



Executive Committee Meeting – Minutes
Monday 21 November 2022

Summary of the outcomes of the meeting

Chair’s Welcome

The Chair:

- Welcomed participants to the meeting.
- Recalled key points and outcomes from the last ExCom meeting such as the ExCom’s approval of the new Staffing Plan with the addition of 16 new positions, the endorsement of the Strategic Plan 2023-2026 for the HLSG’s approval and UNICEF’s update on the status of the Hosting Agreement.
- Outlined the agenda for the meeting as follows:
 - 1) Director’s Update
 - 2) High-Level Financing Conference
 - 3) 2023 Annual Workplan & 2023 Budgets
 - 4) Aob
 - 5) Chair’s Summary and Conclusion

1- Director’s Update

The ECW Director provided the ExCom with a general update and made the following points:

- The ECW Director and HLFC co-host/co-conveners were currently in Switzerland to take forward the planning of the Conference and welcomed the widespread support received from a wide range of partners.
- Graham Lang, ECW’s Chief of Education, will serve as the HLFC Director, to direct and oversee the overall preparations of the High-Level Finance Conference in conjunction with Nasser Faqih, Chief of Partnerships and Resource Mobilisation, Kent Page, Chief of Advocacy and Communications and Maarten Barends, Chief Humanitarian Liaison and External Relations, who are leading on various workstreams.
- Eddie Dutton has taken up the role of Officer-in-Charge for the Education Team during this period.
- The ECW Director recently undertook successful missions to Brussels to meet with key government and private sector partners and to DRC, including to the remote proving of Tanganyika, along with the UK Mission in DRC, UNICEF, WFP and several local civil society organisations. The ECW MYRP in DRC showcased positive results and is a testament to the successful joint programming on the ground with a holistic approach taken at every level of the investment.
- ExCom members and partners were invited to visit DRC or join ECW on any of the upcoming missions to the field due to take place.
- The ECW Director will undertake missions to London, Qatar, Ethiopia, Denmark, Switzerland and Ireland by January to attend a range of events and meet with both government and private sector partners ahead of the HLFC.

The Chair opened the floor for questions and comments:

- **The LEGO Foundation** requested that the Secretariat share a 2023 mission planner in order for partners to look into the possibility of joining ECW-led field missions.
- **The UK** followed up on the UNICEF Hosting Agreement and requested an update on its status.

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

- Updates for all mission planning are shared via the ETRG and GRG as well as through the monthly Secretariat Operational Update. The Secretariat invited the ExCom to reach out bilaterally for any further information needed.
- UNICEF has been awaiting the release of the Internal Audit Report, with ECW's to be expected between 3-10 December. The Hosting Agreement will follow shortly after. The timeline provided is driven by UNICEF and the Secretariat will ensure to follow up and provide ExCom with an update as soon as possible.

2- High-Level Financing Conference

The Chair:

- Stressed that the High-Level Financing Conference in February was just under three months away. The ECW Secretariat and the HLFC co-host and co-conveners have been working closely to ensure the success of the Conference.
- Called on donors and partners to make significant pledges at the HLFC to ensure that ECW reaches 20 million children in the next strategic period which will require a minimum of USD 1,5 billion.
- Handed the floor to Graham Lang to provide an overview of the planning of the Conference to date (See PowerPoint presentation for further details):
- Three main workstreams establishing key roles and responsibilities have been put into place: Resource Mobilisation & Political Advocacy led by Nasser Faqih, Communication and External Engagement, led by Kent Page and Conference Planning and Coordination, led by Graham Lang. Each workstream is supported by a number of ECW and Geneva Global EiE Hub staff along with the events and management company itself to take forward all aspects of the planning.
- The HLFC Steering Committee agreed on a draft agenda which was presented during the meeting. An updated version of the agenda will be shared by the end of the week. The first day of the Conference will in essence focus on financial pledges from donors as well as policy commitments from partner program countries. The second day of the Conference will focus on key thematic areas and showcase progress and key results through ECW investments and link to the commitments made at the Transforming Education Summit in September.
- Highlights: Over 300 invitations had been sent out to date with more to follow in the weeks to come, conversation corners tackling key issues were being planned on the margins of the Conference along with a range of interactive exhibitions and efforts were underway to ensure meaningful youth participation throughout the Conference.
- Next steps: the HLFC Steering Committee will be refining and tailoring each planned session, drafting concept notes and reaching out to the various organisations and speakers participating in the event.

