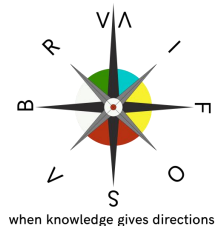




COMMUNITIES IN EXODUS:

recovering identities lost through planned
relocation and disinvestment

PhDc. Sabina LEOPA
URBASOFIA – Bucharest, Romania



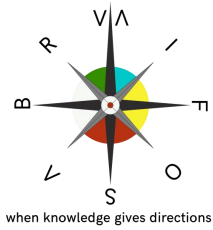
URBASOFIA

Laboratory for urban development, policy design and territorial cohesion focused on developing more integrated, participatory and smart-oriented solutions to pressing urban problems;

Bridging the gap between cities, integrated planning and innovative technologies and tools:

- By assisting cities to transition from traditional, static and inflexible planning to integrated planning: **area-based, transversal, participatory, with integration of funding;**
- By developing the right tools, flagship projects and piloting actions for actual, real urban problems;
- Through research and innovation in the field(s) of social innovation and smart cities (SC) pertaining to urban development.

More information: www.urbasofia.eu



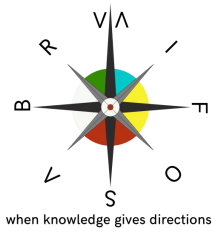
PLANNED RELOCATION & PREVENTIVE RESETTLEMENT

Planned relocation: housing-led programmes of urban regeneration, “*whereby a community’s housing, assets, and public infrastructure are rebuilt in another location*” (World Bank, 2010:77).

Resettlement is a **multi-dimensional process**: physical, social, cultural, psychological, environmental, legal, economic and political-administrative issues need to be considered.

Preventive resettlement:

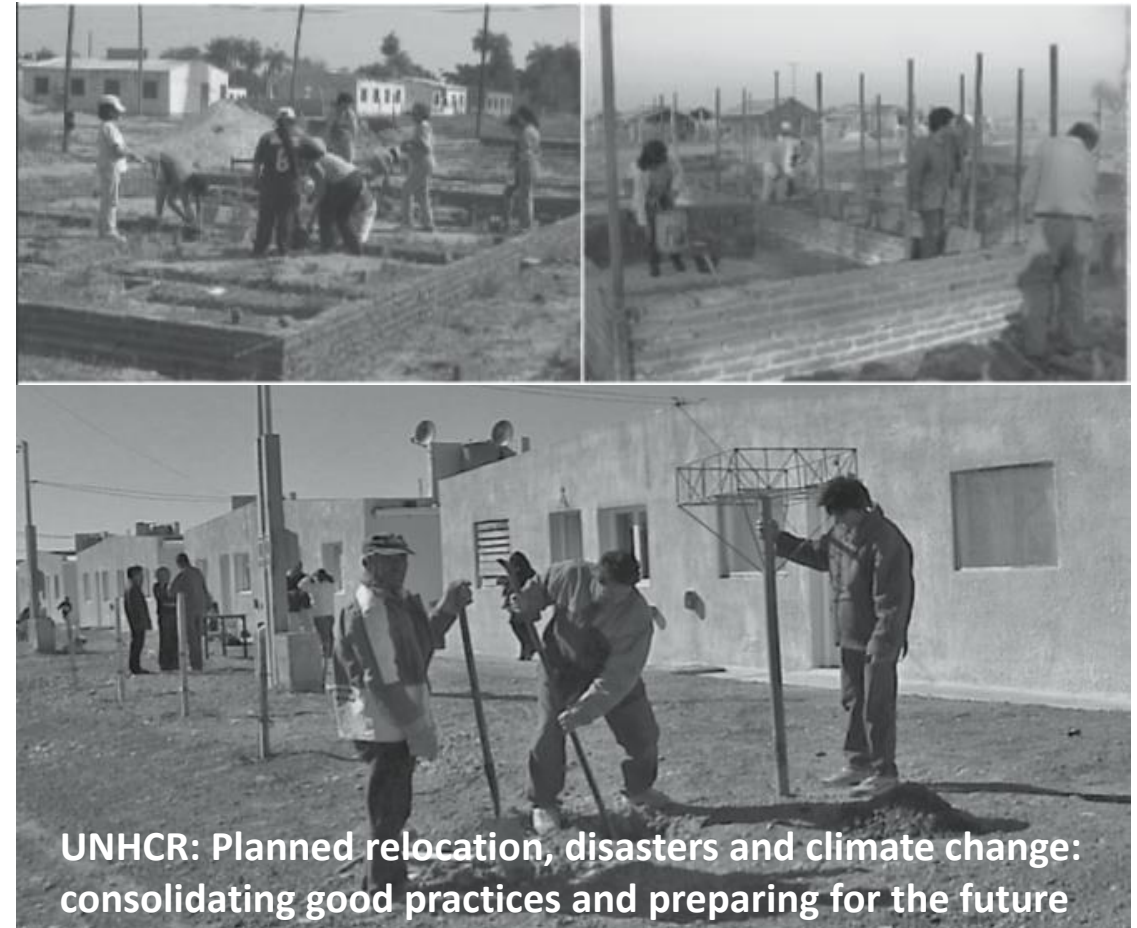
- Last-resort risk management action of community relocation due to high disaster risks;
- Should be supported by risk assessment and feasibility studies, embedded in land-use plans and relocation strategies, accompanied by complex economic and service provision measures – beyond a simple housing process.
- Potential to improve standard of living, but crucial to co-develop and implement with the community itself: multi-level governance relocation model



