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# **Investment Phase:** Progress Update

## **Republic of Kiribati**

January 2026

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Systematic Observations  
Financing Facility

**Weather  
and climate  
data for  
resilience**



## General Information

<b>Country</b>	Republic of Kiribati	
<b>Implementing Entity</b>	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	
<b>Agreement effectiveness date</b>	03 April 2024	
<b>Duration</b>	60 months	
<b>Anticipated end date</b>	01 April 2029	
<b>Reporting period</b>	<b>From:</b> 30 June 2025	<b>To:</b> 31 December 2025
<b>Approved amount</b>	UNEP: USD 10,582,652 WMO: USD 572,450	
<b>Disbursed amount</b>	UNEP: USD 9,524,387 WMO: USD 190,798	

## Summary

### Highlights of key achievements

From June to December 2025, implementation of the SOFF Investment Project in Kiribati progressed through a set of governance, capacity-building, and preparatory activities that strengthened the foundations for subsequent infrastructure investments. Close coordination among the Kiribati Meteorological Service (KMS), the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) supported alignment across institutional, technical, and operational aspects of implementation. During the period, progress was achieved across several outputs, including the formal launch of the project and establishment of the Project Steering Committee, strengthened institutional and gender-responsive capacity, recruitment and training of meteorological personnel, and advancement of procurement planning and technical design for land-based and upper-air observation systems.

**Under Output 1.1 - National consultations including with civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders**, the [inception workshop and the inauguration of the Project Steering Committee \(PSC\)](#) were successfully conducted on

11 June 2025 in Bairiki, marking the formal commencement of the SOFF Investment Project in Kiribati. The events were officially opened by the Secretary to the Office of Te Beretitenti and attended by 15 participants, including representatives from UNEP, KMS, and BoM, as well as national stakeholders from the World Health Organization (WHO), National Economic Planning Office (NEPO), Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Division (CCDRM), Environment and Conservation Division (ECD), and the Local Government Division. Women accounted for 53.33 per cent of total participants.

During the inception workshop, UNEP, KMS, and BoM jointly developed the 2025 Annual Workplan, which was subsequently endorsed at the PSC meeting. Building on these initial consultations, OB, through KMS, convened a one-and-a-half-day SOFF Stakeholder Engagement Workshop from 12 to 13 June 2025 in Ambo, engaging members of the Kiribati National Expert Group (KNEG) on Climate Change and Disaster Risk. The workshop introduced the SOFF programme, including its objectives, priority islands, and expected outcomes. Participants shared experiences from ongoing and past initiatives, identified opportunities for collaboration, and discussed expectations for project implementation. The session was facilitated by KMS, with support from UNEP and BoM, and recorded 69.6 per cent female participation.

The second PSC meeting, chaired by the Secretary to the Office of Te Beretitenti, was held on 1 September 2025, followed by the third PSC meeting on 15 October 2025, also chaired by the Secretary to OB. UNEP participated in both meetings virtually. Key agenda items addressed across these meetings included the review and endorsement of minutes from the preceding PSC meeting, discussion of progress under SOFF-supported activities, and planning for upcoming implementation steps, including preparation for subsequent PSC meetings.

In addition, UNEP and BoM are scheduled to undertake a joint mission to Kiribati from 14 to 19 January 2026. The mission will include in-person working sessions with KMS team and participation in the fourth PSC meeting. Planned discussions during the mission and PSC meeting are expected to cover progress under ongoing SOFF activities, readiness of the identified AWS site, availability of information on potential upper-air sites and co-located manual and AWS stations, and alignment on upcoming implementation priorities. The mission will also provide an opportunity to review project status updates, discuss next steps, and confirm arrangements to support continued implementation.

**Under Output 1.2 – NMHS institutional capacity developed**, KMS, in collaboration with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Sports and Social Affairs (Ministry of Women Youth Sports and Social Affairs, MWYSSA), organized a [gender training workshop](#) on 8 July 2025 at the KMS office. The workshop aimed to strengthen institutional awareness of

gender equality and equity and encouraged staff to reflect on existing policies, organizational arrangements, and operational practices with a view to improving gender responsiveness across KMS functions.

