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### Report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund

## Peacebuilding Fund

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

Amid deteriorating political and security conditions, and against the backdrop of the continuing pandemic, the Peacebuilding Fund set records across nearly every benchmark in its current strategic plan, including record-high investments worth \$195,067,769 in 32 countries in 2021. Support to cross-border or regional programming of \$26.6 million, also a record high, signals growing recognition of the challenges of transboundary conflict factors to sustaining peace. Approval of \$51.1 million through the Fund's Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative, also a record, resulted in the Fund's historic high of approving 47 per cent of its total investments in support of gender-responsive peacebuilding. Recent investments in monitoring and evaluation have helped the Fund to more than double its evaluation coverage, from 36 project evaluations in 2020 to 86 in 2021. Donor partners generously responded to the appeal of the Secretary-General for increased financing for the Fund by contributing or pledging \$178,344,755 in 2021. The Fund's ability to meet growing peacebuilding demands, however, will require greater and sustained support.



## I. Introduction

1. The present report, covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2021, is the twelfth annual report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund submitted to the General Assembly pursuant to its resolution 63/282. It covers the second year of the Fund's 2020–2024 Strategy. The report will be complemented by a certified financial report issued by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office no later than 1 May 2022.<sup>1</sup>

## II. Global performance and lessons learned

2. The year began with the first high-level replenishment conference of the Peacebuilding Fund, which was co-chaired by the Secretary-General, the President of Sierra Leone, the Prime Minister of the Sudan and the Foreign Ministers of Canada and Germany. In response, throughout 2021, partners contributed or pledged a cumulative total of \$592 million towards the \$1.5 billion goal for the period 2020–2024.<sup>2</sup>

3. Building on the momentum, and in the midst of the pandemic, United Nations country teams and their partners advanced new programmes in 2021, amounting to a record-setting \$195.1 million in 32 countries. The Secretary-General approved the re-eligibility of Kyrgyzstan and the Niger to obtain access to the Fund on the basis of national priorities outlined by their Governments. In Kyrgyzstan, this includes support for the development of a cohesive civic identity to strengthen social cohesion, while the re-eligibility of the Niger supports conflict-sensitive management of natural resources and bolstering the resilience of communities affected by radicalization and violent extremism. In both locations, the Fund will help the Governments to reach across their borders and partner with neighbours to better tackle peacebuilding challenges that transcend national boundaries, such as climate-related security risks and illicit trafficking. To better capture the Fund's contribution to nationally set priorities, high-level strategic frameworks that will guide programming in coming years were launched in Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan and South Sudan.

4. The Fund's 2020–2024 Strategy established priority windows to promote the engagement of women and young people within peace and security agendas, encourage cross-border programmes and provide support to United Nations transition settings. Notably, for the fifth year running, the Fund exceeded its target of allocating 30 per cent of investments to gender-responsive initiatives by approving a record 47 per cent. This reflects gender sensitivity in the Fund's regular programming, boosted by its annual Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative, which yielded 38 projects totalling \$51.5 million in 2021, also a record. Civil society organizations were direct recipients, with 17 projects, the most direct funding to non-United Nations entities that the Fund has ever approved.

5. Recognizing that many conflict drivers transcend national borders, the Fund approved \$26.6 million towards cross-border programmes, amounting to 14 per cent of total financing in 2021. The Sahel region is a priority for these types of initiatives, where the Fund is recognized as an exemplary donor and supports roughly half of all cross-border programming under the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel. In the Liptako-Gourma cross-border region between Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, for example, Fund support will strengthen the development of grass-roots organizations. Another key region is Central America, where El Salvador, Guatemala

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<sup>1</sup> Detailed information can be found at [www.un.org/peacebuilding](http://www.un.org/peacebuilding). Complete information on individual projects is available at the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office Gateway, at <http://mptf.undp.org>.

<sup>2</sup> For more information on donor contributions, see [www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/contributions](http://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/contributions).

and Honduras have developed a joint strategy to strengthen national and regional mechanisms to reintegrate returning migrants and refugees and address violence.

6. Countries where United Nations field missions are planning to close or have departed within the past 10 years remain a priority. Against a target of 35 per cent, in 2021 the Fund approved 39 per cent of its financing to ease the transition from peacekeeping operations or special political missions to national counterparts and United Nations country teams. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, where the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) withdrew from Kasai, the Fund supports the establishment of a provincial truth and reconciliation commission through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The Sudan, another priority, saw new programmes approved on gender and environmental peacebuilding, as well as land access and the reintegration of displaced persons and refugees.

7. In addition to responding to the Strategy's priorities, the Fund addressed emerging trends. First, the Fund increased investment in preventing violence during elections. Projects through which peaceful elections were encouraged were undertaken or approved in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the Gambia, Haiti, Honduras, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Somalia and Uganda. They involved youth engagement, codes of conduct, the media, the participation of women and early warning systems. For example, in Uganda, a \$2.48 million project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and OHCHR contributed to lower levels of election-related violence in Rwenzori subregion in January 2021.

8. Second, financing for climate security and environmental peacebuilding has seen year-on-year growth in demand. The Peacebuilding Fund approach draws partners together to create joint solutions to these burgeoning challenges. For example, the development of new transhumance tracking tools to alert community members, nomads and local authorities to risks associated with livestock migration and farming cycles has helped to resolve hundreds of conflicts across Western and Central Africa, while mediation by local groups helps to prevent future violence. In Asia and the Pacific, the Fund assists island nations in jointly assessing and responding to shared climate risks that exacerbate vulnerabilities and heighten competition over shrinking land masses. Given that bolder solutions are needed to counter intensifying climate insecurity and environmental risks, the Fund will commission a thematic review of climate security and peacebuilding challenges in 2022, in collaboration with relevant United Nations partners and with generous support from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

9. Third, sustaining peace requires sustainable economic activity, and the Fund is pursuing new ways to facilitate peace positive investments in productive enterprises. In Colombia, for example, UNDP and the United Nations Environment Programme have teamed up to build the capacity of local organizations in conflict-affected areas to earn carbon credits that can be sold. In Burundi, the United Nations Capital Development Fund will work with the Government and private sources to finance renewable energy investments.

