



EvalforEarth

Evaluation for Food Security, Environment,
Agriculture and Rural Development

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**What AI can hold and what it must
not touch:**

**Lessons from Outcome Harvesting
for evaluation practice and teaching**

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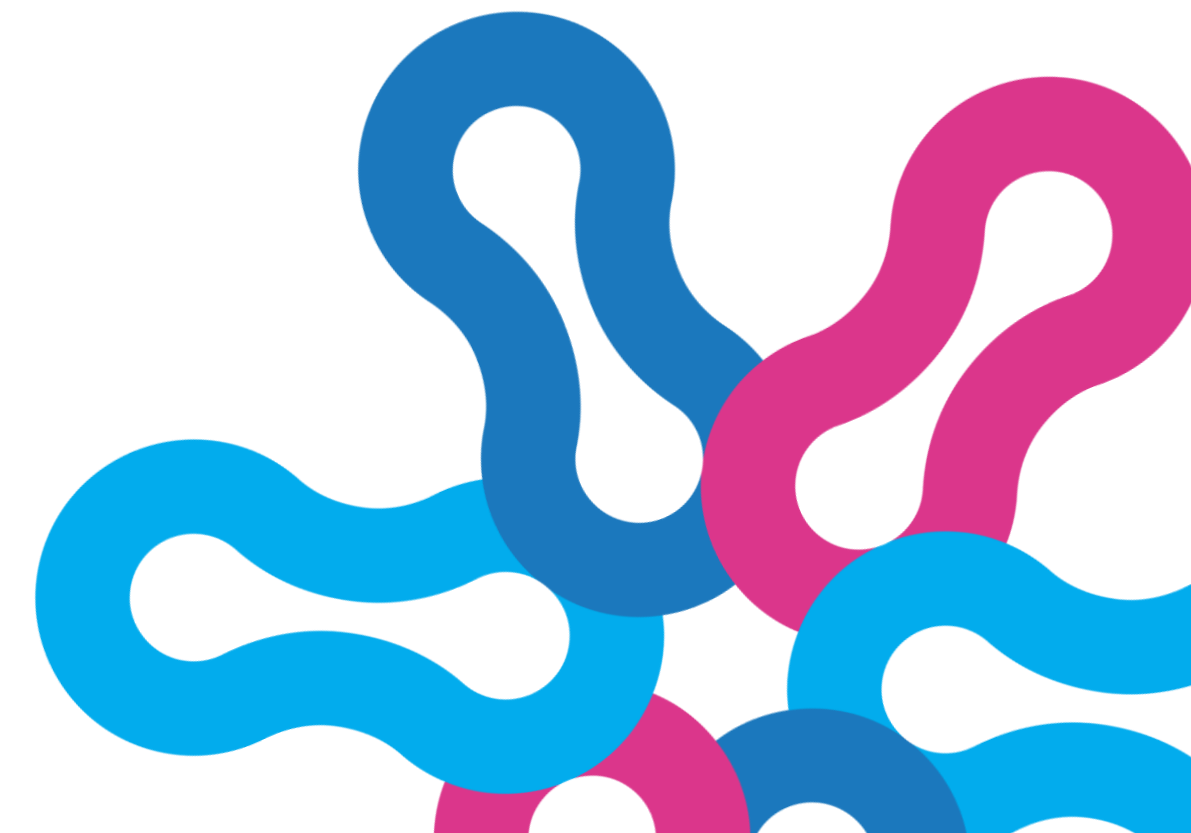
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 **Should we use AI?**

Or

 **when we do use it, what must evaluators be equipped to protect?**





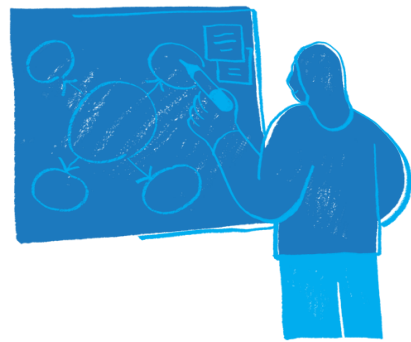
Why Outcome Harvesting is the hard case?



