

AGENDA

High-Level Steering Group Meeting

18 April 2024, 7:00 AM – 8:15 AM EST
The Watergate Hotel, Washington DC



Meeting objective

The meeting will centre around two major areas for plenary discussion: (1) education in the context of escalating global crises; and (2) engaging HLSG members in accelerating ECW's global resource mobilization efforts in line with the 2023 – 2026 Strategic Plan.



Agenda

Time (ET)	Item	Lead
6:45	Registration	ECW Secretariat
7:00	Chair's welcome and introduction	UN Special Envoy for Global Education and Chair of the ECW HLSG, Rt Hon Gordon Brown
7:05	Update on escalating global crises: Gaza, DRC, Haiti, Sudan, South Sudan, and Lebanon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UNICEF Executive Director, Catherine Russell• NRC Secretary General, Jan Egeland• UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, Stefania Giannini• UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, Ruvendrini Menikdiwela• Minister of Education and Higher Education, Lebanon, HE Abbas Al Halabi• Minister of General Education and Instruction, South Sudan, HE Awut Deng Acuil
7:30	Plenary discussion	HLSG members
7:50	Investing in education for peace and stability: Resource mobilization for ECW's 2023 – 2026 Strategic Plan	ECW Executive Director, Yasmine Sherif
7:55	Plenary discussion	HLSG members
8:10	AOB and close	

CONCEPT NOTE: EXTRAORDINARY FINANCING SESSION DURING THE ECW HLSG MEETING (APRIL 2024)

Education for peace and transformation in protracted crises

Introduction:

Millions of children and adolescents in crisis zones yearn for the opportunity to learn, yet a critical funding gap threatens to leave a third of our target of 20 million children and adolescents unreached in the next three years. This critical juncture demands bold action and highlights the crucial role of the High-Level Steering Group (HLSG) in mobilizing resources for education in crisis.

The HLSG boasts a remarkable track record in resource mobilization, having successfully secured over US\$ 1.6 billion to date for the global fund since its establishment. Their leadership was instrumental in securing full funding for the ECW's first strategic plan (2018-2022). They have further demonstrated their commitment through leading multiple successful replenishment events, with the High-Level Financing Conference in February 2023 being the most successful to date. This event, co-convened by Colombia, Germany, Niger, Norway, South Sudan and Switzerland leveraged US\$ 829 million on one day, exemplifying the collective power of the HLSG in mobilizing resources.

This concept note outlines a bold, double-pronged strategy to secure the remaining US\$ 600 million necessary for executing the ECW 2023-2026 Strategic plan and fulfill our collective responsibility to education in crisis. By leveraging the HLSG's proven track record and proposing innovative solutions, we can ensure that millions of children have access to education, the foundation for a brighter future.

Current Landscape:

- **Global Crisis, Education in Peril:** Today, the education of more than **224 million children and adolescents** is disrupted by emergencies and protracted crises. This figure is projected to rise due to increased conflict and climate change.
- **ECW: Delivering Impact Despite Challenges:** Despite limited resources, **ECW has reached over 10 million children in crisis countries, demonstrating unprecedented speed and efficiency** compared to other humanitarian and development initiatives. **This remarkable achievement stands as a testament to the combined power of HLSG leadership and the ECW partners, UN agencies, civil society organizations, governments, and communities.**
- **The Funding Gap: A Looming Threat:** However, the current funding trajectory leaves a **US\$ 600 million gap** in our US\$1.5 billion target. This translates to more than **7 million childhoods jeopardized.**

Consequences of Inaction:

A failure to bridge this gap carries **grave consequences**:

- **Lost Generation:** Children denied education are more susceptible to exploitation, violence, early marriage, and radicalization, jeopardizing their futures and **hampering global stability and economic prosperity.**
- **Broken Promises:** We risk reneging on our **shared moral obligation to Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4):** ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.

- **Diminished Global Security:** Without education, conflict and instability persist. **Prioritizing education is a strategic imperative and an investment in long-term peace and a secure future.**

The ECW Solution: A Double-Pronged Approach

1. **High-Profile Fundraising Moment:** ECW proposes a **high-profile fundraising moment during the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in September 2024**. This strategic opportunity will raise global awareness and garner critical resources.
2. **Ministerial Leadership Campaign:** ECW urges the HLSG members to spearhead a **sustained political leverage campaign**. This campaign will involve:
 - **Targeted outreach to potential new donors:** Highlighting ECW's impact and urgency.
 - **Pushing for increased pledges from existing donors:** Demonstrating strong commitment.
 - **Utilizing diplomatic and multilateral channels to advocate for education in crisis:** Ensuring global support for SDG 4.

Recommended HLSG Decisions (April 2024 Meeting):

1. Affirm that HLSG are the **champions and the driving force** in mobilizing resources for ECW.
2. Public endorsement and declaration by the HLSG committing to collective action towards closing the funding gap.
3. Formal adoption of the proposed fundraising approach.
4. Set financial and donor outreach targets from HLSG members to ensure successful execution of the UNGA event and political leverage campaign.