

actionaid

# PEACE BREEDERS

System and Structure Strengthening Approach Against Radicalisation to Violent Extremism (SARVE III PROJECT)

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**Photo Caption:**

R-L ActionAid Nigeria's Country Director, Ene Obi with Head PCVE Unit, Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), Mairo Abbas and the Director of Programmes, ActionAid Nigeria, Suwaiba Muhammad-Dankabo during a courtesy visit to ActionAid Nigeria's Country Management Team.





## WHAT'S NEW?

ActionAid Nigeria commenced the implementation of the SARVE III project in Kano and Kaduna States in partnership with the Dispute Resolution and Development Initiative (DRDI) and Global Peace Development (GPD). With funding from the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), the project is working closely with the office of the Governors, Ministries of Women Affairs and Social Development; Ministries of Agriculture; Ministries of Youth and Sports Development; Ministries of Education; Ministries of Commerce & Industries other relevant MDAs, Community Based Organisations, and youth groups in the states.

The 36-month project will reach 36,000 direct beneficiaries 18,200 youths (12,600 male and 5,600 female), 4,160 women; 7320 men and 6,320 in-school children (3,160 male and 3,160 female) and 129,360 indirect beneficiaries (40,200 female and 89,160 male) by supporting the benefitting communities against injustice and inequalities through building tolerance, strengthen community agencies where violent extremists exploit weak governance and providing positive socio-economic alternatives and life skills to what violent extremists claim to offer. The project is being implemented in six LGAs in Kano State (Gwale, Nasarawa, Tudun Wada, Bebej, Bichi, Gwarzo) and six LGAs in Kaduna State (Kachia, Jema'a, Zaria, Kudan, Igabi and Chikun).

Conversely, following engagements of the SARVE III project with the office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), towards the implementation of the National Action Plan and Policy Framework (NAP-PF) for the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism (PCVE), a significant gap was identified which was the absence of a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) strategy/plan for the framework. Validation of the draft M&E strategy/plan by the steering committee of the NAP implementation as developed by ActionAid Nigeria was accepted and adopted by ONSA. In appreciation of the outstanding work, the ONSA team led by the head of Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) unit under the Counter-Terrorism Centre (CTC), Madam Mario Abbas, paid a courtesy visit to ActionAid Nigeria's Country Management Team (CMT), pledging their full support in the project implementation while looking forward to future partnerships for achieving more significant strides.

In addition, the SARVE III project team participated in the European Union's Open Day in Commemoration of the 2022 European Union Day, supporting Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund's exhibition on PVE engagements in Nigeria through its grantees. The event presented an opportunity for ActionAid Nigeria to engage with citizens and other development partners on how they can support peacebuilding initiatives in the country while identifying potential partnerships for the pursuance of peace and unity, which are relevant in fostering international relationships, development, and progress.

Still in the news, the capacity of thirty media professionals from Kano and Kaduna States was enhanced on conflict-sensitive reporting during a 2-day Media Master Class on Preventing Violent Extremism themed: Creating Enabling Environment and Shaping Peace through Conflict Sensitive Reportage. At the end of the training, participants resolved to avoid negative profiling and the use of war-triggering phrases in their news reports while supporting in amplifying the voices of vulnerable communities.

Finally, the interfaith dialogue for religious leaders, which was held in Kano and Kaduna states, presented a platform for the Christian and Muslim groups to engage in genuine conversations on issues of trust and reach a consensus on how religious groups can contribute to building a more peaceful society by encouraging tolerance and social cohesion among worshipers.

## Welcome to Peace Breeders!



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## Responding to New and Evolving Challenges in PVE: Kano and Kaduna in Focus

In 2016, ActionAid Nigeria (AAN) received a rare and valuable opportunity to work with the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) to tackle issues of violent extremism and conflicts spilling across communities in Nigeria. For the past six years, the project worked in Kogi and Nasarawa states to address major causes of conflicts stalling development efforts such as idleness, unemployment, and perceived marginalisation in twenty-four (24) communities. Successes recorded while implementing the SARVE project in Kogi and Nasarawa States led to its continuation, replication and restructuring in Kano and Kaduna states with continued support from GCERF.

