

Submission of the United States of America

Santiago Network

14 March 2022

I. Introduction

The United States welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission regarding our views on the institutional arrangements of the Santiago Network (“SN” or “Network”). As part of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM), the Santiago Network has the objective of catalyzing the technical assistance of relevant organizations, bodies, networks and experts for the implementation of relevant approaches to avert, minimize and address loss and damage at the local, national and regional level in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. The United States continues to support the functions of the Santiago Network decided by CMA3 and sees the Santiago Network as an important step forward in facilitating technical assistance to avert, minimize, and address loss and damage. The United States supports the further operationalization of the Santiago Network at CMA4.

In summary, the United States offers the following suggestions on the institutional arrangements of the Santiago Network:

- We propose that the Santiago Network have three elements: (1) a secretariat, (2) a network of organizations, bodies, networks, and experts capable of responding to requests for technical assistance, and (3) an advisory body.
- The primary role of the secretariat should be to connect those seeking technical assistance with the best suited network member. The members of the Network should undertake the substantive work to address requests for technical assistance.
- The host organization for the secretariat should have relevant technical expertise and the capacity to convene organizations across different regions and communities of practice relevant to averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage. This may mean seeking a host external to the UNFCCC secretariat.
- To quickly operationalize and deliver impact on the ground, the Santiago Network should build on existing institutions and networks.
- Activities of the Santiago Network should enhance access to and participation in existing programs and catalyze additional work by network members by identifying opportunities for additional technical assistance. A core role of the Network should be minimizing overlap and duplication in order to enable access and avoid creating unnecessary complexity.
- When network members cannot address requests for technical assistance through existing programs, they may apply for funding from the Santiago Network to deliver technical assistance. Relevant policies, guidelines and procedures for network members to access funding from the Santiago Network must be developed by the Santiago Network secretariat and approved by the advisory panel.

- The advisory body should provide recommendations to the secretariat on criteria for network members, criteria for the assessment of funding requests, and the program of work.

II. Operational modalities:

Process:

The Santiago Network should be demand driven and respond to developing country requests for technical assistance to avert, minimize, and address loss and damage. We support the establishment of a secretariat that receives requests for technical assistance, supports users in developing requests into proposals for technical assistance from network members, actively connects those seeking technical assistance with the best suited network member, and reviews and approves funding to network members to carry out technical assistance according to criteria established by the advisory panel.

The secretariat of the Santiago Network should have an efficient system to receive, assess, and prioritize requests for technical assistance projects. To quickly operationalize and deliver impact on the ground, the host of the secretariat could consider building on existing modalities from an established program. The secretariat should support users in developing technical assistance requests into fully articulated proposals and, in doing so, help identify, prioritize and communicate technical assistance needs and priorities. Through the process of refining proposals, the secretariat should direct users to existing programs that may meet existing needs and refine proposals to focus on gaps. The secretariat may also refer countries to other programs that can support proposal development including, for example, the Green Climate Fund's readiness program.

The secretariat should distribute fully developed proposals to network members and identify network member(s) to respond based on expertise and cost-effectiveness. In addition to distributing proposals to network members, the secretariat should maintain a public database of proposals. Such a public database would increase transparency, help communicate needs and priorities, and catalyze technical assistance targeted towards existing gaps.

Network members should undertake the substantive work to respond to requests for technical assistance. The United States supports a secretariat that provides funding to network members to respond to technical assistance requests, when technical assistance proposals cannot be met by network members' existing programs and resources.

Funding:

Many programs currently provide technical assistance relevant to averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage. In working with countries to refine their proposals for technical assistance, the secretariat should direct countries to existing programs and help countries focus

requests on gaps and catalyzing new technical assistance. When possible, network members should respond to country requests for technical assistance with existing programs and resources. When gaps exist, network members could request funding from the SN to carry out technical assistance. Requests from network members should be considered on the basis of appropriate policies, frameworks, and guidelines, to be developed by the SN secretariat and approved by the advisory body. Funding from the SN should help build capacity in developing countries to avert, minimize, and address loss and damage by supporting local and regional organizations.

Building the Network:

It is important that the Santiago Network have robust membership including organizations that could respond to the requests across regions on the wide range of topics relevant to averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage. The secretariat should actively recruit network members across different communities of practice including climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian assistance, and development. The secretariat should keep network members engaged through regular updates and opportunities for collaboration.

In building the network, the Santiago Network should take advantage of existing networks such as InsuResilience, the Climate Technology Center & Network (CTCN), Risk-Informed Early Action Partnership (REAP), Start Network, Climate and Development Knowledge Network, and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) Center of Excellence for Climate and Disaster Resilience.

Recognizing that some network members may have more capacity to respond to requests for technical assistance, the Santiago Network could consider deeper engagement with active partners. For example, this could include creating a more rapid and streamlined process to engage these partners in responding to technical assistance requests or seeking partners assistance with secretariat functions of refining proposals and identifying relevant providers of technical assistance.

