

30 June 2022

Decision item 1.8

Consultation process for the Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy

First Steering Committee meeting

Systematic Observations
Financing Facility

**Weather
and climate
data for
resilience**



SOFF Steering Committee Meeting, 30 June 2022

Decision item 1.8: Consultation process for the Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy

The Steering Committee:

- Encourages its members to provide comments to the SOFF Secretariat by 29th August;
- Requests the SOFF Advisory Board at its first meeting to review the strategy and to provide recommendations including on how the Advisory Board members can contribute to the implementation of the strategy;
- Requests the SOFF Secretariat to seek feedback on the Strategy from the SOFF Implementing Entities and SOFF peer advisors;
- Request the SOFF Secretariat to submit an updated strategy for consideration and endorsement by the Second Steering Committee.

Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF)

Draft Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy

Document review process notes:

- **Version 15/06/2022**
- The **SOFF First Steering Committee**, taking place 29-30 June 2022, is expected to consider the SOFF resource mobilization and outreach strategy.
- The **SOFF Second Steering Committee**, proposed to take place 4 October 2022, is expected to **endorse the strategy**, taking into consideration
 - feedback from Steering Committee Members provided to the SOFF Secretariat by 29 August 2022
 - feedback from SOFF Implementing Entities and SOFF peer advisors, including at the joint workshop that is scheduled to take place on 30 August – 2 September 2022, and
 - the recommendations from the First SOFF Advisory Board meeting expected to take place on 7 September 2022

About this document

This document reflects on the SOFF targets and the corresponding funding needs and identifies opportunities to expand SOFF financing and positioning in the global climate agenda.

It is presented at the SOFF Steering Committee's first meeting on 30 June 2022 for its consideration and feedback.

It is expected that the strategy will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

The Steering Committee may consider to make the strategy publicly available on the SOFF website.

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1. SOFF in the broader climate finance context

Observations as the basis for climate adaptation finance

Numerous global agreements recognize that successful action on climate mitigation, adaptation, resilience and poverty reduction depends on high-quality weather and climate services, and on the capacity to make informed decisions and take appropriate steps in light of that information. The same agreements recognize that the quality of forecasts and services depends on sound science, underpinned by robust earth observations, monitoring and analytics and that without reliable observations the foundation for sustainable development and effective climate action is weak.

SOFF will strengthen climate adaptation and resilient development by improving weather and climate observations that in turn support better weather forecasts, early warning systems and climate information services to save lives and livelihoods and protect property. SOFF funding is a foundational investment that underpins the effectiveness and sustainability of the investments of other development and climate funds.

Paris Agreement and the UNFCCC and the long-term vision for SOFF

The [Paris Agreement](#) recognizes the need for an effective and progressive response to climate change on the basis of the best available scientific knowledge. The Agreement identifies the need to enhance and strengthen systematic observation, climate services and knowledge sharing (Article 7) and postulates that systematic observation and early warning systems are areas of cooperation and facilitation to enhance understanding, action and support (Article 8).

The two recent reports of [IPCC Working Group I](#) and [Working Group II](#) showcase the progress in monitoring and understanding the climate. However, the lack of observational data – both in terms of the ongoing exchange of observations and access to long-term records – reduces the reliability of weather and climate predictions worldwide, and in particular limits the ability of the developing countries to monitor and forecast their local weather and climate, to understand risk (including the risk of extreme weather and compounding events), and to design meaningful adaptation measures.

The objective of SOFF is to support Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) through the provision of grant financing and technical assistance for the sustained collection and international exchange of surface-based weather and climate observations according to the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON) regulation and to help other DAC-eligible developing countries in assessing the need for strengthening their observations to meet GBON requirements.

The creation of SOFF represents an unprecedented global effort to accelerate the achievement of worldwide systematic observation aimed for under the Paris Agreement. At COP26 in 2021, SBSTA encouraged Parties and relevant organizations to support SOFF to enhance and sustain GBON implementation in developing countries, in particular the SIDS and LDCs.

