MYRPs cover pre-primary, primary and secondary education. Applicants should also consider that MYRP interventions are tailored to the context (see Annex A - list of priority countries).

The Acceleration Facility aims to foster innovative approaches in both programmatic work and the strengthening of capacities. As such, this investment window should <u>not</u> duplicate activities that are commonly designed and included in MYRPs to enhance access and learning.

The RFP seeks proposals from organizations that can address one or several of the focus areas listed below, which are drawn from the systemic obstacles and barriers listed in section 2.3 above:

- Rapid gender analysis conducted in ECW's priority countries listed in annex
- Meaningful engagement with local women organizations: a new way of working with ECW and EiEPC actors on the ground is identified, implemented, and documented
- Capacity strengthening of EiEPC actors on gender in EiE global public goods
- Capacity strengthening of EiEPC actors and measurement of GBV risk mitigation in EiEPC

 Gender-transformative education in EiEPC documentation, capacity building and measurement

Rapid gender analysis conducted in ECW's priority countries listed in annex

This aims to address the Systemic Obstacle 3 identified in the ECW Acceleration Facility Strategy: lack of real-time and up-to-date data and analysis to inform decisions on education response under the Strategic Objective B: Strengthen Systemic Capacities.

Successful grantees will be expected to conduct in-country rapid intersectional gender analysis in relation to the specific threats and barriers faced by girls, boys, including adolescents, in all their diversity, as well as male and female teachers and education personnel, to analyze the different roles and responsibilities of women and men, girls and boys, the resources available to them and their control over these resources in the priority countries listed in Annex A. These rapid gender analyses will be conducted ahead of the MYRP renewals design phase in order to inform the design and strategic planning.

Meaningful engagement with local women organizations: a new way of working with ECW and EiEPC actors on the ground is identified, implemented, and documented

➤ This aims to address the Addressing Systemic Obstacle 4 identified in the ECW Acceleration Facility Strategy: Weak political will, policies and programmatic guidance to ensure the delivery of high-quality, inclusive EiEPC services under the Strategic Objective A: Identify, foster and scale-up Innovations.

The objective of this is to support the ECW Secretariat to fulfill its commitment made in the Call to Action on Protection from GBViE to ensure local women and girls' organizations (LWGOs) are meaningfully engaged in ECW-supported MYRPs both at the design and implementation phase. Furthermore, in its new Strategic Plan (2023-2026) and new Gender Corpus (2023-2026), ECW has identified localization and meaningful engagement with LWGOs as a key priority. As such, this AF proposal will support ECW Secretariat and the MYRP countries listed in Annex A to identify and address the bottlenecks faced by local women and girls' organizations and EiE actors to collaborate meaningfully as equal partners in line with the Grand Bargain through the ECW-supported MYRPs.

Capacity strengthening of EiEPC actors on gender in EiE global public goods

➤ This aims to address the 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 under the Strategic Objective B: Strengthen Systemic Capacities.

The objective of this is to strengthen the capacity of MYRP grantees, including gender lead organizations, in delivering gender equitable programming through the MYRP window in line with global public goods recently developed to build the capacities of EiE practioners on the ground. This AF will contribute to the rollout of the EiE-GenKit and the INEE Gender Guidance Note amongst other tools and will aim to generate evidence and cross-country fertilization and knowledge sharing.

Capacity strengthening of EiEPC actors and measurement of GBV risk mitigation in EiEPC

➤ This aims to address 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 under the Strategic Objective A: Identify, foster and scale-up Innovations.

The objective of this AF is to strengthen the capacity of MYRP grantees, including gender lead organizations, in assessing GBV risks and integrating GBV risk mitigation in the programmes in line with the IASC GBV Guidelines, as well as to improve the monitoring and evaluation of GBV risk mitigation actions in EiEPC.

