

Eighth Steering Committee
18-19 June 2024

Updated Resource Mobilization and
Outreach Strategy and Action
Programme until June 2025

Decision 8.2

Systematic Observations
Financing Facility

**Weather
and climate
data for
resilience**



Decision 8.2: Endorsement of the Updated Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy and adoption of the Action Programme until June 2025

The SOFF Steering Committee

Notes

- that the Updated Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy replaces the previously endorsed strategy ([Decision 2.3](#)).
- with concern the challenging financial situation and the urgency of stepped-up resource mobilization efforts.

Endorses the Updated Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy.

Adopts the Resource Mobilization Action Programme until June 2025.

Decides to focus resource mobilization efforts on high priority short-term actions and to regularly review these actions.

Purpose of this Document

The document reports on progress with SOFF resource mobilization against its original targets and goals, on lessons learned, and on implications of not meeting Resource Mobilization targets. It includes the Action Programme until June 2025 based on the above, with 12 corresponding targets to be delivered in close collaboration between the SOFF Steering Committee and the SOFF Secretariat.

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Updated Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy and Action Programme until June 2025

1. Call to Action

SOFF as a new specialized UN climate fund has been delivering at speed and scale on its early operational targets with low overhead costs. [The Independent External Review](#)¹ conducted in the second half of 2023 assesses SOFF as highly relevant, highly transparent, and highly effective; as the best viable option for countries to upgrade, maintain and operate their observation systems for GBON compliance in a sustainable fashion; and as foundational for the effectiveness and sustainability of investments of other partners.

SOFF is now at the most critical juncture since its inception and risks losing steam because of a shortfall of financial resources needed to meet strong country demand and the programming and fundraising targets set by the SOFF Steering Committee. Without intensive resource mobilization action, the SOFF program, its benefits and sustainability will be severely constrained. SOFF credibility and the credibility of the implementation of the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON) as a WMO flagship initiative are at risk.

Therefore, the updated SOFF Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy is a call to action: SOFF needs an urgent and concerted resource mobilization effort, spearheaded by high-level champions, including current funders, the leadership of WMO, UNDP and UNEP, and representatives of beneficiary countries. The SOFF Secretariat is called upon to support the efforts of these champions.

2. Progress with program delivery and Resource Mobilization against targets

The SOFF Steering Committee at its second meeting in October 2022 endorsed the SOFF Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy.² Since then SOFF has been successful in delivering on its increasingly ambitious operational targets; the [SOFF Action Report 2023](#) provides an overview of achievements since SOFF opened its doors for business in July 2022 and the first country funding requests were approved in March 2023. More detailed information on SOFF progress is reported in document INF 8.1 on SOFF Implementation Progress. Resource mobilization, while successful in raising start-up resources, is now emerging as the most critical constraint for SOFF's continued progress. Urgent action is needed to unlock the necessary financial resources that will allow SOFF to fulfil its crucial mission.

¹ [Decision 7.2 SOFF Independent External Review and Management Response](#)

² [Decision 2.3 Endorsement of the SOFF Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy](#)

The [SOFF Terms of Reference](#), the foundational document on which SOFF was established, identified resource needs for meeting the GBON requirements in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) as USD 200 million by 2025 and USD 400 million by 2027. These needs translated into corresponding resource mobilization targets and inclusion of the USD 400 million target in the UN Early Warnings for All (EW4All) Executive Action Plan and its investment target. Considering the expected benefit from GBON compliance, which were estimated at USD 5 billion per annum, these SOFF resource requirements were judged to be reasonable and realistic.

At its fourth meeting in March 2023, the SOFF Steering Committee decided to front-load SOFF programming of all 55 Readiness countries in 2023 instead of spreading them throughout the First Implementation Period until June 2025.³ In November 2023, at its sixth meeting the Steering Committee decided to substantially raise the delivery targets for its first operational phase (June 2022-June 2025).⁴ For Readiness support, the number of countries to be covered was raised from 55 to 75; and for Investment support, from 35 to 50. This allowed SOFF to contribute more effectively to the implementation of the ambitious goals of EW4All. Despite this increase in planned programme delivery, the resource mobilization target was kept constant at USD 200 million by June with SOFF limiting its support to the mandatory standard density network but allowing for some flexibility to consider country-specific circumstances.⁵ Box 1 summarizes some of the principal achievements of SOFF since the 1st Steering Committee in June 2022 made SOFF operational.

