



Investment Phase: Progress update

Maldives

July 2026

Systematic Observations
Financing Facility

**Weather
and climate
data for
resilience**



General Information

Country	Maldives	
Implementing Entity	UNEP	
Agreement effectiveness date	03 April 2024	
Duration	60	
Anticipated end date	03 April 2029	
Reporting period	From: 01 January 2026	To: 30 June 2026
Approved amount	Total: USD 4,907,326 UNEP: USD 4,436,526 WMO: USD 470,800	
Disbursed amount	Total: USD 4,149,791.04 UNEP: USD 3,992,873.4 WMO: USD 156,917.64	

Summary

Highlights of key achievements

Between 1 January and 30 June 2026, the SOFF Investment Phase in the Maldives recorded steady progress in institutional development, capacity building, and procurement for the Global Basic Observing Network (GBON) infrastructure. A High-Level Dialogue on the benefits and co-production of GBON infrastructure was held in Malé, bringing together key stakeholders to strengthen understanding of and support for the project. Preparatory work continued on the Organizational Strategy, Gender Policy, and Stakeholder Engagement Plan, with technical support from the Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI) and in close coordination with the Maldives Meteorological Service (MMS) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In parallel, planning continued for a study visit to Finland and the annual capacity-building programme facilitated by the Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES). On GBON infrastructure development, the procurement process for the new and upgraded Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) reached the completion of the technical and financial evaluation stage. However, the evaluation identified a budget shortfall, and UNEP, RIMES, FMI, and MMS are working collaboratively to address this and move the procurement process forward. Throughout the reporting period, regular coordination among UNEP, MMS, RIMES, and FMI ensured continued alignment and implementation across all project components.

Under Output 1.1 – National consultations, including with civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders, and Output 1.2 – NMHS institutional capacity development, a [High-Level Dialogue and stakeholder engagement on the benefits, co-production, and ownership of GBON infrastructure](#) was held on 30 March 2026 in Malé, bringing together MMS, UNEP, FMI, RIMES, and national government stakeholders. The dialogue was held alongside the inception of [UNEP's GCF-funded TRACT project \(Toward Risk-Aware and Climate-resilient Communities\)](#), which strengthens the broader early warning value chain and complements SOFF's investment in foundational observational infrastructure. The event brought together 57 participants, including 23 women (40%). The 2nd PSC meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 2026 in Malé, subject to the availability of PSC members, with UNEP planning to join virtually. Further information and supporting materials for the High-Level Dialogue and Stakeholder Engagement event are available through the following links: [Ministry of Tourism and Environment](#), [Maldives Meteorological Service](#) and [Maldivian Red Crescent](#).

MMS continued coordination with UNEP and FMI on preparations for the Organizational Strategy, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, and the Gender Policy, alongside preparations for a planned gender workshop. However, the FMI mission

planned to support these activities in the 1st quarter of 2026 could not proceed as scheduled, owing to regional travel disruptions, and the gender workshop, together with the related institutional development work, has been tentatively rescheduled for November 2026. It was agreed that these institutional deliverables should be developed in a coordinated manner to ensure coherence between them, with the Gender Policy to draw on the outcomes of the gender workshop. Separately, UNEP conducted a virtual procurement working session with MMS on 15 June 2026 to further support procurement planning and introduce a new procurement management tool to enhance the management and monitoring of procurement activities.

Under Output 1.3 – NMHS human capacity required to operate the GBON network developed, the Project Management Unit (PMU) of MMS continued to provide day-to-day oversight of project implementation throughout the reporting period, with the Project Manager, 6 part-time in-house MMS staff, and technical and ICT staff at N. Maafaru station supporting coordination, reporting, and follow-up on procurement activities. At N. Maafaru, MMS recruited 3 of the 5 planned technical staff and 2 of the 3 planned ICT staff in 2025. Recruitment for the remaining 2 technical positions and the remaining ICT position has continued to face challenges, owing to the limited availability of qualified technical staff in the Maldives. MMS is considering proposing to repurpose the remaining ICT position into a Graphics Designer role at the 2nd PSC meeting, to better reflect the project's communication needs.

