## Why?

The media plays an important role in shaping public discourse on current issues - especially in conflict situations. Depending on the reporting, media can either exacerbate conflicts or contribute to their de-escalation and constructive management.

The aim of CPS's work in this field, is to support partner organizations that work on conflict-sensitive media content. Training courses for journalists and media professionals raise awareness of the consequences of their reporting and the resulting responsibility. Core principles of conflict-sensitive media work are independence, transparency, no manipulation, identification of problems as well as possible solutions, and consideration of different perspectives. This enables readers, listeners, and viewers to have access to objective information, to form their own opinions and to be oriented towards solutions. Journalists and media professionals have the power to positively influence public discourse, provide an inclusive and safe space for dialogue and exchange, and contribute to nonviolent conflict transformation.

### How?

Our partners focus on the intersection of media and conflict transformation. Their conflict-sensitive media work is aimed at providing media professionals with concepts, methods, and strategies for analyzing and understanding conflicts and their dynamics. Further, they explore the possibilities of exerting a de-escalating and peace-promoting influence on the presentation of conflicts through informed, differentiated, and sensitive reporting. A variety of approaches are used to strengthen conflict-sensitive media work at the individual, local, community and institutional levels and to bring about societal change.

CPS partner organizations play the main role in disseminating knowledge and implementing activities to strengthen conflict-sensitive media. They aim to tell their own stories with a conflict-sensitive approach, increase professionalism in their work and strengthen organizational

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development.

Digitalization and the use of social media platforms have fundamentally changed the way public opinion functions. Contents that are entertaining, emotional, and polarizing spread virally. The portrayal of violence on social media deeply impacts public opinion in contexts of violent conflict. Balanced news, sober facts and arguments are less likely to be heard. To counter the exacerbation of conflicts through hate speech, fake news, mis- and disinformation, the CPS is increasingly promoting trainings on working with social media platforms and approaches such as fact-checking and awareness-raising in their conflict-sensitive media work.

Trainings and workshops are supported by CPS media experts and eventually by financial subsidies.

### What?

Initiatives and activities of our CPS partners include:

- Designing training modules on conflictsensitive media work and non-violent communication
- Creating a wide range of media products, including radio shows and dramas, photographs, visualized interviews, television, theater performances, articles, features, online media, vlogging, blogging, comic books, murals, or paintings
- Bringing together diverse groups in conflict to report on divisive issues
- Creating communities of practice for learning, listening, and sharing
- Establishing monitoring and evaluation structures to assess the impact of products
- Organizing peer-to-peer exchanges in labs, conferences, and roundtables.

On the following pages, nine countries in which the CPS runs projects provide insights into their respective conflict-sensitive media work.



# Bolivia

### **Media Context**

Radio is the most prominent communication medium in Bolivia: Historically, it played an important role in the political processes of the country. On the one hand, in accompanying workers' struggles and resistance to totalitarian and military governments and, on the other hand, securing the political status quo and spreading propaganda. Hence, until today, it represents an important medium for information and collective mobilization during conflicts. During the past 15 years, community radio stations increased, largely with the support of the state. Today, there are approximately two hundred radio stations in the nine departments of the country today.

### **CPS Conflict-Sensitive Media Work**

In our area of intervention, most journalists have inherited the profession. That is why they adhere to rather classical and traditional journalistic styles and approaches, which tend to delay new developments in Bolivia's media environment. However, there is a high demand for participating in training processes. For this reason, the Fundación Instituto Radiofónico Fe y Alegría (IRFA) together with the Civil Peace Service (CPS) initiated processes with an institutional focus on Conflict-Sensitive Journalism (CSJ). The objective is to generate awareness about media as actor in conflicts and, therefore, as potential contributor to the configuration of possible peace scenarios. IRFA is a private non-profit organization founded in 1975 and affiliated to the Jesuits. It is the owner of Radio Santa Cruz, a radio station that provides alternative education together with popular communication in the realm of development projects, in urban and rural areas. It heads several regional community radio networks in the Bolivian lowlands with around 800.000 listeners. IRFA has three main tools at its disposal regarding its training focus:

Firstly, a virtual workshop series directed to journalists and communicators new to the field of CSM to reflect on

different issues that constitute it. Invited experts share practical insights into their work on specific topics such as "Information Search and Sourcing on Environmental Issues" in a dynamic virtual setting.