Box 1: SOFF Operational Achievements since June 2022

SOFF established its operational framework: Since SOFF opened doors for business in June 2022, significant progress has been achieved in setting SOFF's operational framework, including Steering Committee adoption of SOFF Operational Manual⁶, SOFF Work Programme 2022-2025 and its update⁴, SOFF Gender Action Plan⁷, SOFF Risk Management Framework⁸, SOFF Investment Phase Framework⁹ and SOFF Results Framework and its update¹⁰.

SOFF is delivering at speed and scale: Since March 2023, Readiness funding for 60 countries and Investment funding for 11 countries has been approved, totalling USD 75

³ [Decision 4.4 Adoption Accelerated SOFF implementation and second batch of SOFF programming countries](#)

⁴ [Decision 6.6 Updated Work Programme SOFF Implementation Period July 2022 to June 2025](#)

⁵ The original estimates included in the SOFF Terms of Reference were based on the GBON high density network in line with earlier GBON design assumptions that were revised in the final GBON decision.

⁶ [SOFF Operational Manual](#)

⁷ [Decision 3.3 Adoption of the SOFF Gender Action Plan: Targets for the First Implementation Period](#)

⁸ [Decision 4.2 Adoption of the SOFF risk management framework](#)

⁹ [Decision 5.8 SOFF Investment Phase Framework and Funding Request Template](#)

¹⁰ [Decision 6.7 Updated SOFF Results Framework for the First Implementation Period 2022-2025](#)

million. The average time it took from the Steering Committee programming decision to the approval of the Readiness funding requests was 3.7 months.

SOFF is leveraging partners' competencies to maximize impact: 72 international partners are joining forces in the Steering Committee, Advisory Board and as SOFF operational partners to close the basic weather and climate observation gaps in a systematic manner. At COP28, SOFF signed a collaboration framework with the major multilateral climate funds for enhancing systematic observation and improving the use of basic weather and climate data for effective climate action.¹¹

Country Spotlight: Mozambique

Mozambique is one of the EW4All initial focus countries and has successfully completed the SOFF Readiness phase with support from the South African Weather Service as peer advisor. With currently no GBON-compliant stations, Mozambique is receiving USD 7.8 million as SOFF Investment phase support to install six new land surface stations, upgrade 15 existing surface stations and install four upper-air stations to meet GBON requirements. The implementation is led by the World Food Programme (WFP) as the SOFF Implementing Entity. Its role is crucial, leveraging WFP extensive field presence, data analysis capabilities, and ongoing activities in the country. SOFF operations enhance national capacities for early warnings, forecast-based finance, and Anticipatory Action. Moreover, SOFF support ensures the operation and sustainability of stations funded by previous projects, including those from the Climate Investment Funds Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience, Nordic Development Fund, and World Bank, which were abandoned due to a lack of maintenance resources.

However, the resource mobilization pace during the first two years of SOFF's existence has not kept up with the pace of program delivery. SOFF raised USD 79 million by the 7th Steering Committee meeting (7SC) in November 2023 and is expected to increase this total to USD 92 million by the 8SC in June 2024. This has opened up a significant gap between resources available and resources required to meet program needs at 8SC and potentially through June 2025 and beyond. Accordingly, the program delivery pace has to be curtailed at the 8SC and a major shortfall in SOFF implementation relative to the program delivery targets will be inevitable by June 2025, unless the pace of resource mobilization is substantially increased in the immediate future.

The SOFF Secretariat alerted the Steering Committee to the impending resource mobilization challenge at the 7SC and the Steering Committee adopted in Decision 7.3¹² four specific short-term actions as well as the preparation of this update of the SOFF Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy. The next section reviews progress with

¹¹ [Framework for Collaboration for enhancing Systematic Observation](#)

¹² [Decision 7.3 SOFF financial situation, country demand and resource mobilization actions](#)

SOFF resource mobilization against the five goals set in the original Strategy and considers the impact of the short-term actions taken under Decision 7.3.