Preparations also continued for the capacity-building activities. A study tour supported by FMI, in which around 6 MMS staff are planning to participate, has been scheduled for 31 August to 4 September 2026, with visa applications for participating staff currently underway, and is expected to support knowledge exchange on GBON implementation and sustainable meteorological service delivery. Separately, RIMES is coordinating the sequencing of its 2026 capacity-building activities with the ongoing procurement of land-based equipment, so that practical training can be delivered once the new and upgraded stations are installed. The capacity-building activities will include vendor-led field training on installation, maintenance, and troubleshooting immediately following equipment delivery, followed by an advanced session on quality management, data handling, and sustained GBON operations. The training is provisionally scheduled for 14 October to 30 November 2026, with final dates to be confirmed once the procurement process is completed and the supplier mobilization plan is approved.

Under Outputs 2.1 and 2.2 – New and improved land-based stations and related equipment, ICT systems, and data management systems in place, the bundled [procurement for the new AWS for Maafaru and the upgrade of sensors and data loggers at the 4 existing stations](#) (Hulhulé, Hanimaadhoo, Kadhdhoo, and Gan) proceeded through technical and financial evaluation during the reporting period. Following the proposal submission deadline of 9 March 2026 and bid opening on 24

March 2026, RIMES, with technical participation from FMI, completed the mandatory compliance review and financial and technical evaluation between April and June 2026, including a technical evaluation meeting on 26 May 2026 and reconciliation meetings on 3 and 11 June 2026. The evaluation identified a budget shortfall between the approved procurement package budget and the bidding price received from compliant bidders. RIMES, together with UNEP, MMS, and FMI, is now working through a cost validation process, exploring cost optimization options, and considering a formal negotiation process to identify a GBON-compliant and financially viable path to contract award.

MMS's procurement of civil works for the new and upgraded stations remained at the design and cost-estimation stage during the reporting period, in preparation to initiate the procurement process. This work is being coordinated alongside the equipment specifications being finalized through RIMES's ongoing procurement process. In parallel, MMS is reassessing the previously identified installation sites, as changes to airport master plans at some locations may affect their suitability; site visits are therefore planned for August 2026 to confirm the final locations. At certain airports, including Hulhulé, there is also the possibility that the airport authority may carry out the required civil works directly, and this arrangement is still being discussed on a site-by-site basis. Separately, MMS began operating aviation meteorological services at N. Maafaru International Airport in June 2026, using a temporary office and an existing AWS unit, ahead of the installation of the new SOFF-funded station and a permanent office at the site. MMS is preparing to propose a corresponding budget reallocation for the permanent office at the 2nd PSC meeting.

Under Output 2.4 – Improved upper-air stations and related equipment, ICT systems, and data management systems in place, RIMES continued preparing the technical specifications and procurement documentation for the upgrade of the upper-air station at Gan, covering the receiver and ground system, hydrogen generator, radiosondes, meteorological balloons, container and safety requirements, installation, commissioning, and associated capacity building. The technical specifications and procurement documents were reviewed with UNEP and FMI during the reporting period, and as of 30 June 2026, the solicitation documentation was still being finalized ahead of its planned issuance. RIMES anticipates finalizing the solicitation package by 31 July 2026, with evaluation and approvals expected between August and September 2026, and delivery anticipated by 21 December 2026, subject to procurement lead times and required approvals.

MMS continued preparatory work on the civil works requirements for the upper-air station upgrade, including renovation needs, with further progress linked to the procurement of the upper-air equipment and the implementation schedule being coordinated with RIMES. On data systems, MMS continued its own technical

assessment of server requirements as part of its planned transition from the existing WIS 1.0 system to WIS 2.0.