Built on interpretive judgment, not pre-set targets



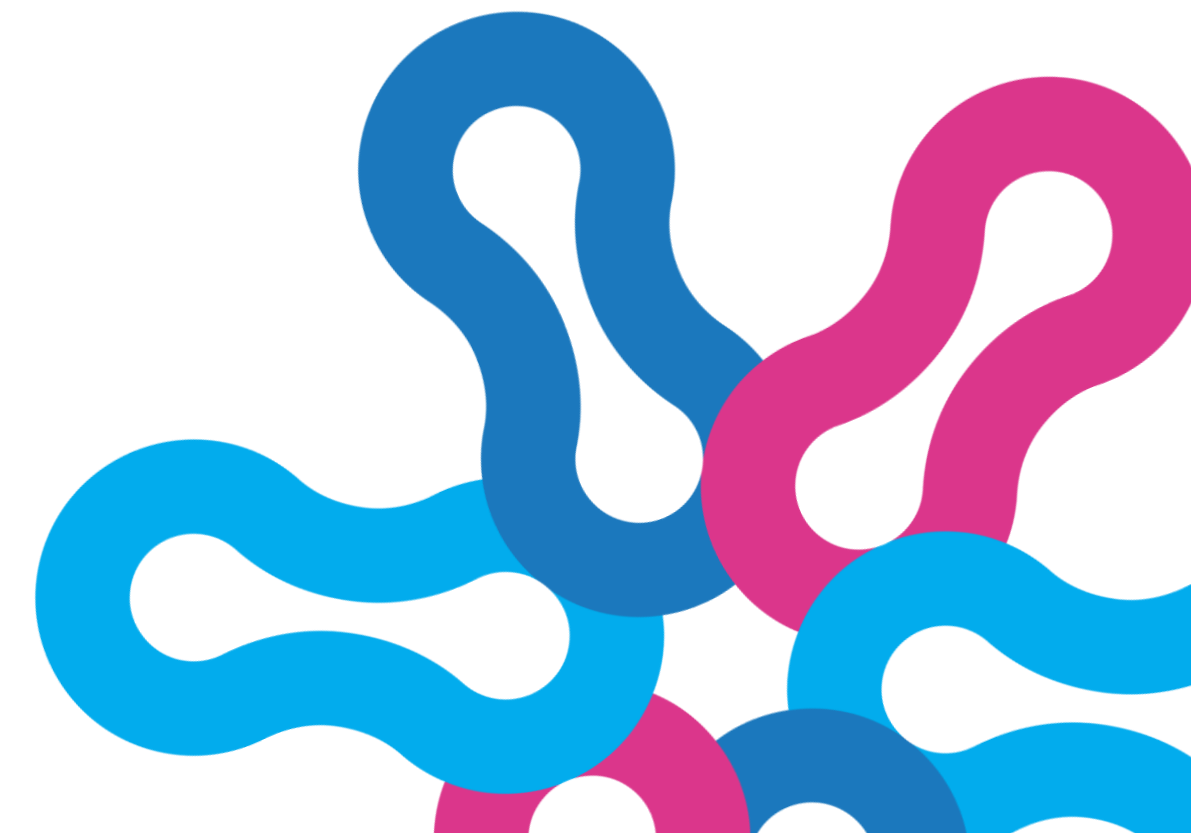
Work backward from observed change to contribution



The case of evaluation:

20 validated outcomes based on the extensive desk review and around 80 interviews

Conducted in 3 countries, in 3 different languages during 2025





Key steps for Outcome Harvesting...

DESIGN THE HARVEST..

ENGAGE WITH INFORMANTS...

ANALYSE AND INTERPRET

1

3

5

2

4

6

REVIEW THE DOCUMENTATION
AND DRAFT OUTCOMES...

SUBSTANTIATE...