Secondly, the so-called Travelling Radio: For this activity, the staff of the Radio Santa Cruz travels to remote areas of Bolivia with portable radio equipment to get to the bottom of conflict-related social and environmental issues (e.g., illegal gold mining in nature reserves), which has been the subject of recent radio coverage. In the run-up to the trip, different analytic approaches such as Reflecting on Peace Practice and Do No Harm are applied to the conflict setting with different kinds of actors involved in the conflict and strategic alliances. These analyses and trustbuilding activities finally lead up to organized roundtable discussions about the conflict, which are transmitted via local radio stations and social media. The purpose is to generate an alternative reading of the underlying conflicts and to learn about alternative transformative solutions. Thirdly, there is the so-called Conflict-Sensitive Journalism Laboratory, a classroom event that is directed to those who would like to deepen their knowledge. Initially, the participants use a checklist developed by the CPS and IRFA to contrast the approaches of CSJ and conventional journalism. Then, they go out on the streets to investigate on different topics of their own choice. Back in the laboratory, they produce the content of their news coverage. At the end, they present their products in a plenary session, which are then evaluated based on the checklist. The results are published on IRFA's website and social media channels and/or transmitted via Radio Santa Cruz and local radio stations.

In the future, there will be two issues that will surely shape the work of the CPS Bolivia with respect to CSJ: The impact of digitalization on peacebuilding and the focus on gender as a transformative approach, as both have a direct effect on the work of journalists not only in Latin America, but all around the world.







The media landscape in Honduras is dominated by a few private sector players who are part of the Honduran oligarchy. Media monopolies restrict freedom of press and freedom of expression in the country. Journalists and communicators are in a precarious security situation, suffering attacks, threats, widespread censorship, repressive measures and criminalization. According to Reporters Without Borders, "the Honduran press has been in a slow descent into hell for more than a decade, following the 2009 coup d'état. The country remains one of the deadliest for journalism on the American continent".

For years, violence, polarization and social division within Honduran society have been on the rise and this situation is reflected in the media's reporting. The one-sided, limited and unbalanced media coverage contributes to the escalation of existing conflict lines in the country.

However, the alternative communication sector is growing stronger and offers transparent communication that raises awareness and promotes social change.

## **CPS Conflict-Sensitive Media Work**

With the aim of reducing polarization and encouraging a culture of dialogue and peace, the CPS supports media communicators and journalists to apply the conflict-sensitive journalism approach and to report in a comprehensive, transparent and balanced manner, focusing on examples of non-violent conflict management and dialogue processes.

The partners of the CPS are the Asociación de Medios Comunitarios de Honduras (AMCH), and especially social communicators from eight community radio stations of this association, which represents alternative media. On the other hand, CPS works with the Asociación de Prensa Hondureña (APH) and journalists and communicators, most of them working for commercial media. Additionally, the CPS promotes the creation of strategic alliances between both associations and other actors, as well as the strengthening of ties between community radio stations at the regional level.

Among the activities carried out with the partners are training workshops at local and regional level and exchanges of experiences and best practices on conflict-sensitive journalism. Communicators became aware that the fact of being in front of a media gives them the power to aggravate or reduce social conflict, depending on how these issues are dealt with. Instead of focusing on one side, they seek the voice of all actors involved in a conflict. They use precise language, explain background and investigate causes and consequences of a conflict.

In addition, the CPS accompanies the construction of a gender radio programme, the participatory elaboration of security protocols for community radio stations and codes of ethics. Among other activities, it also supports the development of meetings of the AMCH Board of Directors and General Assembly and provided legal assistance to obtain legal status for AMCH and four community radio stations, which greatly contributes to the strengthening and consolidation of the association.







Media in Kenya is clustered in three categories, the public, private/commercial and community media. It is licensed by the Communication Authority and regulated by Media Council of Kenya who accredit media houses and journalists including content creators. It has more than 90 radio stations, over 50 free to air TV stations and over 10 print newspapers. Radio remains the most used media in Kenya. With the rising number of social media platforms, reports indicate there are about 8.8million social media users in Kenya. There have been incidences of disinformation and misinformation on social media platforms.