10. Fourth, the Fund's support to the Humanitarian-Development-Peacebuilding and Partnership Facility is helping the United Nations and the World Bank to work together to support national authorities in achieving milestones linked to increasing development assistance resources. In 2021, the Facility invested \$1.46 million to foster such collaboration in over 13 country settings.

11. Every year, the Fund undertakes up to two thematic reviews. In 2021, a thematic review of gender-responsive peacebuilding, commissioned in partnership with the

German Federal Foreign Office with support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), highlighted the need for core operational support to women's organizations and approaches that go beyond the participation of women in existing forums and processes. The findings of another thematic review, on local peacebuilding, implemented in partnership with the United Nations Volunteers programme and the PeaceNexus Foundation, will inform better ways to support local organizations and tailor peacebuilding efforts to local contexts.

12. Looking to the future, it is clear that peacebuilding cannot wait. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has diverted the world's attention while growing tensions, violence, coups and protests are witnessed in many settings. Consequently, the Fund is needed more than ever. Its work champions themes from the 2021 report of the Secretary-General, "Our Common Agenda" (A/75/982), including conflict prevention in all settings, increased intergenerational action and the renewing of social contracts. The Fund supports a new generation of United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks designed to integrate the prevention agenda. The strength of the Fund's performance in 2021, moreover, demonstrates that it can deliver even in the midst of crisis. The work of the United Nations financed by the Fund is necessary to ensure that, as the world emerges from the current health crisis, it does so in ways that reinforce more inclusive social, political and security foundations.

Table 1  
**Peacebuilding Fund decisions in 2021**

(United States dollars)

	2021 approvals		Total
	Immediate Response Facility	Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility	
Angola <sup>a</sup>	1 600 000.00	–	1 600 000.00
Burkina Faso	5 694 543.00	5 710 000.00	11 404 543.00
Burundi	3 000 000.00	4 475 749.00	7 475 749.00
Cameroon	1 500 000.00	4 562 043.40	6 062 043.40
Central African Republic	3 799 963.45	3 508 593.13	7 308 556.58
Chad	–	9 000 000.00	9 000 000.00
Colombia	3 650 000.00	3 000 000.00	6 650 000.00
Côte d'Ivoire	3 466 138.00	–	3 466 138.00
Democratic Republic of the Congo	4 496 564.00	3 000 000.00	7 496 564.00
El Salvador	1 500 000.00	–	1 500 000.00
Gambia	3 897 379.40	3 494 150.27	7 391 529.67
Guatemala	1 500 000.00	6 990 356.51	8 490 356.51
Guinea	4 205 499.00	2 610 890.76	6 816 389.76
Guinea-Bissau	2 906 693.69	3 343 349.82	6 250 043.51
Haiti	3 000 000.00	4 500 000.00	7 500 000.00
Honduras	3 000 000.00	–	3 000 000.00
Kenya	1 000 000.00	–	1 000 000.00
Kyrgyzstan	2 099 732.22	3 000 000.00	5 099 732.22
Liberia	1 200 000.00	5 401 591.00	6 601 591.00
Mali	3 850 000.00	4 500 000.00	8 350 000.00
Mauritania	1 500 000.00	1 479 494.00	2 979 494.00

	2021 approvals		
	Immediate Response Facility	Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility	Total
Niger	2 555 457.00	8 999 655.00	11 555 112.00
Papua New Guinea	3 000 000.00	–	3 000 000.00
Senegal	1 400 000.00	–	1 400 000.00
Sierra Leone	4 040 333.00	–	4 040 333.00
Solomon Islands	1 499 960.00	–	1 499 960.00
Somalia	2 285 000.05	7 000 000.33	9 285 000.38
South Sudan	2 787 745.00	13 845 896.72	16 633 641.72
Sri Lanka	3 000 000.00	–	3 000 000.00
Sudan	4 498 342.00	9 982 253.51	14 480 595.51
Uzbekistan <sup>a</sup>	1 500 000.00	–	1 500 000.00
United Nations	3 230 396.00	–	3 230 396.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>86 663 745.81</b>	<b>108 404 023.45</b>	<b>195 067 769.26</b>

Source: Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, January 2022.

Note: The table reflects funding decisions taken in 2021, not funds transferred.

<sup>a</sup> As a counterpart to a cross-border or regional project.

### III. Specific engagements of the Peacebuilding Fund

#### A. Central and Southern Africa

13. In Chad, following the death of the President, in April, a Transitional Military Council took power, supported by a civilian-led transition government, and committed itself to holding credible elections within 18 months. Amid the political transition, Fund investments helped to enhance trust among local communities and the State and reduce farmer-herder conflicts and violent extremism while encouraging more equitable and peaceful natural resources management. At the request of the Prime Minister, the Fund's catalytic support will enable an upcoming national dialogue, a key transition milestone, to be inclusive and meet international human rights standards. In N'Djamena, Bol and Mondou, a \$3.5 million project of OHCHR, UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) helped to establish three new legal offices that have already addressed nearly 100 requests for legal assistance linked to intercommunal conflicts. In eastern Chad, 198 conflicts over natural resources were resolved with joint committees of indigenous people, migrants and State authorities through a \$3.1 million investment implemented by WFP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In central Chad, 3,254 young people were made aware of risks associated with irregular migration, including increased vulnerability to recruitment by non-State armed groups in northern Chad and Libya, through a \$3.5 million project of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and WFP. Combined with vocational training, the project has created an enabling environment for dialogue and fostered confidence between young people and local authorities. In Lac and Hadjer Lamis Provinces, in a Fund-supported study on Boko Haram recruitment modalities, launched through a \$1.5 million initiative of UNDP and UNICEF, ways were identified in which future initiatives may prevent recruitment, especially among women and girls.