SUPPORT USE OF FINDINGS





Steps

AI helped

Stayed human



Design

Draft tools, checklists

Define "outcome," ethics



Document
review

Cluster, flag, map

Resist the programme's
framing



Engagement

Transcribe, translate

Trust, safe space, silence



Substantiate

Track evidence web

Weigh, judge, scale down



Analysis

Propose patterns

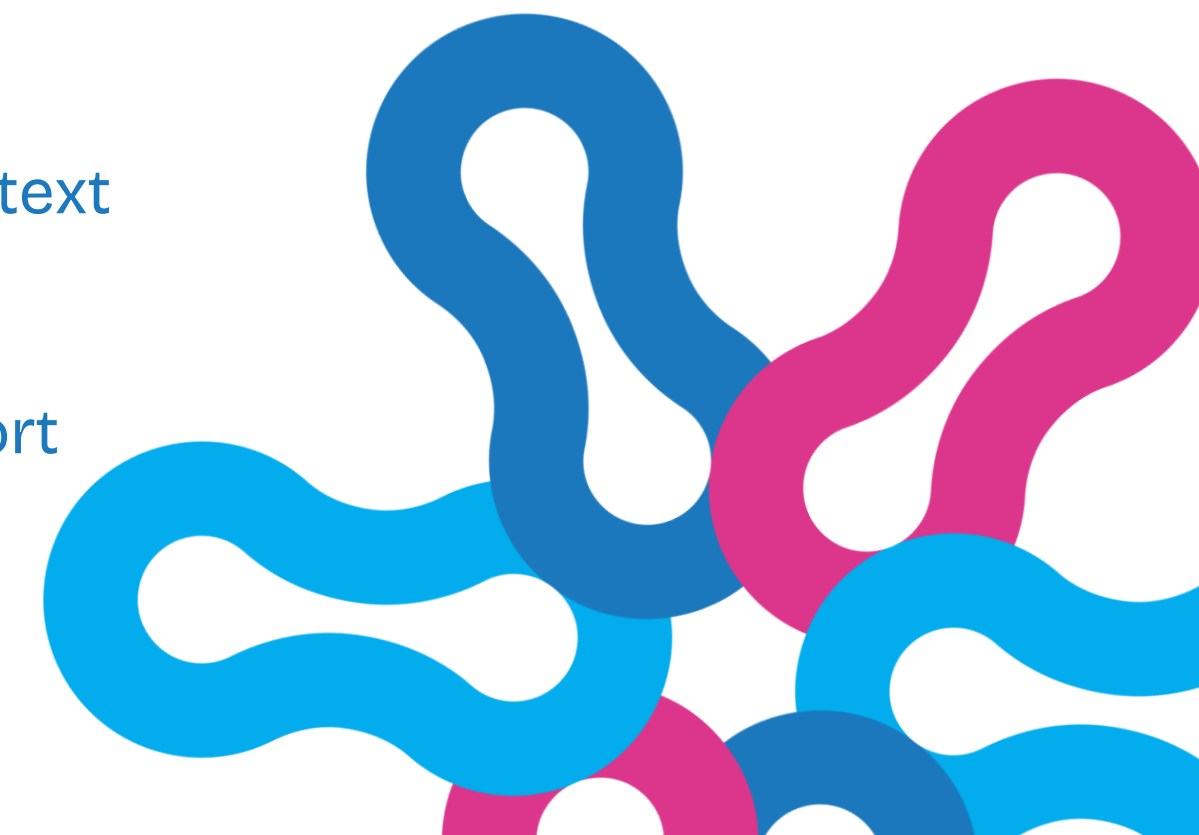
Test against context



Reporting

Draft, restructure

What not to report





What AI hold for us?