3. Progress against the goals set in the initial Resource Mobilization and Outreach strategy

In assessing the progress made with SOFF resource mobilization it is important not to lose sight of the fact that SOFF is a brand-new initiative which had to make the case for funder support in a very difficult global resource mobilization context and crowded climate finance space comprised of more than 80 climate funds.¹³ Bilateral funder budgets, in particular, are subject to severe fiscal constraints, while at the same time facing overwhelming needs due to many factors including regional conflicts, humanitarian crises, the aftermath of COVID, a severe debt overhang in developing countries, and the need for climate action at multiple fronts, and hence many demands on limited resources. Concerning climate action, many funders face domestic demands to demonstrate that their tax dollars directly reach people in need, i.e., the “Last Mile.”

Against this background, SOFF made the case that closing today’s major basic weather and climate observation gaps has direct benefits with high rates of return for actions downstream in the hydromet value chain¹⁴ and therefore deserved allocation of scarce budgetary resources potentially over other uses. The SOFF Terms of Reference argued for funder support precisely on these terms (see Box 2) and it is remarkable and gratifying that 12 initial funders have taken the leadership and been ready to step up and contribute to the SOFF UN fund in the first two years of SOFF’s existence despite the constraints they faced. Indeed, a number of these funders made not only one but two and even three consecutive contributions. While the pace of SOFF resource mobilization has to increase significantly, the support of the initial funders demonstrates that the arguments for funder support of SOFF are highly relevant and appears to be convincing. The remainder of this section briefly assesses the progress against the four resource mobilization goals set in the 2022 strategy in order help explain the current status of resource mobilization and extract lessons to inform action going forward.

Box 2. Benefits of GBON and SOFF

Reliable weather forecast and climate prediction is vital for responding to the risks posed by climate change and extreme weather events. The forecasts upon which society depends would not be possible without the real-time, international exchange of observational data from all over the world. Local forecasting in any given location benefits from improved observations from all over the globe.

¹³ P. Le Houérou, “Climate Funds: Time to Clean Up”, FERDI Working Paper 320, 14 March 2023.

<https://ferdi.fr/en/publications/climate-funds-time-to-clean-up>

¹⁴ As explained in the SOFF Terms of Reference, the hydromet value chain connects weather observations collected and shared by countries with weather and climate predictions by global and national weather centers, which in turn inform development, climate and early warning activities.

The socio-economic benefits of weather prediction are estimated to amount to at least US\$160 billion per year. Further improvements in forecasting and early warning systems could provide additional benefits of US\$30 billion per year.¹⁵

The 193 countries and territories of the World Meteorological Congress in a breakthrough decision established for the first time the minimum set of basic surface-based weather and climate observation – the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON) – that all countries must comply with since January 2023. Improvements in the international exchange of observational data through GBON can deliver benefits of over USD 5 billion annually.¹⁵ The benefits to low- and middle-income countries are likely to be underestimated as non-monetizable benefits are not considered in this analysis.

Investing in additional surface-based observations is highly economically efficient with an estimated global cost-benefit ratio of 1:26. This means for every dollar invested, at least twenty-six dollars in socio-economic return could be realized.¹⁵

The benefits of increasing surfaced-based observations through GBON will be felt most in regions that are most vulnerable to climate change and its impacts including Africa, South America, South-West Pacific and parts of Asia. However, given the global nature of weather and climate, benefits of GBON will be realized both in the countries where the improvements are made and across the globe.

A further analysis of GBON benefits is currently undertaken by ECMWF, based on Decision 6.8 on SOFF Impact Reports.¹⁶ In collaboration with the work undertaken by ECMWF, the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) is undertaking an analysis of the socioeconomic benefits of better weather and climate observation and decision-making ecosystem, funded by Austria as a complementary contribution to its contributions to the SOFF UNMPTF.

3.1. Goal 1: Expanding SOFF funding base

The strategy recognized the need to expand the funding base, both in regard to bilateral funders and multilateral funders. At the launch of SOFF in June 2022, seven funders pledged USD 29 million – six bilateral official funders and one multilateral organization (the Nordic Development Fund, NDF). By the 7SC in March 2024, the number of funders had risen to twelve (Table 1) with pledges amounting to USD 79 million (Table 1). However, additional funders will have to be mobilized to generate the scale and pace of resources required to reach the USD 200 and USD 400 million targets by 2025 and 2027 respectively.