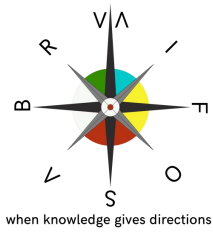
PREVENTIVE RESETTLEMENT ACTIONS (1)

Argentina: resettlement of flood-prone communities

- Subprograma de Vivienda – 15 year three-stage housing programme for low-income population
- Assisted self-construction: contributing labour
- Horizontal and vertical governance, including community organization of up to 100 people working together;
- Significant amount of unity, participation and training in building homes
- ***Transparency, participation, reasonable costs, interdisciplinarity***



UNHCR: Planned relocation, disasters and climate change: consolidating good practices and preparing for the future



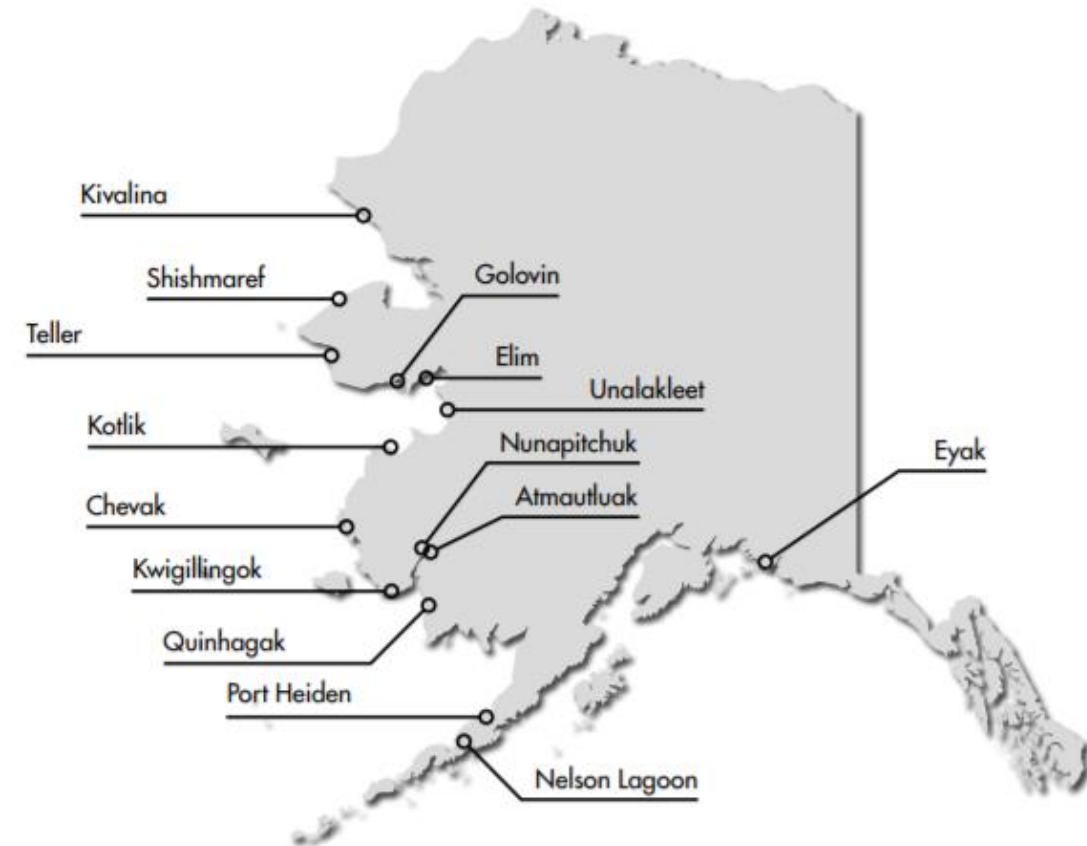
PREVENTIVE RESETTLEMENT ACTIONS (2)

