THEME REPORT ON
ENABLING
SDGs THROUGH
INCLUSIVE, JUST ENERGY
TRANSITIONS
TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF
SDG 7 AND NET-ZERO EMISSIONS
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
An inclusive and just energy transition can catalyse transformational co-benefits for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Energy is inextricably linked to virtually all the SDGs, and at the same time progress made towards achieving advancement of the other SDGs can also contribute to achieving SDG 7. Transforming the world’s energy systems will create new jobs, advance gender equality, and empower people, communities, and societies. Based on the concept of ‘leaving no one behind’, a just and inclusive energy transition will enhance human well-being, health, and capabilities, increase resilience, and drive innovation towards a sustainable society at all levels, while also driving huge investments. Although the transition pathways will vary based on the individual needs of countries and regions, all pathways must be just and inclusive in order to accelerate collective actions to deliver on the SDGs and the Paris Agreement and to ensure the ‘future we want’.

**RECOMMENDATION 1**
Every country and region should integrate achievement of the SDGs as a guiding framework into the planning and implementation of their own transition pathways towards clean and sustainable energy. Sustainable energy transitions, involving the electricity, heating/cooling, and transport sectors, can dramatically accelerate the development and the achievement of the SDGs, but only if they are designed to be fully just and inclusive. An integrated, participatory, and inclusive approach should be mainstreamed into policy and programmatic decision-making for energy and climate, including ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and longer-term strategies under the Paris Agreement. This will ensure that the benefits of the clean energy transition are shared, that no one is left behind, and that the protection of people, the achievement of prosperity, and the preservation of the planet remain at the core of the energy transitions.

**RECOMMENDATION 2**
Implement a sustainable energy transition strategy with social equity and inclusiveness at its centre to enable the SDGs. Energy transitions will have a disproportionate influence on the achievement of the SDGs, with greater progress potentially being made on some targets than on others, unless specific measures are otherwise implemented. Policymakers can and should explicitly prioritize the needs of the vulnerable through the energy transition pathways by:
Empowering people by ensuring gender equality in its multiple dimensions; enhancing win-win outcomes for health and education, putting the needs of children, youth, local communities and other vulnerable populations first, including safeguarding and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples and addressing the essential energy needs of displaced people and affected communities.

Protecting the planet by ensuring a pathway to net-zero emissions and the sustainable use of finite resources, such as water, food, and ecological systems; also ensuring biodiversity, high levels of air and water quality and sustainable life on land, below water, and in cities.

Enhancing prosperity and reducing inequality by empowering populations through modern energy access; creating new jobs and employment opportunities; implementing the framework of a circular economy and promoting diversification within it; increasing the role of the private sector and entrepreneurship development; ensuring sustainability and affordability; and building capacity to reap the full benefits of digitalization while maximizing human potential.

**RECOMMENDATION 3:**
Integrate access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy, including access to electricity and clean cooking, as the central pillar of inclusive, just, energy-transition strategies. Billions of people around the world still lack basic access to electricity and clean cooking, which negatively impacts their health, well-being, livelihoods, and local environment. Ensuring access to clean, modern, and sustainable energy solutions for those currently left behind is the most fundamental element of a just and inclusive energy transition. In such a framework, access to energy needs to be accelerated to the essential services, in particular, to the hundreds of thousands of healthcare facilities that still lack energy access. This will enable basic and life-saving health services for everyone, both in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Energy access should be a priority of all energy transition pathways to maximize the co-benefits for the SDGs and the climate goals.

**RECOMMENDATION 4**
Accelerate the integration of gender equity into energy transition pathways. Gender-transformative approaches should be integrated into all energy transition plans to close gender gaps and empower women by, among other things, ensuring gender parity in the employment, policy-, and decision-making process. Investing in the economic empowerment of women to realize women’s rights and gender equality must be a major priority in all energy-transition strategies: this will include enhancing the education of women and their ability to actively and effectively participate in existing markets, gain access to decent work, and enable meaningful participation for them in economic decision-making at all levels.