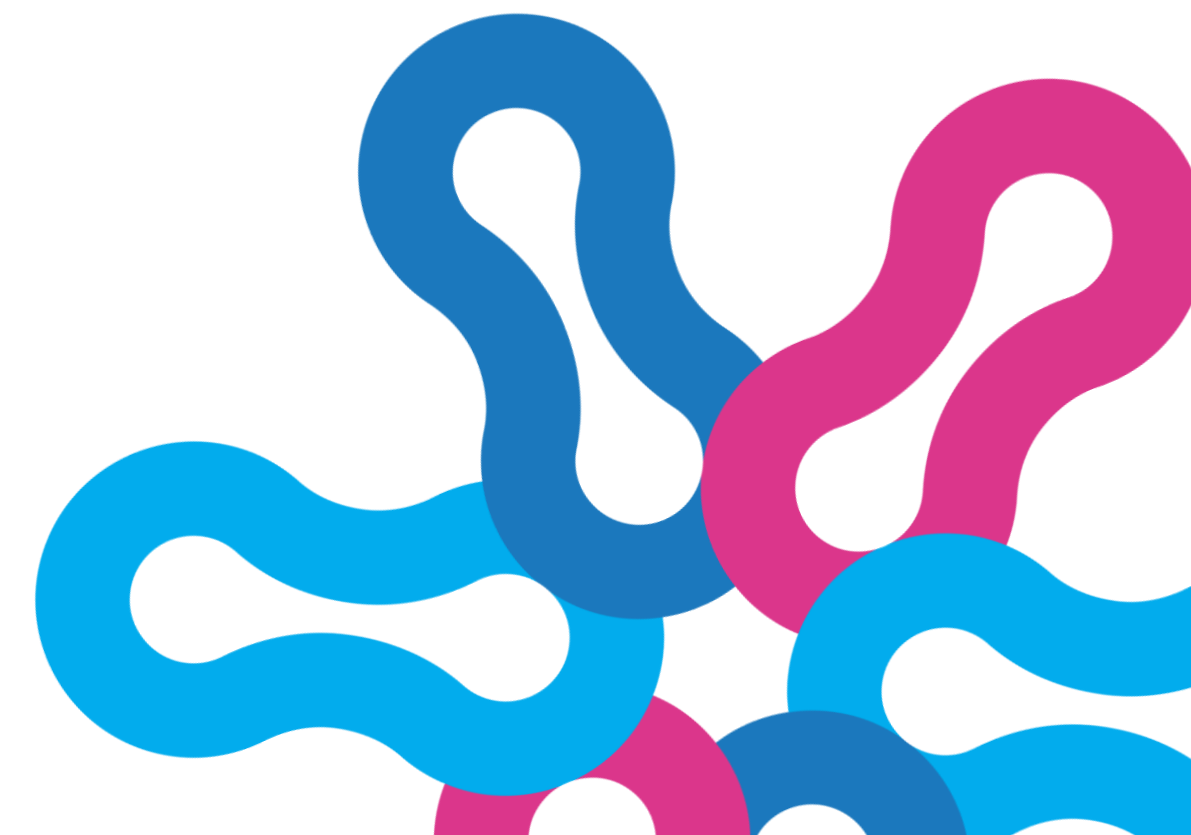
Volume & language: transcribe, translate, make a vast corpus searchable



Structure & consistency: cluster outcomes, check the three quality criteria, flag missing "who-did-what-when-where"



Pattern & draft: surface candidate patterns, draft synthesis, track the evidence web





AI can't judge how big a result really is?