The Chair next handed the floor to the HLFC co-host and co-conveners, and workstream leads for further updates:

- Switzerland has been engaging at the high-level with specific donor partners and was planning on sending letters to Heads of State on behalf of the President which will be followed by bilateral exchanges at different levels. Switzerland was also planning on releasing an Op-Ed on behalf of the President, will be hosting a high-level dinner with ECW and co-conveners after the ExCom meeting on 21 November to engage permanent missions based in Geneva and reach out to new donors and will be following up

with the private sector. As such, Switzerland was facilitating exchanges between ECW and a Swiss Bank who is planning to launch an investment fund where a percentage of interest rates will then be donated to ECW. A side-event will be planned during the World Economic Forum on 19 January with ECW and co-conveners to further engage the private sector and present this investment proposal by the Swiss Bank.

- Norway's Minister of International Development has been focusing outreach and efforts on partners across the Nordic countries and will be convening joint meetings in the months to come. The Minister will be participating on a joint mission with the ECW Director to Ethiopia in December and will be lobbying African Union leaders throughout her overseas visit.
- Germany has been reaching out to G7 partners before its presidency comes to an end. Germany recently pledged EUR 200 million to ECW and an additional EUR 10 million for ECW's response to the Ukraine crisis and is working on drawing in new donors.
- South Sudan thanked the Secretariat, co-hosts and co-conveners for all the progress made to date. The Minister of Education of South Sudan will also be lobbying high-level partners and donors and stands ready to support all efforts as needed.
- Nasser Faqih, Chief of Partnerships and Resource Mobilisation, provided the following update on behalf of the Political Lobbying and Diplomatic Influence Workstream:
 - High-Level political lobbying and outreach is being undertaken by both President Ignazio Cassis of Switzerland and the Rt Hon Gordon Brown, to existing and prospective partners to step up their funding to ECW.
 - ECW's standardized messaging and Call to Action were centralized across all bilateral and multilateral engagements of the HLFC's co-conveners and advocates. ECW is also convening a powerful group of civil society organisations that have been coordinating efforts for the ECW campaign, engaging their coalitions across the world and addressing many donor markets with concrete asks on ECW's behalf.
 - Discussions with MYRP investment countries to identify policy commitments on the first day of the Conference, were ongoing. These policy commitments will provide an opportunity for ECW's partner countries to demonstrate how the MYRPs are enabling the TES agenda.
 - Dialogues with existing and new private sector partners to secure their contributions at the HLFC were also ongoing.
 - The workstream was working closely and urged current ECW strategic donor partners to make multi-year announcements during the HLFC to help showcase the significant amount of funds that can be pledged to ECW over the 4-year strategic period but also to provide visibility to the level of contributions made by donors, typically done on an annual basis.
 - The current pipeline of funding reflects existing commitments of USD 250 million and an indication from partners of approximately USD 500 million to be pledged at the HLFC. This approximation would potentially rise to USD 750-850 million, which represented half the funding target for the Strategic Plan period, at the outset.
 - The workstream welcomes the collaboration of all ExCom members to help in mobilizing towards the HLFC target and welcomed bilateral engagements to better understand and navigate each donor's funding situation. The HLFC Steering Committee also welcomed the ExCom's collaboration to intensify all advocacy opportunities and support in planning upcoming commitments such as around ECW's outreach missions to partner countries which are being prioritized by the ECW Director.

- Kent Page, Chief Advocacy and Communications, provided the following update on behalf of the Communication and External Engagement workstream:
- Campaigns: The team continued to update the social media content around the #222MillionDreams Campaign, which has reached over 330 million people globally, with assets published in English, French, Spanish and Arabic. New campaigns being rolled out included: #BestinClass, #LeaveNoDonorBehind encouraging all donors to play a key role in the HLFC, and a letter writing campaign for which a young person in each of the 40 countries ECW is working to deliver quality education, will write a letter which will be published on social media and presented during the HLFC.
- Youth engagement was being ramped up through the many campaigns including the letter writing campaign and active efforts to involve youth constituencies around the world in the HLFC.
- CSO engagement: ECW was working closely with CSO's around the world such as in France, Canada, Japan, Australia and Denmark to launch campaigns at various levels supporting resource mobilization efforts. To mark World Children's Day, the US Civil Society coalition including the Jesuit Refugee Service, IPNEd, Global Citizen, World Vision and the Global Campaign for Education, launched a campaign calling for USD 158 million to be pledged at the HLFC. The UK Civil Society's "Send My Friend to School" campaign was calling for the UK government to pledge GBP 170 million for ECW's HLFC.
- The private sector was also being targeted through the numerous social media campaigns as well as the many bilateral engagements led by the Secretariat and HLFC co-hosts and co-conveners. NASDAQ recently published an interview featuring the ECW Director targeting its online readers.
- Media outreach: The Secretariat continued to remain highly engaged with media around the world whilst ensuring that particular emphasis is placed on the HLFC in all communications. High-Level interviews are being organized and published to raise awareness alongside high-level Op-Eds. The Secretariat ExCom members who wish to publish an Op-Ed are encouraged to reach out to the Secretariat for any support needed in drafting it or amplifying it once published.
- The Secretariat has received over 45 pre-recorded video statements supporting and promoting the HLFC. HLFC co-hosts and co-conveners, as well as ExCom members, were kindly asked to support this outreach to high-profile personalities and high-net worth individuals requesting video statements.

