



Associated Programme on Flood Management (APFM) Implementation Plan 2026–2028

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations. It coordinates the activities of the meteorological and hydrological services of 193 countries and territories and is the authoritative voice on weather, climate, and water.

GLOBAL WATER PARTNERSHIP

The Global Water Partnership (GWP) is an international network whose vision is for a water-secure world. The GWP's mission is to advance governance and management of water resources for sustainable and equitable development. Created in 1996 the GWP network is open to all organizations that recognize the principles of integrated water resources management endorsed by the network.

ASSOCIATED PROGRAMME ON FLOOD MANAGEMENT

The Associated Programme on Flood Management (APFM) is a joint initiative of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the Global Water Partnership (GWP). Since 2001 it has promoted the concept of Integrated Flood Management (IFM) as an approach to flood management.



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Context and emerging climate change issues


Floods are among the most frequent and damaging natural hazards affecting societies and ecosystems worldwide. Their impacts extend far beyond immediate inundation and physical damage: floods disrupt livelihoods and economic activities, damage critical infrastructure, degrade land and ecosystems, contaminate water supplies, and pose serious risks to human health and safety. Climate change is fundamentally altering flood regimes by intensifying extreme precipitation, increasing rainfall variability, accelerating snowmelt, and amplifying the frequency, severity, and spatial extent of flood events. At the same time, population growth, urban expansion into floodplains, land degradation, deforestation, and unsustainable land and water management practices are compounding flood risk, particularly in already vulnerable regions.

Recent decades have demonstrated that floods are no longer isolated or purely episodic events. Flash floods, compound flood events linked to storms and landslides, and repeated flooding in the same catchments are becoming more common, often overwhelming traditional structural and emergency-response approaches. These evolving flood dynamics expose critical weaknesses in sector-based, infrastructure-centric, and reactive flood management strategies and underscore the urgent need for anticipatory, coordinated, and systems-oriented responses that reduce flood risk before disasters occur.

In light of the increasing frequency and intensity of flooding events across numerous countries, there is a pressing need for a comprehensive and context-specific approach to flood management. The Associated Programme on Flood Management (APFM), together with its Support Base Partners (SBPs), is well positioned to deliver such an approach. By leveraging their collective expertise and coordinated support, they can more effectively assist societies in strengthening preparedness, enhancing resilience, and reducing the adverse impacts of floods.

Background on APFM, its activities and need for the implementation plan 2026-2028

The concept of Integrated Flood Management (IFM) promoted by APFM emerged as a cornerstone approach for building long-term flood resilience. IFM recognizes floods as part of the natural hydrological cycle and addresses flood risk through coordinated management of land, water, ecosystems, and human activities within river basins and coastal zones. IFM emphasizes a balanced combination of structural and non-structural measures, strengthened flood forecasting and early warning systems, risk-informed land-use planning, and inclusive governance arrangements that engage communities and multiple sectors.



To operationalize IFM in practice, effective end-to-end early warning systems are essential. In this context, the UN Secretary-General's Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative provides a unifying framework to ensure that all people are protected from disasters by multi-hazard early warning systems. APFM directly supports EW4All by strengthening flood risk knowledge, monitoring and forecasting capacities, warning dissemination, and preparedness and response, in line with the four pillars of early warning systems. This alignment is further reinforced by the WMO Vision and Strategy for Hydrology, which articulates the ambitions that “no one is surprised by a flood” and that high-quality hydrological data and operational services underpin effective early warnings. Through these efforts, APFM contributes to building coherent early warning system mechanisms that enhance anticipatory action and flood risk management across local, national, and regional scales.

At the global level, a range of complementary processes is advancing flood preparedness and resilience, including efforts under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, climate adaptation processes under the UNFCCC, and water-related initiatives led by WMO, GWP, and partners. APFM and its partners actively contribute to these processes through technical guidance, science-policy engagement, and support to implementation, while aligning with global policy frameworks and regional priorities.

This three-year implementation plan (2026–2028) of APFM responds directly to these priorities and better provides tailored, unique and sustainable support to countries and organization in terms of operational tools and products, capacity development of practitioners, policy makers, knowledge and awareness on preparedness and response measures, etc. The implementation plan supports in the application of the IFM concept into concrete actions, focusing on strengthening institutional coordination, improving flood monitoring, forecasting, and early warning, promoting sustainable land and water management, and embedding flood risk management within broader climate adaptation and development frameworks. Through these efforts, the plan aims to support countries and partners in building resilient, adaptive, and inclusive social-ecological systems in an increasingly flood-prone world.