Under Output 3.1 – Sustained compliance of land-based stations, 5 sets of spare sensors for temperature, humidity, atmospheric pressure, and wind are being procured together with the new AWS and the upgrades to the 4 existing stations. This approach ensures that the spare parts are matched exactly to the make, model, and technical configuration of the equipment ultimately selected through that procurement, avoiding compatibility issues that could arise if spares were sourced independently. As this forms part of the same bundled procurement package as the new AWS and the 4 station upgrades, the spares will be finalized and contracted together with that equipment once the procurement, currently undergoing evaluation and budget realignment, reaches contract award.

Under Output 3.2 – Sustained compliance of the upper-air station, RIMES incorporated the radiosondes, meteorological balloons, and other operational consumables needed to sustain the upper-air station at Gan into the same solicitation package as the upper-air system procurement, ensuring the consumables will be compatible with the specific sounding system selected. This package is currently being finalized, with issuance targeted for 31 July 2026. No stations reached commissioning during the reporting period. Once the upper-air system is installed and becomes operational, MMS and RIMES will establish the country-specific costs of operating and maintaining the station.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

One of the major challenges was a shortfall between the budget approved for the bundled land-based station procurement and the prices returned by the competitive evaluation process. In response, RIMES, UNEP, MMS, and FMI are jointly assessing options for cost optimization, negotiation, and budget realignment to determine a viable path to contract award, validating current costs against prevailing market conditions and the full scope of installation, integration, training, and long-term maintenance requirements.

A related challenge arose from the complexity of evaluating multiple technical bids against strict GBON compliance requirements. Reconciling differing vendor documentation required several rounds of technical review among RIMES, MMS, and FMI, which the partners carried out through a series of dedicated evaluation and reconciliation meetings to reach a consistent outcome.

Institutional activities, including the gender workshop and the drafting of the Organizational Strategy and Gender Policy, were delayed after regional travel disruptions prevented a planned FMI mission from proceeding. MMS, UNEP, and FMI

have since agreed to reschedule these activities for November 2026, to be carried out together in a coordinated manner.

At N. Maafaru, MMS addressed the pending completion of permanent infrastructure by beginning aviation meteorological services from a temporary office using existing equipment, and is now preparing to bring a proposed budget reallocation for permanent office facilities to the Project Steering Committee.

Next steps

Looking ahead to the second half of 2026, on institutional development, the gender workshop is planned for November 2026, alongside the coordinated initiation of the Organizational Strategy, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, and the Gender Policy with FMI's support. MMS also plans to convene the 2nd PSC meeting in August 2026.

On capacity building, RIMES plans to deliver vendor-led field technical training for MMS personnel by 30 November 2026, covering installation, maintenance, quality management systems, data handling, and troubleshooting. A study tour supported by FMI, in which around 6 MMS staff are planning to participate, has been scheduled for 31 August to 4 September 2026, with visa applications for participating staff currently underway.

Procurement of the bundled land-based station package is expected to move toward resolution. RIMES anticipates completing cost validation and confirming the minimum GBON-compliant scope with MMS and FMI by 31 July 2026, with UNEP's guidance sought on the proposed procurement and budget approach. Building on this, the procurement decision, including any permissible negotiation or scope adjustment, is targeted for conclusion by 31 August 2026, with contracting to follow as early as practicable. Delivery, installation, and commissioning of the new station at Maafaru and the upgrades at Hulhulé, Hanimaadhoo, Kadhdhoo, and Gan are targeted to begin from 13 October 2026 once the procurement decision, contract award, and supplier mobilization plan are confirmed. MMS will continue to follow up with RIMES on this process and will conduct site assessments in August 2026 to confirm final installation locations.

For the upper-air station at Gan, RIMES intends to finalize and issue the procurement package by 31 July 2026, with evaluation and approvals anticipated between August and October 2026 and delivery targeted by 21 December 2026, to be followed by installation, acceptance testing, and operational training. MMS will continue preparatory work on the corresponding civil works and site requirements in parallel.