Credible associations and support groups in the media industry have been vocal in advocating for press freedom, safety and security of journalists by engaging with the government and media owners.

### **CPS Conflict-Sensitive Media Work**

Since 2016, GIZ -CPS has been working with media in the field of conflict-sensitive journalism and conflict transformation. The programme collaborates with partners through community radios, artists and theatre groups who acts as conflict moderators to inform and educate the community members and stakeholders.

The programme has been using several approaches to reach its target groups. Journalists and other media professionals have been trained on conflict-sensitive reporting, non-violent communication, fact-checking, multi-media story telling etc. Creative writing workshops for community radio journalists and theatre groups have been held to produce content on radio dramas that reflects on peace, IDPs, MHPSS, dialogue, conflict transformation etc. feature stories, talk shows and campaign peace messages are also produced. The Community Radios have been engaging directly with their audiences to build rapport and trust in activities such as sports and commemorating special events such as World Radio Day, World Press Freedom Day, World Refugee Day & International Day of Peace. Specialized in-house trainings, workshops on content production and organizational development have been held for new community radio stations and those that request for support.

Our partners are working with local artists to nurture their talents by performing street theatre shows such as Participatory Educational Theatre (PET) and puppetry. They also do mural painting to promote peaceful coexistence among communities.

The program intends to broaden its media scope by creating synergies within existing partners and networking with other potential partners in the media & arts field.



Mural painting used as a tool to promote peaceful co-existence among the communities living in Mukuru







The media landscape is constantly changing. It has never been easier than nowadays to produce and disseminate news and information. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or TikTok are only a few of the channels where original messages get simplified, as details get lost or distorted along the way and where information can be spread without verification. False reports, hate speech and rumors can spread widely and cause harm, especially in fragile environments and conflict settings. Whether maliciously spread or emerging spontaneously, hate speech and rumors can trigger unnecessary violent reactions. Longstanding work of trust- and peacebuilding can be eliminated, sometimes within minutes, when a hoax goes viral on social media. Hate speech, xenophobia and racism also prevail in Lebanese media coverage.

### **CPS Conflict-Sensitive Media Work**

CPS Lebanon aims at sensibilizing and strengthening awareness of stereotypes by showing alternative narrative methods. In cooperation with our partner organizations, we are aiming at creating a counterbalance to the present coverage and the prevalent public image of Syrian refugees and other marginalized groups in Lebanon.

One of our partner organizations in this field is SHiFT that founded the Shadda Media Lab in 2019. Located in Libanon's northern city Tripoli, the media lab provides a creative safe space. Young people from socially deprived areas receive trainings on topics such as non-violent communication and sharing their own narrative through a conflict-sensitive lens and language. Jointly, they develop a set of different storytelling formats for social media and create stories from their communities, promoting freedom of speech, countering hate speech, reducing stereotypes and devitalizing prejudices.

Together with our PO Jibal, we work on stories related to migration. As part of our storytelling training, we ask guiding questions such as: 'How can migration topics be portrayed in a conflict-sensitive way, without reinforcing prevalent stereotypes or unintentionally fostering discrimination? How can I as a journalist or someone working with refugees, detect my potentially existing blind spots, to do no harm when reporting on migration?' The project brings together participants from the fields of journalism and people from civil society organizations who are working with refugees and migration in different ways. Through self-reflection, critical media analysis and sharing experiences the participants learn to produce conflictsensitive content to prevent reproducing stereotypes. As part of the project, Jibal also prepared a publication "New routes to narrating migration" which builds on interviews made with journalists, researchers, civil society activists and other storytellers working in Lebanon and elsewhere, all of whom at some point participated in one of the workshops. The publication also profits from knowledge created in our workshops on the topic of migration, including takeaways from numerous discussions, reflections, and shared experiences.

Trainings and workshops help reduce stereotypes in the communities we work in. For example, in the Shadda Media Lab, participants created platforms and became strong content creators using the knowledge they gained in the trainings. Issues such as fear and prejudice are addressed among the target groups that CPS Lebanon works with. Through capacity building, youth from marginalized areas are also empowered to share their own narratives.