This implementation plan will also function as a strategic mechanism through which the Associated Programme on Flood Management (APFM) can contribute to flood-related aspects of the Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative, particularly in capacity development. In collaboration with the Integrated Drought Management Programme (IDMP), APFM will design and deliver targeted capacity-building activities, including the development of curricula and training materials informed by systematic needs assessments.

These efforts will aim to strengthen Members' technical and institutional capacities in flood and drought management, in alignment with the priorities outlined in the [EW4All executive plan 2022–2027](#).

WMO support to the NMHSs on flood management

Under its mandate to facilitate international cooperation in operational meteorology and hydrology, and related environmental disciplines, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) plays a central role in supporting its 193 Members in the development and strengthening of hydrological and meteorological services. In particular, WMO provides normative guidance, technical standards, operational frameworks and capacity-development support to National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) to enhance flood management across the full end to end flood forecasting and early warning system value chain. This includes assistance in the design, modernization and integration of end-to-end early warning systems (EWS); the development and application of tools and products for flood monitoring, forecasting and impact-based warning services; and the promotion of multi-hazard, people-centred early warning approaches in alignment with global initiatives such as Early Warnings for All. WMO further supports Members through the preparation and dissemination of technical guidelines, operational manuals and best-practice guides on flood forecasting, flash flood guidance, risk assessment and mapping, and integrated flood management, as well as through training programmes, regional cooperation mechanisms and peer-to-peer exchanges. In this context, Members are encouraged to actively engage with WMO in identifying existing needs and gaps—whether institutional, technical, infrastructural or human capacity-related—in order to better target support for strengthening forecasting capabilities, data management systems, service delivery, and coordination with disaster risk management authorities. Enhanced collaboration in assessing requirements and mobilizing resources will be essential to ensure that NMHSs are adequately equipped to provide timely, reliable and actionable flood monitoring, forecasting and early warning services that effectively safeguard lives, livelihoods and infrastructure.


APFM and its action domains

APFM operates across three key action domains and thus defines the future goals accordingly:

1. **Catalyzing flood action on the ground (assistance to all stakeholders)**
2. **Generating and managing knowledge**
3. **Strengthening partnerships**



The first goal focuses on enhancing flood resilience by improving flood management practices at different levels and thereby catalyzing flood action to build resilience. This involves putting Integrated Flood Management (IFM) into action to help countries build resilience against flood risks while advancing sustainable development and protecting the environment. At local level, the approach prioritizes community-centered solutions, empowering populations to actively participate in planning and decision-making processes with local authorities. At national level, it emphasizes the implementation of end-to-end early warning systems to deliver timely, actionable information to vulnerable communities. A whole-of-society approach ensures the inclusion of all stakeholders such as governments, private sector, civil society, and local communities—fostering collaboration and shared responsibility in flood management. Central to this approach is gender mainstreaming, ensuring that flood resilience strategies are inclusive, equitable, and address the unique needs and perspectives of women and marginalized groups. By integrating structural and non-structural measures, fostering good governance, investing in adaptive and resilient infrastructure, and ensuring sustainable financing mechanisms, APFM delivers long-term, inclusive, and effective flood resilience solutions.



The second goal focuses on establishing and promoting standards and guidelines for Integrated Flood Management (IFM), building on the expertise of WMO's and GWP global expert network. This goal also emphasizes translating these standards into practical capacity-building initiatives tailored to the needs of different stakeholders. Special attention is given to empowering governments, as key decision-makers, with the knowledge, tools, and frameworks needed to implement IFM effectively. The APFM HelpDesk, soon to be supported by relevant WMO and GWP communities of practice, plays a pivotal role in this effort, providing a one-stop resource to assist governments, technical institutions, private sector actors, community organizations as well as individuals in all aspects of IFM. With a clear priority on empowering governments as key decision-makers, the HelpDesk delivers expert guidance, training, and tools to support effective flood management policy and implementation.