**RECOMMENDATION 5**
Enable transformational change by promoting systemic approaches in the energy transition to achieving the SDGs and the climate goals, while ensuring energy security. Pursuing a just and inclusive energy transition offers an important opportunity to catalyse structural transformations
in the energy and relevant sectors—to increase positive synergies and reduce trade-offs across the SDGs, while meeting the 1.5°C objective set out by the Paris Agreement. Harnessing such an opportunity requires integrated approaches tailored to specific country conditions and supported, among others, by:

i. Long-term vision, integrated planning, and cross-sectoral coordination.

ii. Participatory and inclusive governance mechanisms.

iii. Education, training, and capacity-building, promotion of consumer and behavioural change, sharing of knowledge, data, and information, and identification and promotion of skills in the energy and other sectors, particularly in relation to the impacts of energy on a range of SDGs.

iv. Innovation and technology, supported by adequate research and development policies.

v. Finance and investment aligned with local needs, including tailored mechanisms to facilitate access (i) to affordable and synergistic finance and support instruments to enhance progress towards achieving multiple SDGs at the same time, and (ii) to increased investment in infrastructure. Additional or specialized support is required for developing countries, in particular, least-developed countries, small island developing states (SIDS), and countries in conflict and/or in the process of disaster reconstruction.

RECOMMENDATION 6
Track progress and integrate an Energy for SDG Impact Framework into energy transition strategies. Such a framework should include a set of targets and indicators tailored to specific circumstances and conditions, and help design, implement, and monitor a just, inclusive energy transition as an enabler of the SDGs (see Table 1). The framework should present the disparities faced by different sectors of the population (women, children and youth, indigenous, urban/rural). Data access, collection, analysis (disaggregated by gender, age, ethnicity, disability, etc.) as well as communications will be essential. A crucial role will also be played by transparency, accountability, and good governance.

RECOMMENDATION 7
Strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships to leverage the transformational potential of energy for enabling the SDGs. Such partnerships should encourage action at the global, regional, national, and local level, and also facilitate coordination among a variety of stakeholders, including governments, financial institutions, businesses, and civil society, as well as impacted and vulnerable communities. The partnerships should facilitate resource mobilization and be designed to support the planning, implementation, and monitoring of just and inclusive energy transitions, guided by the principles of equity, respect, and realization of human rights; they should also be a focus for the voices of the impacted communities and stakeholders (see the Results and Action Matrix). A coalition of partnerships like this will play a valuable role in strengthening knowledge-sharing, facilitating the identification of risks and opportunities for all impacted stakeholders, and targeting advocacy and collective action in the energy and other sectors.
RECOMMENDATION 8

Ensure that the energy transition pathways are sustainably designed and implemented to enhance synergies and reduce trade-offs with other SDGs. In this context, it is essential to design, enforce, and monitor adequate sustainability standards to avoid potential conflicts between energy services and other developmental targets. For example, the expanded use of feedstocks and arable land to produce bioenergy can indeed conflict with food production and affordability. It is thus important to put in place measures to avoid negative impacts on food security and to protect the local resources on which local populations and vulnerable communities depend. Ensuring that appropriate environment and waste management are integrated into the energy transition is also essential; this includes electronic waste related to disposal of power generation and storage systems.