14. In the Central African Republic, the Fund supports the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation of 2019 by helping diverse communities to understand the Agreement and participate in its implementation. Through an \$800,000 initiative led by the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes, 1,000 young people joined prefectural implementation committees and local peace committees tasked with implementing the Agreement locally, while an awareness-raising campaign by UNFPA, UN-Women and the organization Search for Common Ground helped 41 per cent of the country to improve its understanding of the Agreement's commitments. Other Fund investments support communities in managing local conflicts. In Bambari, local communities reportedly felt safer in 2021 than in 2019, in part as a result of a \$2 million project of IOM that has helped to drive a 70 per cent reduction in security incidents since 2019. Women community mediators trained through the project contributed to the success by resolving 86 per cent of the conflicts brought to their attention. In Bossangoa, women-led organizations are encouraging more trustful relations by mediating between local communities and security units composed of armed forces, gendarmerie, police and former members of armed groups. While violence reduction is important, peace without justice is not sustainable. A \$4.5 million project of UNDP and UN-Women provided legal aid and psychosocial support to 11,431 victims of past violence, most of whom were women. The project also helped 11 new commissioners, 5 of whom were women, to join the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission.

15. Fund investments in stabilization initiatives in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are designed to support the MONUSCO transition plan, including rule of law efforts through which courts have rendered five convictions for crimes against humanity and war crimes. Fund investment is helping to reintegrate 486 ex-combatants through a labour-intensive community infrastructure rehabilitation project in Kasai, Kasai Central and Tanganyika benefiting whole communities with livelihood support, access to basic services and intercommunal dialogue. Additional investments in the same regions, including a \$3 million project of UNHCR, UNFPA and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) through which 24,612 children from displaced communities have obtained birth certificates, foster trust among ethnic groups and State institutions. In South Kivu, IOM supports over 300 women miners in two cooperatives to better manage their sites and defend their rights. Through the \$1.5 million initiative, the miners have joined two conflict-free mining supply chains that reinvest profits in local development efforts to benefit entire communities. Elsewhere, 33 women-led peace huts have resolved at least 47 conflicts, including those between Twa and Bantu farmers and herders. Since the project's inception, eight women have been named village or quartier chief, a sign of communities' recognition of their leadership.

16. On the border between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, cross-border trade and the reintegration of former armed group members is fostering increased community interaction and trust. Through a \$3 million effort, WFP trained 4,768 farmers in sustainable farming methods, which have been extended further through a network of 12 cooperatives reaching over 1,500 additional farmers through field schools established by FAO. A comprehensive package of support to ex-combatants through the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission provided health insurance and start-up capital for income-generating activities to more than 1,000 ex-combatants to facilitate their productive reintegration into communities.

17. In the Far North of Cameroon, a \$2.2 million initiative of UNFPA, IOM and FAO helps marginalized populations, including displaced communities, to cooperate and build trust with local authorities. Through the project, consultations ensured that communal development plans reflected the concerns of women and young people. The consultative process has become a model for 15 other communities. Elsewhere in the

Far North, through a World Health Organization and IOM project, the reduction of violence is promoted through inclusive health and social interventions to support marginalized populations. In the North-West and South-West Regions, 50 local community health providers, trained through a \$1.5 million UNFPA initiative, helped 202 survivors of gender-based violence with revenue-generating activities to support their recovery. In the East, Adamaoua and North Regions, a new transhumance tracking tool, developed through a \$2.5 million Fund investment, has begun to provide critical information on livestock movement to prevent intercommunal transhumance-related conflicts. In parallel, 15 village committees are addressing local tensions and developing communal activities promoting good agropastoral practices.

## **B. East Africa**

18. In Madagascar, the Fund has concentrated on improving security and promoting the socioeconomic autonomy and voice of young people and women in marginalized communities. In Betroka, a reduction in livestock theft and other crime has improved community perceptions of security following a \$3.5 million initiative of UNDP, IOM and UNFPA. Paired with income-generation assistance provided to more than 6,700 households and initiatives to improve access to justice and improve civil-military relations, the project has reduced vulnerability that leads to grievances. On the outskirts of Antananarivo, 316 young people have begun to develop business plans with guidance from 13 training centres, while other young people have joined local committees and are leading awareness-raising campaigns to encourage youth employment. In the northern regions of Diana and Sava, dialogue and early warning initiatives that are part of a \$1.5 million project of the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNICEF and UNFPA have reduced vanilla crop theft by 50 per cent, improving community perceptions of security and increasing youth participation in social dialogue and local peace initiatives. To address corruption that fosters criminality, a \$2 million effort of UNDP, OHCHR and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has enabled the Independent Anti-Corruption Bureau to open two new regional hubs to curb natural resources smuggling and other crimes, while a third hub will open in early 2022.

19. In Somalia, the Fund fosters trust and social cohesion among diverse groups, in particular with regard to elections. Projects managed by UNDP and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) contributed to the construction of the electoral dispute resolution mechanism building of the Federal Government and improved the capacity of the ad hoc Electoral Dispute Resolution Committee. To enhance electoral security, a joint initiative with the Folke Bernadotte Academy helped to establish women's situation desks in 13 Fund-supported Joint Operations Centres to address the specific electoral security concerns of women. Beyond elections, the organizations Life and Peace Institute and Somali Peace Line conducted over 630 community dialogues. The dialogues brought together young people, community members and clan elders in Baidoa, Jawhar and Caabudwaaq to jointly address community needs, including challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and foster supportive relations. Despite the gains, results were mixed following a \$2 million effort of UNICEF to reduce child recruitment by armed forces and armed groups, demonstrating how difficult the road to peace is after decades of conflict. While grave violations of children's rights continue to be a concern, the initiative managed to reach 861 former child soldiers or children at high risk, with only one reported case of recidivism. Important shifts in perception among Somali military actors, from viewing child soldiers as perpetrators to acknowledging them as victims, were another important achievement that resulted in the referral of more underage ex-combatants to children's services rather than prosecution.