While violent extremism (VE) requires interventions to protect the security of people and assets, prevention of VE needs to look beyond strict security concerns to development-related causes and solutions to the phenomenon. Experiences in both development and peacebuilding show that increasing the levels of inclusion and tolerance in communities can lead to better governance of diversity and societies better inoculated against violent extremism.

It would be recalled that the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted unanimously by the General Assembly by its resolution 60/288, explicitly addresses prevention and foresees balanced implementation across all four of its Pillars:

- 1 Tackling conditions conducive to terrorism.
- 2 Preventing and combating terrorism.
- 3 Building countries' capacity to combat terrorism and strengthen the role of the United Nations system in that regard.
- 4 Ensuring respect for human rights for all and the rule of law while countering terrorism.



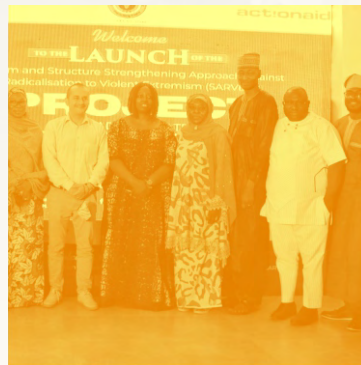
Ahead of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Strategy in 2016, the Secretary-General launched the Plan of Action with a focus on preventive measures for addressing VE, including reinvigorating those measures covered under Pillars I and IV of the strategy, ensuring a more comprehensive implementation of the strategy given the lessons learned over the past decade and the challenges that may lie ahead.

The Plan calls for national ownership, recommending that Member States consider adopting their own National and Regional Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) Plans of Action. It is in line with this injunction that the Federal Government of Nigeria, in 2017, developed a Policy Framework (PF) and National Action Plan (NAP) for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE). The Policy Framework and National Action Plan for PCVE came into effect on 24th August 2017 with a Presidential directive.

Against this background, ActionAid Nigeria has continued to implement programmes that address the root causes of VE, which are complex, multifaceted, intertwined, and relate to the structural environment in which radicalisation to violent extremism can take hold.

Having carried out successful programming with outstanding initiatives in Kogi and Nasarawa States of North Central Nigeria, ActionAid Nigeria launched the phase three of the project in Kano and Kaduna States, where the Executive Vice Chairman, Kaduna Peace Commission, on behalf of the Kaduna State Governor launched the project in the state; just as the Secretary to the Government of Kano State, also on behalf of the Governor of the State, launched the project in Kano State.

The SARVE III journey has begun!





Participants at the Inter-Faith dialogue meeting, Kano state.

## Partnering for Safer Communities: A Tale from Kofa.

In the Islamic religion, the last ten days of Ramadan are often very engaging and busy as worshippers tend to prayers and supplications. During the holy month, many people attend mid-night congregational prayers, making their homes vulnerable to burglary attacks. Criminals seize the gloomy dark time to unleash evil and harmful acts. As the day drew nearer to end of the Ramadan, the situation worsened, and locals feared for their safety. This was not the first time the incident had become a dreaded nightmare for residents in the Kofa community during each Ramadan season.

Kofa town is in the Bebeji local government area of Kano state, about 53.5 miles (84 KM) away from the Kano metropolis. Farming and animal rearing is the mainstay of economic revenue.

According to the 2006 National Population Commission (NPC) census, Kofa has an estimated population of 14,104, and 7 to 10 police officers are stationed in the community for security purposes. Sadly, security officers within the town are glaringly under-equipped with the necessary tools and logistics to carry out their responsibilities efficiently and adequately.

As a way of ending the increasingly unbearable situation which was already affecting the community's economy negatively as business owners close earlier than usual in a bid to escape criminal attacks or physical harm, Halima Abubakar, a member of Community Action and Response (CART) set up by ActionAid Nigeria and Dispute Resolution and Development Initiative (DRDI) called the attention of members who took immediate action to curb the incessant attacks.

