



Ninth Steering Committee  
22 October 2024

# Green Climate Fund – SOFF Fragile and Conflict Affected States Accelerator Programme

Decision 9.6

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Systematic Observations  
Financing Facility

**Weather  
and climate  
data for  
resilience**



## Decision 9.6: Green Climate Fund – SOFF Fragile and Conflict Affected States Accelerator Programme

### The SOFF Steering Committee

Notes with concern the significant weather and climate data gaps in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States, home to about two billion people, with a GBON compliance rate for surface land stations of less than one percent, and that these data gaps hamper effective climate action in these countries and across the globe.

Recalls decision 6.4 to develop a framework for collaboration with multilateral climate funds, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for enhancing systematic observation and improving the use of basic weather and climate data for effective climate action; decision 7.3 to develop a proposal for a potential GCF contribution to the SOFF UNMPTF; and decision 8.2 to seek GCF funding for SOFF as a short-term resource mobilization action.

### Welcomes

- the discussions that took place between the GCF Secretariat, the SOFF co-founders WMO, UNDP and UNEP, the UNMPTF Office and the SOFF Secretariat. Further welcomes the meeting between the GCF Executive Director and the SOFF Steering Committee co-chairs that took place 26 September 2024 on seeking an impactful partnership in support of Fragile and Conflict-Affected States.
- the initial programme idea on “Enhancing systematic observation and improving the use of basic weather and climate data for effective action: GCF – SOFF Fragile and Conflict-Affected States Accelerator Programme” that builds on these discussions and meetings, as outlined in this document.

Appreciates the interest of the GCF Secretariat to forge an ambitious programmatic GCF-SOFF partnership as to create impact at scale in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States, deliver on a joint priority of GCF and the SOFF co-founders, and make a significant contribution to the UN Early Warnings for All initiative.

Decides to further develop with urgency the programme with the proposed design.

### Requests

- the SOFF Secretariat to continue engaging the Steering Committee members and as possible their respective GCF Board Members for further guidance in developing the programme with the proposed design and based on further engagement with the GCF Secretariat and countries that express interest with putting a particular emphasis on Small Island Developing States, Least Developed Countries and Lower Middle-Income Countries.
- The SOFF co-founders WMO, UNDP and UNEP to engage with the GCF Secretariat to identify the implementation modalities that will allow for using the existing SOFF

UNMPTF governance and operational arrangements for the implementation of the programme.

- The SOFF Secretariat to continue to engage with UNEP as they consider serving as the Accredited Entity for this programme.
- The SOFF Secretariat, guided by Steering Committee co-chairs, to support the preparation of the programme under leadership of the Accredited Entity
- The SOFF Secretariat to report to the 10<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting on progress in developing the programme.

#### Purpose of this Document

This document responds to requests from the SOFF Steering Committee to develop a proposal for a potential GCF contribution to the SOFF UNMPTF. It contains the initial concept for a GCF-SOFF Fragile and Conflict-Affected States Accelerator programme.

It seeks guidance from the Steering Committee on further developing the envisioned multi-country programme that is built on two components. Component 1 on enhancing systematic observation through GBON compliance would be implemented through SOFF and its governance structure and operational partners. Component 2 would implement activities that improve the use of basic weather and climate data for effective climate action.

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# Green Climate Fund – SOFF Fragile and Conflict Affected States Accelerator Programme

## 1. Context

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) substantially contributed to SOFF development and serves as SOFF Advisory Board member. The GCF Secretariat has been actively involved in SOFF design and development ever since the first brainstorming workshop in July 2019. Since then, the GCF has played an important role in shaping SOFF. The GCF is part of the SOFF governance structure as an Advisory Board member and has been working with the SOFF Secretariat in a collaborative manner.

GCF and SOFF Secretariats signed a framework for collaboration. In December 2023, at UNFCCC COP28, the SOFF and GCF Secretariats, jointly with Secretariats of other multilateral climate funds, signed a [framework for collaboration to enhance systematic observation and improve the use of basic weather and climate data for effective climate action](#).