20. In South Sudan, the Fund encourages inclusive peace through the empowerment, protection and effective participation of women and young people. In Aweil and Akobo, national authorities have established two one-stop centres to address gender-based violence through a \$3 million investment implemented by UNFPA. Through the centres, 303 survivors of gender-based violence and 27 survivors of child marriage have received confidential medical, psychosocial and legal support. Increased reporting of gender-based violence and other crimes following Fund-supported dialogues in 18 communities and 14 *payams* signals an increase in popular trust in police. The Fund further contributes to enhanced security for women through a \$4.5 million initiative of UNDP and UN-Women, through which 41 police-community relations committees, nearly half of whose members are women, provide more effective security. Moreover, in a turn away from violence, nine gangs in Wau pledged to cease hostilities and become agents of positive change at an event that they organized in July with support from a \$2.8 million Fund investment. Through the project, 210 young people have begun to produce and distribute soap and face masks to help to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

21. Despite recent political and security challenges in the Sudan, Fund support for the implementation of the Juba Agreement for Peace in the Sudan and local peacebuilding remained steadfast. The core of the Fund's approach is that of financing a comprehensive package of support in the five states of Darfur following the withdrawal of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. Many of the efforts involve community-based conflict resolution mechanisms. Throughout the five states, in places such as Jebel Moon, El Fasher, Yassin and Jebel Marra, the mechanisms are improving local security by resolving hundreds of conflicts over access to land and water and mediating sustainable agreements on future access between hostile groups such as nomads and pastoralists or between local administrations and displaced communities. The combined effect of the efforts has contributed to improved perceptions of security and has encouraged increasing numbers of displaced Sudanese to return home, as in Graidia, in South Darfur, where security improvements have been driven by a \$3.3 million initiative of UNHCR, UNDP and UNICEF through which new police stations have been built and law enforcement personnel have been trained. Construction of new health facilities that serve both nomadic and pastoralist communities and provision of legal aid are meeting the non-security needs of both host communities and returnees and promoting durable resettlement by reducing local tensions.

### C. West Africa

22. A hallmark of Fund investment in West Africa is initiatives that address transhumance conflict factors that transcend national boundaries. In the Liptako-Gourma region, consultation frameworks and the development of transhumance tracking tools successfully resolved about 50 per cent of the 331 conflicts referred to local authorities and community mechanisms in 2021. Thirteen new water points and other infrastructure will help to reduce future conflicts over shared resources. At the Mali-Mauritania border, through a \$3 million project implemented by FAO and IOM, another transhumance tracking tool generates information on cross-border dynamics and includes an early warning mechanism to reduce farmer-herder conflicts. At the Mali-Niger border, 69 per cent of local conflicts were reduced in five communes by integrating environmental protection into the work of local land commissions and by strengthening local capacities for environmental protection and conflict resolution. Beyond transhumance, an initiative across Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo supports young people and religious leaders in reinforcing community-level early warning capacities and preventing recruitment by violent extremist groups.



23. In Mauritania, Fund investments protect and promote the rights of women and young people and build the capacity of local authorities to offset inequalities, prevent violent extremism and reduce intercommunal conflicts. In 2021, UNESCO and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) launched a national campaign to encourage the participation of women in the justice, security and defence professions, while an action plan to make prisons more gender-sensitive was approved and will be implemented in 2022. In the Karakoro basin, a regional dialogue and an early warning platform were established with local authorities to prevent intercommunal conflicts through a \$1.5 million project implemented by WFP and FAO. Elsewhere, village committees now include women, young people and refugees, which provides more holistic responses to conflict prevention.

24. In 2021, deteriorating security conditions and eroding political consensus in Burkina Faso underscored the strategic importance of Fund investments. Fund-supported mobile courts heard 780 civil and criminal cases and issued 2,500 new certificates of nationality, while legal assistance systems in five penitentiaries ensured that all defendants had access to legal advice. Through a \$1.5 million project of IOM and UNHCR, 100 microprojects launched by young people and women through a participatory process in Kaya, Dori, Barsologo and Gorom-Gorom have strengthened social cohesion between host communities and displaced persons. In the North and Sahel regions, 150 early warning mechanisms hosted 123 community dialogues to reduce tensions, while in the East and Central East regions, 10 community conflict management observatories have been established or revitalized. Women-led community action committees in Kaya, Boussouma, Kongoussi and Sabsé facilitated reconciliation between Sanrgho and Nienega-Foulbé villages in the Centre-North after more than a year of conflict. The committees also supported 100 women from host and displaced communities in Koulogo in reactivating traditional peace and social cohesion mechanisms that had all but disappeared.

25. In Guinea, the Fund's approach to social cohesion through inclusive dialogue and conflict resolution, coupled with economic opportunities for at-risk groups, remained relevant following a coup d'état in September. In areas marked by high levels of insecurity, community-based violence decreased by 14 per cent, while women's sense of public security grew by 11.5 per cent, attributable in part to interventions by 800 women leaders funded through a \$1.1 million project of UNDP and UNICEF. In other areas, a \$1.25 million project of UNFPA, IOM and UNDP has helped to improve community security by supporting young taxi drivers in turning away from past engagement in electoral violence and becoming agents of positive change in their communities. In Guinée Forestière, with support from UNDP and Search for Common Ground, over 350 conflicts were referred to Fund-supported local early warning and conflict resolution mechanisms that bring together community members and authorities. The initiative is part of a package of support in Guinée Forestière that fosters greater collaboration between communities and improved relations with security forces.

26. To promote a participatory constitutional reform process in Guinea-Bissau, the National People's Assembly, with support from UNDP, UNFPA and WFP, launched a public information campaign to heighten awareness of the issues and increase space for broad citizen participation. At the same time, the Women's Jurists Association held consultations across the country to provide citizens with a voice regarding the importance of mainstreaming gender into the revised version of the Constitution. To bolster the role of civil society in the reform process, more than 25 organizations have established a consultation space for civil society organizations to monitor governmental initiatives on health, education, governance and legislation. Addressing long-standing issues of corruption, the National People's Assembly was presented with the country's first national strategy to fight corruption, developed with support

from a \$2 million project of UNODC, UNDP and IOM. The project also helped to create local cross-border protection structures to monitor human trafficking while increasing the investigative and operational capacity of the gendarmerie, the judiciary police and the national guard to prosecute offences. To help to develop the skills of future leaders, the country's first Leadership Academy launched leadership courses in 2021 with support from UNDP, UNFPA and WFP. Moreover, 73 per cent of participants in an initiative led by the organization Interpeace have become involved in formal and traditional decision-making institutions, which has helped to improve their relationship with local authorities.