Progress of implementation

Output	Indicator	Target					Actual					Status	Milestones achieved	Challenges and risks
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5			
1. GBON institutional and human capacity developed														
1.1 National consultations , including with CSOs and other relevant stakeholders conducted	# of inception workshops held (1.1.7)	1	1	1	1	1		1				Achieved	The inception workshop and the inauguration of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) were conducted on 3 June 2025 The 2nd PSC meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 2026 in Malé	Note: Only 1 inception workshop is planned; PSC meetings will be held yearly in subsequent years.
	% female participation in the inception workshops (<i>please also indicate the actual number in brackets</i>) (1.1.8)	50	50	50	50	50		33% (14)				On-track	A total of 43 participants attended the inception workshop, with 33% (14) female participants.	Achieving 50% remains challenging due to male-dominated technical roles within MMS. A 30% female participation target has therefore been set, with continued efforts to promote broader representation.
	# of stakeholder workshops held (1.1.9)	0	1	1	1	1		2				Achieved	High-Level Dialogue and stakeholder engagement on the benefits, co-production, and ownership of GBON infrastructure was held on 30 March 2026 in Malé	
	% of female participants during consultations (<i>please also indicate the actual number in brackets</i>) (1.1.10)	0	50	50	50	50		33% (14) 40% (23)				On-track	High Level Dialogue and stakeholder engagement brought together 57 participants, including 23 women (40%)	
	# of high-level events held (1.1.15)	1	0	0	0	1		1				Achieved	High-Level Dialogue and stakeholder engagement on the benefits, co-	

Output	Indicator	Target					Actual					Status	Milestones achieved	Challenges and risks
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5			
													production, and ownership of GBON infrastructure was held on 30 March 2026 in Malé	
	% female participation in the high-level events <i>(please also indicate the actual number in brackets)</i> (1.1.97)	50	0	0	0	50		40% (23)				On-track	High Level Dialogue and stakeholder engagement brought together 57 participants, including 23 women (40%)	
	# of gender workshops held (1.1.16)	0	1	1	0	0						Delayed	MMS/UNEP/FMI continued coordination on Gender workshop, gender policy and related work tentatively scheduled for November 2026.	FMI mission planned to support the gender workshop in the 1st quarter of 2026 could not proceed as scheduled, owing to regional travel disruptions, and the gender workshop and gender policy activities have been tentatively rescheduled for November 2026.
	% female participation in the gender workshops <i>(please also indicate the actual number in brackets)</i> (1.1.98)	0	50	50	0	0						Delayed		
1.2 NMHS institutional capacity required to operate the GBON network developed	Years in which the Organizational Strategy will be drafted (1.2.11)	0	1	1	1	0						On-track	MMS/UNEP/FMI continued coordination on development of the organizational strategy, stakeholder engagement plan and gender policy, tentatively scheduled for November 2026.	FMI mission planned to support the organizational strategy, stakeholder engagement plan and gender policy in the 1st quarter of 2026 could not proceed as scheduled, due to regional travel disruptions, and the activity tentatively rescheduled for November 2026.
	Years in which Gender Policy will be drafted (1.2.13)	0	0	1	1	0						On-track		
	Years in which stakeholder engagement plan will be drafted (1.2.12)	0	1	0	0	0						Delayed		

Output	Indicator	Target					Actual					Status	Milestones achieved	Challenges and risks
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5			
1.3 NMHS human capacity required to operate the GBON network developed	# staff salaries paid (1.3.6)	9	9	9	9	9		12	12			Achieved	MMS PMU provided day-to-day project oversight during the reporting period, supported by the Project Manager (recruited in Aug 2025), 6 part-time in-house staff (recruited in July 2025), and technical/ICT staff at N. Maafaru. In 2025, MMS recruited 3 of 5 planned technical staff (recruited in Aug 2025) and 2 of 3 planned ICT staff at N. Maafaru (recruited in Oct 2025).	Recruitment for the remaining 2 technical positions and the remaining ICT position has continued to face challenges, owing to the limited availability of qualified technical staff in the Maldives. MMS plans to propose converting the remaining ICT position into a Graphics Designer role at the 2nd PSC meeting.
	Years in which trainings will be conducted (1.3.7)	1	1	1	1	1	1	3				Achieved	A refresher training programme was conducted by RIMES in November 2024 AWS installation, operation, and maintenance training for MMS staff under the GBON network, held in two batches (13–17 and 19–23 July 2025) in Malé, with 21 participants including 6 women (21% female). customized basic observation course in meteorology in Pune from 27 October to 1 November 2025. GBON-focused training at the Thai Meteorological Department (TMD) and	