SOFF as part of the UN Secretary-General Early Warning Systems Initiative

SOFF is a building block of the [Early Warning Systems Initiative](#). At the request of the UN Secretary-General, this initiative is spearheaded by WMO and is expected to be presented at COP27, with the goal to ensure that every person on Earth is protected by early warning systems within five years.

It is estimated that the entire initiative, including SOFF, will require a minimum additional investment of US\$ 1.5 billion over the next five years. Moreover, implementing full early warning coverage will require a global partnership effort to be mobilized by the initiative, leveraging existing investments in hydromet and early warning systems of Alliance for Hydromet Development institutions, such as the World Bank, UNDP and GCF, to broaden and maximize collective early warning endeavors.

2. SOFF targets and funding needs

SOFF First Implementation Period

The First Implementation Period begins 1 July 2022, following the first SOFF Steering Committee meeting adoption of the SOFF governance structure. It will end three years later.

The resource mobilization target for the First Implementation Period is USD 200 million. Any uncommitted resources at the end of the First Implementation Period will be carried over into the Expansion and Sustaining Period.

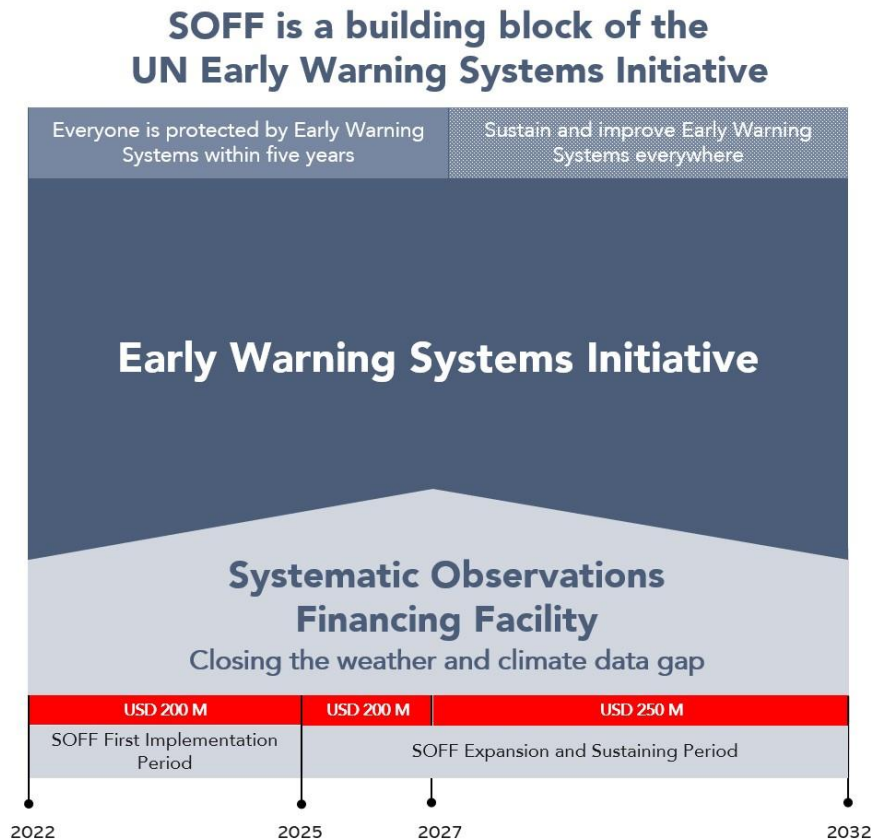
The First Implementation Period is expected to deliver on the following:

- Up to 55 countries with SOFF readiness support initiated
- Up to 35 countries with SOFF investment support initiated
- Results-based financing provided for up to 150 GBON compliant stations and on-demand compliance phase advisory services provided to up to 10 countries

SOFF Expansion and Sustaining Period

As described in the SOFF Terms of Reference, an Expansion and Sustaining Period follows the First Implementation Period for the remainder of the current 10-year horizon of SOFF.

After the 10 years, continued SOFF engagement will likely be needed to sustain GBON compliance in many SOFF eligible countries. The sequencing of implementation and funding needs are shown in the graph below.