The Chair opened the floor for questions and comments:

- The **UK** asked which advocacy channels were expected to deliver a higher return on the time invested across the various activities and drive concrete results to draw in pledges.
- The **EU** welcomed the attention given to meaningful youth engagement and noted its recent adoption of the Youth Action Plan in External Actions. To this end, the EU have held extensive consultations with youth organisations who have expressed eagerness to engage further on EiE. As such, these organisations could be very strategic partners and if empowered properly, could truly help drive ECW's agenda and resource mobilisation efforts. The EU extended its support on youth engagement and to reach out to various organisations they were engaged with. The EU noted that they would make a contribution at HLFC.
- **GPE** reiterated its long-standing offer to support ECW in the run up to the HLFC. GPE recommended establishing a figure considered to be a success if reached during the HLFC and sharing it with partners ahead of the conference for their support in amplifying messaging to declare this success when reached.
- **UNHCR** welcomed the continued conversations and commitments around funding for EiE for refugees. UNHCR underlined that the Global Refugee Forum should remain the global place where commitments

were made for refugee inclusion, including from member hosting countries and requested that these connections are made explicitly throughout.

- **Education International (EI)** thanked the Secretariat for its work to date on the HLFC and welcomed the inclusion of teachers as a theme in the programme. EI strongly has been actively involved in advocacy efforts and in this regard will be launching an education financing campaign on February 24th to mark the International Day of Education, which will represent a good opportunity to amplify the messaging in support of ECW with its members in the global North and also in the global South.
- **Canada** suggested that the HLFC Steering Committee reach out to the Refugee Education Council (coordinated by World Vision Canada) composed of engaged youth advocates who would be willing to contribute to the HLFC.

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

- All media opportunities, interviews, Op-Eds, video statements, and other activities undertaken attract a lot of attention to ECW's campaign and allow the Fund to reach a multitude of stakeholders.
- Two factors that will determine success on the day will be for all ECW's strategic donor partners to commit and make pledges to ECW during its financing campaign, and on the other hand to follow Germany's model as a donor who represents a third of ECW's overall funding through the scale of its latest pledges.
- Furthermore, and in concrete numbers, all ECW stakeholder donor partners were invited to pledge at the HLFC, as this would secure funding for at least the next two years of the Strategic Plan and allow ECW to make multi-year commitments with confidence to its different recipient countries. This would represent a successful threshold and entails exceeding half of the USD 1,5 billion target on the day of the Conference.

3- 2023 Annual Workplan & 2023 Budget

Raakhi Williams, Chief of Strategy, Planning and Accountability, provided a presentation on the 2022 and 2023 Annual Workplans (See PowerPoint presentation for further details):

- The 2022 Workplan was delivered in what can be described as a pivotal year for ECW. Key highlights included:
 - ECW officially became a “USD 1-billion-dollar global fund”
 - ECW launched groundbreaking data around its 222 million children and adolescents figure and initiated a prolific advocacy campaign around it.
 - Publishing the new 4-year Strategic Plan and Case for Investment
 - ECW was submitted to its first Organizational Evaluation and made real progress against implementing the recommendations of both the FER and MYRP evaluations, as well as achieved approval of new MYRPs and FERs.
- A set of deliverables remained to be carried out in the fourth quarter of the year and some will be carried over to 2023.
- The 2023 Annual Workplan (AWP) is aligned to ECW's 7 strategic priorities and will be used to operationalise the new Strategic Plan. The AWP was developed during ECW's recent in-person Staff Retreat where cross-Secretariat teams reviewed the deliverables and provided healthy challenges against each one and discussed the level of detail required. All teams in the Secretariat will take the Annual Workplan and use it as their guiding document for delivery next year, by creating their own team-level workplans with more detailed deliverables.
- The ExCom provided over 50 pieces of feedback on the draft AWP which were summarised and presented under key trends. The Secretariat encouraged ExCom members who wish to see further level of detail to reach out to Chiefs/ECW technical leads for bilateral discussions on key areas of interest, or request agenda items at ETRG/GRG meetings. All teams will be creating team-level and detailed workplans that will be aligned to the AWP.

