United Nations University, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, University of Sussex, Ca Foscari University

Submission on the Review Of Warsaw International Mechanism

16 October 2019

The SBI and the SBSTA invited Parties and other stakeholders to submit, via the submission portal by 16 October, their views on the review of the Warsaw International Mechanism on the basis of the terms of reference for consideration at SB 51. This submission by the United Nations University on behalf of all other contributing organizations responds to the call for submissions by first commenting on the current state of work related to affected communities including in urban areas, followed by suggestions that can be taken into consideration for further enhancing the work under the WIM. The content of this submission builds upon a deliberative exercise conducted during the "World Risk and Adaptation Futures - Demographic Change" Summer Academy, which was organized by the United Nations University and Munich Re Foundation in cooperation with UNFCCC (and in special partnership with Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich). These discussions comprised 19 participants drawn from academic and practitioner communities from 15 countries along with subject experts from the United Nations Organizations and leading academic institutions of the world, along with the organizing institutions (hereafter referred collectively as ORGANIZATION).

ORGANIZATION welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the development of comprehensive risk management approaches which identify and address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change. In particular, we wish to call the attention of the Executive Committee to the importance of anticipating demographic changes and incorporating these into the loss and damage mechanism. Demography refers to the specific composition of a society driven by characteristics including mortality, fertility and migration. Demographic change interacts directly with the critical aspects of contemporary societies, such as education, health conditions, urbanization and population redistribution. As a result of demographic changes, a series of futures will be possible: these include increment of the working age population, ageing, growing or shrinking populations and human mobility diversification. Current adaptation planning as well as loss and damage mechanisms do not adequately consider the significant role of demographic change for shaping societies' future exposure and vulnerability to climate change impacts.

The review of the WIM presents an opportunity to enhance work that averts, minimizes and addresses the adverse effects of climate change, including the incorporation of considerations of demographic change into the loss and damage mechanism. Doing so would greatly improve the targeting of resources and the effectiveness of adaptation, mitigation and loss and damage actions towards most vulnerable groups and places now and in the future, as well as supporting the sustainable development goals. Furthermore, in light of growing young populations in many regions, demographic shifts can also present a significant window of opportunity for increasing resilience if matched with capacity development.

Investments in capacity development for these sectors of the population can increase adaptive capacity, reduce vulnerability, mitigate certain forms of risk, and limit future loss and damage.

To date, in the formulation of activities in the WIM Excom five year rolling work plan, the WIM Excom has taken a strategic focus on: vulnerable people, communities, developing countries and ecosystems. The work related to urban areas and the impact of climate change on them and their role in achieving the 1.5 °C target is also being considered. We applaud these efforts and look forward to their further enhancement.

The WIM Excom produced a technical paper on loss and damage finance earlier this year, and the Standing Committee on Finance' autumn meeting featured sustainable cities. As nations prepare their climate action plans and include climate impacts in their nationally determined contributions towards the temperature goal of the Paris Agreement, enhancing finance and other forms of support which help avert, minimizes and addresses the adverse effects of climate change is beneficial. There is significant potential to improve the accuracy of resourcing for the proposed financial mechanisms through incorporating likely demographic change scenarios and addressing their drivers. There is also an opportunity to utilise demographic assessments to better target financial allocations for capacity development to most effectively support communities and better equip them in their fight against climate change.

Next Steps

Following the review of the Warsaw International Mechanism at COP25, the WIM ExCom could consider enhancing its five year rolling workplan in the following ways:

- Under workstream E (enhanced support), the five year rolling workplan might further explore and map finance, and other forms of support needed for climate-resilient human settlements. Workstream E could consider elements of support related to identifying the needs of highly exposed and vulnerable populations. Such elements could include identifying population growth rate, age structure, likely demographic dividend, fertility, mortality and migration. Demographic analysis has already identified several systems which play a critical role in shaping the exposure and vulnerability of populations to climate change. These include family planning, health services, education as well addressing the factors related to human migration. Integrating analysis of, and engagements with, these systems in climate change risk assessments offers significant opportunities to avert, minimize, and address the adverse effects of climate change on human settlements. The WIM could play an important role in fostering the cross-sectoral discussion, understanding and establishing mechanisms to support climate-resilient urban infrastructure systems in light of projected changes to the demographic profile of their users, and the changing profiles of human settlements.

- Under workstream C on comprehensive risk management, the Technical Expert Group on Comprehensive Risk Management and the WIM more broadly, could play an important role in helping to foster cross-sectoral discussion and understanding in order to better integrate demographic analysis into risk assessments and risk management approaches. Key interactions

between demographic change, shaping vulnerability and exposure, and climate change impacts that should be considered including ageing populations, demographic dividends, fertility rates, mortality rate, and migration.

- Under workstream D on cooperation and facilitation to human mobility, including migration, displacement and planned relocation, enabling people to migrate with dignity will enhance adaptation planning. A sustainable future can only be achieved by allowing people to respond to environmental stresses through orderly migration, as well as global support and solidarity with the destinations and origin areas. The WIM ExCom can play an important role here as a driver for more inclusive policy solutions based on rich empirical evidence.

Further areas in which the WIM might enhance action and support include:

- The WIM Excom might exchange experiences with the Standing Committee on Finance and consider writing a joint policy brief such as that done already between the Technology Committee and Excom on coastal technologies. The topic of such a brief could explore enhanced support for the incorporation of likely trends in demographic change and their probable impacts on climate change mitigation, adaptation as well as residual loss and damage.
- A further area which the WIM Excom could consider includes a dialogue before or during COP26 with the Presidency and relevant stakeholders on this issue.