The third goal focuses on fostering and strengthening collaboration and dialogue within the global flood management community. APFM stands as the world's largest partnership of organizations dedicated to advancing flood resilience, bringing together governments, academia, international and UN organizations, and the private sector. By uniting these diverse stakeholders, APFM creates a powerful platform for exchanging knowledge, aligning efforts, and driving collective action toward sustainable flood management solutions. As a representative voice for the global flood resilience community, APFM actively engages in international platforms such as the Conference of the Parties (COP) and other high-level dialogues. Through this advocacy, APFM ensures that flood resilience remains a central priority in global climate, water, and disaster risk reduction (DRR) agendas.

These three goals are interconnected, with enhanced partnerships (goal 3) enabling greater knowledge generation and exchange (goal 2), which in turn informs and guides flood management policies and practices (goal 1).

For each of these three goals, the implementation plan outlines specific activity areas to scale up the urgently needed IFM efforts toward a future where everyone is prepared for floods. The plan further explains how APFM must evolve to achieve these goals by strengthening its resilience and effectiveness through robust partnerships, good governance, and performance measurement to enable learning and improve the financial sustainability of the programme.

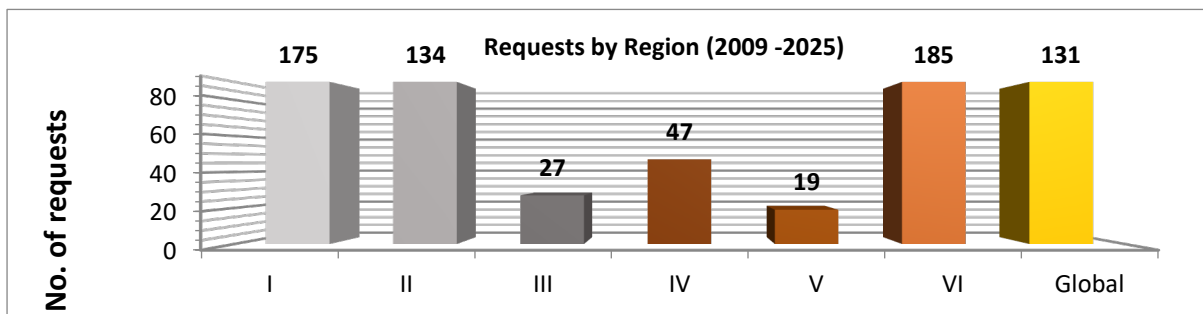
[The Technical Support Unit](#)

The Technical Support Unit (TSU) of the Associated Programme on Flood Management (APFM), composed of staff from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the Global Water Partnership (GWP), serves as the operational backbone of the Programme. TSU provides coordinated technical and strategic support to advance Integrated Flood Management (IFM) principles at the global, regional and national levels. A key function of

the Unit is the management of the IFM HelpDesk, through which it responds to queries from countries and partners, offering tailored technical guidance, facilitating access to tools and methodologies, and connecting stakeholders with relevant expertise within the APFM Support Base. TSU also actively liaises with partner organizations, regional institutions and development agencies to foster collaboration, mobilize expertise, and promote coherence in flood management initiatives. Through these functions, the TSU ensures effective knowledge exchange, responsiveness to Members' needs, and the sustained implementation of IFM approaches in support of resilience-building efforts.