In Nepal, CPS cooperates with local partners that build structures for cooperation and dialogue across lines of conflict and create safe spaces where parties of a conflict can meet. CPS also strengthens information and communication structures that trace the causes and consequences of violent conflict and provides assistance to groups that are particularly affected by violence and ease their re-integration into society. The aim of the project 'Systematic strengthening and linking of local and national potentials for peace in a post-conflict phase' is to create spaces for nonviolent conflict transformation on the local level and to contribute to a constructive and holistic 'dealing with the past'.

### **CPS Conflict-Sensitive Media Work**

Due to a vast multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural environment in Nepal, a strong need for context- and conflict-sensitive media has been identified to strengthen social cohesion and prevent conflict. Prevailing inequality, poverty, economic crisis and unemployment lead to societal challenges and marginalization of vulnerable groups. Since 2022, CPS Nepal has been working in the field of conflict-sensitive media (CSM). A baseline study was conducted to analyze the content and provide a reflection of journalistic practices. The results showed that media professionals are self-critical about their understanding of CSM. They stress the need to improve conflict sensitivity among journalists and other mass communicators, criticizing a lack of capacity building and institutional efforts to improve conflict-sensitive reporting. There is potential to improve application of journalist ethics, context-analysis and in-depth reporting on grassroots initiatives and human rights issues to empower the community.

The media landscape has changed due to digitization and

media houses are lagging behind when it comes to adopting technologies. Journalism outside of mainstream media or alternative content creation is largely rejected by media professionals but is gaining public attention.

The aim of implementing a conflict-sensitive Media approach is to foster cooperation between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) journalists, media institutions, and academics to promote and institutionalize CSM and to establish a sustainable community of practice for exchange of knowledge, reflection of work and sharing experiences. Further, the goal is to capacitate partner organizations and their networks to reflect on their communication strategies and their individual behavior online. Strengthening CPS partners and peace actors, supports them to take preventative measures and fosters resilience against digital threats by improving media literacy and the ability to identify mis- and disinformation, and to increase awareness towards online security.

CPS implements, among others, the following activities:

- Capacity building through a hybrid long-term education program for and with media professionals, content creators, multipliers, and educators.
- Training CPS Nepal partner organizations in conflict-sensitive communication, public relations and media work, including digital literacy and online security, knowledge management related to CSM, and development of training material.
- Providing the framework and support for establishing a sustainable and locally owned Community of Practice in conflict-sensitive media production.







The Palestinian territories are geographically, politically and institutionally fragmented into the West Bank (Areas A, B and C), East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. The Israeli occupation has created a divided and discorded Palestinian society. It is one of the longest-running crises in the world. More than 1.5 million Palestinian refugees live in refugee camps Being refugees, they are socially isolated and stigmatized. They have no civil rights and are subject to systematic discrimination.

The youth represent about 30% of the Palestinian population. Given the high level of unemployment, poverty and often daily experiences violence, these young people are growing up without prospects.

Persistent misrepresentation and disinformation are entrenched in the ways Palestinians are homogenized. Media narratives tend to omit the harsh reality of the occupation. Simultaneously, it is common to see other orientalist representations, which emphasize images of Palestinians as helpless, poor, inferior, dirty, or exotic. These illustrations and discourses contribute to the injustices experienced across different Palestinian communities, be it those living under occupation or in exile and diaspora. News media portrays Palestinians as being victims and passive recipients. On the other hand, is the image of a Palestinian fighter, covering his face with a Kuffiyeh — an image that has a home in most large media outlets.

Together with Palestinian partner community-based organizations, the Civil Peace Service (CPS) supports young Palestinians in refugee camps and marginalized areas to tackle inner-societal conflict and violence rooted in the long-lasting occupation and its consequences. CPS and partners create safe spaces for youth, give psycho-social

support and initiate and maintain contacts across geographical and societal borders. Using alternative forms of expression through arts, culture and sports CPS promotes prospects of a life free from violence.

### **CPS Conflict-Sensitive Media Work**

Since 2019, adolescent participants of the CPS media project from different socio-geographical areas (refugee camps, villages and cities within West Bank including East Jerusalem and Gaza strip) learn to view their surroundings through the lens of a camera, to use photo-videography techniques, and tell their stories in exhibitions and on digital media.