TABLE 1. ENERGY FOR SDG IMPACT FRAMEWORK: EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF AN INCLUSIVE, JUST ENERGY TRANSITION AND ITS IMPACT ON THE SDGs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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| 1   | • Percentage of low-income households spending more than or equal to 5% of their household expenditure to meet all of their energy demands (by region, gender of head of household, and indigenous populations)  
• Percentage increase in income of marginalized communities due to access to electricity for productive uses (including rural farmers, artisans) |
| 2   | • Percentage increase in agricultural productivity due to electricity access in rural and low-income countries (e.g. solar-powered irrigation systems)  
• Percentage of food waste due to electricity access for cold-chain food conservation |
| 3   | • Number (or percentage) of health-care facilities with access to reliable and sufficient supply of energy (by energy end-use, e.g., electricity, cooking)  
• Percentage of population with access to clean energy for all basic end-uses in the community (cooking, heating, lighting), disaggregated by type of settings (household, school, health care facility) |
| 4   | • Percentage of educational institutions (school, university, vocational) with access to a reliable and adequate supply of electricity for all needs (lighting, digital learning, ICTs) (by type of institution, educational level, gender, income, and geographic area).  
• Number (or percentage) of students in energy-oriented educational programmes (formal and non-formal education) (by type and level of institution, gender, and geographic area) |
| 5   | • Share (%) of women employed in the energy value chain for technical jobs related to renewable energy, energy efficiency, and energy access  
• Share (%) of women in senior positions in relevant ministries, national energy agencies, and programmes |
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| 6   | • Percentage of improved sanitation facilities powered by electricity (by electricity source, gender, geographic location)  
     | • Percentage increase of population with access to quality water services due to increase in access to electricity (by electricity source, geographic location, gender) |
| 8   | • Percentage of fossil fuel–sector employees reskilled for employment in sustainable energy (disaggregated by gender)  
     | • Increase (%) in finance available for women-led energy businesses, disaggregated by geographic area, educational level |
| 9   | • Percentage in increase in productivity from improvements in energy efficiency  
     | • Amount (USD) spent on R&D&D programmes for rural/urban infrastructure and agriculture, based on international collaboration |
| 10  | • Percentage of people with disabilities employed by the energy industry in vocational or technical roles  
     | • Increase in funding (%) to support sustainable energy deployment in small island developing states, least-developed countries, and Indigenous people’s needs |
| 11  | • Percentage of clean transportation in cities (cars, public transportation) (disaggregated by energy source and technology)  
     | • Percentage reduction in emissions via improvements in energy efficiency and/or increased reliance on renewable energy in buildings |
| 12  | • Percentage reduction in energy intensity by economic sector  
     | • Percentage reduction in water (m3) withdrawn/consumed/discharged by energy source (and cooling technology) at the energy production facility level |
| 13  | • Reduction in GHG emissions from the energy sector  
     | • Reduction in short-lived climate pollutants (black carbon, HFCs, methane, tropospheric ozone) from energy sector (disaggregated by economic sector, geographic location) |
| 14  | • Share of coastal and marine areas used for offshore and onshore oil and gas infrastructure  
     | • Percentage reduction in emissions due to clean energy of shipping sector |
| 15  | • Percentage growth in the share of sustainable wood-forest harvesting for energy use  
     | • Percentage change in arable land for agriculture due to land use for energy production (including for biofuels, ground-mounted solar parks, etc) |
| 16  | • Percentage of displaced people and affected communities with access to sustainable energy (disaggregated by energy end-use, gender, geographic location)  
     | • Number of countries using environmental impact assessment and a participatory process in land use planning related to the production and distribution of energy, involving indigenous populations and other affected communities (disaggregated by geographic location, wealth quintile) |
## RESULTS AND ACTIONS MATRIX