Gender-transformative education in EiEPC documentation, capacity building and measurement

This aims to address the Systemic Obstacle 3 identified in the ECW Acceleration facility Strategy: Lack of real-time and up-to-date data and analysis to inform decisions on education response and Systemic Obstacle 4: Weak political will, policies and programmatic guidance to ensure the delivery of high-quality, inclusive EiEPC services.

The objective of this AF will be to map gender-transformative EiEPC interventions through ECW MYRPs and develop training materials and public goods targeting EiEPC practioners. It will also look at developing resources on gender-transformative measurement of EiEPC.

Proposals under this RFP should consider that ECW MYRPs cover pre-primary, primary and secondary education. Applicants should also consider that MYRP interventions are tailored to the context (see Annex A - list of priority countries).

- 2.3. Alignment with the Acceleration Facility Strategy This RFP is in line with the ECW Acceleration Facility Strategy 2019-2022. The Acceleration Facility Strategy states that the Acceleration Facility will provide a flexible financing mechanism to fund strategic initiatives which will tackle a prioritized subset of systemic barriers to quality education in EiEPC, namely:
 - insufficient funding for interventions related to gender-responsive and gender-transformative education in education in emergencies and protracted crisis;
 - weak political will, policies and programmatic guidance related to the delivery gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in and through education in emergencies and protracted crisis:
 - the lack of up-to-date quality data and analysis on the differentiated needs of women, girls, men and boys with regards to education in emergencies and protracted crisis:
 - inadequate EiEPC response and coordination capacities for the delivery of gender-responsive and gender-transformative interventions.

It is intended that proposals funded under the Acceleration Facility feed into investments from ECW, particularly MYRPs, 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. The Acceleration facility prioritizes two strategic objectives:

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

This RFP calls for proposals that respond to one or both of these strategic objectives.

2.5 Implementation Modalities

Through this RFP, ECW seeks to fund through this RFP **several partnerships** that can deliver each on one or more of the five focus areas listed under Section 2_in multiple countries (see Annex A).

These countries have been selected as they correspond to countries with current or planned MYRPs, which the current RFP should complement and support. As such the prospective grantees of the current RFP are expected to coordinate with MYRPs grantees to feed into ongoing efforts to promote gender transformative education in emergencies and protracted crises.

The current RFP makes available USD \$1.25 million divided as follows for each focus area:

Focus areas	Earmarked Budget	
Rapid gender analysis conducted in ECW's priority countries	Up \$100,000	to
Meaningful engagement with local women organizations: a new way of working with ECW and EiEPC actors on the ground is identified, implemented, and documented	Up \$250,000	to
Capacity strengthening of EiEPC actors on gender in EiE global public goods	Up \$400,000	to
Capacity strengthening of EiEPC actors and measurement of GBV risk mitigation in EiEPC	Up to 300,000	\$
Gender-transformative education in EiEPC documentation, capacity building and measurement	Up \$200,000	to
Total	\$1,250,000	

It is expected the grants will focus on piloting and/or delivery of interventions in the priority countries listed in Annex A. These countries have been selected as they correspond to countries with planned MYRPs, which the current RFP should complement and support. As such the prospective grantees are expected to coordinate with MYRP grantees to feed into ongoing efforts to advance gender equality in and through education in emergencies and protracted crisis. It is not expected that proposals will be for work in the full list of countries, but a selected few. No minimum number of countries for delivery has been set – the proposal should consider the value for money and necessary balance between depth of work in any single country and breadth across multiple countries. It is expected that the selected grantee will deliver interventions in no more than 5 countries in total, in order to ensure sufficiently impactful investments in each setting.

The current RFP makes available USD \$1.25 million. The RFP partner will be accountable to ECW for the entire grant. If any, sub-contracted partners would normally be based incountry and will directly report to and be financially accountable to the selected partner of this RFP.

2.6. Connection with other national, regional and global Initiatives or actors

As a global fund focused on education in emergencies and protracted crises and with its mandate to create, facilitate and share knowledge on education for those affected by

conflict, ECW is in a natural position to steer this initiative. In addition, ECW is expanding its portfolio in-country, whereby it works with its grantees (UN agencies and (I)NGOs) and has access to a network that implements interventions that serve to build evidence and learning.