27. In Togo, where Fund support is aimed at reducing the risks of violent extremism, hundreds of young people and traditional, religious and formal State authorities established intergenerational trust charters in target prefectures to systematically involve young people in local decision-making and the development of community development plans. The charters are part of a comprehensive approach to address the needs of young people that includes support for 23 youth-led income-generation projects through a \$2.4 million project implemented by UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF.

28. Despite coup-related insecurity, Fund investment in Mali helped to ensure the establishment and operation of much-needed legal infrastructure related to human rights and land-based conflict. Through a joint effort of OHCHR, UN-Women, UNDP and Interpeace, 46 land-related disputes in central Mali were resolved through mediation by newly established Fund-supported land commissions. Other aspects of Fund investment in Mali have supported reducing social and political exclusion that leads to grievances and fuels conflict. Following an initiative of FAO, UNDP and UN-Women to support more youth-responsive local development plans, 83 per cent of young people in six communities in central Mali reported satisfaction with their improved socioeconomic conditions. At the policy level, a national youth policy was drafted and validated at a national youth conference through a partnership between the Ministry of Youth, Sports, Civic Education and Citizenry Construction, UNICEF and Search for Common Ground. The policy is aimed at fostering trust among national and local leaders, authorities and young people through a broader institutionalized approach.

29. A cornerstone of the Fund's investment in Liberia has been advancing the leadership and engagement of women as a key aspect of sustaining peace. A \$1.5 million initiative of UN-Women and OHCHR helped to strengthen accountability mechanisms of the Government's national action plan on women and peace and security and produced a Government-endorsed innovative finance strategy to implement the plan. At the same time, a \$1.3 million project implemented by the organization ZOA supports 2,000 women and 2,000 young women and men to monitor indicators of violence through women's situation rooms, through which 530 cases have been addressed, including 20 cases of election-related violence in the lead-up to a November 2021 by-election. In addition to fostering the empowerment of women, a \$4 million investment through UNDP, UN-Women and WFP promotes better dialogue between local communities and extractive industries and supports community access to land. Through the project, Nimba Rubber Incorporated has compensated communities affected by the rubber industry through educational and livelihood support. Three environmental and social impact studies will lead to a greater understanding of the environmental impact of mining and other extractive industries in Nimba, Cape Mount and Sinoe Counties. To promote better conditions at the outset of contracting, 208 early warning monitors have been deployed to counties in Liberia and will play an important accountability function by monitoring the implementation of concession contracts.

30. In Sierra Leone, the Fund combines dispute resolution at the local level with support for livelihoods to encourage community-driven solutions that engage young

people in decision-making and conflict prevention. In Moyamba and Pujehun districts, thus far, 26 of 78 disputes between communities and private companies have been resolved through Fund-supported grievance redress committees. Through the same initiative of WFP and UNDP, the repair of irrigation canals by 3,600 young people has reduced tensions between farmers' associations and private companies, resulting in no instances of violence since the repairs were made. In Tonkolili and Pujehun districts, a \$1.4 million project of the organization Cordaid has helped community-based dispute resolution mechanisms to be more inclusive of young people. Youth empowerment has been reinforced by a \$3 million project of FAO, UNDP and UNFPA through which 418 young people at risk of gang recruitment have joined local decision-making mechanisms, have been provided support through socioeconomic opportunities and have been encouraged to work with authorities to devise better initiatives for youth engagement and reintegration.

31. In Côte d'Ivoire, where the Fund backs local efforts to repair past injustices and reduce intercommunal tensions, local authorities are turning increasingly to 175 women mediators trained through 12 women-led conflict prevention platforms that were established through a \$3.7 million project implemented by UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP and UNESCO. In border areas near Liberia, networks of local peace committees and civil-military cells have resolved more than 360 conflicts and promoted intercommunal trust through dialogue and electoral violence prevention campaigns. Through a UNDP-implemented project, 800 ex-combatants have been reintegrated into their communities, in which they serve as firefighters, forest rangers and prison guards. In western Côte d'Ivoire, young people are leading intercultural dialogues to protect forests as sacred spaces and to reduce conflict associated with their illegal exploitation. Through the efforts, implemented by UNDP and UNESCO through a \$1.5 million project, young people are establishing sustainable livelihoods, such as eco-friendly tourism and tree nurseries. Investment in human rights mechanisms through a \$2.6 million project of UNDP and FAO has helped to reform the National Council on Human Rights and establish 31 regional offices throughout the country, accelerating hearings for 452 delayed criminal cases and advancing reconciliation through 21 community-based reparation projects. Through the reparation projects, long-standing grievances of conflict-affected communities are being addressed through the improvement of access to essential services, such as water and health care.

32. The Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission in the Gambia, which enjoys a 90 per cent public approval rating, according to a 2021 survey, completed its three-year mandate. It submitted a 17-volume final report to the President in November 2021, which was made public on 24 December. During its tenure, the Commission held 23 public hearings and received more than 2,500 statements with support from a \$4.7 million project implemented by UNDP and OHCHR. In 2022, the Fund will support the Government in implementing the Commission's recommendations, and it welcomes the Government's commitment to transparent and responsive justice. In the lead-up to the 2021 presidential election, a \$2.2 million project of UNFPA, UNDP and UNESCO established youth-led early warning response centres, while a \$1.6 million effort of UNDP and UNICEF supported inter-party dialogue. A national stakeholders' forum organized by the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel and Inter-Party Committee of the Gambia included high-level participation from the Office, the Economic Community of West African States and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. During the forum, 18 political parties signed a pledge for peaceful elections free of hate speech. Other Fund investments are aimed at addressing mental health and security needs. As Gambians displaced by previous hardships return home, a \$2.3 million project of IOM, the International Trade Centre and UNFPA has enabled 1,700 people to gain access to mental health support and provided space for dialogue between

returnees and host communities to reduce the stigma of return. A \$1.6 million project of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA has increased the reporting of incidents of sexual and gender-based violence by 82 per cent compared with in 2020.