Monthly meetings, joint photography field trips and summer camps allow young people to explore communities other than their home community and continuously engage in exchange about challenging experiences in marginalized areas. While practicing and producing short videos and photo projects, young people find a voice to communicate their perspectives, to represent themselves and tell their own story for a positive social change.

How does this impact youth and partners? Youth is breaking down prejudices and stereotypes within Palestinian communities.

Media trainees present positive stories through local and international photo exhibitions. They express thoughts and share concerns in a non-violent and creative way. Young Palestinians are preserving and investing in the knowledge of their culture, and express own ideas about cultural identity.

CPS partner organizations enhance the capacity to improve their communication and visibility.







The southern Philippines' Mindanao is considered the least developed and structurally fragile region in the country. Factors such as unequal distribution of land and resources, forced internal displacement, discrimination, and marginalization contribute to multiple violent conflicts. Media has a significant impact on public opinion and exacerbates political and social polarization. Despite extremely high social media usage, there is a lack of media literacy, increasing vulnerability to misinformation and disinformation, particularly among young people. Internet accessibility is limited to urban areas, creating a digital divide with traditional media, especially radio, still being the primary source of information in remote regions. Press freedom and spaces for civil society are severely restricted, with journalists and activists facing a precarious security situation, especially in Mindanao due to the sensitive nature of the topics.

## **CPS Conflict-Sensitive Media Work**

The conflict-sensitive media (CSM) component of CPS Philippines addresses several social divides, including the lack of cultural and conflict sensitivity in media institutions, poor representation of marginalized groups, shrinking spaces for civil society, and the digital divide.

Misinformation and disinformation further intensify conflict lines in the region. Through activities promoting conflict-sensitive approaches, CPS Philippines aims to increase awareness among journalists, media professionals, and online influencers about their impact on conflict and social cohesion, to empower them to support civil society actors in countering exclusion, discrimination, and shrinking spaces; and at the same time, supporting media professionals against intimidation and attacks on press freedom.

CPS Philippines also seeks to enhance inclusive media and increase the participation of socially dis-advantaged groups

in political decision-making processes, recognizing the importance of both traditional and social media. For capacity building in media literacy and resilience, e.g., learning to target and report dis-/misinformation, fact-checking or countering hate speech, CPS Philippines collaborates with training institutions and civil society stakeholders.

Recent activities of the CSM component include:

- Implementation of long-term training program on conflict-sensitive media creation
- Formation of a self-supportive "Community of Media Practice"; implementation of their CSJcommunity project, including radio programs, mobile journalism, participatory filmmaking, and e-talk shows
- Collaboration with media and civil society organizations for projects targeting youth, civil society, indigenous groups, and media practitioners in Mindanao

As CPS Philippines plans to expand its media work in the upcoming program cycle, targeted and effective interventions will consider the rapid changing nature of media, investigate on the potentials of social media in peacebuilding, and explore nexus projects between media and internal displacement, gender in peacebuilding, or transitional justice.

Summarizing, it can be said, that CPS media work in the Philippines is guided by a holistic approach that recognizes the complex challenges and contributions to the creation of conflict lines within the media landscape. By incorporating conflict-sensitive media creation, promoting media literacy, and empowering marginalized groups through collaborative efforts, CPS Philippines strives to foster a more inclusive, informed society and seeks to create a media environment that opens opportunities for informed political participation.







The Civil Peace Service has been actively promoting peace in Uganda since 1999 in the North-Eastern Acholi, Karamoja and Teso Sub-regions.

All these regions have experienced violent conflicts about land ownership and natural resources. In a participatory approach, the GIZ Civil Peace Service supports and coordinates twelve Interest Groups and one national partner organization to jointly work on different types and dynamics of land conflicts. Our 150 partners represent civil society, government, academia, cultural and spiritual leaders and media. Together, we expand on methods in non-violent conflict transformation and access to information on land management and protection of land rights.

Uganda's media serves a population of 50 million people in 2023 and plays a significant role in peace-building efforts – especially in rural areas. Hundreds of (mostly independent) media houses make it one of the more vibrant media landscapes in the region. While online media is experiencing rapid growth, it is important to note that the majority of Ugandan audiences in rural areas rely on radio as their primary source of information. This presents an opportunity for GIZ Civil Peace Service to actively disseminate information and rights and responsibilities, promote dialogue, and foster understanding among different communities.