The collaboration framework intends to support beneficiary countries in a coordinated manner across the meteorological value chain, with the multilateral climate funds

- encouraging countries to close their Global Basic Observing Network (GBON) data gap with SOFF support;
- taking advantage of SOFF support to provide sustainability for previous GBON investments, as needed;
- exploring additional financial support including, among others, co-financing and parallel financing opportunities between SOFF and the other multilateral climate funds; and
- exploring avenues to contribute to the SOFF UN Fund, if the mandates and procedures allow for, in order to equip SOFF to close today's GBON data gaps and contribute to effectiveness and sustainability of other funds' investments.

The SOFF Steering Committee requested to develop a proposal for a potential GCF contribution to the SOFF UN fund. Following the signing of the collaboration framework, the SOFF Steering Committee through [Decision 7.3](#) requested to develop a proposal for a potential GCF contribution to the SOFF UNMPTF, and through [Decision 8.2](#) included seeking GCF funding for SOFF as a short-term resource mobilization action.

The envisioned GCF-SOFF Fragile and Conflict-Affected States (FCS) Accelerator multi-country programme responds to the SOFF Steering Committee requests. The initial programme idea presented in this document is based on discussions between the GCF Secretariat, the SOFF co-founders WMO, UNDP and UNEP, the UNMPTF Office, and

the SOFF Secretariat.

## 2. Systematic observation as the foundation for Early Warnings for All

The Paris agreement calls for cooperation and enhanced action on systematic observation. All weather forecasts and climate projections are based on the current and past state of the earth, are based on systematic observation. The Paris Agreement includes a call for cooperation and enhanced action on systematic observation of the climate system. The COP27 Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan decision on early warning and systematic observation emphasized the need to address existing gaps in the global climate observing system, particularly in developing countries, as well as the need to enhance coordination of activities related to systematic observations.

The 193 countries and territories of the World Meteorological Congress established in 2021 the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON). It clearly defines the minimum set of observations that all countries must generate and internationally exchange. Achieving GBON compliance has been mandatory for all countries since January 2023, yet huge data gaps persist.

The World Meteorological Congress in 2021 requested the creation of the Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF) as a specialized UN fund, co-created by WMO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNEP, to support countries in achieving sustained GBON compliance. SOFF provides long-term, open-ended, grant financial and technical support to beneficiary countries. Technical assistance is provided by advanced national meteorological services on a peer-to-peer basis. SOFF opened its doors for business in July 2022, the first country funding requests were approved in March 2023, and today SOFF is already supporting 60 countries, of which 13 countries have moved to the SOFF investment phase.

GCF, SOFF and the SOFF co-founders WMO, UNDP and UNEP, are committed to scale up support to the UN Early Warnings for All initiative. GCF's target is to provide early warning systems support to up to 60 countries by 2027. As part of the Early Warnings for All executive action plan, SOFF aims to support 100 countries by 2027. SOFF is a foundational element and delivery vehicle of the Early Warnings for All initiative. The 2024 Memorandum of Understanding between GCF and WMO features the UN Early Warnings for All initiative and SOFF as areas for collaboration. The GCF Climate Information and Early Warning Systems (CIEWS) sector guide includes a commitment to GBON.

### 3. Accelerator programme concept

#### 3.1. Closing the biggest gaps – Fragile and Conflict Affected States

Today, there are huge GBON data gaps in FCS. According to the WMO global GBON baseline of June 2023, the 39 countries, home to one billion people and covering one sixth of the earth land surface, have only 7 (!) GBON compliant land surface stations. Addressing the most severe shortfalls in systematic observation in FCS would enhance the ability of those countries to adapt to climate change, and the impacts are far greater in countries facing conflicts and fragility.

The aim is to foster an innovative GCF-SOFF partnership to accelerate support to FCS in comprehensive manner. Conflicts and fragility exacerbate the vulnerability of countries to climate change. Sustaining standardized climate and weather data exchange in such a context and supporting countries in making effective use of improved forecast products for effective climate action can only be achieved through stepped-up collaboration. This collaboration envisions to accelerate the combined support in a systematic manner to countries classified under fragile and conflict-affected situations<sup>1</sup>. The proposed partnership would operationalize the SOFF collaboration framework with the multilateral climate funds and the Memorandum of Understanding between WMO and GCF.