The workshop brought together 24 participants, with women representing 46 per cent of attendees. Discussions explored practical approaches for integrating gender considerations into communication, awareness, and outreach activities, with particular attention to engagement in outer island communities. Participants also reviewed national gender policies and frameworks, supporting alignment of KMS institutional practices with national priorities on gender equality and women's empowerment. As part of the workshop, initial tools and approaches for gender gap analysis and the development of a Gender Action Plan were introduced to support the systematic integration of gender considerations into SOFF-supported activities.

Building on this work, KMS is in the process of finalizing a Gender Gap Analysis to assess institutional practices, capacity gaps, and opportunities for strengthening gender responsiveness. The draft Gender Gap Analysis and accompanying Gender Action Plan are expected to be completed in January 2026 and will provide a structured framework to guide the integration of gender-responsive approaches across project implementation, inform future capacity-building activities, and support monitoring of progress on gender-related commitments under the SOFF Investment Project.

**Under Output 1.3 – NMHS human capacity required to operate the GBON network developed**, KMS strengthened coordination and oversight arrangements through the establishment of a dedicated Project Management Unit (PMU) responsible for national-level implementation, monitoring, reporting, and procurement activities. The Procurement and Logistics Officer and the Accounts Officer were appointed on 9 June 2025, ahead of the project inauguration and first PSC meeting. This was followed by the recruitment of the Project Manager on 28 August 2025, completing the PMU structure. The fully constituted PMU was formally introduced at the second PSC meeting, chaired by the Secretary to the Office of Te Beretitenti on 1 September 2025.

To further strengthen operational capacity, five Meteorological Observers were recruited on 30 July 2025. The observers subsequently undertook induction and refresher training in Basic Aviation Meteorology, covering METAR and SYNOP reporting, as well as surface and upper-air observation techniques. The training programme included on-the-job training and competency assessments, supporting readiness for operational deployment.

Recruitment processes for additional technical and support positions continued. These include one ICT Officer to be based on Kiritimati Island and one Driver to support logistical operations in Tarawa. Interviews for the ICT Officer position were conducted

in the second week of December 2025. The Driver position, following interviews held on 15 August 2025, remains pending final approval from the Secretary to the Office of Te Beretitenti. In addition, the recruitment process for an Economist position was initiated in November 2025.

In collaboration with BoM, further progress was achieved in institutional capacity development through targeted technical training and support. BoM delivered both remote and in-person sessions on OSCAR/Surface metadata management and the WMO Data Quality Monitoring System (WDQMS), providing practical guidance to strengthen KMS's data quality management, monitoring, and reporting processes.

In addition, eight KMS officers—comprising five Meteorological Observers from Tarawa, two from Kiritimati Island, and one Technical Officer from Tarawa—participated in the Basic Instruction Package for Meteorological Technicians (BIP-MT) course at the BoM Training Centre in Melbourne, Australia. The officers departed Kiribati on 22 August 2025, and the three-month training programme was delivered from September to November 2025. BoM supported the participants through a structured orientation upon arrival, covering administrative, logistical, and welfare arrangements, including accommodation, banking, local transportation, and stipends. The successful completion of the BIP-MT course strengthened technical competencies in meteorological observations and data handling, contributing to KMS's longer-term capacity to meet operational and GBON-related requirements.

**Under Outputs 2.1 and 2.2 – New land-based stations and related equipment, ICT systems, data management systems, and standard operating practices in place,** KMS PMU and technical team progressed procurement activities for fencing materials for both manual and automatic weather stations. The tender for fencing materials was launched and published on 15 August 2025, with Requests for Quotation (RFQs) closing on 8 September 2025. Following evaluation in line with national procurement procedures, the contract was awarded in November 2025 after completion of the required review and clearance processes, including review by the Office of the Attorney General (OAG).

In parallel, KMS finalized a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formalize collaboration with outer island councils in support of project implementation. The MoU, which was reviewed and approved by the OAG, sets out procedures for the secure storage and management of weather monitoring equipment and materials upon delivery to the islands. It also clarifies the roles and responsibilities of island councils, including the provision of local labor and in-kind contributions such as gravel, sand, and construction support for AWS fencing and enclosures. This arrangement has

strengthened coordination between KMS and local authorities and supported community participation during implementation.

Preparatory field visits to outer islands were carried out between September and December 2025, in line with logistical feasibility and flight schedules. The visits focused on consultations related to MoU, stakeholder engagement, site surveys, Grievance Mechanism discussions, and Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) considerations. The islands visited included Abemama and Maiana in September; Nonouti and Tamana in October; Arorae and Butaritari in November; and Beru before the end of December 2025. These visits provided essential inputs to confirm site readiness, local arrangements, and coordination mechanisms ahead of construction activities.