A tentative estimate of the total cost of SOFF implementation over 10 years is USD 650 million (in 2022 prices). With this scale of support, at the end of the SOFF Expansion and Sustaining Period all SIDS and LDCs would have demonstrated sustained GBON compliance and all developing countries that demand readiness support would have received such support.

The specific parameters of the programmatic and resource mobilization approach for the Expansion and Sustaining Period will be designed in the third year of the First Implementation Period, building on the experience during that period. An independent external evaluation is envisaged by the second quarter of the third year of the First Implementation Period. This evaluation will inform the design and targets of the subsequent Expansion and Sustaining Period, based on approximately two years of implementation experience.

The UN Secretary-General Early Warning Systems Initiative sets a time horizon of five years to ensure that everybody is protected by Early Warning Systems. As indicated in the previous section, SOFF is a building block of this initiative as it will provide essential data underpinning for the provision of early warning systems against increasingly extreme weather and climate change.

Therefore, at the end of its 5th year SOFF will aim to have committed sufficient funding to ensure that all SIDS and LDCs have progressed toward GBON compliance. The additional resource mobilization target for the Early Warning Systems Initiative time horizon (SOFF implementation years 4-5) is expected to be on the order of USD 200 million.

During the period from the sixth to the tenth year of SOFF implementation, SOFF will focus on delivering on the commitments made during the first five years and on supporting sustained GBON compliance. The resource mobilization target for the sixth to the tenth years of SOFF implementation is estimated to amount to 250 USD million, with an annual expected expenditure of 50 USD million to support operations and maintenance of GBON observing networks.

A potential expansion of the scope of GBON that requires a decision by the World Meteorological Congress and/or of the SOFF beneficiary countries could be considered by the Steering Committee and would imply additional financial needs for SOFF.

After the First Implementation Period SOFF could organize its own replenishment cycle, with the first replenishment envisaged to be completed in the third year of the First Implementation Period. Alternatively, SOFF replenishments could be organized alongside one of the regular replenishments of a major development or climate fund. This might broaden the funder base and make for a more efficient replenishment process. It would also reinforce the notion that SOFF funding is a foundational investment that underpins the effectiveness and sustainability of the investments of other development and climate funds.

3. Expanding SOFF funding base

Funders and Prospective Funders

To become a contributor to the SOFF UNMPTF, a bilateral or multilateral partner enters into a Standard Administrative Agreement (SAA) for contributions with the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund (UNMPTF) Office, which acts as the SOFF Trustee. Other types of entities, such as philanthropic foundations, can contribute to the SOFF UNMPTF upon agreement by the Steering Committee and with the consent of the Trustee.

All funders of the SOFF UNMPTF are decision-making Members of the Steering Committee. This includes funders with a firm pledge (publicly announced political commitment to contribute a specific amount of financing to the SOFF UNMPTF). Funders have one year from the announcement of the pledge to transfer the funds to the Trustee. WMO is also a decision-making Member representing the co-founders, UNEP and UNDP. Direct contributions to the SOFF Secretariat are welcomed and of great value to support SOFF implementation. However, only financial contributions to the SOFF UNMPTF result in membership on the Steering Committee.

Prospective Funders are those that are considering a pledge and have notified the SOFF Secretariat accordingly. A Prospective Funder can be a non-decision-making Member of the

Steering Committee for one year from its first participation in a Steering Committee meeting. The Funder has to materialize its pledge within a year to become a decision-making Member. An extension could be considered by the Steering Committee.

Goals for Expanding the Funding Base

During the SOFF First Implementation Period, the SOFF will focus on four main goals to expand its funding base:

- Goal 1: Support Prospective Funders in becoming Funders. It is expected that the SOFF Secretariat and SOFF Funders will advocate for SOFF with other governments that are exploring a pledge to the SOFF UNMPTF, aiming to finalize their entrance into the group of Funders.
- Goal 2: Bring the remaining top bilateral climate funders into the group of SOFF Funders. It is expected that the SOFF Secretariat and SOFF Funders will reach out to the top bilateral climate financiers, aiming to bring them on board as SOFF Funders.
- Goal 3: Explore the possibility of potential contributions from multilateral organizations and mechanisms. SOFF will not only ensure sustainability of their previous investments into basic observations but also take care of GBON investments in LDCs and SIDS, hence freeing up resources of multilateral partners.
- Goal 4: Support Funders with limited initial pledges (e.g., for one year only) in extending their pledges into subsequent years. The SOFF Secretariat will work with these Funders to support their efforts.