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<td>Every country and region should integrate the SDGs as a guiding framework for the energy transition and, vice versa, should consider access to sustainable energy as a key element in the achievement of all SDGs.</td>
<td>- Mainstream SDGs through policy and planning (such as sustainable energy policies, nationally determined contributions [NDCs] etc).&lt;br&gt; - Place access to energy, including electricity and clean cooking, as a central pillar of an inclusive, just energy transition and of sector strategies.&lt;br&gt; - Target inclusive economic stimulus to low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways in national sustainable energy and development policies to support inclusive transition while mitigating climate change.&lt;br&gt; - Develop policies and plans such as NDCs, which align with long-term planning of the Paris Agreement and towards net-zero emissions; create jobs and assure inclusion.&lt;br&gt; - Monitor progress and stay accountable to agreements, partnerships, strategies, and plans.&lt;br&gt; - Systematic mapping of areas left without access to electricity and clean cooking fuels and technologies (CFTs) to be a priority in national development policy.&lt;br&gt; - Put in place measures to ensure that the energy transition pathways are implemented without conflicting with other priorities, including use of agricultural land for food production.&lt;br&gt; - Ensure transparency and sharing of data and correct information regarding the energy transition (including on energy potentials, pros and cons of different energy sources and technologies, feasibility, and impact of different energy solutions etc.)</td>
<td>- Public&lt;br&gt; - Increase energy efficiency and gradually phase out fossil fuel use.&lt;br&gt; - Place access to energy, including electricity and clean cooking, as a central pillar of an inclusive, just energy transition and of sector strategies.&lt;br&gt; - Develop policies and plans such as NDCs, which align with long-term planning of the Paris Agreement and towards net-zero emissions; create jobs and assure inclusion.&lt;br&gt; - Monitor progress and stay accountable to agreements, partnerships, strategies, and plans.&lt;br&gt; - Systematic mapping of areas left without access to electricity and clean cooking fuels and technologies (CFTs) to be a priority in national development policy.&lt;br&gt; - Put in place measures to ensure that the energy transition pathways are implemented without conflicting with other priorities, including use of agricultural land for food production.&lt;br&gt; - Ensure transparency and sharing of data and correct information regarding the energy transition (including on energy potentials, pros and cons of different energy sources and technologies, feasibility, and impact of different energy solutions etc.)</td>
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Civil Society
Private

Implement a clean-energy transition strategy with a focus on equity and inclusiveness to help enable the SDGs.

**STAKEHOLDER ACTIONS**

- **Public**
  - Spread awareness for sustainability and equitable treatment of vulnerable groups.
  - Support transition of workers to future required skills, including through reskilling and retraining.
  - Create decent and green jobs and diversify economically.

- **Private**
  - Pursue carbon pricing or alternatives to offset the potential adverse effects of a rapid energy transition.
  - Ensure affordability of energy services, in particular, for poor and vulnerable people.
  - Promote public consultations involving affected local communities and vulnerable populations.

- **Civil Society**
  - Pursue carbon pricing or alternatives to offset the potential adverse effects of a rapid energy transition.
  - Support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), entrepreneurship, and clean technology innovation at the local level, to enhance local development and job creation, especially for energy and transportation.

- **International organizations**
  - International organizations

**PRIORITY RESULTS**

**PRIORITY ACTION AREAS**

- Establish specific measures to:
  - Create new jobs and employment opportunities.
  - Promote the diversification of the economy to provide diverse employment opportunities, and support training and capacity-building, including reskilling.
  - Ensure affordability of energy services, in particular, for poor and vulnerable people.
  - Build capacity to reap benefits of clean energy and digitalization.
  - Integrate gender-equality transformative approaches, including at the policy and institutional levels.
  - Maximize the impact of energy as enabler of human capital development, including on health and education.
  - Put the needs of local communities and indigenous people first, including safeguarding and protection of indigenous peoples’ rights.
  - Ensure sustainability of finite resources such as water, food, and ecological systems while ensuring high ambient-air and water quality.
  - Protect, and address the needs of children, youth, and other vulnerable sectors of population, including those in displacement settings.
  - Ensure energy security and reliability of energy systems, including addressing potential dependence.
  - Prioritize the needs of the vulnerable sectors of the population, including women, children, indigenous people, and people in displacement settings.
  - Support transition of workers to future required skills, including through reskilling and retraining.
  - Establish regulatory frameworks for big data, smart grids, and communication technology, and design energy markets to promote innovative, sustainable, and flexible business models.

- Redirect subsidies to target energy-efficiency technology, including for industries, support retro-fits; at the level of energy access, support cleaner energy sources, the cost of the initial connection to a power grid, and off-grid renewable energy equipment for least-income household.