- The 2023 AWP some level of activity in 2023 against all commitments made in the Strategic Plan. It represents a 1-year workplan laying critical policy, programmatic and corporate groundwork in the first operational year of the strategic plan, with an overall vision of results to be achieved over the whole Strategic Period.

Michael Corlin, Chief of Finance and Operations, delivered a presentation of the 2023 Budgets (See PowerPoint presentation for further details):

- Highlights of ECW's financial benchmarks of the last Strategic Period: The Secretariat expenditure was kept below the 6% of total expenditure, the Acceleration Facility's expenditure (AF) remained below 5% of overall investments, FERs represented 20% of disbursements and MYRPs 55% of disbursements.
- Forward look of financial commitments for the next Strategic Period: AF disbursements will stand at 3% of overall investments and FERs and MYRPs will both be respectively increased to 25% and 72% disbursements.
- Secretariat Budget: Staff costs will be increased based on the implementation of staffing plan, but overall costs linked consultancies and other expenses will decrease in alignment to UNICEF direct costs.
- Further to the implementation of the staffing plan, ECW remains committed to keeping within the agreed budgeted benchmarks by keeping staff costs at 65% - approximately USD 10.8 million- and the overall budget at USD 16.4 million.
- The recruitment of new positions has been divided into three main batches with a first batch of 7 positions being prioritised immediately, followed by a batch of 9 positions following the HLFC.

Eddie Dutton, A/g Chief of Education, provided an update to support the request on the replenishment of the FER reserve:

- Whilst the FER window had a fund of USD 25 million, there has been a clear increase in demand for the FER in recent months, notably as some regions across the world have been affected by climate-related challenges and disasters, and the reserve will soon be depleted.
- Some of the current FER applications in the pipeline to be highlighted are three applications related to drought (Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia), two related to floods (Sudan and Chad) and one for a health-related crisis due to a Cholera outbreak (Syria). These all amount to an expenditure of USD 17.5 million.
- ECW has already disbursed USD 21,7 million this year and foresees more applications and requests to be sent through in the coming year.
- The Secretariat is thus requesting to replenish the FER reserve, as all available funds will be utilized soon.

The Chair opened the floor for questions and comments:

- The **EU** welcomed the Secretariat's efforts to make the workplan and actions more SMART-oriented and noted the challenge in identifying benchmarks and targets at this stage. The EU however encouraged the Secretariat to include these where possible in order to measure progress against actions. The EU further noted that the funding allocated to FERs were small against the amount of FERs proposed, which could present a challenge for the Secretariat's capacity.
- The **UK** approved the proposed budgets, welcomed the progress made on the staffing plan and the increase of the funding allocation for the FER reserve. The UK recommended that this increased funding be used to present larger scale FERs in the coming year, providing more predictability from the start, especially given that education runs the risk of being deprioritised in humanitarian response plans amidst the current financial climate
- **Porticus** requested further clarification on how the funding for the AF will be spread out over the Strategic Period.
- **Norway** congratulated the Secretariat on its work for the AWP and welcomed the extension of current MYRPs as opposed to committing to new ones whilst encouraging the Secretariat to further look into

their exit strategies. Norway noted improvements made to the AWP in terms of SMART and clear deliverables and encouraged the Secretariat to report against deliverables to better understand achievements against plans made. More detail on how the Secretariat plans to implement the strategic plan over the coming years was also requested. Norway wished to discuss further the amount of FERs proposed whilst taking into account the Secretariat's capacity, proposing to consider allocating larger amounts to a fewer number of FERs.