### **CPS Conflict-Sensitive Media Work**

CPS conflict-sensitive media work in Uganda focuses on strengthening peace-building efforts through creative and conflict-sensitive approaches. This involves supporting our Interest Groups by employing various methods such as campaigns, radio dramas and talk shows, audio documentaries, songs, and information materials to promote conflict transformation.

Our recent radio documentary and talk show "Land Matters" amplifies voices from the community to share their stories on conflicts over natural resources such as mining, cattle raiding and women's land rights. Interest Group members then discuss these issues drawing attention to rights and responsibilities.

Aside from radio, we develop materials that provide relevant and applicable peace-building methods tailored to the specific context. The Land Management Guidebook and Mediation Handbook are examples for this. Furthermore, we offer capacity-building opportunities for key partners, providing media trainings and support in digitalizing communication needs.



Mobile radio to reach rural communities





## Rwanda – Burundi – Democratic Republic of Congo

### **Media Context**

In Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) the importance of media, especially radio being the most popular and widely used one in the three countries, has been increasing. In Rwanda, in 1994, the role played by the Radio-Télévision des Mille Collines (RTLM) was overwhelmingly negative due to its contribution in the genocide against the Tutsi. RTLM served as a propaganda tool and was used by Hutu extremists to spread ethnic hatred and to incite the Hutu majority to perpetrate the massacre against the Tutsi minority. One the other hand, there are two positive examples. The first one being the availability of information during the first and second Congo war in 1996 and 1998 which was vital for people who fled to the mountains where there was no connection with the outside world. The other one is the role that Burundian media played in contributing to the peace process or even to reconciliation in 1993, after the assassination of President Melchior Ndadaye that led to a political crisis, followed by ethnic violence in which 300,000 lives were lost and thousands became refugees or internally displaced people. Among the initiatives targeting the grassroots level, there were radio programmes oriented at promoting reconciliation through open discussions on the root causes of the Hutu-Tutsi conflict.

### **CPS Conflict-Sensitive Media Work**

The CPS in Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC implements a regional program since 2019, given the common history that the three countries share and with the aim of fostering social cohesion and peaceful coexistence of their inhabitants. In this way, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are encouraged to use dialogue spaces to deal constructively with differences, to work on existing social

conflicts and to reflect on how to deal with past experiences.

One of the topics that the CPS has been working on for over 7 years in the region is journalism, side through its partner Ejo Youth Echo (EYE), a Rwandan organization that encourages youth to become professional journalists and that produces content using the conflict-sensitive journalism approach.

With the support of the CPS, Ejo Youth Echo implements several activities. Its oldest one is the production and airing of a radio show called "Ejo" that addresses topics related to human rights and conflicts. The newsroom behind this show is formed by young journalists who have received training and coaching from EYE on different topics related to the profession. The newsroom has collaborated with other media houses in DRC and Burundi to produce joint radio shows on themes that involve the society of the three countries. Additionally, EYE trains media clubs in secondary schools across Rwanda with the objective of educating on media literacy to inculcate the journalistic profession with young people. As a novelty, in 2022, EYE organized a workshop with female journalism students, in which they heard from women in leadership positions in media in Rwanda and reflected on strengths they have to make the media landscape in the country more gendersensitive and equal.

Furthermore, the CPS in Rwanda has a refugee component which EYE is part of. The organization works in three refugee camps as well as with the host communities to tackle issues causing tension trying to diminish them. In this sense, EYE supports a working group of refugee journalists and youth from the host communities in producing a magazine covering issues that concern them as





well as through training. Moreover, in the largest refugee camp of the country, they train a group of high school students who produce a newsletter with the aim of breaking down conflicts that arise at school as a result of rumors and prejudices surrounding refugees and host communities.

As complementary work to what the CSOs do on the ground, the CPS has a strong focus on strengthening their organizational development. In this sense the CPS advisors provide coaching, support and training on various themes such as peace project management, fundraising, leadership or external communications. For the latter one, some of the organizations, both in the regional and the refugee programs, have participated in workshops and brainstorming sessions organized by the CPS in which they learned how to develop a communication or social media strategy and basics of photography or storytelling, which they use for the promotion of their work towards the public, donors and government.

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