"Broad transformation" → one institution, and a shaky one

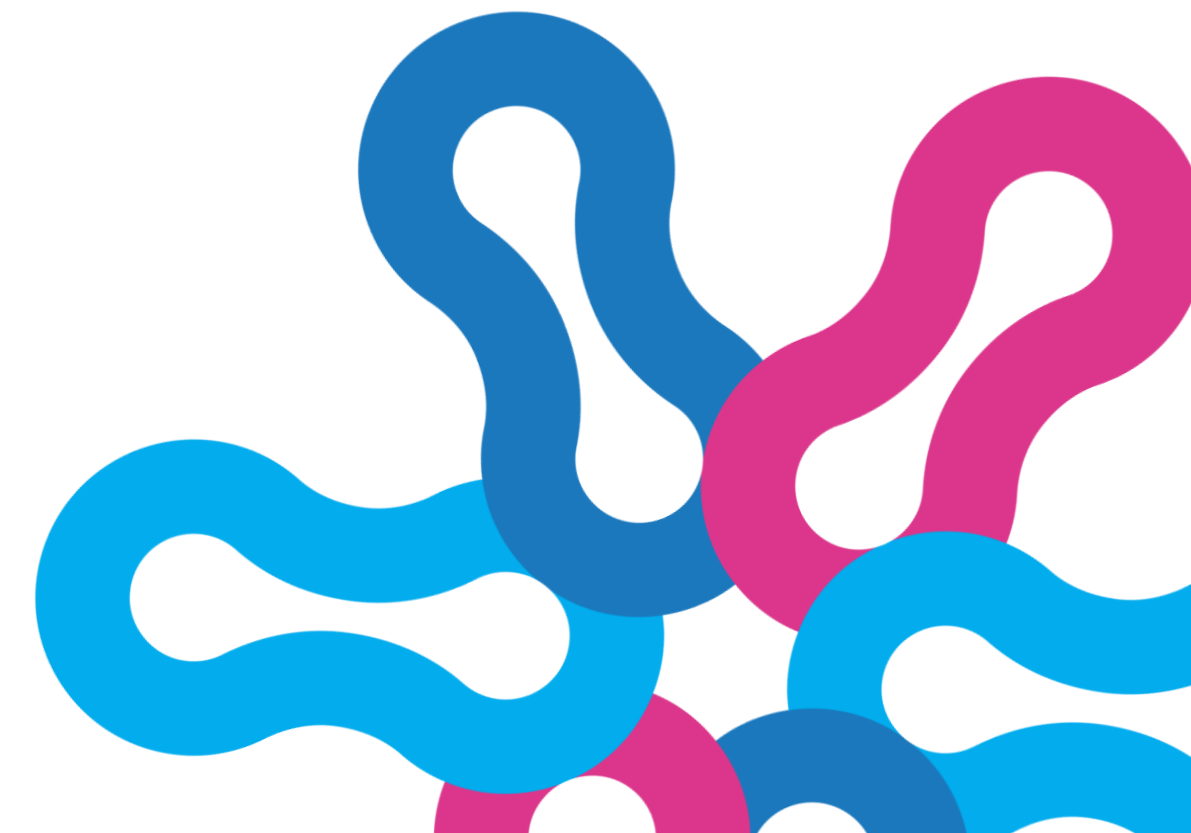


"Region-wide empowerment" → a handful of core people



"Enhanced capacity across institutions" → two coaches, no group programmes

**Feed AI the programme's documents and it writes the big version.
Sizing a result down is human work.**





The catch: AI always agrees with you



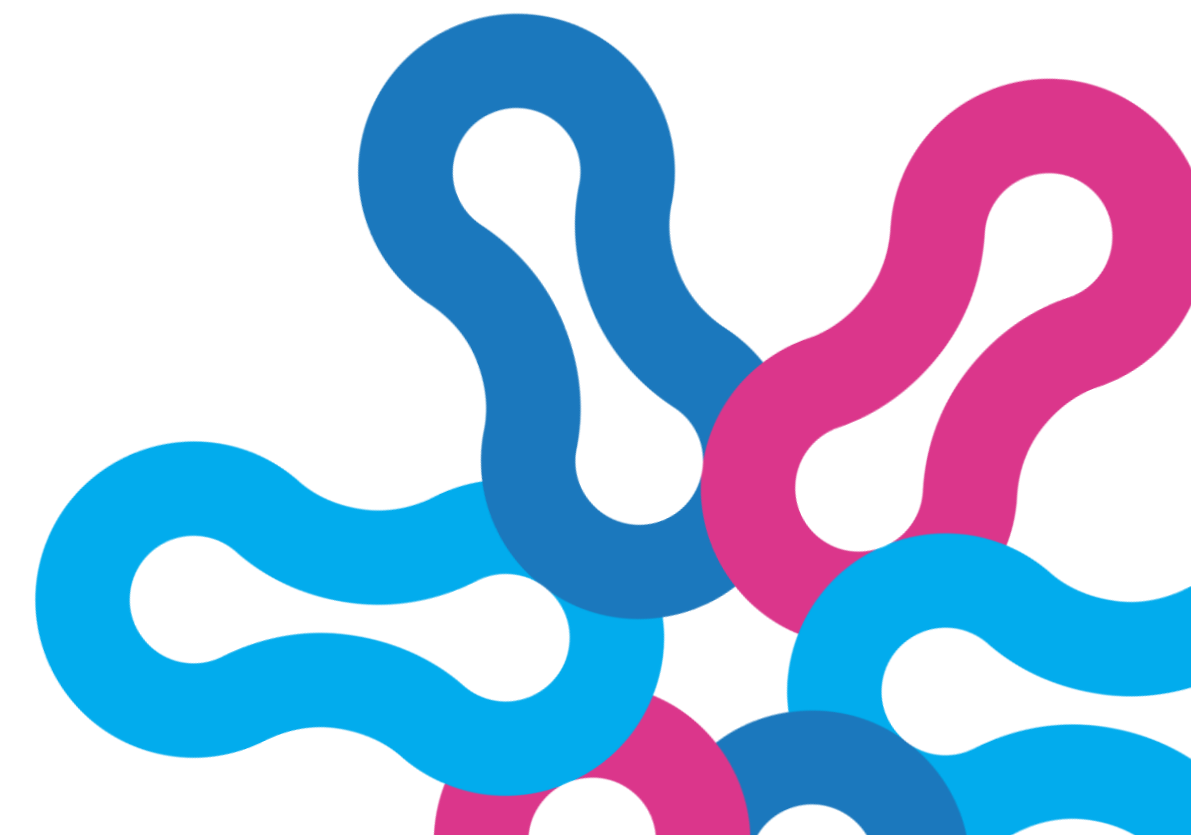
It gives you the confident, positive version of the story