#### **D. Latin America and the Caribbean**

33. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, a \$3 million Fund investment launched by OHCHR, UNDP and UN-Women in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided critical support for a peaceful and democratic transition. In support of elections in 2020 and 2021, and together with the Plurinational Electoral Organ, the Fund helped to facilitate 370 electoral dialogues that reached 13,700 people, including representatives of political parties, women, young people, indigenous peoples and civil society organizations. Other aspects of the Fund's approach bolstered human and gender equality through independent human rights monitoring led by four national civil society organizations and technical assistance provided to State entities, including with regard to the prevention of violence against women, the promotion of the participation of women in political life and support for the peacebuilding efforts of rural indigenous women leaders.

34. In Colombia, the Fund supports the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace of 2016 and was among the top five donors to nationally led peace efforts in 2021. In one flagship pilot project, innovative finance initiatives have been tested to leverage additional investments for peace. Following the Fund's initial \$3 million investment in relation to the reintegration of ex-combatants, an additional \$13.2 million in private sector investment has been leveraged to improve the socioeconomic conditions of 4,500 ex-combatants, victims and community members in conflict-affected areas. To promote a more inclusive peace, a \$1.1 million initiative led by the organization Christian Aid Ireland documented 11 strategic cases that were presented to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace to recognize the rights of women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer victims of the armed conflict.

35. In Guatemala, the digitization of 2.9 million documents from the historical archive of the National Police, implemented through a \$4 million project of UNDP, has made essential information on past violations available to judicial institutions and 2,700 victims of grave rights violations committed during the internal armed conflict. Through the project, eight cases of grave rights violations have been initiated following the provision of technical and legal advice and psychosocial support to nearly 2,000 relatives of victims and witnesses. To end the cycle of violence, the Ministry of Education incorporated transitional justice, historical memory and peace education into social studies within academia on a pilot basis. Through a \$1.5 million investment, UNODC, ILO and UN-Women supported the equal participation of indigenous women leaders, with 25 project beneficiaries becoming members of local electoral councils and 92 indigenous women leaders working to curb hate speech and violence against women in three regions. To meet the needs of returning migrants, local governments have supported the start-up of 68 youth-led enterprises through a \$1.5 million project implemented by FAO, IOM and UNESCO.

36. In the run-up to elections in Honduras, a \$3 million project implemented by OHCHR, UNDP and UN-Women led to the establishment of two technical forums, composed of actors from government, the international community and civil society, to resolve electoral disputes. The project advanced gender sensitivity, securing the accreditation of 25 transgender women as electoral observers and provisions that promoted the equal participation of women under a new election law. Elsewhere, more than 3,000 community and family conflicts were defused by 30 community leaders through a \$1.5 million project implemented by UNICEF and Fundación

Nacional para el Desarrollo de Honduras, through which nine private companies provided training and seed financing of women-led small enterprises to address root causes of gender-based violence.

37. In Haiti, the assassination of the President, as well as a powerful earthquake, challenged the country's stability and further delayed already overdue elections. Nonetheless, the Electoral Violence Prevention and Management Unit, established by the Provisional Electoral Council, launched a prevention strategy to curb electoral and political violence, including against women, through a \$1.5 million Fund investment of UNDP and UN-Women. To address community violence reduction amid increasing gang violence, community-level platforms in 11 Cité Soleil neighbourhoods were established through a \$1.5 million project implemented by the organization Concern Worldwide, while local mediation cells promoted ceasefires between armed gangs and local dialogue through an initiative of UNOPS, UNDP and UNFPA. In the future, a new national legal assistance council and associated offices in 18 jurisdictions will provide legal aid to vulnerable populations while strengthening coordination between judicial actors and the penal system.

## **E. Asia and the Pacific**

38. The Pacific atoll nations of Kiribati, the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu jointly analysed climate security risks and validated priorities with local communities through a Fund-supported initiative implemented by UNDP and IOM. After regional governments and technical experts endorse priorities, each nation will develop climate profiles and risk assessments and integrate climate security into national adaptation plans through a cross-governmental approach to ensure regional coordination.

39. In Solomon Islands, a \$1.7 million project implemented by UNDP and ILO helped to incorporate 20 youth caucuses established by 500 young people from marginalized communities nationwide into the National Youth Congress. The engagement of young people with local authorities through the caucuses has shown tribal and church leaders the effectiveness of young women and men in addressing local grievances and sustaining peace. The results complement the work of more than 200 rural women who have formally submitted more than 50 recommendations relating to the revision of the Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill with support from a \$2.7 million project of UNDP and UN-Women.

40. In Papua New Guinea, the promotion of continuing dialogue between the national Government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government in the context of implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement frames the Fund's approach. In 2021, three joint post-referendum consultation meetings between the two governments were held through Fund support and with the United Nations as Chair. Significant progress was made, including agreement on a road map for the future of the process with a goal of reaching a settlement on the political future of Bougainville between 2025 and 2027. In addition, the Bougainville Transition Dialogues brought clarity and reassurance regarding the process to 6,552 people, including young people, ex-combatants, chiefs and church representatives. In the Highlands region, a \$4 million project of UNDP, IOM, UNFPA and UN-Women supports seven local communities and leaders in developing community peace and development plans through processes that include women, young people, older persons and persons with disabilities. Following earlier Fund-supported, women-led mediation efforts, communities in Hela and Southern Highlands provinces received conflict sensitivity training and have launched sustainable community-driven development initiatives. Through the project, 70 women participated in the inaugural Hela Women's Forum, which resulted in a peace and stability action plan and a pledge by the Provincial Governor to include women in future mediation.