CART engaged community vigilante for surveillance and early response. Through concerted actions by the community in ensuring that people feel safe when going out for prayer

Although reports on criminal attacks have drastically reduced following actions from the CART, Halima believes that the newly constituted Community Action Response Team could begin to detect and respond to early warning signs of conflicts and avert them before they escalate. Since ensuring the safety of the good people of Kofa cannot be left alone for the government. Through learnings from the SARVE III project's engagements with the CART, Halima is now leading the team to develop strategies that will aid in addressing the situation better as well as tackling similar challenges in the future.

*"We appreciate ActionAid Nigeria and DAG for helping us establish CART in our community, and we look forward to more support in securing a more peaceful Kofa", She happily narrated.*



## Securing the Future of Young People in Vulnerable Communities with Digital Literacy.

After six years of relentless engagement in Kogi and Nasarawa States to address major causes of conflicts such as idleness which stalls developments and exposes young people to extremist influence and recruitment, ActionAid Nigeria discovered that digital literacy is essential in PVE programming and implementation.

When the COVID-19 lockdown was announced in 2020, it became blatant how possible it is for young people who spend more time interacting via the internet to be soft targets for driving extremists' agenda. The effect ranges from depression and increased circulation of vile information to violent actions such as physical destruction of properties and infrastructure, communal clashes etc. With this, contemporary issues on youths' restiveness, radicalisation and the associated use of violence become a growing issue of concern, including in the Northwest region of Nigeria.


Businesses may inadvertently exacerbate young people's risks of radicalisation because of the exploitation by violent extremists on social media or recruitment in the workplace. But they can also provide solutions that include better alternatives to idleness through job creation and other productively engaging opportunities.

The awareness of this vulnerability to exposure or involvement with groups or individuals who advocate violence to a social, religious, political and other ideological end informed ActionAid's youth engagement at the grassroots through training and sensitisation, especially as they have been cut off from their peers in the different parts of the world for so long.

With support from the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, GCERF, ActionAid Nigeria partnered with IHS and Dispute Resolution and Development Initiative (DRDI-DAG) to provide digital literacy skills for 120 young men and women from 12 communities in Kano State. This provided an opportunity for young people in Kano state to gain basic digital knowledge with professional insights on how to use them to bring innovative solutions to peculiar and identifiable community problems. This will not only keep them productively engaged but also away from the influence of extremist groups.

Sessions to provide a clearer understanding of the role of youths in PVE and alternative narratives to PVE were also taken during the 4-day learning event.

As a way of encouraging the participants and sustaining the success achieved at the workshop, ActionAid Nigeria will work closely with IHS through the GCERF's continuous funding to empower 100 youth in Kaduna (50) and Kano (50) by establishing two kiosks in each of the selected LGs across within the states and develop a strategy to monitor their progress over the 36-month duration of the programme.



AAN's Communications Coordinator, Nihinlola Ayanda, facilitating a session at a 2-day media master class training.

## JAVE: A Movement of Enthusiastic Journalists on one Mission to End Violent Extremism.

In recent times, trends of violent conflicts spilling across communities in Nigeria have skyrocketed, leaving devastating impacts on women, girls, children, young people, and men. The heterogeneous nature of Nigeria as a country makes conflicts even more inevitable. However, how the media report such issues can either continue to fan the flames or quench them.

Journalists often view conflicts as vital elements that provide the substance for drama, action, suspense, and human interest, which drives audience loyalty. The current global trend indicates that media houses thrive more on reporting existing, foreseen or developing conflicts.

The report by a Nigerian Newspaper that triggered the crisis years back in Jos was simply about a woman who crossed through a congregational prayer and has remained an epic case study of how media reports can escalate conflicts.

ActionAid Nigeria's (AAN) core communications strategy emphasises building the capacity of the media to understand relevant development issues to improve the quality of reportage and media's engagement on such matters, sensitive topics that can lead to violent conflict.

The growing menace of false news and insecurity in the country made ActionAid Nigeria see the need to engage with and enhance journalists' skills in the Northeast and Northwest regions on Sensitive Conflict Reporting. On this basis, Journalists Against Violent Extremism (JAVE) was formed to counternarratives that may lead to violent conflict and promote peace.