¹⁵ Kull, Daniel; Riishojgaard, Lars Peter; Eyre, John; Varley, Robert A. 2021. [The Value of Surface-based Meteorological Observation Data](#). © World Bank, Washington.

¹⁶ [Decision 6.8 SOFF Impact Reports](#)

Table 1. Growth in SOFF funding base SC1 to SC7.

	1SC June 2022	3SC November 2022	5SC June 2023	7SC March 2024
Number of funders	7	8	10	12
Funders	Austria Denmark Finland Iceland Ireland NDF Norway	Austria Denmark Finland Iceland Ireland NDF Norway United States	Austria Denmark Finland Iceland Ireland NDF Netherlands Norway Spain United States	Austria Belgium Canada Denmark Finland Iceland Ireland NDF Netherlands Norway Spain United States
Total pledges in USD million	29	41	65	79

The SOFF Secretariat has been reaching out to a group of additional potential funders in Europe and beyond Europe, but so far with limited success. A number of factors likely explain the challenge:

- It appears that SOFF remains “the invisible ingredient”, in that the importance of upstream observations for the realization of downstream benefits is not yet widely appreciated.
- The fact that a significant fraction of the benefits of SOFF accrues to high income countries (HICs), while in principle potentially a prime reason for HIC support, in practice means that the ministries in charge of ODA allocation – which is determined by benefits according to lower and middle-income countries – might not be in a position to use this argument for funding SOFF.
- The limited political visibility of the meteorological community and National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in some funder capitals also may be a constraint. This constraint appears to be amplified at global level. For example, while SBSTA59¹⁷ emphasized “the continued need to address gaps in systematic observations globally [...]” and “encourage[d] Parties and relevant organizations to further strengthen their provision of support to the systematic observation

¹⁷ Decision [FCCC/SBSTA/2023/8](#)

community”, this recommendation was not reflected in the cover decision of COP28.

- Finally, some bilateral funders have been concerned about the fragmentation in the climate finance architecture.¹⁸ They might see a new fund that is exclusively focusing on systematic observation with scepticism even as SOFF has made exceptional efforts to be incorporated within an existing climate fund and, once established under the umbrella of the UN Multi-Partner Trust Funds (UNMPTF), to foster division of labor and collaboration among partners (see section 3.2 below).

Among potential multilateral funders, the SOFF Secretariat has been reaching out to the European Commission (EC) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF). More recently, it has also been exploring the possibility of getting funding through the newly established Loss and Damage Fund (LDF). In each case, progress has been limited to date for varying reasons. In the case of the EC, while there is strong support for SOFF from the climate directorate this has yet to translate into financial support from the funding directorate (DG INTPA). In the case of the GCF, the SOFF Secretariat has closely engaged with the GCF Secretariat but did not get traction so far in advancing discussions on a potential GCF contribution to the SOFF UNMPTF. The LDF is in its early days. It has established its board and is in the process of firming up its mandate and financing modalities. The fund is expected to be in operation by COP29, and establishing SOFF as part of the LDF delivery arrangements is expected to take time.

3.2. Goal 2: Fostering partnerships

Recognizing the challenges of organizational fragmentation in the climate finance architecture and the clear need for cooperation and coordination, the design and implementation of SOFF have stressed effective partnerships from the outset. SOFF is employing what is now referred to as a T-shaped structural approach to its mission: A narrow and sharp vertical focus on supporting countries in only one area – internationally agreed and mandated basic weather and climate observations –, while incentivizing and closely coordinating with a large number of partners to ensure effective delivery and appropriate linkages with downstream activities in the hydromet value chain. In addition, the governance structure (Steering Committee and Advisory Board) ensures the engagement of partners and stakeholders from a diverse spectrum, from the multilateral climate funds to private sector, from global forecast centers to civil society. Additionally, at COP28, the SOFF Secretariat has signed an agreement with five other multilateral climate funds assuring effective collaboration. Judging from the speedy and successful deployment of its operational partnerships so far, SOFF has been effective in ensuring intensive collaboration across these many partners during the first two years of its existence. This is confirmed by the recent SOFF Independent External Review which