Information, knowledge, and collaboration:

In addition to catalyzing demand-driven technical assistance, a function of the Santiago Network is to facilitate the development of information and knowledge on approaches relevant to averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage. The Santiago Network should fulfill this function by identifying gaps, connecting relevant organizations, and creating outlets for information. The Santiago Network should serve as a platform to share knowledge products, best practices, trainings, and curricula. The Santiago Network could consider hosting webinars, trainings, and events to share knowledge and create opportunities to connect users and providers of technical assistance.

Web-based platform:

The Santiago Network should have a user-friendly web-based platform to receive requests for technical assistance, share activities and results, and facilitate knowledge sharing. The web-based platform should provide clear guidance to users seeking technical assistance on the Santiago Network process and the steps to request and receive technical assistance. The platform should also share information on current Santiago Network activities and results, including a list of network members.

A user-friendly, web-based platform is also critical to fulfilling the Santiago Network's function to facilitate development and access to information and knowledge related to averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage. The secretariat should maintain an up-to-date website where countries and network members can access knowledge and resources on good practices, lessons learned, data, associated funding sources and information on country needs and capacity gaps. The web-based platform could also serve as a platform to promote collaboration between various actors for example by providing online training, peer-to-peer exchange, and expert advice.

III. Structure:

The United States supports a Santiago Network with three elements:

- 1. A secretariat** that will
 - a. Receive requests for technical assistance, work with users to refine their proposals, and disseminate requests for proposals among network members;
 - b. Identify network members to respond to requests for technical assistance through existing programs;
 - c. Provide funding to support technical assistance by network members where appropriate; and
 - d. Collect and disseminate best practices for averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage including by maintaining a website and hosting workshops.
- 2. A network** with participation of relevant organizations, bodies, networks, and experts capable of responding to requests for technical assistance to avert, minimize, and address loss and damage. The members of the Network will undertake the substantive work to address requests for technical assistance. The priority should be to deliver technical assistance through existing programs. When existing programs do not exist to meet countries' technical assistance needs, network members may apply for Santiago Network funding to respond to a country's proposal.
- 3. An advisory body** that will provide recommendations to the secretariat on criteria for network members, criteria for the assessment of funding requests, the program of work and synthesize reports from network members on their activities to be included in the annual report of the ExCom.

Criteria for selection of host of secretariat:

The United States supports the selection of an external organization to host the Santiago Network Secretariat. The prospective host should have:

- Technical expertise relevant to averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage;
- Experience in international multi-stakeholder cooperation;
- Demonstrated capacity to convene organizations, bodies, networks, and experts across different regions and communities of practice related to averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage including climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian assistance and development;
- Ability to prioritize and respond to a high volume of requests from Parties in an effective and efficient manner;
- A track-record building capacity in developing and least developed countries;
- Demonstrated capability to ensure fair and open international tendering for the procurement of services in line with the fiduciary and ethical standards of the United Nations; and,
- An effective governance and management structure to support high quality administration, financial management, auditing and reporting functions.

To quickly operationalize the Santiago Network and deliver impact on the ground, we encourage potential hosts to consider how the Santiago Network could leverage and build on existing work including existing networks and operational modalities.

IV. The role of the executive committee (ExCom) and its expert groups, task force and technical expert groups:

Because the CMA decision provides that the Santiago Network is part of the Warsaw International Mechanism, calls for Santiago Network organizations to report information to the ExCom, and for the ExCom to include information on the network in its annual reports, we support the ExCom taking a more active role in the Santiago Network. The ExCom should be able to provide guidance on network activities and should integrate information from the Santiago Network into ExCom activities and products, and those of its expert groups. One way to facilitate this, would be for the advisory body to be established under the ExCom.

V. The role of loss and damage contact points and other relevant stakeholders at the subnational, national and regional level;

Loss and damage contact points will play an important role in connecting the Santiago Network with relevant stakeholders within countries by being a conduit of information. The Santiago Network should seek to regularly engage the loss and damage contact points to share activities. Loss and damage contact points should share relevant information with their networks and help local organizations, bodies, networks and experts as well as users connect with the Santiago Network.

VI. Possible elements for the terms of reference of a potential convening or coordinating body that may provide secretarial services to facilitate work under the Santiago Network;

The terms of reference for the organization providing secretarial services should include elements related to the mission of the Santiago Network, functions, architecture, roles and responsibilities, governance, organizational structure of the secretariat, reporting and review, and term of the memorandum of understanding with the host organization.

VII. Process moving forward:

The United States supports the further operationalization of the Santiago Network as soon as possible and we look forward to the technical workshop to further exchange views. We consider the technical workshop as a valuable opportunity for parties to consider the views of organizations, bodies, networks, and experts that may participate in the Santiago Network. Providing time for potential hosts of Santiago Network secretariat to elaborate on their submissions is particularly important. We would also welcome presentations from networks that have similar functions on their institutional arrangements and lessons learned.

As work continues to operationalize the Santiago Network, we encourage the UNFCCC secretariat, in its capacity as the interim secretariat, to engage partners in the Network and begin developing the website.