

## Executive Committee Meeting – Minutes

Tuesday 22 August 2023

### 1. Co-Chair's Welcome

The new Co-Chairs opened the meeting, reviewing the agenda and reminding the ExCom of the actions taken at the last ExCom meeting. They highlighted several changes in ExCom representation, including:

**Corinne Duriaux**, the new representative for Switzerland; **Friedrich Affolter**, the new UNICEF Global Education Cluster Coordinator; **Hector Ulloa**, the new Youth and Student-led representative; **Jussi Karakoski** the new representative for Finland; **Luis Benveniste**, the new representative for the World Bank and **Paula Nolan**, the new representative for Ireland.

The Co-Chairs welcomed the new colleagues to ExCom and thanked former colleagues for their support and participation.

### 2. The Executive Director's Update

The Executive Director focused her update on two key issues:

#### a. ECW's in-country work – Niger, Afghanistan and the Sudan response

- ECW are monitoring the situation in Niger closely and providing full flexibility to partners to ensure education provision continues. ECW implementation has so far been able to proceed, but the team do anticipate some delays to the close out/renewal of the MYRP at the end of the year.
- ECW continues to prioritize the situation in Afghanistan. The Executive Director is liaising closely with the HLSG Chair on this and recently met with United States Special Envoy Rina Amiri and GCE. ECW's partners continue their programming, and ECW recently launched a [global campaign](#) to bring the voices of Afghan girls to the global stage. She encouraged ExCom members to share and amplify these important messages and thanked those members whose organizations and governments had already done so.
- ECW is responding swiftly to the displacement resulting from the conflict in Sudan. ECW have put in place a \$5 million FER to address the most urgent and immediate needs in West Darfur and White Nile while also supporting the Regional Refugee Response Plan through FERs in CAR, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, and South Sudan. A total of \$14.5m is currently in the FER pipeline.

#### b. Resource Mobilization

- The Executive Director reminded ExCom of the need to close the remaining \$670 million financing gap through our collective resource mobilisation efforts. ECW are working with Global Citizen at the UNGA to give any new pledges lots of visibility – ExCom members can reach out to Nasser to coordinate.
- ECW will be hosting a private sector roundtable in the City of London in the United Kingdom in September, joined by investment funds, foundations and other private sector companies to explore innovative forms of support. She thanked ExCom members supporting private sector outreach.
- She also shared examples of in-country resource mobilisation and partners' alignment with the MYRPs. Almost \$60 million has been mobilized/aligned by the donor community and partners in support of the MYRPs in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. The South Sudan MYRP is a strong example of ECW-GPE coordination with GPE contributing \$10 million –

ExCom members are encouraged to support the 5x5 financing campaign in South Sudan to achieve ECW's first fully funded MYRP.

- ECW are also advancing resource mobilization within the strategic push on climate change and will share a briefing on ECW's strategy and work with regard to climate change based on the ECW Strategic Plan 2024-2026

### 3. Update on Ukraine and new contributions

The Executive Director for the Global Business Coalition (GBC) for Education reported on progress made on their HLFC commitment, with a focus on the Ukraine response. GBC-Education worked with the government, the Cluster and ECW to map needs and capacities and to find the best partners (in this case HP and Microsoft) in implementing this funding pledge for ECW. They were able to mobilize more than \$39 million in devices, shipping, licenses etc to support teachers and learners with distance learning in Ukraine and refugee-hosting countries. The approach could be a model for engagement in other emergency contexts - see PowerPoint presentation for full details.

The ECW Deputy Director thanked GBC-Education and reiterated the importance of this type of collaboration. He reminded ExCom of the joint mission to Moldova April last year with FCDO, USAID and TheirWorld/GBC-Education during which USAID announced an additional \$18m for the ECW Trust fund. Germany have earmarked an additional \$10m for Ukraine, and ECW have also received \$2m from Porticus. Current ECW investments include the Moldova FER (US\$ 1.5 M, UNICEF, April 2022 – March 2024) and the Ukraine FER (US\$ 5 M, UNICEF & SCI, March 2022 – November 2023). The Ukraine MYRP is under development with submission due in October - it will build on the FER and will be a platform for other donors to align their support, as demonstrated by the work of GBC-Education.

### 4. ExCom Operations

The Co-Chairs shared several operational updates since the meeting in Lillehammer:

- The monthly Operational Update now includes updates from the Reference Groups
- Electronic communication now utilizes cc rather than bcc to support transparency
- ExCom dates, locations and standing agenda items are now fixed until end of next year, and save the dates for 2024 will be sent soon (alternating virtual and in-person meetings)
- With ExCom's approval, minutes for meetings will be shorter and more concise

The Co-Chairs then provided an overview of the responses from the small survey which was carried out and to which some ExCom members responded. See PowerPoint presentation for full details. The Co-Chairs opened the floor for questions and comments:

- The Deputy Director highlighted that it is important to use the agreed management responses from the evaluations and the audit as these provide a clear organizational and business process basis on which to make any amendments. He also reinforced the need to remain within the parameters set out in the new Strategic Plan and to focus collective energies on delivering on these jointly agreed commitments at country-level.
- USAID and FCDO echoed these sentiments and encouraged ExCom to retain the focus at strategic level as part of the update of the Operational Manual. They reminded members of the importance of following up the discussions on southern representation and governance. [Afternote: two new youth representatives have just been elected from the South - one female and one male - to serve on HLSG and ExCom respectively].
- The Lego Foundation reminded members that the next in-person ExCom meeting will take place in Billund, and a logistic note will go out this week.