This GCF-SOFF FCS partnership would be implemented through a GCF multi-country programmatic approach to accelerate the compliance of FCS countries with GBON requirements, therefore closing the biggest gaps in systematic observation, and engaging with multiple national and international partners in the beneficiary countries to translate better forecast products into effective climate action.

Out of the 39 FCS, 32 countries would be eligible to benefit from the GCF FCS accelerator programme as SOFF is already providing Investment phase support to seven countries to close their GBON gaps.<sup>2</sup> Eligible countries for the GCF-SOFF FCS Accelerator Programme would be comprised of two groups:

- Countries that have completed the SOFF Readiness phase and have submitted SOFF Investment funding requests to the SOFF Steering Committee, i.e. countries with pre-identified sub-projects. These are countries that have completed their GBON National Gap Analysis, GBON National Contribution Plan and Country Hydromet Diagnostics and will have submitted

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<sup>1</sup> Classification of Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations, available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/brief/harmonized-list-of-fragile-situations>

<sup>2</sup> SOFF has approved Investment funding requests from Chad (USD 7.0 m), Ethiopia (USD 10.0 m), Mozambique (USD 7.9 m), Kiribati (USD 11.2 m), Solomon Islands (USD 8.5 m), and South Sudan (USD 2.5 m), and has conditionally approved an Investment funding request from Timor-Leste (USD 5.8 m).



their Investment funding requests to the SOFF Steering Committee by April 2025. These Investment funding requests would immediately be ready for implementation once the GCF Board approves the financing of the programme and necessary legal arrangements are put in place.

- Countries that have not yet completed the SOFF Readiness phase, i.e. FCS countries that are at earlier stages of the SOFF Readiness phase or are yet to access the SOFF Readiness phase and would submit SOFF Investment funding requests at a later stage.

As of October 2024, six FCS countries are at advanced stage of developing their SOFF Readiness products and have the potential to submit their Investment funding requests to SOFF by April 2025 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Potential investment-ready FCS countries

Region	Country	SIDS	ODA	CIEWS projects with GCF	GCF-CREWS scaling up	SOFF Readiness
Africa	Democratic Republic of the Congo (the)		LDC			Ongoing
	Guinea-Bissau	✓	LDC			Ongoing
	Sao Tome and Principe	✓	LDC			Ongoing
Asia-Pacific	Federated States of Micronesia	✓	LMIC		✓	Ongoing
	Marshall Islands	✓	UMIC	FP066, FP147		Ongoing
	Papua New Guinea	✓	LMIC			Completed

Twenty-six additional FCS would be eligible to participate in the programme , i.e., countries which are at early stages of SOFF Readiness phase or are yet to access the SOFF Readiness phase (see Annex 2 for list of eligible countries).

The envisioned GCF funding for the FCS accelerator programme corresponds to up to USD 150 million but would depend on the number of countries expressing interest to join the programme. The final list of countries that would be covered by the programme would be determined following the expression of interest from countries and a decision by the SOFF Steering Committee.

A call for expressions of interest from GCF National Designated Authorities (NDAs) and WMO Permanent Representatives would be conducted later this year. This would include a request for no-objection letters for the envisioned project preparation grant from GCF's Project Preparation Facility (PPF). Only those countries that express in participating in the programme through both entities, GCF NDA and WMO Permanent



Representative, would be included in the programme. It is envisioned that by end-2024 the selection of countries to participate in the programme would be completed.

### 3.2. Programme Principles

**Impact:** The FCS accelerator programme would be driven by the commitment of programme partners to deliver impact at scale and make a major contribution to the UN Early Warnings for All initiative. Investing in surface-based observations significantly impact forecast accuracy and there is substantial evidence that investing in additional surface-based observations is highly beneficial (see [draft decision 9.2](#)). In order to fully tap these benefits, better data and forecast products need to be translated into effective early warnings that reach the most vulnerable.