Outreach and Advocacy

Outreach and advocacy efforts will focus on expanding the SOFF funding base as well as further positioning SOFF in the climate agenda:

- Further positioning SOFF within UNFCCC: SOFF Steering Committee members, including the LDC Group and AOSIS, are encouraged to promote SOFF within the UNFCCC process, aiming at ensuring that COP decisions reflect the need for SOFF and closing the systematic observations gap. The SOFF Secretariat will engage in the UNFCCC process, including through SOFF submissions, in support of these efforts.
- Tapping high-level political advocacy opportunities: The SOFF Secretariat will promote the participation of Steering Committee members in high-level events when they provide an opportunity to create further SOFF momentum and support.

- SOFF co-founders WMO, UNDP and UNEP promoting SOFF: The three co-founders will seek to further promote understanding of SOFF at events and in their reports and publications.
- Showcasing SOFF impact by SOFF Advisory Board members: The Advisory Board is expected to maximize SOFF by linking SOFF with their and other initiatives across the meteorological value chain to ensure “last mile” impact. SOFF Advisory Board Members are encouraged to showcase good practice examples.
- Continuing consultations: Consultations with civil society and the private sector will continue in order to ensure that local perspectives are voiced and incorporated into the design of SOFF operations. The representatives of the civil society and the private sector in the Advisory Board are expected to identify opportunities to promote SOFF among their constituencies.

4. Jointly implementing the Strategy

The implementation of the SOFF Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy requires cooperation among the SOFF governing bodies and SOFF partners. The most important are highlighted below.

Steering Committee

SOFF Steering Committee members, supported by the SOFF Secretariat, will aim at expanding the SOFF funding base and are expected to engage in outreach and advocacy efforts. This could imply the participation in high-level events; supporting submissions to UNFCCC bodies and relevant COP decisions; advocating for the transition of Prospective Funders into the Funders group; and promoting SOFF among potential funders.

Additionally, the SOFF Steering Committee is encouraged to position SOFF in high-level resolutions and strategic documents related to systematic observations and climate adaptation.

The LDC Group and AOSIS representatives in the Steering Committee are expected to alert the SOFF Secretariat about outreach opportunities and SOFF advocacy support among beneficiary countries.

Advisory Board

In coordination with the SOFF Secretariat, the Advisory Board members are expected to identify areas in which they can showcase how their activities benefit from SOFF operations and explore options to communicate to funders the impacts of SOFF implementation and its last mile benefits.

Furthermore, the Advisory Board members are encouraged to continuously seek opportunities to advocate and promote SOFF through their respective network.

SOFF Secretariat

The SOFF Secretariat will spearhead the resource mobilization and outreach efforts guided and supported by the Steering Committee and supported by the Advisory Board and SOFF partners.

The SOFF Secretariat will provide support to Prospective Funders in order to firm up their pledges, while engaging with potential funders; it will identify and coordinate with the Steering Committee and the Advisory Board on opportunities where SOFF could be promoted; it will assist SOFF co-founders in promoting SOFF among their respective partners and constituencies; and will work alongside the Steering Committee in order to contribute to high-level resolutions, including COP decisions.

Implementing Entities

The SOFF Implementing Entities are expected to promote SOFF among beneficiary countries within their portfolios, as well as to the donors supporting their climate adaptation activities.

Peer advisors

The SOFF peer advisors are expected to promote SOFF among WMO Members, taking advantage of their participation in WMO constituent body meetings and WMO-related events. The SOFF peer advisors are encouraged to promote SOFF among their national institutions with funding capacity, seeking to support SOFF resource mobilization efforts.