41. The Fund's portfolio in Sri Lanka addresses religious tensions and conflict risks at the local level. Through a \$1.5 million project implemented by UN-Women and UNOPS, 45 village development plans to reduce intercommunal tensions related to environmental risks were developed in partnership with young people and women. In districts affected by the Easter Sunday attacks in 2019, 111 young women from diverse religious backgrounds implemented peacebuilding initiatives and established partnerships with local authorities, improving communities' perceptions of the role of women in conflict prevention. Through a \$1.5 million project of UNOPS and OHCHR, grass-roots organizations, human rights defenders and artists have undergone legal aid training and, through a strengthened relationship with the Legal Aid Commission and the Bar Association of Sri Lanka, will be better able to support dialogue, mediation and human rights.

42. The combined impact of a military takeover in Myanmar in February, existing pandemic-related challenges, an economic downturn and the emergence of several armed groups dramatically reduced the space for peacebuilding. Nevertheless, local efforts continued. In Magway Region and Mon State, 36 young people from diverse cultural backgrounds worked to debunk harmful misconceptions related to human rights, gender equality and conflict resolution through training sessions that reached 770 community members. Across Mon, Kayin, Rakhine and Mandalay States, women undertook conflict-mapping exercises and designed local peacebuilding initiatives to address immediate local challenges. In addition, 3,342 young people trained in digital literacy and critical assessment of discriminatory or hateful online content piloted the first Burmese-language algorithm through which 11,000 instances of hate speech have already been removed from the Internet.

43. In the Philippines, a \$3 million project implemented by IOM, UNFPA and UN-Women is aimed at reintegrating fighters from the Bangsamoro Islamic Women's Auxiliary Brigade and building community resilience, mediation and security efforts. Through the project, 200 demobilized Brigade members trained as gender and peace champions led community discussions on drivers of conflict and peacebuilding opportunities in 80 local communities. In the Datu Saudi Ampatuan and South Upi areas, 13 of 15 communities with security monitoring mechanisms jointly operated by security forces, local governments and communities reported increased conflict-sensitive peacekeeping by local forces. The project also supported 17 municipal governments in the same region in embedding women and peace and security priorities into their local gender and development plans.

## **F. Europe and Central Asia**

44. Recent Fund engagement in Kyrgyzstan supported national efforts to prevent violent extremism, in coordination with the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. A \$3 million project of UNICEF, OHCHR, UN-Women and UNDP helped to revise the legal and policy frameworks of Kyrgyzstan on prevention of violent extremism to be human rights-compliant, gender-sensitive and socially inclusive. The project strengthened the capacities of law enforcement and judicial institutions in accordance with international human rights standards and included direct legal assistance on 191 cases and advice on an additional 1,377. In parallel, a \$1.7 million project of UNODC and UNDP supported national efforts to institutionalize probation services for offenders convicted of violent extremism and facilitated their social reintegration. The project resulted in a 20 per cent reduction in incarcerations, with up to 500 persons benefiting from recently established probation and reintegration services and 527 sentences being revised on the basis of a new Fund-supported amnesty law. Through a \$2.6 million project implemented by UNFPA, UN-Women and UNICEF, 12 local governments

committed nearly \$1 million in new resources to youth-related issues, while 16 locations adopted youth action plans to reduce factors leading to violent extremism. A \$1.45 million project of IOM, ILO and UN-Women contributed to the enactment of a concept of the State migration policy to address needs of migrant women and girls. Project activities promoted the economic rights of women and their equal participation in local decision-making, which led to the adoption of local socioeconomic development plans, including gender-sensitive peacebuilding initiatives in six local governments.

45. In Tajikistan, the Fund supported national efforts to prevent violent extremism by promoting youth participation in local decision-making and expanding economic opportunities for young people. Through a \$2.25 million project implemented by UNICEF, UNDP and UN-Women, 2,300 young women and men partnered with local governments in Sharinav and Baljuvan districts to jointly prioritize 21 peacebuilding gaps that were later addressed through local development plans. Through the project, 130 school psychologists, education and health providers and law-enforcement staff were trained in improving mental health services for at-risk adolescents.

46. In the Western Balkans, the Fund supports future leaders by offering opportunities to young women and men to engage across ethnic lines and devise solutions to common problems through research, dialogue and implementation of local initiatives. A \$3.5 million regional initiative implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA, in partnership with the Regional Youth Cooperation Office, helped to drive a 15 per cent improvement in participants' perceptions of peers from other backgrounds. The outcome is the result of a two-year effort that brought more than 500 young people together through 15 trust-building initiatives through which participants from hard-to-reach communities debunked stereotypes and found common areas of interest.

47. Through a regional effort implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, young people, women, teachers and media professionals led 19 national and regional dialogues in which they developed recommendations for national authorities on generating greater regional understanding and trust. In a final evaluation, it was found that the initiative had fostered a new generation of leaders interested in greater regional cooperation, as well as that participants' support for cross-ethnic collaboration had increased significantly. In Kosovo,<sup>3</sup> a \$2.7 million project implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and UN-Women to increase the trust of young people in other ethnic groups and their confidence in State institutions helped to drive a 12 per cent reduction in the number of young people who perceived inter-ethnic relations as tense.

## **G. Middle East and North Africa**

48. In Lebanon, through a \$3 million project implemented by UNDP, UN-Women and OHCHR, the Government established a national commission on the missing and forcibly disappeared and launched the Forum for Memory and Future. Through the project, intergenerational dialogue is encouraged to address past conflicts and prevent future ones by engaging with local universities, history teachers, young people, ex-combatants and hundreds of men and women in need of psychosocial support and legal assistance.

49. The Fund's investment in Libya supports conflict prevention and access to services to reduce local tensions. A \$2.9 million project implemented by UNDP,

<sup>3</sup> References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP in Libya provided training and seed grants to more than 1,500 young people in Sirte to bolster civic participation. To increase the access of women and young people to essential services, the Ministry of Interior committed itself to making family and child protection units more child-friendly and gender-sensitive.