Within the first and second phases of the System and Structure Strengthening Approach against Radicalisation to Violent Extremism project (SARVE I & II), funded by the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), ActionAid Nigeria trained a total of 93 mid and high-level media professionals from Kogi and Nasarawa states on preventing violent extremism through conflict-sensitive reportage and counternarratives. The trained Journalists have been part of JAVE supporting AAN's effort through the project to promote peace and social cohesion using various media channels at regional, state, and national levels.



Following the launch of the SARVE III project in Kano and Kaduna states, it became necessary to strengthen the already existing media partnership further, build stronger cooperation with media professionals in Kogi, Nasarawa, Kano, and Kaduna states, as well as recruit more committed, enthusiastic and goal-oriented journalists into JAVE. Hence, a 2-day Media Masterclass on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism was organised. With the theme, Creating Enabling Environment and Shaping Peace Through Conflict Sensitive Reportage, the capacity of thirty (30) media professionals from the four states was further enhanced to understand their roles in promoting peace through informed, accurate and peaceful reporting.

The experience-sharing session revealed to participants the importance of proper story investigation and fact-checking, which, when ignored, could trigger violence.

Speaking on the impact of the training, **Patience Jacob, Nasarawa Broadcasting Service**, said:

*“The training has improved my knowledge of conflict-sensitive reportage and has enhanced my understanding of the basics of peace journalism to promote peace in my state, Nigeria, and the world at large. It has also developed my skills in reporting conflict-sensitive stories that seek to resolve the crisis in Nasarawa State and Nigeria, making me more ethical and careful when reporting conflict-sensitive stories”.*

At the end of the training, a communique highlighting concerns hindering effective journalism and recommendations was developed by the participants and circulated. One of the key recommendations was for media professionals to institutionalise and integrate strategic communication as a holistic approach to preventing and countering violent extremism.

While participants made commitments to support peacebuilding initiatives in the project states and drive the online campaign tagged #TogetherForPeace, Murpheus Idoko, an On-Air-Personality with Invicta FM, Kaduna, recommended that there should be support funding/logistics for on-field report journalists with more training and sensitisation to reach more journalists across the country to enable them to understand their role in peace building and preventing violent extremism.





## Tagarji: A different perspective on peacebuilding

*“Before the SARVE III project, the community did not fully support the vigilante, and the leaders did not advocate for the support either” - Abdulrahim Auwal, Vigilante Commandant, Tagarji.*

The visit to Tagarji Community was quite impressive, having to find out how community members are utilising the knowledge and skills acquired from the SARVE III project on conflict prevention and early warning response.

After the project was launched in the first quarter of 2022 in Kano and Kaduna states, the community swung into action by establishing inclusive vigilante and peace committees in all the streets within the community. Before the SARVE III project, women's participation or contribution to any conflict preventive mechanism in the community was considered unnecessary because they believed women had no role in preventing violence; women should only not be heard, but that perspective has changed since the SARVE project began.

The established community Action and Response Team (CART) mobilised extended community members to support ten vigilante members with working tools and sensitised women and youths on drug abuse when they found out that drug abuse is one of the significant triggers of security challenges

in their community. Interestingly, a women's committee was established with more than twenty women engaging in a door-to-door campaign, sensitising fellow women. In excitement about their success, they told the SARVE team that the neighbouring communities are now trying to replicate these strategies for preventing violent extremism in their respective communities.

*“Before SARVE III, there were many places where youth smoke and take illegal drugs, but as a result of a constant awareness campaign to both youth and the parents, now it is only one place which we will try our best in the few months to make it a history.”*

The challenges of snatching phones and tricycles have drastically reduced in the community because of established peace groups in all streets of the community with CART in collaboration with the vigilante groups who supported identifying the buyers of the goods, confronted culprits and made them face the wrath of the law. Now, women and youths are fully engaged in all conflict preventive activities in the community, yielding positive results.