**Innovation:** The unique programme would showcase effective collaboration, driven by an innovative partnership to effectively support FCS. It would require all partners to pursue creative approaches and aim for simplicity of programme design and implementation. SOFF technical assistance is provided by advanced national meteorological services, working hand-in-hand, long-term with country presence with beneficiary country meteorological services. SOFF also closely works with private sector to implement SOFF investments and as part of its [Terms of Reference](#) has developed jointly with the Association of Hydro-Meteorological Equipment Industry (HMEI) private sector engagement engagement models ; HMEI is member of the SOFF Advisory Board. The combination of SOFF's peer advisory services and private sector business models would constitute an important element of success of the programme.

**Speed:** Given the urgency of closing the major basic weather and climate data gaps in FCS and to provide coordinated support to translate improved forecast products into effective action across the early warnings value chain, the programme would aim for speed of preparation and delivery. A critical element of this is that SOFF through its existing resources would cover the SOFF Readiness phase costs and the GCF FCS accelerator programme would then cover the SOFF Investment phase costs as well as the costs for additional activities beyond SOFF.

### 3.3. Programme design

The FCS Accelerator Programme would include two components.

- Enhancing systematic observation through GBON compliance: Component 1 would focus on enhancing systematic observation by supporting beneficiary countries in achieving GBON compliance. The SOFF UNMPTF would serve as the executing mechanism (i.e., the component would be implemented through the SOFF governance structure, operational partners including UN organizations and MDBs as Implementing Entities, advanced national meteorological services as peer advisors, with WMO serving as SOFF Technical Authority) and SOFF operational policies (e.g., output-based standardized Investment framework) would be followed.

Component 1 would represent the larger share of the programme, with an envisioned allocation of 75 percent of GCF resources to this component.

- Use of basic weather and climate data for effective climate action: Under component 2 and building on the foundational work of SOFF in component 1, the GCF Accredited Entity would implement activities that improve the use of basic weather and climate data for effective climate action. Based on the assessment of the meteorological service and its operating environment through the Country Hydromet Diagnostic, a mapping of all relevant activities and partners would be undertaken. Effective links among ongoing or planned activities would be established and the most urgent capacity development and investment gaps would be filled.

A particular focus would be put on engaging and connecting multiple national partners, including National Disaster Management Agencies and line ministries such as agriculture and water, and international partners active in the country. This component would also link the GCF -SOFF FCS Accelerator Programme with ongoing or planned projects supported by the GCF, including the GCF UNDP Multi Country Proposal for Early Warnings for All, and the other multilateral climate funds that signed the collaboration framework (Adaptation Fund, Climate Investment Funds, CREWS initiative including GCF SAP – CREWS scaling up, Global Environment Facility).

For this complementary component, 25 percent of the GCF resources would be allocated.

Component 1 via SOFF	Component 2 via GCF Accredited Entity
Enhancing systematic observations – GBON compliance	Improving the use of basic weather and climate data for effective climate action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of GBON institutional and human capacity</li> <li>• Installation and improvement of land-based and upper air stations</li> <li>• Commissioning of land-based and upper air stations, including data verification from the WMO Technical Authority</li> </ul>	Activities under this component to be tailored to specific country circumstances

## 4. Implementation arrangements

A GCF Accredited Entity is required for the implementation of this programme. UNEP is considering serving as the Accredited Entity with which the GCF would sign a funded activity agreement (FAA). For component 1, the Accredited Entity would sign a

Contribution Agreement to transfer the funds to the account of SOFF in the UMPTF; the UNMPTF Office is part of UNDP. This would allow SOFF to operationalize component 1 of the programme by implementing the sub-projects through its governance and operational structure.