## 5. Secretariat Operational Update

The Deputy Director provided a quick update on four key issues:

- a) **The Operational Manual.** The Deputy Director proposed establishing an Operational Manual Advisory Group (comprised of ExCom members themselves, and reporting to the ExCom Co-Chairs and ECW Executive Director). During the first meeting, the group will discuss the ToRs and process for the light update and analyze the capacity/resource needed to deliver the light update. ExCom members were requested to send expressions of interest to join the OM Advisory Group to the Deputy Director, copying the co-chairs and the Executive Director. In adhering to organizational and business processes, the scope of the OM update will be informed and guided by the management responses to the evaluations and the audit recommendations. ExCom members recommended that the advisory group should include different types of ExCom members and representatives of the Global South, that it should build on the discussions held in Lillehammer.
- b) **Hosting Agreement.** UNICEF FSO updated that this will be delayed until the end of the year, despite best efforts. The team are working closely with the Chief of Finance and Operations.
- c) **Preparations for the GRF.** ECW are working very closely with UNHCR in the run up to the GRF. ECW are fully engaged across the secretariat and will be working on concrete pledging in focus areas as well as the joint ECW-GPE-World Bank pledge. ECW is participating in several working groups, including Early Childhood Development, Secondary Education, Education in Emergency Contexts, Teachers, Social Emotional Learning, Refugee Connected Education Challenge and Digital Learning. ECW is also engaging strongly with the 'mega pledge' (the focus is on multi-year predictable finance toward including refugees in national education systems).
- d) **Investment Allocation Amounts.** Responding to question about how ECW determine FER allocations, the Deputy Director explained that the FER investment amounts are done on a case-by-case basis, assessing both quantitative as well as qualitative factors and taking into account the funds available in the annual FER budget. All of this is systematically captured in a rapidly developed, two-page decision paper which is reviewed and approved by the Executive Director. To fund a greater share of emergency responses, we need to mobilize more funds.

The Co-Chairs opened the floor for questions and comments:

- UNHCR welcomed ECW's engagement on the GRF and encouraged the secretariat and partners to focus on concrete pledges to support refugee inclusion. ExCom members can follow up with UNHCR directly with any questions.
- ExCom members supported the idea of an Operational Manual Advisory Group and encouraged diverse participation. FCDO and the EU highlighted the need to stay well connected to the wider ExCom and suggested dedicated discussions in future ExCom meetings.
- ExCom members asked for clarification about whether the update will be done internally or through a consultant, with members flagging concerns for the Secretariat workload. The Secretariat explained that the preference is to keep it in-house given the institutional memory of the recent and very comprehensive production of the OM and the light nature of the update. The Advisory Committee will discuss this further in the first meeting.

## 6. Presentation: 2022 Annual Results Report Paper

The Chief of M&E and Global Reporting provided ExCom with an overview of the findings from the ECW 2022 Annual Results Report. The presentation covered the evolution of ECW resource mobilization and

## **7. High-Level Steering Group Meeting**

The Executive Director reminded members that the HLSG meeting will take place on 20th September in the Danny Kaye room at UNICEF House in New York from 07.00 – 08.15am. The draft agenda was sent out with the papers on 8th August.

ExCom members requested if other crises – such as Niger and Ukraine - could be on the agenda. The Executive Director said she would ensure these are covered in her update.

## **8. Update on Climate and Education**

Due to time limitations, a dedicated call will be organized to discuss this important topic [Afternote: The invitation has now been sent for September 6<sup>th</sup>].

## **9. Progress towards disbursement targets**

Due to time limitation, an update will be shared via email.

## **10. Co-Chair's Summary and Close:**

The Co-Chairs thanked ExCom members for their participation, and highlighted several actions from the meeting:

- An ad hoc ExCom session on Climate will be scheduled shortly.
  - Expressions of interest to join the Operational Manual Advisory Group should be emailed to the Deputy Director, copying the Executive Director and ExCom Co-Chairs
  - ExCom members can reach out to the Chief of Partnerships regarding any new pledges to be announced at UNGA.
  - ExCom members are encouraged to support the financing campaign for the MYRP in South Sudan, and to share the messages from the [#AfghanGirlsVoicesCampaign](#).
  - The logistics note for the next ExCom meeting will be circulated shortly.
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