A partnership approach to implement the recommended activities is encouraged, including in-country partners, Government partners and education in emergencies and protracted crises country-level stakeholders, ECW Secretariat staff, and other relevant organizations at global, regional and national levels, particularly national and local women and girls' organizations.

2.7. Timeline and deliverables

We envision a grant start date in the last quarter of 2022. The envisioned budget is US\$ 1.25 million in total, for the full portfolio of work that responds to this call. It covers a period of a minimum of 3 years, as MYRPs by design are implemented over a 3-year period. It is likely that that not all programmes or grants allocated through this RFP move at the same speed.

2.8. Assessment Criteria

Assessment Criteria

The application process will be in two stages. The first stage is an Expression of Interest (EoI) stage, based on which ECW will shortlist applicants that meet minimum criteria and pass the bar for invitation to full proposal.

The overall proposal should be lean and to the point. Please follow the EoI template guidance for maximum page limits.

All eligible proposals will be assessed based on these Terms of Reference. For each stage (EoI and full proposal stage), applications will be granted scores following objective technical criteria under four categories. Percentages on how much each criterion influences the total score are given in brackets below. ECW will shortlist applicants based on this EoI stage, and invite the highest-scoring applicants that meet a minimum benchmark to submit a full proposal. The template for the full proposal will be shared with applicants that pass the first stage.

Eol Stage Scoring:

Technical:

- A. Expertise of the firm or institution in gender equality (including GBViE) and education in emergencies and protracted crises (30%)
- B. Proposed approach, including relevance and understanding of countries covered and in-country presence (25%)
- C. Proven track record in the focus area(s) for which the organization is applying (see Section 2.2) (25%)

Financial:

D. Pricing (20%)

Full application Stage Scoring (only for shortlisted applications that pass the Eol stage)

Technical:

A. Expertise of the firm or institution in gender equality (including GBViE) and education in emergencies and protracted crises (15%)

- B. Proposed approach (including the Theory of Change), understanding of ECW and its MYRPs, methodology and work-plan, understanding and relevance of countries covered and in-country presence (35%)
- C. Qualifications and experience of the team relevant to this request for proposals. Particularly, proven track record in the focus area(s) for which the organization is applying (see Section 2.2) (30%)

Financial:

D. Value for money, in terms of economy, efficiency and effectiveness (20%)

2.9 How to Apply

At the EoI stage, a technical and financial EoI should be submitted in two separate PDF documents using ECW's Acceleration Facility EoI Application and Budget templates. Please ensure that the technical EoI does not refer to any financial figures from the budget. Guidance on eligibility requirements and processes for submission are detailed in the *Introduction* section of this RFP.

The submission should be sent in an email according to the deadlines and format below:

Deadline: September 15, 2022

Subject ECW AF Proposal: [Insert Organisation]

Line:

Email: rfp@un-ecw.org

The technical and financial EoI should be submitted as separate PDFs in one email. Incomplete applications or applications received after the deadline will not be considered. Shortlisted applicants that pass the EoI stage will be invited to submit a full proposal. The criteria for assessment for the EoI stage and full proposal stage are detailed in this RFP.

A complete Eol application consists of:

- C. Acceleration Facility Expression of Interest Application (Technical EoI)
- D. Eol Budget template (Financial Eol)

For shortlisted applicants (after the conclusion of the EoI stage), a complete full application will consist of:

- C. Acceleration Facility Application (Technical proposal)
- D. Budget template (Financial proposal)

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Annex A - Priority countries

Where applicants are proposing projects which will deliver services or products, or conduct research, they should focus on the following countries. Please note that this list is provisional and subject to change.

- Burkina Faso
- Colombia
- · Democratic Republic of Congo
- Ecuador
- Mali
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Peru