- Design and implement policies to rationalize energy subsidies in deficit countries in order to target low-income groups more effectively, and by redirecting subsidies to pro-poor applications, such as first-time connection subsidies and price support for improved cook stoves.

- Put in place and enforce regulation that facilitates grid access, especially for local/community suppliers.

- Evaluate policies and regulatory frameworks to open up utility sectors to private investment, through supporting community-driven projects as well as a market for distributed energy where this can help close gaps in access.

- Establish regulatory frameworks for big data, smart grids, and an integrated systems approach; deploy information and communication technology, and design energy markets to promote innovative, sustainable, and flexible business models.

- Support public sector through public-private partnership to train the local workforce for next-generation industrial technologies and digitalization of manufacturing: across different industrial sectors, gender and race consideration, for different levels of personnel, continuous and evolving basis.

- Adopt gender-equality and-empowerment strategies; track progress on implementation and impact on economic activity.

- Include consultation with local communities as an integral part of company policy before making final investment decisions.

- Include benefit to local community and highest possible standards of sustainability and equitable treatment of vulnerable groups.

- Create awareness for sustainability and equitable treatment of vulnerable groups.

- Promote more sustainable practices in natural resource use, including the circular carbon economy.

- Mobilize financial support for LDCs, SIDS, and vulnerable populations to improve access to affordable finance.

- Support local training and capacity building to empower local communities with new access to electricity and CFTs to help translate energy access into localised business growth, with special attention to be paid to women and other vulnerable groups.

- Strengthen the inclusion and representation of indigenous peoples in consumer-based organisations.

- Promote the use of small-scale, decentralized, renewable energy technologies (RETs) including mini-grid and stand-alone systems, for areas that are uneconomic to connect to a central grid; such as remote villages and small islands.

- Strengthen local, community-owned suppliers, in particular, relating to micro-hydro or rooftop photovoltaic (PV) systems.

- Strengthen indigenous peoples’ representation at the level of governance (ESG) criteria as a possible standard of possible standards of community and highest possible standards of.
- Put in place national policies and regulations for gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women in economic sectors.
- Provide financial capital; provide government loan guarantees for microcredits to rural women, and greater government support for women’s associations and savings groups.
- Reform land tenure and ownership, ensuring stable and clear tenure rights, not only in regard to women, but to secure many rural livelihoods, and benefit sustainable-energy access in the long run.
- Phase out fossil-fuel subsidies and redirect energy subsidies to support investment in clean electricity for essential services, including energy access in healthcare facilities.
- Enshrine the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples to their land, their natural resources, and the protection from contamination of their land by nearby energy-related, industrial, or mining activities in the national policies.
- Promote and operationalize energy- and water-efficient technologies and processes that improve the efficiency of energy used.
- Prepare for more technology waste. End-of-life management policies to be part of a broad range of cross-cutting enabling instruments that support the transition to sustainable energy life-cycle policies, including for renewable energy. Tailor activities to specific national conditions and market maturity based on principles of the circular economy.
- Commit to the principle of science informing policy.
- Invest in the acquisition of specialized knowledge in interlinked areas such as energy, water, and environmental management.
- Support adequate training and capacity building, including reskilling of workers who may lose their jobs in the framework of the energy transition.

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## Address systemic barriers to bring about coherent, integrated planning and implementation.