## Youths in Action: Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in Kano and Kaduna.

A 50-member youth-focused association has attempted to advance youths' participation, mobilisation, and inclusion in governance in Kano and Kaduna states. The group advocates for youths' welfare to maximise their potential and abilities in various fields. It is one of the tenets of Kaduna Youth Peace and Security Network (YPSN), a coalition saddled to look inwards with the support of the two project state MDAs for youth and peace to be a driving force to stimulate the readiness of young people. The coalition was also instituted to meet the needs and aspirations of youths by creating an enabling environment that is supportive and protective of the fundamental human rights of youths, job creation, curbing the menace of drug abuse, reducing crime, and mainstreaming peacebuilding initiatives. The establishment of the Youth Peace and Security Network aims to coordinate the activities and contributions of young people in Kaduna and Kano states to build peaceful states.

In December 2015, at the 7573rd meeting of the United Nations Security Council, Resolution 2250, which spotlighted the nexus between Youth, Peace, and Security Network (YPSN), was adopted and was birthed as a result that emphasises the inclusion of youth in peace and security architecture is very important and to also portray youths as one of the key players in preventing and countering violent extremism and building sustainable peace.

However, it is worthy of note that the most recent development on the National Action Plan and Youth Peace and Security (YPS) is seen to be yielding positive results with the new partnership between the Ministry of Youth and Sports Development and ActionAid Nigeria. Here are links to the story <https://youthandsports.ng/fg-to-partner-actionaid-on-poverty-reduction-among-youth/>

<https://emergencydigest.com/2022/05/18/actionaid-partners-poverty/>

<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/814032?ln=en>



## **Federal Government of Nigeria to Partner ActionAid Nigeria on Youth, Peace and Security National Action Plan Implementation.**

The Honourable Minister of Youth and Sports Development, Mr Sunday Dare, has expressed his Ministry's willingness to partner with ActionAid Nigeria in poverty reduction and promotion of peace and security amongst most of the unemployed youth through various initiatives as part of the implementation of the National Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security. The Minister gave the assurance in his office in Abuja when the staff of ActionAid Nigeria, led by its Country Director, Ene Obi, paid him a courtesy visit.

According to him, the present administration is committed to uplifting the lives of our unemployed and productive youth roaming the streets. That is why he said, "Such initiatives like the Digital Skills, Entrepreneurship, Employability and Leadership (DEEL), Work Experience Programme (WEP), among others, are packaged by the government with the aim to reducing poverty amongst the youth who are vulnerable to committing crimes and criminalities as a result of unemployment." In addition to providing policy direction in youth and sports development affairs in Nigeria, Dare said, the Ministry will continue to work in collaboration with other government agencies, international development partners, civil society organisations, youth organisations and the private sector aimed at ensuring full implementation of policies and programmes of the federal government that will improve the lives of the Nigerian youth and make them contribute meaningfully to the economic growth and development of the country





# Peace Champions Spotlight.

When we speak about radicalisation, many people only think about it from a religious perspective, but it goes beyond that to ethnicity, economy, crimes and social vices like drug abuse, addiction, and various forms of youths' restiveness we normally experience. In shaping the society, we deal with all these challenges of crime, insecurity, inter-community conflicts, religiously motivated violence, and other forms of conflicts, and we are optimistic that this project will contribute hugely to achieving peace in Kaduna State. **Dr Saleh Mamale, Vice Executive Chairman, Kaduna State Peace Commission.**

For us at the office of the national security adviser, this project is significant as it aligns with the core objectives of the policy framework and national action plan, which the president launched in 2017. We will continue to collaborate effectively with ActionAid to build a strong Nigeria where peace and prosperity will reign for national development, **Mrs Abbas Mairo, Head PCVE Unit, ONSA.**

The SARVE III Project comes at the right time ahead of the 2023 election when young people are much more vulnerable to being recruited for violent purposes and criminal activities. I believe that through community engagement which is a key strategy for implementing the project, this will be addressed, and violence will be reduced to the barest minimum, **Kabiru Ado Lakwaya, Hon. Commissioner, Ministry of Youth and Sports Development, Kano State.**