- **Canada** thanked the Secretariat for clearly linking the AWP to targets and for outlining a clear map of accountability and responsibilities.
- **UNHCR** welcomed the helpful conversations that have taken place between the ExCom and the Secretariat in regard to setting up a refugee working group who would hold an advisory role noting that the aspirations on refugees were not met with strong capacity in this technical area and looked forward to pushing the conversation further until a detailed recommendation was developed.
- The **LEGO Foundation** approved the AWP and budget but requested further specificity on deliverables and the Secretariat's reporting.
- **Germany** congratulated the Secretariat for all the work put into the AWP and budgets. Germany encouraged the Secretariat to further look into exist strategies for the MYRPs and to place a greater emphasis on gender.

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

- The AF budget can be increased to USD 10 million when the Strategic Plan is fully funded (USD 1.5 billion). With the current funding, the Secretariat was working on a 70% scenario, and has thus allocated 70% of the USD 10 million for the first year.
- The Secretariat noted calls for improved specificity and reporting and will continue to engage with the ExCom on these matters with more detailed proposals.
- The Secretariat will provide a mid-year report to the ExCom in June.
- The Secretariat thanked the ExCom for their feedback on capacity. A dedicated FER manager has been recruited addressing the capacity issue.
- ECW follows a humanitarian imperative and given the large number of crises unfolding, it will be difficult for the Fund to foresee itself responding to less crises and thus disburse less FERs. ECW has grown to such a large extent which demonstrates why more funding was needed to respond to the unfolding crises and at scale.
- Similarly, for the MYRPs, ECW is operating in unstable environments where protracted crises are becoming longer, and refugee populations are growing. Very few of the countries ECW operates in fulfill the criteria to consider an exit strategy. The Secretariat noted that these are protracted conflicts and ECW cannot consider exiting while a country is still in the midst of a complex emergency and protracted crisis. Rather, MYRPs are extended every three years until the post-crisis recovery phase has been established.

The Chair:

- Requested the ExCom's non-objection to the 2023 Annual Workplan, the 2023 Secretariat budget and the replenishment of the FER reserve.
- **Noted that no objections were received and the 2023 Annual Workplan, the 2023 Secretariat budget and the replenishment of the FER reserve were subsequently approved by ExCom.**

4- AoB.

- **Afghanistan MYRP:** The situation in Afghanistan was sadly deteriorating with a shrinking of the space for civil society and implementors to operate, especially around girls' education. ECW's extended and expanded MYRP was close to ready having recently undergone reviews by the ETRG and ERP. Selected grantees to implement the MYRP and continuously provide secondary level community-based

education in certain provinces include organisations such as the Aga Khan Foundation, Save the Children and UNICEF. The new MYRP will be an iteration of the existing MYRP, with a majority of girls targeted as learners, and an expansion into further provinces. The Secretariat will be seeking the ExCom’s non-objection to add USD 30 million to the current MYRP given the heightened needs in coming weeks.

- **Ukraine MYRP:** Thanks to Germany for the additional EUR 10 million contribution. Partners in Ukraine were very dedicated and committed to delivering the MYRP in spite of the challenging and dangerous conditions they were operating in. The planning of the MYRP, coordinated by the Cluster but led by the government, was underway. There was a strong leadership in country with a great clarity on what the needs were and how the MYRP will contribute to these. The grantee selection process was currently ongoing. The Secretariat will provide a more substantive update at the next ExCom meeting or through the next monthly Operational Update.
- **Norway** announced their plans to host the next ExCom meeting in the Spring of 2023. The meeting could be an opportunity to discuss follow up after the HLFC, but the agenda will have to be discussed and agreed upon by ExCom. Norway will share more details in due course.
- **Canada** formed a small working group, following requests made during the ExCom Retreat, to reflect on how ECW could better include Southern and Youth voices. An initial priority flagged, given the upcoming elections, was to reflect on the opportunities around CSO representation. The working group which includes representatives from the South and from Youth Constituencies, will provide recommendations and updates in writing as the discussions evolves.

Chair’s Summary and Conclusion:

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

- The HLFC Steering Committee provided positive and helpful updates on HLFC preparations and around ECW’s political and media advocacy and resource mobilization efforts. There was much to be achieved yet in the short space of time remaining and all ExCom members were called on to support driving the efforts to deliver a successful HLFC.
- No objections were received for the 2023 Annual Workplan, 2023 Budget or to replenish the FER reserve.
- Canada provided an update on the working group it was leading on the integration of Southern voices in ECW’s governance structure.
- Norway offered to host the next ExCom meeting in the Spring of 2023.
- The ECW Secretariat provided programmatic updates on the Afghanistan and Ukraine MYRPs.