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<td>■ Promote energy security; this includes addressing the potential issues deriving from significant dependence on minerals needed to support the energy transition.</td>
<td>• Re-evaluate education to incorporate clean energy transitions.</td>
<td>• Knowledge hubs can promote experiences and best practices.</td>
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<td>■ Involve young people by ensuring an inter-generational approach to a successful clean energy transition</td>
<td>• Redirect finance flows away from fossil fuels to sustainable energy.</td>
<td>• Mobilize financial support for LDCs, SIDS, and vulnerable populations to improve access to affordable finance for projects and programmes that contribute to multiple SDG enhancement.</td>
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<td>■ Promote integration of SDGs into private-sector activities, for example, through the adoption of company-level target contributions to relevant SDGs.</td>
<td>• Innovate and change through R&amp;D; remove market-distortion factors; support digitalization; conduct electrification of end-use sectors; change transport technology.</td>
<td>• Encourage greater transparency among businesses and governments regarding energy use, procurement policies, or regulations.</td>
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<td>■ Adopt transparent classifications of sustainable investments, as they are drivers of the needed increase in investments.</td>
<td>• Develop cross-cutting policies that align with the SDGs and net-zero and strengthen institutional capacity.</td>
<td>• Provide technical assistance, build knowledge and capacity, share best practices, make direct financial investments and provide risk mitigation instruments.</td>
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<td>■ Promote innovative sustainable impact investment mechanisms (e.g., SDG-linked bonds) which go beyond the traditional project-focused green finance.</td>
<td>• Support open access to data and information and support their dissemination to build foundational knowledge and ensure accountability.</td>
<td>• Encourage greater transparency among businesses and governments regarding energy use, procurement policies, or regulations.</td>
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**Address systemic barriers to bring about coherent, integrated planning and implementation.**

- Reprioritize the coordination of developmental policies across government entities, strengthening integrated policymaking.
- Strengthen integrated governance frameworks that span policy areas and SDGs.
- Enhance capacity-building, education, and knowledge.
- Take concerted steps to enable private capital to flow to those in most need.
- Catalyse finance and investment.
- Leverage innovation and technology.
- Foster the inclusion of gender-equality transformative actions. These may include, among other measures, the promotion of local partnerships to support women workers in low-income countries (e.g., supporting: women’s access to ownership of renewable energy products, women’s ownership of, and access to, ecosystems-based

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## Establish inclusive monitoring frameworks

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<td>• Establish a set of indicators for monitoring, including data disaggregation on the situation of the most vulnerable groups within the SDGs, in particular women, children, people with disabilities, and indigenous peoples.</td>
<td>• Monitor progress, ensure accountability, and share results.</td>
<td>• Commit to sharing data on SDG 7 and related indicators and key performance indicators (KPIs) set at national level.</td>
<td>• Strengthen understanding of the way energy interlinks with other sectors, including their synergies and trade-offs, by using wider sustainable development goals and indicators.</td>
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<td>• Undertake a global monitoring exercise based on the set indicators.</td>
<td>• Track SDG progress at country level.</td>
<td>• Set up voluntary reporting mechanisms that may feed into public monitoring frameworks.</td>
<td>• Track SDG progress at country, regional, and global levels.</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Ensure transparency and promote open access to information and data.</td>
<td>• Improve data availability at the level of sub-national government, including regional and municipal governments, urban–rural disaggregation, and regular household surveys.</td>
<td>• Promote open access to information and data.</td>
<td>• Promote institutional capacity at country and regional level to collect, interpret, and disseminate data and information across sectors, including basic demographic, macroeconomic, and energy-related data, and also more specifically all indicators stipulated by Agenda 2030. Special attention is required to strengthen data quality and quantity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Strengthen global partnerships by all stakeholders to help leverage transformational potential of energy for enabling the SDGs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Civil Society</th>
<th>International organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Partner internationally to encourage global action.</td>
<td>• Engage the private sector, including philanthropists, in coalitions to strengthen collective action.</td>
<td>• Rethink multi-stakeholder partnerships to achieve cross-sectoral systemic change.</td>
<td>• Maintain comprehensive monitoring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Embrace synergies with other SDGs.</td>
<td>• Make and encourage sustainable behavioural changes</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Catalyse multi-stakeholder partnerships to achieve cross-sectoral systemic change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Agriculture, and women’s access to capital to strengthen livelihoods, etc.}
For further information, please contact:
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