50. Despite ongoing conflict in Yemen, the Fund has supported early opportunities for peacebuilding to prepare the ground for an eventual peace agreement. In an environment in which 72 per cent of young people expressed distrust of the media in a recent poll, more than 500 young people produced and disseminated content expressing the perspectives of young people on the ongoing crisis through a project implemented by UNESCO and Radio Netherlands Worldwide Media. The project has amplified the voices of young women and men through youth barometer surveys and the Road to Peace website while ensuring the participation of women. Young people in Yemen also participated in Lighthouse Projects: Pioneering Media and Information Literacy Experiences in the Arab World – the regional media and information literacy conference – and World Press Freedom Day celebrations thanks to support for the projects.

Table 2  
**Global performance of the Peacebuilding Fund, 2020–2021**

<i>Fund priority areas</i>	<i>Project count</i>	<i>On track to deliver outputs (percentage)</i>	<i>On track with evidence of significant contribution to peacebuilding outcomes (percentage)</i>
<b>Priority area 1<sup>a</sup></b>			
2021	29	79	34
2020	31	68	19
<b>Priority area 2<sup>b</sup></b>			
2021	151	77	21
2020	160	76	23
<b>Priority area 3<sup>c</sup></b>			
2021	16	88	31
2020	13	92	13
<b>Priority area 4<sup>d</sup></b>			
2021	25	92	16
2020	17	71	20
<b>Overall 2021</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Overall 2020</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>19</b>

*Source:* Peacebuilding Support Office project assessments, periodic reports and independent country evaluations.

<sup>a</sup> Security sector reform; rule of law; disarmament; demobilization and reintegration; and political dialogue.

<sup>b</sup> Reconciliation, democratic governance and conflict prevention/management.

<sup>c</sup> Employment and equitable access to social services.

<sup>d</sup> State capacities, extension of State authority and governance of peacebuilding resources.

## IV. Peacebuilding Fund oversight and management

### A. Advisory Group

51. The second year of the mandate of the sixth Advisory Group was focused primarily on funding, United Nations coherence and the impact of the Fund at the



country level. To this effect, the Group supported the high-level replenishment conference of the Fund, held in January and hosted by the Secretary-General, and advised Member States, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Secretary-General throughout the year on securing more predictable, adequate and sustainable financing for the Fund. The Group held dedicated working group meetings, which included consultations with the Development Coordination Office, and participated in the Fund's virtual donor visit to Madagascar.

## **B. Budget and personnel**

52. In line with its growth strategy, the Fund expenditure to support its Secretariat function increased to an estimated \$4.1 million in 2021, with the operational budget drawn exclusively from the overhead of donor contributions in accordance with the Fund's terms of reference. To maximize effectiveness and resources, the Fund continued to build partnerships with United Nations Volunteers, Junior Professional Officers, secondees from UNDP, UN-Women and OHCHR and, for the first time, a visiting academic fellow.

53. In terms of cost savings, virtual meetings continued to replace most travel, with the exception of participation in the Fund's annual strategic dialogue with top donors in Switzerland in late summer, while Fund staff routinely flew in economy class for work-related travel. With the gradual return to office, essential COVID-19 safety supplies and videoconference equipment were purchased to accommodate hybrid workspaces.

## **C. Enhanced monitoring and evaluation**

54. The Fund oversaw independent final evaluations in Burundi and Madagascar and an internal lessons learned exercise in Sri Lanka. In Burundi, the evaluation found that the Fund's ability to manage risks enabled it to remain engaged in an increasingly difficult operational context, even as other donor and diplomatic ties were being cut, and that the role of the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission was particularly effective in maintaining open communication with the Government and other political actors. In Madagascar, Fund support was found to have increased space for the engagement of women in security sector reform, human rights and local peacebuilding efforts. Fund support also enhanced institutional and social capacities for peace overall.

55. For the third year running, the Fund continued to expand its project-level evaluations, assuring the quality of a record 86 evaluations of its projects, which was more than double the 2020 historic high of 36. Broader evaluation coverage contributed to enhanced knowledge of how best to support conflict-affected communities and informed forthcoming guidance on community-based monitoring and evaluation. In addition to the above-mentioned thematic reviews, to capture learning across its portfolio, the Fund commissioned its second independent synthesis review, in which evidence of Fund performance in 2020 was examined. While the Fund's efforts to respond to the recommendations in the earlier review, including the launch of new country-level strategic frameworks and investments in monitoring and evaluation at the country level, were noted in the review, it was concluded that more time was needed to register the results of the efforts and recommended that synthesis reviews be conducted every two years to better monitor progress. In 2022, the Fund will launch a new online searchable database of all evaluations, reviews and studies to ensure broad accessibility and uptake of learning.

## V. Conclusion

56. The peacebuilding achievements of the partners of the Peacebuilding Fund in 2021 demonstrated the commitment of the United Nations system to prioritizing peacebuilding even in the midst of crises. Conflict and political turbulence around the globe illustrated that peacebuilding cannot be put on hold while the world grapples with a pandemic. Despite the damage of COVID-19 – the loss of life and illness, the human resources challenges for all institutions, the tremendous financial burden and diversion of budgets, and myriad logistical challenges – the Fund experienced its highest year of investment in peacebuilding and its second-highest year of donor contributions. Core priorities were pursued, including women and young people in peacebuilding, cross-border programming and peacebuilding in United Nations transitions. Innovation continued, in particular in relation to private sector partnerships and financing. More investments were made in trending categories, including peaceful elections and climate security.

57. In 2022, the Fund will require a further increase in resources to meet the ambition of its Strategy, including through greater burden sharing and through a portion of assessed resources to ensure predictability, broaden engagement and promote transformative, prevention-focused and conflict-sensitive responses. Towards the end of 2022, a mid-course high-level replenishment event may be required to review the Fund's progress in this regard.

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