¹⁸ Philippe Le Houérou. [Climate funds: time to clean up. 2023.](#) (hal-04027247)

concluded that “SOFF is considered as coherent with and complementary to the overall climate finance architecture.”¹⁹

While there has been notable success in the operational sphere, limited progress has been made in engaging key SOFF stakeholder groups as effective partners in the SOFF resource mobilization effort. The Resource Mobilization and Outreach Strategy envisioned active support in resource mobilization from the SOFF co-founders (WMO, UNDP, UNEP), Steering Committee and Advisory Board members and from beneficiary country stakeholders. Except for several initial SOFF funders and WMO Executive Management, there is little evidence that these potential champions have effectively deployed their voices in helping to bring additional funders into the SOFF fold. Given the many competing priorities for each of these SOFF stakeholder groups – and in the case of SOFF Implementing Entities and other multilateral climate funds the need to raise resources for their own organizations – it is perhaps not surprising that they have not yet focused on supporting SOFF resource mobilization. More outreach to and by senior levels will be required to enlist their active support.

Partly in response to this experience, the SOFF Secretariat recently strengthened its in-house communications and outreach capacity. This will be deployed to engage with and support current funders, partners, and stakeholders in working with SOFF to promote its resource mobilization goals.

3.3. Goal 3: Positioning SOFF within UNFCCC and COP

The SOFF Secretariat in coordination with WMO and with support from funders, partners, and beneficiary countries, has made intensive efforts to ensure that the GBON and SOFF agendas are effectively integrated into the UNFCCC agenda and have used COP27 and COP28 to convey the importance of GBON and SOFF clearly and convincingly to the wider climate community. As a result, GBON and SOFF have been included explicitly in SBSTA conclusions, as noted above (see Box 3). However, more needs to be done at COP29 and beyond to enshrine systematic observation and SOFF fully in the COP cover decisions. Full support for SOFF from COP would be of significant help with resource mobilization. See INF 8.6 for more information.

Box 3. SOFF at COP27 and COP28

COP27

The COP27 cover decision, [the Sharm el Sheikh Implementation Plan](#), emphasised the need to address existing gaps in the global climate observing system, particularly in developing countries, and recognised the need for enhanced cooperation by the systematic observation community. SBSTA ([ECCC/SBSTA/2022/L.20](#)) noted with

¹⁹ [Decision 7.2 SOFF Independent External Review and Management Response](#), p.26 of the Annex.

appreciation the progress in supporting systematic observation, as well as the development of SOFF.

The Early Warnings for All initiative, with SOFF as a delivery vehicle, was launched at COP27 and welcomed in the cover decision.

The SOFF high-level event featured key partners and external stakeholders supporting SOFF, including principals from WMO, UNEP, IMF, ECMWF and the Africa Risk Capacity, as well as Ministers from funding and beneficiary countries.

UNFCCC listed SOFF as part of the Loss and Damage financing architecture in its [“Synthesis report on existing funding arrangements and innovative sources relevant to addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change”](#) in March 2023.

COP28

The COP28 decision on the Loss and Damage Fund ([FCCC/CP/2023/11/Add.1](#)), states that “Entities that form part of the funding arrangements should explore ways of better coordinating all channels of finance, [...] with the aim of improving synergies and coherence among the existing and new arrangements for responding to loss and damage”. Paragraph 21 highlights SOFF “to increase their support for activities that enhance response to loss and damage”.

SBSTA59 ([FCCC/SBSTA/2023/8](#)) emphasized “the urgent need to maintain and expand systematic observations in support of adaptation, as well as deliver Early Warnings for All [...]” and “the continued need to address gaps in systematic observations globally”. SBSTA59, “noted the continued efforts of [SOFF]. It encouraged Parties and relevant organizations to further strengthen their provision of support to the systematic observation community.”

At COP28, SOFF, for the first time, provided an update to Parties at the [Earth Information Day 2023](#), an UNFCCC mandated event.

Two high-level events, one partnering with ECMWF, brought together a broad range of committed high-level partners. There, SOFF signed a collaboration framework with Green Climate Fund (GCF), Climate Investment Funds (CIF), Adaptation Fund (AF), Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the CREWS initiative) to collaborate on strengthening systematic observations.