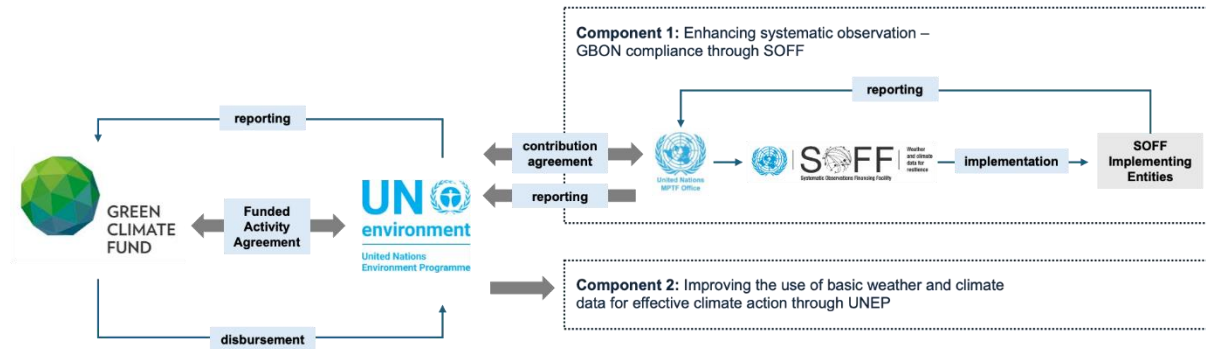


Figure 2. Implementation arrangement for the FCS Accelerator Programme

It is envisioned that about 15 countries could benefit from the programme with the envisioned up to USD 150 million of grant financing from the GCF, inclusive of the Accredited Entity fee,<sup>3</sup> depending on the size of the countries' respective GBON gaps and complementary funding needs for component 2. The transfer of funds from the Accredited Entity to the SOFF UNMPTF for component 1 would allow a substantial portion of the grant to be channelled to the SOFF UNMPTF which would thereafter transfer resources to the SOFF operational partners in line with the [SOFF Operational Manual](#) for the implementation of the sub-projects.

## 5. Requirements for success

### 5.1. Programme partners joint vision and commitment

To develop and implement the programme in line with the stated principles and implementation arrangements a joint vision and commitment would be required by the executive management as well as the technical staff of the partner organizations. This pathbreaking approach would challenge all participating organizations. It would also require flexibility on the interpretation of GCF standard requirements for effective and speedy development of the funding proposal and its delivery.

### 5.2. Strong country ownership

Participation in the programme would require ownership from GCF NDAs and the WMO Permanent Representatives of the respective countries. This is a challenge and an opportunity. Experience shows that direct engagement between these two parts of

<sup>3</sup> GCF policy on fees, available at: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/policy-fees>

government in many countries is the exception, rather the rule. At the same time, this is a significant opportunity to bring the national meteorological agencies closer to the climate finance decision-makers in the government. Participation in the programme would require a non-objection from both entities. Therefore, engagements and consultations with the GCF NDAs and the WMO Permanent Representative as well as relevant stakeholders in the countries would be conducted throughout the funding proposal development stage to ensure that strong country ownership is embedded in the design of the programme.

### 5.3. Tailoring the programme to the specific challenges of FCS

The programme and its implementation would be tailored to the specific challenges of FCS as summarized in the WMO-UNDRR Center of Excellence Handbook on EWS in FCV settings (*forthcoming*), the GFDRR report on EWS in FCV settings, the Red Cross Red Crescent Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Practitioner Handbook "Navigating Fragility, Conflict, and Violence to Strengthen Community Resilience (*forthcoming*), and the Anticipation Hub/CGIAR - Anticipatory Action in Conflict tool kit (*forthcoming*), as well as other literature and expert knowledge. Implementation would benefit from the hands-on experience of SOFF peer advisor in the respective countries and the country presence and relationships of the SOFF Implementing Entities.

### 5.4. Efficient delivery of the funding proposal

Applying for support from the GCF's Project Preparation Facility (PPF) to develop the funding proposal package would be considered.<sup>4</sup> The PPF grant would be used to contract technical consultants that would support the Accredited Entity in preparing the funding proposal and its relevant annexes in collaboration with SOFF and the UNMPTF Office. This includes feasibility studies, gender assessment and action plan, environment and social management framework, economic and financial analysis, and stakeholder engagement plan. As stated, preparation of these annexes would also require some GCF flexibility given the innovative programme design.

## 6. Timeline

A "go ahead" decision was taken by the GCF Executive Director and the SOFF Steering Committee co-chairs at their meeting 26 September 2024. As a next step, the 9<sup>th</sup> SOFF Steering Committee meeting taking place 22 October 2024 will consider the proposal. If the Steering Committee positively considers the envisioned programme, the development of the funding proposal package and the preparation of the call for country expression of interest would immediately commence.