The IFM HelpDesk

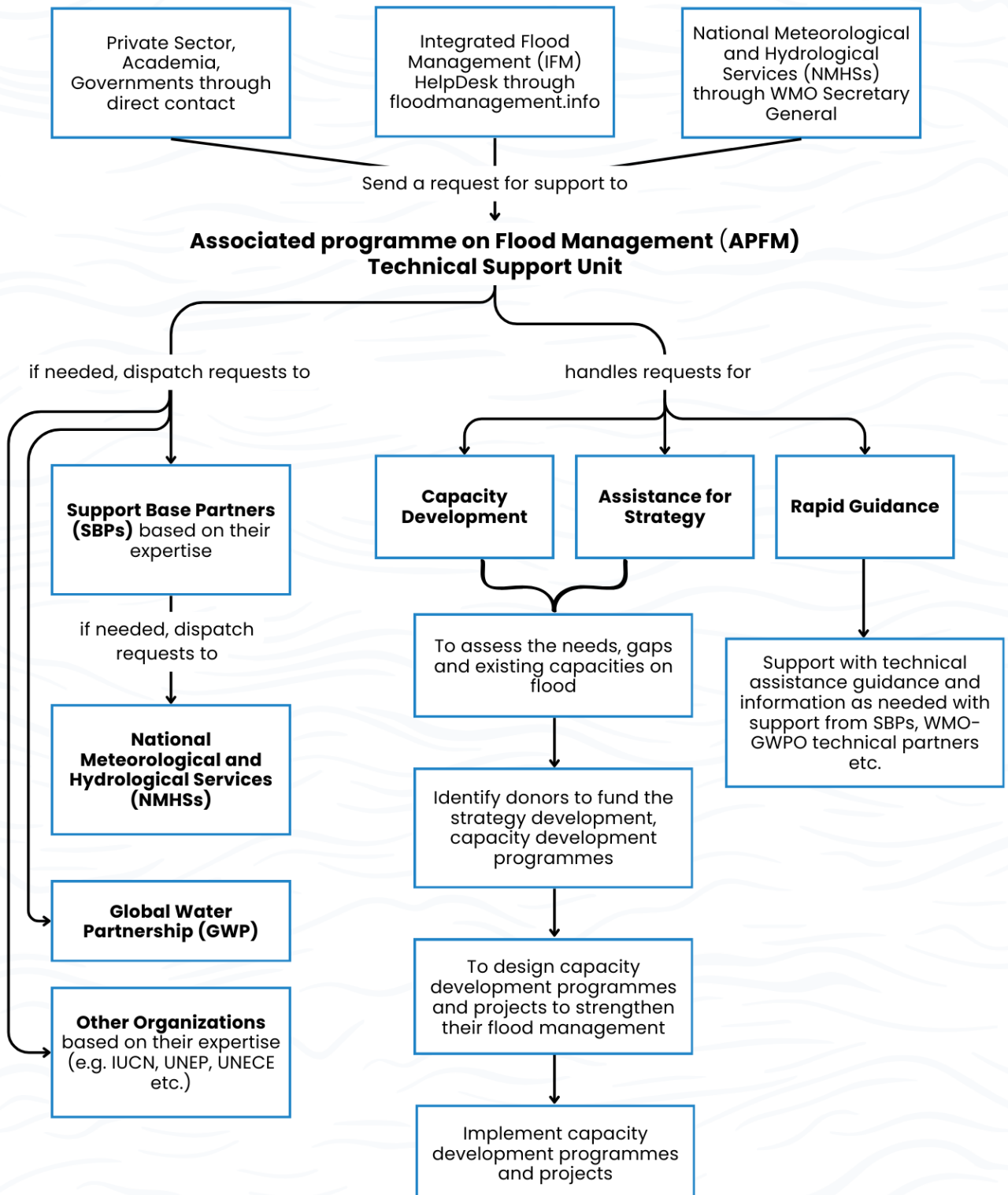
The [IFM HelpDesk](#) serves as a dedicated technical assistance platform under the Associated Programme on Flood Management (APFM) to support countries and partners in advancing Integrated Flood Management (IFM). Through this online facility, practitioners, policymakers and institutions can submit specific queries related to flood risk assessment, monitoring and forecasting, early warning systems, policy development, institutional coordination and the application of IFM principles. The HelpDesk facilitates access to expert advice drawn from the APFM Support Base and its partner networks, ensuring timely, tailored and context-sensitive guidance. In addition to responding to technical inquiries, it promotes knowledge sharing, disseminates relevant tools and guidance materials, and strengthens collaboration among stakeholders engaged in flood management and resilience-building.



No. of requests by geographical distribution since 2009

The workflow chart below illustrates how the Associated Programme on Flood Management (APFM) can provide structured and coordinated support to countries on flood management. It highlights the collaborative role of Support Base Partners (SBPs) and other partner organizations in delivering technical assistance, capacity development, knowledge products, and project implementation support.