3.4. Goal 4: Bolstering the UN Early Warning Systems Initiative

SOFF has been fully engaged in developing and delivering the EW4All initiative and is recognized as a foundational element and delivery vehicle. SOFF is firmly anchored in the Executive Action of the initiative and the SOFF funding target of USD 400 million is an integral part of the EW4All investment needs by 2027. The 30 countries identified as initial EW4All focus countries face significant GBON compliance gaps; their GBON compliance

rate corresponds to a mere 5% for surface land stations and 6% for upper air stations. Within one year, SOFF has programmed support for all 30 initial focus countries and already allocated more than USD 50 million for 28 countries, but there remains a SOFF funding gap of roughly USD 100 million to fully support these countries in closing their basic weather and climate data gaps.

This central engagement of SOFF in EW4All should in principle help with SOFF resource mobilization, but since the initiative has so far made limited progress with resource mobilization overall, it has been difficult to fully leverage it for the purpose of mobilizing SOFF resources. There is also a risk that the SOFF narrative could become too narrowly focused on its early warning benefits. These benefits are undoubtedly very important, but the overall GBON and SOFF benefits extend well beyond its essential contribution to improved early warnings. According to a 2021 study by the World Bank, WMO and the UK Met Office, 41% of total benefits of global weather prediction are due to improved disaster management, including early warning, with the remainder due to benefits in such areas as agriculture, construction, energy, transport, and water supply.²⁰

3.5. Overall assessment of progress so far

Table 2 summarizes overall progress for each of the four goals in the form of a traffic light color scheme, where green stands for full achievement, yellow for partial achievement and red for low achievement. Progress for the goal of expanding the funder base is rated yellow, because although some progress has been made by adding funders over the past two years, SOFF remains far from having established a funder base that allows for its effective and sustained program delivery. Partnerships for SOFF resource mobilization is rated red, since so far there has been too little engagement by potential key champions among SOFF stakeholders to support its resource mobilization effort. The other two goals are also rated yellow since there has been initial progress with positioning SOFF within the UNFCCC process and because SOFF has been prominently featured as a key element of the EW4All initiative but with limited SOFF resource mobilization results.

Table 2. Overall assessment of progress with achieving SOFF resource mobilization goals.

Resource Mobilization Goal	Rating
Goal 1: Expanding SOFF funding base	Partial Achievement
Goal 2: Fostering partnerships for resource mobilization	Low Achievement
Goal 3: Positioning SOFF within UNFCCC and COP	Partial Achievement
Goal 4: Bolstering the UN Early Warnings for All Initiative	Partial Achievement

²⁰ Kull et al., op. cit..

4. Lessons learned for SOFF Resource Mobilization

Five key general lessons can be drawn from this experience for future SOFF resource mobilization which in turn form the basis for specific actions and targets proposed in the last section:

- Lesson 1 – Mobilize more bilateral official funders: The leadership and support of the 12 initial funders has been crucial but achieving the USD 200 million funding target by June 2025 will require mobilizing additional bilateral funders with sizeable contributions. Therefore, the focus in the short term must be on the large high-income countries that do not yet support SOFF; in the medium-term SOFF will also need to reach out to potential funders among emerging economies.
- Lesson 2 – Move beyond bilateral funders: Achieving the USD 400 million funding target by 2027 most likely requires securing contributions to the SOFF UN fund beyond bilateral funders. In the short-term the focus must be on multilateral official funders with a focus on EC, GCF and LDF; in the medium-term private funders should also be tapped, including foundations and private aggregators.²¹
- Lesson 3 – Streamline the SOFF resource mobilization process: After the systematic resource mobilization effort with regular funder forum events during the preparation phase of SOFF, the approach to SOFF resource mobilization during the first two years of SOFF's existence was largely opportunistic and ad hoc, driven mostly by the SOFF Secretariat; resumption of a more systematic approach should be considered, ultimately moving towards a regular replenishment process.
- Lesson 4 – Strengthen SOFF communications and outreach: SOFF needs to intensify its communications and outreach activity in building a broad stakeholder alliance and raising awareness of the importance of weather and climate observations for effective development, climate, and early warning action. While the initial focus of the SOFF Secretariat was on getting SOFF operations going, the recent strengthening of the SOFF Secretariat's communication capacity will allow a stronger effort in this regard. SOFF Secretariat communication would need to be supported by communication efforts of the SOFF co-founders and more broadly all Steering Committee members.
- Lesson 5 – Mobilize champions: The most important lesson is that efforts by the SOFF Secretariat for resource mobilization do not suffice. SOFF needs key high-