Your job is often the opposite: doubt it, shrink it, say no



The risk isn't a wrong number you'd catch — it's a smooth story you stop questioning





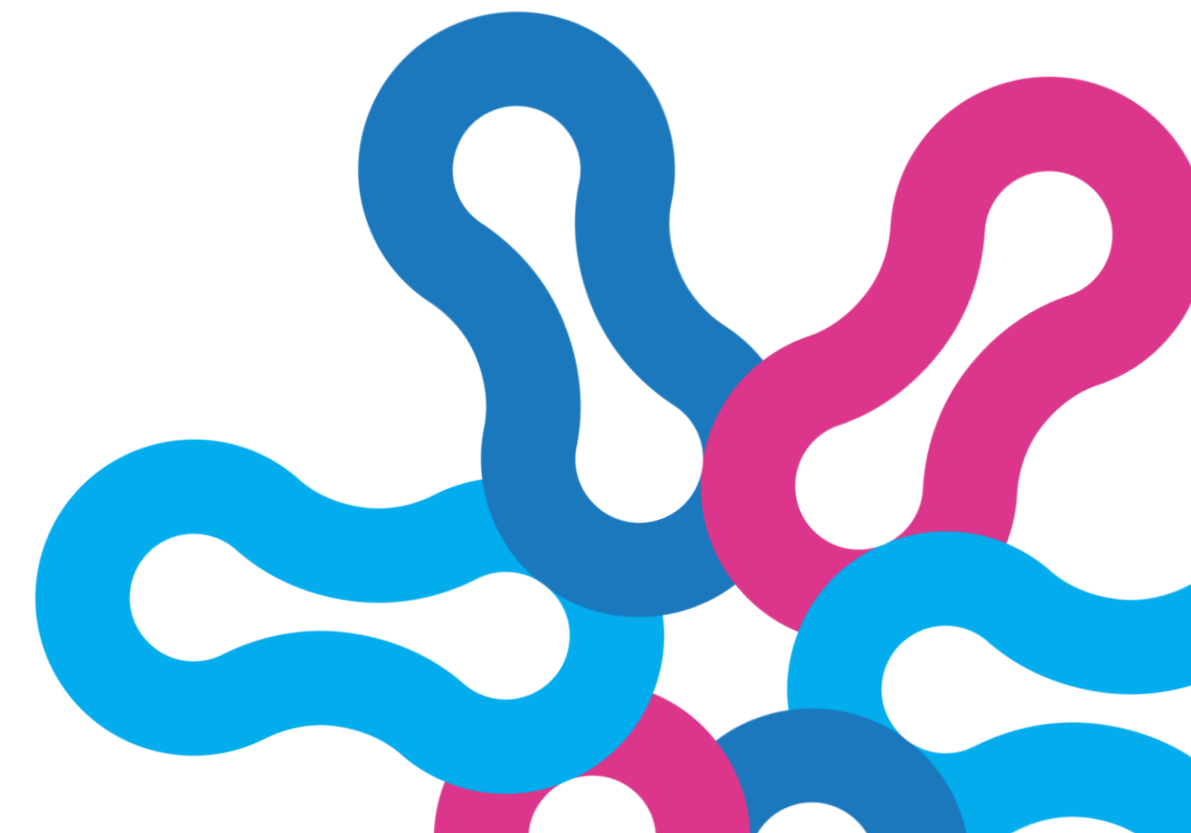
What this means for teaching?



How we work in the field shapes what we teach?



What we teach shapes how the next generation works?





global
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Thank you!

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