Output	Indicator	Target					Actual					Status	Milestones achieved	Challenges and risks
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5			
													RIMES headquarters in Bangkok from 23 to 29 November 2025. An FMI-supported study tour for ~6 MMS staff is scheduled for 31 Aug–4 Sep 2026; visa applications for participants are underway. RIMES capacity-building activities including vendor-led installation, maintenance, and troubleshooting training, and advanced data management training, scheduled for 14 Oct–30 Nov 2026.	
2. GBON infrastructure in place														
2.1 New land-based stations 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 (2.1.1)	0	1	0	0	0						Delayed	The bundled procurement for new AWS and sensor/data logger upgrades at 4 existing stations underwent technical and financial evaluation. Following the 24 March 2026 bid opening, RIMES and FMI completed compliance review and evaluation between April–June 2026, including a technical evaluation meeting on 26 May and reconciliation meetings on 3 and 11 June 2026.	The procurement evaluation identified a budget shortfall between the approved package budget and the pricing received from compliant bidders. RIMES, together with UNEP, MMS, and FMI, is now working through a cost validation process, exploring cost optimization options, and considering a formal negotiation process to identify a GBON-compliant and financially viable path to contract award and the process is ongoing.
2.2 Improved land-based stations and related equipment, ICT systems, data management systems and standard operating practices in place	# of stations improved as per the GBON National Contribution Plan (2.2.1)	0	4	0	0	0						Delayed		

Output	Indicator	Target					Actual					Status	Milestones achieved	Challenges and risks
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5			
2.3 New upper air stations 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	0	0	0	0	0						Select an item		
2.4 Improved upper air stations and related equipment, ICT systems, data management systems and standard operating practices in place	# of stations improved as per the GBON National Contribution Plan (2.4.1)	0	0	1	0	0						On-track	RIMES prepared technical specs/procurement docs for the upper-air station upgrade and spare parts, reviewed with UNEP/FMI during the reporting period. Solicitation still being finalized as of 30 June 2026; expected finalization by 31 July 2026, evaluation /approvals Aug-Sep 2026, delivery anticipated by 21 Dec 2026.	
3. Sustained compliance with GBON														
3.1 GBON land-based stations' commissioning period completed , 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 (3.1.1)	0	5	5	5	5						Delayed	The bundled procurement for new AWS and sensor/data logger upgrades at 4 existing stations underwent technical and financial evaluation. Following the 24 March 2026 bid opening, RIMES and FMI completed compliance review and evaluation between April-June 2026, including a technical evaluation meeting on 26 May and reconciliation	The evaluation identified a budget shortfall between the approved package budget and the pricing received from compliant bidders. RIMES, together with UNEP, MMS, and FMI, is now working through a cost validation process, exploring cost optimization options, and considering a formal negotiation process to identify a GBON-compliant and financially viable path to contract award.

Output	Indicator	Target					Actual					Status	Milestones achieved	Challenges and risks
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5			
													meetings on 3 and 11 June 2026	
3.2 GBON upper air stations' commissioning period completed , 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 (3.2.1)	0	0	1	1	1						On-track	RIMES prepared technical specs/procurement docs for the upper-air station upgrade and spare parts, reviewed with UNEP/FMI during the reporting period. Solicitation still being finalized as of 30 June 2026; expected finalization by 31 July 2026, evaluation /approvals Aug-Sep 2026, delivery anticipated by 21 Dec 2026.	

Attachment: [Maldives SOFF Investment Phase Annual Report 2025](#)