Associated programme on Flood Management (APFM) support request flowchart



Role of SBPs

The Support Base Partners (SBPs) of the Associated Programme on Flood Management (APFM) constitute a global network of professional institutions that provide essential technical expertise and in-kind support to the Programme and the IFM HelpDesk. These partners are actively engaged in offering advice and advocacy for flood management policy and strategy formulation, delivering technical guidance at international, regional and local levels, and facilitating workshops and training that promote the integrated approach to flood management. They also contribute to the development and dissemination of tools, publications and capacity-building materials, and assist in shaping objectives and scoping for flood management proposals and projects. SBPs meet regularly, either virtually or in person, to identify opportunities for collaboration, share knowledge, and provide inputs to the APFM Technical Support Unit in responding to HelpDesk requests and in the preparation of pilot project proposals. Their collective contributions enhance the breadth and quality of APFM's support to countries in implementing Integrated Flood Management

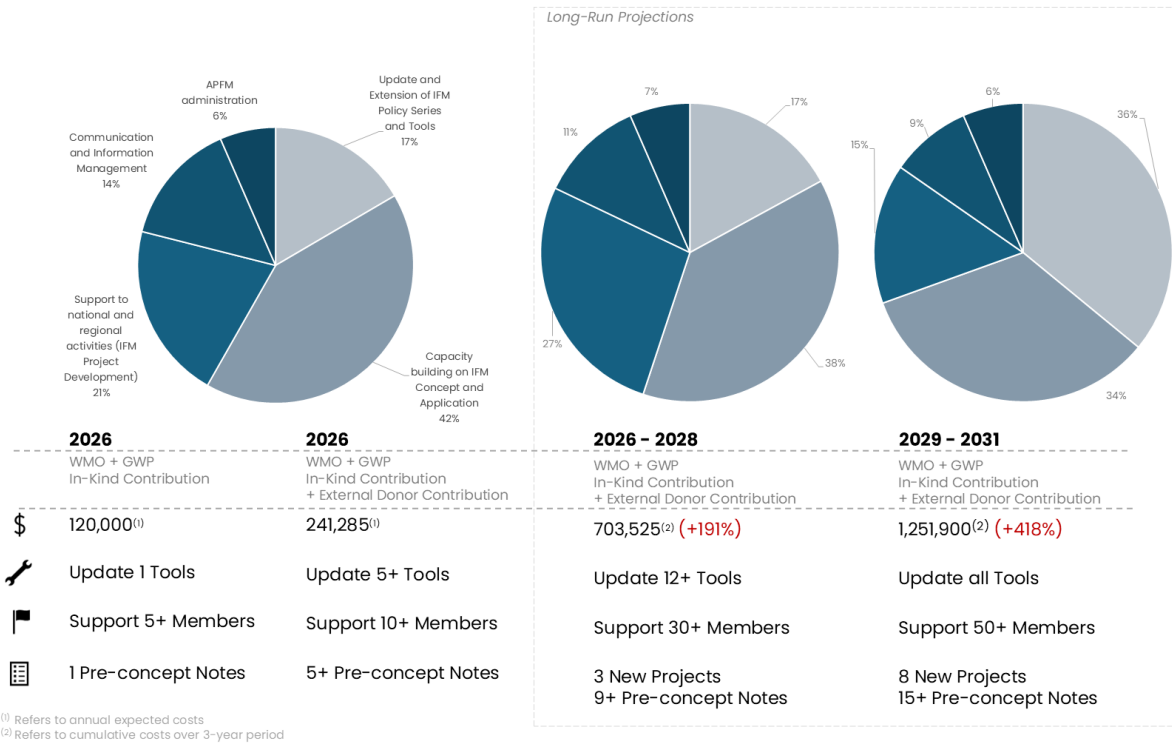
APFM implementation plan 2026-2028

Activities to be implemented	Description	Target output for 2028	Roles and responsibilities
Donor mapping for core activities of APFM	Map potential donors (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Banks, Financial institutions, Private Foundations, etc.) which could fully or partially support core activities of the APFM.	At least one core donor to support core activities of APFM is identified	APFM TSU (jointly with WMO partnership and resource mobilization unit) to lead the mapping of donors and identification of potential donors.
Resource mobilization for core activities of APFM	Initiate the resource mobilization process with the identified donors.	Identified donor with a funding commitment of at least USD 150K per year	APFM TSU engages and SBPs support in mapping of donor and building connection with potential donors