Construction of AWS fencing is planned to commence following the delivery of materials to each island and confirmation of sites through local consultations. Works are expected to be carried out with the support of island councils and locally arranged labor, under the technical supervision of KMS staff. Each fencing installation is expected to take approximately two to three days per site, with construction activities targeted to be completed by the end of 2025, subject to transport and shipping schedules.

In coordination with BoM, procurement activities for components to upgrade five existing AWS are ongoing, with installation planned for early 2026. A Pacific Observations Infrastructure Lead appointed by BoM is supporting coordination of procurement and installation activities. KMS has provided site-specific information on existing equipment to inform technical specifications and installation planning. A detailed installation timeline will be finalized once site information has been fully reviewed, with BoM anticipating a one- to two-month procurement period following finalization of specifications, prior to assembly and delivery.

**Under Output 2.3 – New upper-air stations and related equipment, ICT systems, data management systems, and standard operating practices in place,** preparatory work for the establishment of new upper-air observation infrastructure is ongoing. The KMS PMU continues to coordinate closely with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy (MISE) on building design and associated technical requirements. The design phase remains under development, supported through formal correspondence and technical exchanges between KMS and MISE, with finalization of the upper-air station design expected by the end of December 2025.

A site visit by the assigned designer to the KMS office was conducted in September 2025 to support site assessment and inform the preparation of detailed architectural designs. The resulting design package will be subject to technical review and approval by MISE. As part of the broader planning process, the establishment of a dedicated



storage warehouse for upper-air equipment is also under consideration to support safe storage and operational readiness.

In parallel, BoM has provided technical support by sharing reference design documentation for an upper-air station model appropriate to Kiribati's environmental and operational conditions. BoM has also facilitated initial technical exchanges between KMS and a potential contractor as an early step toward future implementation. A detailed timeline for the procurement of upper-air equipment and materials is expected to be developed and shared following completion of site-specific planning and technical review.

## Progress of implementation

Output	Indicator	Target					Actual					Status	Milestones achieved	Challenges and risks
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5			
<b>1. GBON institutional and human capacity developed</b>														
1.1 <b>National consultations,</b> including with CSOs and other relevant stakeholders conducted	# of inception workshops held	1	1	1	1	1		1				On-track	<p>The <a href="#">inception workshop and the inauguration of the Project Steering Committee (PSC)</a> were successfully conducted on 11 June 2025 in Bairiki, Kiribati, and attended by 15 participants, including representatives from UNEP, KMS, BoM, and national stakeholders such as WHO, NEPO, CCDRM, ECD, and the Local Government Division.</p> <p>The second PSC meeting, chaired by the Secretary to the Office of Te Beretitenti, was held on 1 September 2025, followed by the third PSC meeting on 15 October 2025, also chaired by the Secretary to OB.</p> <p>UNEP and BoM are scheduled to undertake a joint mission to Kiribati from 14 to 19 January 2026.</p>	

Output	Indicator	Target					Actual					Status	Milestones achieved	Challenges and risks
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5			
	% female participation in the inception workshops	50	50	50	50	50		53.33				On-track	Women represented 53.33 percent of participants.	
	# of stakeholder workshops held		1	1	1	1		1				On-track	Following the inception workshop, KMS, convened a one-and-a-half-day SOFF Stakeholder Engagement Workshop from 12 to 13 June 2025 in Ambo, Kiribati, with members of the Kiribati National Expert Group (KNEG) on Climate Change and Disaster Risk. The session was facilitated by KMS, with support from UNEP and BoM, and recorded 69.6 percent female participation.	
	% female participation in the stakeholder workshops		50	50	50	50		69.6				On-track		
	Years in which stakeholder engagement plan will be drafted	X	X									Not yet started		
1.2 <b>NMHS institutional capacity</b> required to operate the GBON network developed	Years in which Gender Gap Analysis and Gender Action Plan will be drafted			X	X							On-track	KMS, in collaboration with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Sports and Social Affairs (MWYSSA), conducted a gender training workshop on 8 July 2025 at the KMS office.  The training was attended by 24	