²¹ Private aggregators are organizations that collect and administer the charitable contributions of high net worth individuals and contributions from smaller foundations and Corporate Social Responsibility contributions from private firms. The SOFF Secretariat has been in initial contact with two such potential private aggregators to explore possible support.

level champions to support its resource mobilization effort. This includes the leaders of the three SOFF founding entities, of current funders, and of beneficiary countries.

5. Resource Mobilization Action Programme until June 2025

Based on these lessons, five actions and 12 corresponding targets are proposed for the next twelve months. Delivering these actions and achieving the targets requires close collaboration between the SOFF Steering Committee, the SOFF co-founders WMO, UNDP and UNEP, and the SOFF Secretariat.

Action 1: Secure additional contributions from existing funders and intensify outreach to large potential HIC funders

Under the leadership of the SOFF Steering Committee and supported by the SOFF Secretariat and the meteorological offices of the respective countries that in several cases already serve as SOFF peer advisors, SOFF will reach out to HICs, including Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, and United Kingdom; it will also lay the groundwork for outreach to selected middle income countries (MICs) (principally G20 members).

June 2025 targets:

- At least 5 additional funders contribute to the SOFF UN fund.
- At least 10 existing funders make an additional contribution.
- SOFF is prominently featured in the EW4All resource mobilization strategy.

Action 2: Intensify outreach to the EC, GCF, LDF and foundations and private aggregators

With the active support of the Steering Committee, the SOFF Secretariat will intensify its outreach to these three multilateral organizations; it will also resume outreach to foundations (Gates, Bezos, Rockefeller, etc.) and step-up engagement with potential private aggregators.

June 2025 targets:

- The EC makes a substantial contribution to the SOFF UN Fund through DG INTPA, with the help of the Steering Committee EU members.
- The GCF finds a way to support the SOFF UN Fund, with the help of the Steering Committee and their GCF Board members.
- SOFF is conduit for addressing Loss and Damage and is reflected in the funding arrangements of the LDF fund, with help of the LDC Group, AOSIS representatives and SOFF funders represented on the LDF board.

- Discussions with at least two foundations and potential aggregators are at an advanced stage.

Action 3: Organize regular funder meetings

In the run-up to 9SC and COP29 SOFF will organize an informal funders meeting, encouraging funders to invite their COP finance negotiators to join, aiming at securing pledges at and SOFF recognition in the cover decision of COP29. It will further organize a formal funders meeting back-to-back prior to 11SC in June 2025. The funders meeting will be jointly sponsored by one or more current funders and one or more beneficiary countries.

June 2025 Targets:

- SOFF mechanism for more systematic resource mobilization established and first formal funders meeting held.

Action 4: Greatly intensify SOFF communications and outreach

Building on its expanded communications capacity, the SOFF Secretariat will further strengthen the SOFF message, stressing the potent combination of SOFF's distinctive features: the foundational nature of GBON observations for downstream benefits; SOFF as a highly innovative, cooperative, efficient, and scalable financing and delivery instrument for an essential global public good; and its ability to deliver quick wins for the global multilateral climate finance agenda, including the LDF. SOFF will have a strong presence at COP29 with high visibility. SOFF will need scaled-up communications and COP29 support from its co-founders WMO, UNDP and UNEP and all its Steering Committee members.

June 2025 Targets:

- SOFF prominently featured at COP29 Earth Information Day.
- SOFF featured in COP29 cover decision.

Action 5: Activate strong high-level champions for SOFF

SOFF will draw on the group of its initial funders as champions for SOFF in its outreach to new funders. Funders will be joined by WMO, UNDP and UNEP Senior Managements in this effort. This will involve high-level letters and bilateral and joint outreach to individual funder ministries and agencies, active engagement in the governing bodies of multilateral organizations (in particular GCF and LDF), inclusion of SOFF in the G7 and G20 agendas, and the mobilization of senior beneficiary country representatives to act as champions for SOFF.