<p>Support to national and regional activities (IFM project formulation)</p>	<p>Co-design and formulate new IFM (possibly integrated with Drought Management) projects at national, regional and local levels and submit it to potential donors or funding authorities through call for proposals</p>	<p>At least 10 projects (single country or regional projects) are submitted and out of which a minimum of three projects is accepted for implementation (ensuring that some of the tools, publications, core activities costs can be covered under the project)</p>	<p>APFM TSU, together with the NMHSs, WMO regional offices, project management and implementation unit, to (i) support the identification of project opportunities (including through assessments of needs, gaps and capacities in flood management) and (ii) jointly formulate the identified projects, and (iii) submit them to relevant donors (Adaptation Fund, CREWS, etc.)</p> <p>SBPs can inform of potential funding opportunities and co-design new projects</p>
<p>Capacity development on IFM concept and its application</p>	<p>Ensure governments, international organizations, Academia and Universities, NGOs, etc. have developed knowledge and skills on IFM concept and its application</p>	<p>At least 10 national/regional workshops (500 participants out of which at least 30% are women and youths) are organized with IFM concept and its application in different projects</p>	<p>APFM TSU to proactively include IFM and related capacity development workshops in the project concept</p> <p>SBPs to provide support in implementing capacity</p>

			development workshops with APFM or independently in their projects or initiatives
Update and extension of IFM policy series and Tools	Content update, editing, design, printing and outreach for the existing or new publications	At least 5 new or revised tools are published	APFM TSU along with WMO and GWP experts to co-lead the design and development effort APFM SBPs to co-lead the drafting of the tools or policy guidelines, training materials
Communication and information management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustained growth in the global reach and influence of APFM HelpDesks and communications (web, social media, conferences). - Positioning APFM as a globally recognized <i>authoritative resource</i> on IFM and people-centric flood risk communication. - Regular contributions in key global fora on flood risk, climate adaptation, and early warning (e.g. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 10 webinars organized in different topics related to IFM and promotion of the IFM HelpDesk - Participate and lead the organization of at least 3-4 side events or sessions during global for a or conferences - Development of updated promotional materials related to APFM and activities (flyers, posters, banners etc.) 	APFM TSU to lead the development APFM SBPs to provide support in designing, developing and promoting the APFM and its activities

	UN conference, constituent meetings).	global WMO body		
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Timeline and Workplan

APFM Implementation Plan Phases

1. Finalization of the APFM Implementation Plan 2026-2028 (0-3 months):

The Associated Programme on Flood Management (APFM) implementation plan is scheduled to be finalized by April 2026. This process will integrate inputs and feedback from the Support Base Partners (SBPs), relevant bodies of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) – including the Standing Committee on Hydrological Services (SERCOM) and technical divisions of the Secretariat – as well as subject-matter experts from the Global Water Partnership (GWP). The finalized plan will provide a clear framework for guiding APFM activities and priorities over the medium term.

2. Inception Phase (3–12 months):

During the inception phase, efforts will focus on donor mapping and resource mobilization to support APFM's core activities, including capacity development for APFM users and the design of new projects. These initiatives will be developed in alignment with existing funding mechanisms, such as the Adaptation Fund, CREWS, financial institutions, and Horizon Europe calls for proposals. This phase will also rely on in-kind technical support from WMO and GWP to facilitate initial implementation and ensure a coordinated approach to resource planning and project development.

3. Operational Phase (12–36 months):

The operational phase will focus on the full-scale implementation of APFM activities, with support from the SBPs. Key priorities include:

- Continued donor mapping and resource mobilization for core APFM activities;
- Support to national and regional initiatives, including IFM project development;
- Capacity-building initiatives on the IFM concept and its practical application;
- Updating and expanding the IFM policy series and associated tools;
- Strengthening communication and information management aligned with the implementation plan.

This phase will ensure that APFM's strategic objectives are effectively translated into actionable programs and activities, leveraging the expertise and networks of both WMO and GWP, as well as the global APFM Support Base, to enhance flood resilience worldwide.

Implementation Plan Reporting

The Associated Programme on Flood Management (APFM) Technical Support Unit (TSU) will regularly provide comprehensive updates on the progress and implementation status of the APFM implementation plan. These updates will be presented during the bi-annual and annual forums of the APFM Support Base Partners (SBPs), ensuring that all partners remain fully informed of ongoing activities, milestones achieved, and any adjustments to planned actions. In addition to these scheduled reporting events, the TSU will also respond to ad hoc requests for information, providing tailored updates through email correspondence or dedicated meetings as needed. This approach ensures transparent communication, facilitates timely feedback from partners, and enables effective coordination and collaborative decision-making in support of the Programme's objectives.