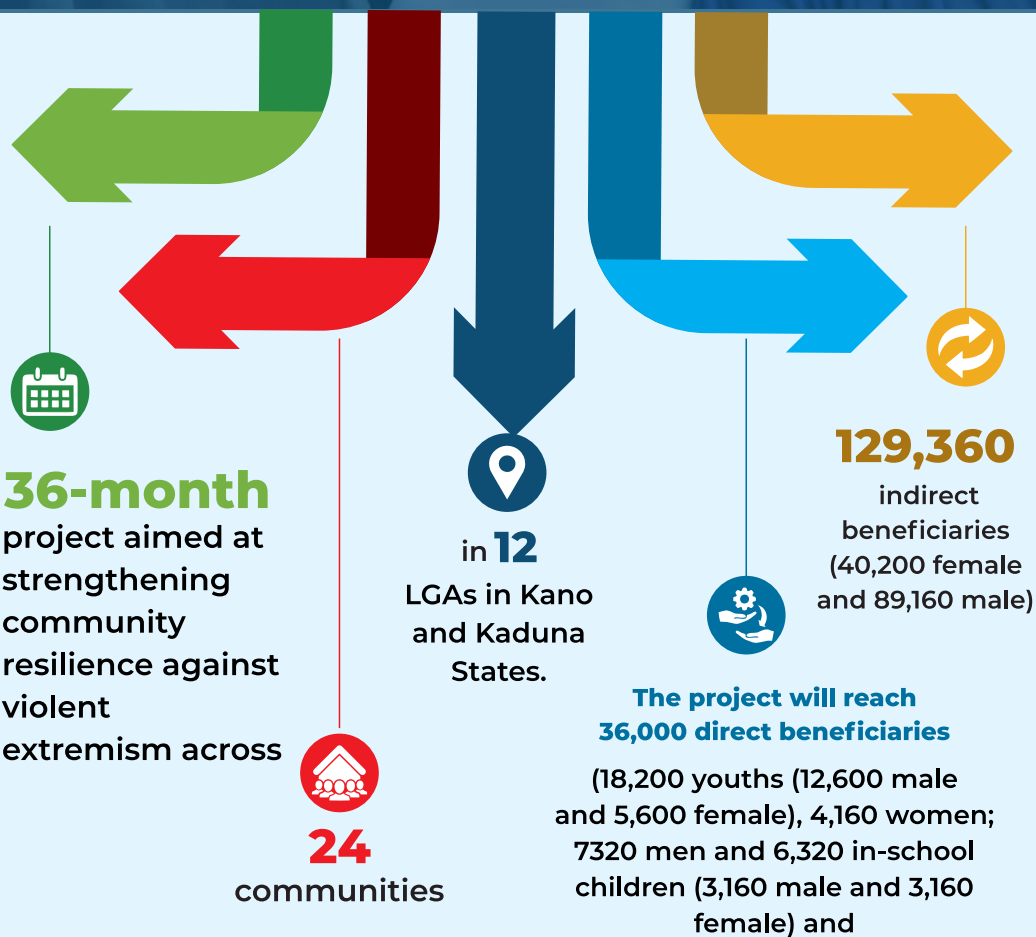
## SARVE III SARVE III PROJECT BRIEF

Following successes recorded in the first (SARVE I) and second (SARVE II) phases of the project in Kogi and Nasarawa states, respectively as well as current trends in the Northwest region of the country, ActionAid Nigeria has received more funding from the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) to continue the implementation of the third (3rd) phase of the SARVE project in partnership with Democratic Action Group (DAG) in Kano and Global Peace Development (GPD) in Kaduna states. SARVE III will raise awareness on the dangers of violent extremism, develop new and nurture existing effective response systems, promote peaceful coexistence, encourage shared positive alternative narratives, and build social cohesion among vulnerable groups. This will be achieved by empowering communities to identify threats and signs of violent extremism, peacebuilding initiatives, conflict resolution systems, platforms for inter-communal dialogue, and advocacy

SARVE III project aims to reach 36,000 direct (18,200 youths 12,600 male and 5,600 female), 4,160 women; 7320 men and 6,320 in-school children (3,160 male and 3,160 female) and 129,360 indirect beneficiaries (40,200 female and 89,160 male) by supporting the 24 benefitting communities across 12 Local Government Areas (LGAs) against injustice and inequalities through building tolerance as well as strengthening community agencies where violent extremists exploit.



**The System and Structure Strengthening Approach  
against Radicalisation to Violent Extremism  
(SARVE III) Project is a**



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