June 2025 Targets:

- Heads of UNDP, UNEP and WMO and SOFF funder's leaders use multiple opportunities to promote SOFF at high level events and engage with senior officials from potential HIC funder countries in support of a pledge to SOFF.
- SOFF mentioned in G7 and G20 communiqués, with the help of SOFF funder ministries and their G7 and G20 sherpas.

6. Implications of not achieving the funding targets

The potential consequences of SOFF not reaching the resource mobilization targets established in its Terms of Reference and adopted by its Steering Committee are severe. This section briefly lays out some of the implications of a SOFF resource shortfall for a range of relevant stakeholders.

- For beneficiary countries: SOFF would be unable to meet high country demand and thus disappoint country expectations and delay the benefits for these countries from improved weather and climate observations and prediction. For the longer term it would undermine the credibility of SOFF in beneficiary countries and hence country commitment in delivering their mandatory GBON contribution as an essential global public good.
- For all countries: Since internationally exchanged weather and climate observations are the backbone of all weather forecasts and climate projections, all countries would suffer the consequences. As the above-mentioned study of the benefits of weather prediction has demonstrated, the greatest share of benefits accrues to MICs and HICs and thus they would directly be affected by the shortfall in SOFF resources.
- For investments in the hydromet value chain: Effective action of SOFF peer advisors and Implementing Entities would be limited and hence also the effectiveness of observation investments. The sustainability of benefits of observation investments would be put in doubt in the absence of SOFF support for operations and maintenance. This would reduce the effectiveness, benefits, and sustainability of downstream investments from other partners, including multilateral climate funds, Multilateral Development Banks, and bilateral official funders, when they depend on the accuracy of weather and climate observations and predictions.
- For WMO and WMO members: A resource shortfall for SOFF would undermine the credibility Global Basic Observing Network (GBON) as a WMO flagship initiative and the spirit of WMO Members supporting each other for mutual benefits. It would also put in doubt SOFF's ability to support a potential future expansion of GBON into other earth observation domains, which is being explored by WMO constituent bodies.

- For SOFF and its initial funders: A significant and sustained resource gap would put SOFF credibility at risk. It would reverse the strong momentum of SOFF's early start. It would limit SOFF's ability to motivate peer advisors and Implementing Entities. And it would undermine the impact of the investment by current funders in SOFF to date. In effect, there is a risk of a return to a delivery model of one-off, fragmented, unsustainable investments in upstream hydromet capacity that SOFF was set up to overcome.
- For the UNFCCC process: A failure by SOFF to deliver on its promise would be seen as a step back from climate and climate finance commitments made by advanced countries in general, and as an inexplicable failure to support what is widely recognized as a highly efficient and effectively targeted financing mechanism for an essential global public good.

Annex: SOFF Short-term Resource Mobilization Actions

Action Area	What	Who	When	Timing of Impact
Outreach to Bilateral Funders				
Current SOFF funders	Seek additional pledges	Current funders; WMO/UNDP/UNEP leadership; SOFF Secretariat	July-November 2024; and beyond	COP29; November 2024-June 2025; and beyond
Additional bilateral SOFF funders	Seek new HIC funders, esp. large potential funders	Current funders; WMO/UNDP/UNEP; SOFF Secretariat	Ditto	Ditto
Outreach to EC, GCF, LDF, Foundations and Private Aggregators				
EC	Seek EC pledge incl. with letter to INTPA	Current SOFF Funders from EC; SOFF Secretariat	Ditto	Ditto
GCF	Seek GCF funding for SOFF programs	SOFF Secretariat; GCF management; current SOFF Funders at GCF Board	July 2024-June 2025	June 2025 and beyond
Activate Strong High-Level Champions for SOFF				
Targeted outreach at leader/ministerial level	Prominent mention of SOF at high-level events and Meetings Letters to ministers of potential funders	WMO/UNDP/UNEP leadership and current funder ministers; Ministers of current funders	July 2024-June 2025	COP29; November 2024-June 2025; and beyond