



Systematic Observations Financing Facility - SOFF

A new way of financing basic observations

Executive Summary

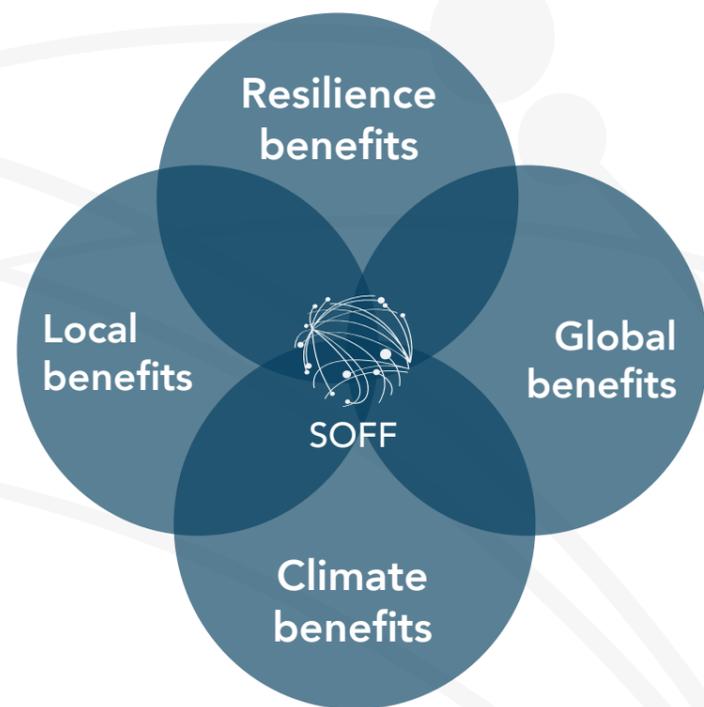
The goal of the **Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF)** is to **strengthen local and global resilient development and climate adaptation through improved observing systems leading to better weather forecasts and climate services.**

Basic weather observations underpin weather forecasts, early warning systems, and climate information locally and globally. There are currently great gaps in weather observations, especially in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Investments to substantially increase these observations will bring significant local and global benefits, with an estimated cost-benefit ratio of 1:26.

In 2019, the World Meteorological Congress and its 193 member countries and territories agreed to establish the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON). For the first time, GBON sets out a clear obligation for all World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Members to acquire and internationally exchange the most essential surface-based observational weather data. However, many countries will need substantial investments and strengthened capacity to achieve and maintain compliance with the GBON requirements.

SOFF will support countries to meet their GBON commitments to generate and exchange basic observational weather data, with a focus on LDCs and SIDS. It will also enable these countries to access improved weather forecasts and climate analysis products. These improved forecasts are critical for managing extreme weather events and will benefit all sectors, especially those that rely heavily on weather data, such as agriculture, renewable energy and insurance. In the climate space, improved forecasts will help countries understand the adaptation challenges they will face and to prepare and respond accordingly with proactive, preventive and systematic adaptation action, including better risk management and anticipatory action. In addition to these local and regional benefits, better data from LDCs and SIDS will improve the quality of forecasts globally, especially medium to long-range forecasts, with benefits for all countries, in all sectors.

SOFF at the intersection of national and global, resilient development and climate benefits



SOFF will provide technical and financial assistance in new ways – applying internationally agreed metrics to guide investments based on the requirements of the GBON, using data exchange as a measure of success, and creating local benefits while delivering on a global public good. Past investments in meteorological capacity, often supported by the international community through time-bound projects, have not, in many instances, yielded lasting benefits because of inadequate budgets for operations and maintenance. SOFF will provide grant support to LDCs and SIDS for capital investments and contribute to cover operations and maintenance, ensuring the benefits of investments in observational capacity are sustained. The creation of SOFF is a commitment and priority action of the Alliance for Hydromet Development. The aim is to integrate SOFF into an existing multilateral financial organization or platform, rather than establish it as a new institution.

SOFF is an ambitious undertaking. It aims at fixing a perennial problem that is undermining the foundation of adaptation efforts. To bring all 68 LDCs and SIDS into GBON compliance over an initial 5-year period is estimated to require USD 400 million. Sustaining the capacity over time is expected to require USD 50 million per year subsequently. After the initial implementation period, SOFF may be able to expand its scope by including lower-middle income countries among its beneficiaries and by covering additional earth observation domains.

The intention is to announce SOFF at COP26 in November 2021 with a commitment of at least USD 200 million, with another USD 200 million to be raised subsequently.

 Find out more about the SOFF [here](#)