Output	Indicator	Target					Actual					Status	Milestones achieved	Challenges and risks	
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5				
													participants, of whom 46 percent were women. Building on this work, KMS is in the process of finalizing a Gender Gap Analysis to assess institutional practices, capacity gaps, and opportunities for strengthening gender responsiveness. The draft Gender Gap Analysis and accompanying Gender Action Plan are expected to be completed in January 2026		
	Years in which participation in regional coordination initiatives and forum are planned (tentatively)	X	X	X	X	X							Not yet started		
1.3 <b>NMHS human capacity</b> required to operate the GBON network developed	# of staff salaries paid	11	11	11	11	11		8					On-track	<p>The Procurement and Logistics Officer and Account Officer were appointed on 9 June 2025, ahead of the project's inauguration and first PSC meeting, followed by the recruitment of the Project Manager on 28 August 2025, thereby finalizing the PMU structure.</p> <p>5 Meteorological Observers were recruited on 30 July 2025 and subsequently participated in induction</p>	

Output	Indicator	Target					Actual					Status	Milestones achieved	Challenges and risks	
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5				
													and refresher training on Basic Aviation Meteorology, covering METAR, SYNOP, and both surface and upper-air observation techniques. Interviews for the ICT Officer position were conducted in the second week of December 2025. The Driver position, following interviews held on 15 August 2025, remains pending final approval from the Secretary to the Office of Te Beretitenti. In addition, the recruitment process for an Economist position was initiated in November 2025.		
	Years in which trainings will be conducted	X	X	X	X	X		1					On-track	8 KMS officers—comprising 5 Meteorological Observers from Tarawa, 2 from Kiritimati Island, and 1 Technical Officer from Tarawa—participated in the Basic Instruction Package for Meteorological Technicians (BIP-MT) course at the BoM Training Centre in Melbourne, Australia. The officers departed Kiribati on 22 August 2025, and the three-month training programme was delivered from	

Output	Indicator	Target					Actual					Status	Milestones achieved	Challenges and risks	
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5				
													September to November 2025.		
<b>2. GBON infrastructure in place</b>															
2.1 <b>New land-based stations</b> and related equipment, ICT systems, data management systems and standard operating practices in place	# of new stations installed as per the GBON National Contribution Plan			4	5								On-track	The tender for fencing materials was launched and published on 15 August 2025, with Requests for Quotation (RFQs) closing on 8 September 2025. Following evaluation in line with national procurement procedures, the contract was awarded in November 2025 after completion of the required review and clearance processes, including review by the Office of the Attorney General (OAG). Each fencing installation is expected to take approximately two to three days per site, with construction activities targeted to be completed by the end of 2025, subject to transport and shipping schedules.	
2.2 <b>Improved land-based stations</b> and related equipment, ICT systems, data management systems and standard operating practices in place	# of stations improved as per the GBON National Contribution Plan		5										On-track	In parallel, KMS finalized a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formalize collaboration with outer island councils in support of project implementation.	

Output	Indicator	Target					Actual					Status	Milestones achieved	Challenges and risks	
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5				
														The MoU, which was reviewed and approved by the OAG, sets out procedures for the secure storage and management of weather monitoring equipment and materials upon delivery to the islands.	
2.3 <b>New upper air stations</b> and related equipment, ICT systems, data management systems and standard operating practices in place	# of new stations installed as per the GBON National Contribution Plan		1	1									On-track	preparatory work for the establishment of new upper-air observation infrastructure is ongoing. The KMS PMU continues to coordinate closely with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy (MISE) on building design and associated technical requirements. The design phase remains under development, supported through formal correspondence and technical exchanges between KMS and MISE, with finalization of the upper-air station design expected by the end of December 2025.	
2.4 <b>Improved upper air stations</b> and related equipment, ICT systems, data management systems and standard operating practices in place	# of stations improved as per the GBON National Contribution Plan		1										Not yet started		
<b>3. Sustained compliance with GBON</b>															

Output	Indicator	Target					Actual					Status	Milestones achieved	Challenges and risks
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5			
3.1 <b>GBON land-based stations' commissioning period completed</b> , country-specific standard cost for operations and maintenance established, and data sharing verified by WMO Technical Authority	# of stations commissioned as per the GBON National Contribution Plan		5	9	14	14						Not yet started		
3.2 <b>GBON upper air stations' commissioning period completed</b> , country-specific standard cost for operations and maintenance established, and data sharing verified by WMO Technical Authority	# of stations commissioned as per the GBON National Contribution Plan		2	3	3	3						Not yet started		

**Attachments:**

[Kiribati Semi Annual Report July 2025](#)