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<sup>4</sup> Requirements to receive PPF grant from GCF: (1) PPF funding application; (2) terms of reference of the firm/consultants that will support the project development; (3) PPF-specific no-objection letters from the NDAs of countries that will be covered by the PPF; and (4) draft concept note.

The approval of the PPF would be targeted for December 2024 and implementation would commence in January 2025. In parallel, stakeholder engagements and consultations with the NDAs would take place.

The dates for submission and review of the funding proposal would be confirmed with the GCF to enable the presentation of the programme to the GCF Board as early as B.43 in October 2025, noting that this represents an ambitious timeline.

See Annex I for the indicative milestones and deadlines.

## Annex I. Timeline

	2024					2025									
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Designing the programme															
Prepare initial programme idea document															
“Green light” decision of GCF Executive Director and SOFF Steering Committee co-chairs		UNGA													
SOFF Steering Committee decision on the approach			9SC												
Funding proposal development															
Drafting of PPF application															
Call for expressions of interest from GCF NDAs, including request for no-objection letters for the PPF															
Submission of PPF application to GCF															
GCF Secretariat review and approval of the PPF application															
Procurement of firm/consultants that will support the development of the funding proposal															
SOFF Steering Committee decision on countries to be covered in the programme							10SC								
Implementation of the PPF (until GCF Secretariat and ITAP review stage)															
Engagements with GCF NDAs and relevant stakeholders for the issuance of no-objection letters for the funding proposal															

	2024					2025									
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Funding proposal approval															
Submission of funding proposal to GCF															
GCF Secretariat & ITAP review															
Presentation to the GCF Board (27-30 October 2025)															B.43



## Annex II. Eligibility of FCS countries to participate in the GCF FCS Accelerator Programme

Region	ODA	Country	SIDS	CIEWS projects with GCF	GCF-CREWS scaling up	SOFF Readiness	SOFF Investment	Eligibility
Africa	LDC	Burkina Faso		FP074, FP092		Ongoing		Yes
		Burundi						Yes
		Central African Republic						Yes
		Chad		FP092	✓	Completed	Approved (USD 7.0 m)	No
		Comoros	✓			Ongoing		Yes
		Democratic Republic of the Congo (the)				Ongoing		Yes
		Eritrea						Yes
		Ethiopia				Completed	Approved (USD 10.0 m)	No
		Guinea-Bissau	✓			Ongoing		Yes
		Mali		FP012, FP092				Yes
		Mozambique				Completed	Approved (USD 7.9 m)	No
		Niger		FP092		Ongoing		Yes
		Sao Tome and Principe				Ongoing		Yes
		Somalia				Ongoing		Yes
		South Sudan				Completed	Approved (USD 2.5 m)	No
		Sudan				Ongoing		Yes

Region	ODA	Country	SIDS	CIEWS projects with GCF	GCF-CREWS scaling up	SOFF Readiness	SOFF Investment	Eligibility
	LMIC	Cameroon		FP092				Yes
		Congo						Yes
		Nigeria		FP092				Yes
		Zimbabwe						Yes
	UMIC	Libya						Yes
Asia-Pacific	LDC	Afghanistan						Yes
		Kiribati				Completed	Approved (USD 11.2 m)	No
		Myanmar						Yes
		Solomon Islands	✓		✓	Completed	Approved (USD 8.5 m)	No
		Timor-Leste	✓	FP171		Completed	Conditionally approved (USD 5.8 m)	No
		Tuvalu	✓	FP147		Ongoing		Yes
		Yemen						Yes
	LMIC	Federated States of Micronesia	✓		✓	Ongoing		Yes
		Papua New Guinea	✓			Completed		Yes
		State of Palestine						Yes
		Syrian Arab Republic						Yes
	UMIC	Iraq						Yes

Region	ODA	Country	SIDS	CIEWS projects with GCF	GCF-CREWS scaling up	SOFF Readiness	SOFF Investment	Eligibility
		Lebanon						Yes
		Marshall Islands	✓	FP066, FP147		Ongoing		Yes
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	UMIC	Kosovo						Yes
	LMIC	Ukraine						Yes
Latin America and the Caribbean	LDC	Haiti	✓		✓	Ongoing		Yes
	UMIC	Venezuela						Yes