Relocating Communities in Alaska

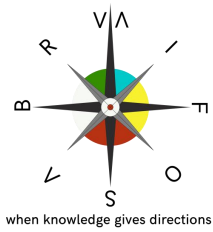
- Currently undergoing
- Community-led relocation process
- **Multi-disciplinary working groups** for the development of coordinated strategies
- **Community-based monitoring** of change impact on culture, economy, health and well-being

MAP OF THE 15 COMMUNITIES WORKING WITH AIJ TO DESIGN A COMMUNITY-LED RELOCATION PROCESS

Source: Alaska Coastal Hazards Program



Source: www.nrc.no



UNDERSTANDING DISPLACEMENT EFFECTS

“The biggest challenge is to move the minds of the people.” (M. Szulgit, Kiruna)

Physical

- Separate from the original location
- Perceived distance

Functional

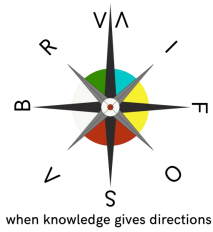
- Local services creation delay, or
- Services lacking in area and harder to access

Social

- Dissolution of existing social networks
- Disconnection, often difficulty to replace existing social relations

Psychological

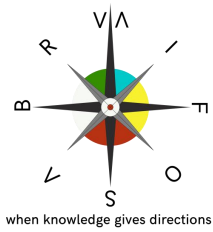
- Absent sense of identity and attachment
- Mistrust, reduced „fit” between inhabitants and place



WHAT DO GOOD ACTIONS HAVE IN COMMON?

- **Strong governance framework**, involvement of all government levels and stakeholders, from institutions, social services and utility providers to suppliers, investors, media, NGOs and citizens themselves;
- **Early involvement of the population** in planning and execution (Resettlement Advisory Councils, community boards, working groups etc.)
- Counselling, advisory services, courses and preparing families for integration; post-resettlement assistance.
- **Clear indicators and monitoring framework** (often involving citizens themselves) for the effects in well-being, health, education, economy and employment, environment, social cohesion and psychological effects.
- **...thinking outside the box:** socially innovative initiatives (eg. Physical participation to resettlement as a way of strengthening buy-in) can be sustainable on the longer term.



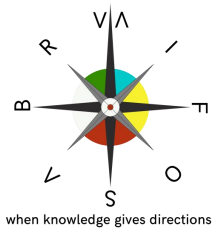


MONTERUSCIELLO: A COMPLEX AFTERMATH OF PLANNED RELOCATION

- Resettlement was conducted 30 years ago: we can speak about a *historically* disenfranchized community
- The **current (new) generation** faces problems stemming from *long-term* deprivation of services, rather than the needs of a newly-relocated community
- So, rather than restoring the original community sense: **FOSTERING A NEW IDENTITY**



Source: iniziativa.net



(SENSE OF) COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY

- Meeting needs and sharing values
- Membership and influence
- Shared emotional connection

CONNECTIONS

- Within and outside: access to resources and exchanges

CONTROL

- Participation and decision-making

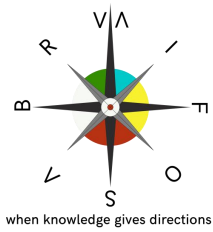
CASH

- Access to employment opportunities
- Community-based economic development strategies

COLLECTIVE ACTION [2012, Chavis, D]



Dinner and a Movie community events
(dinnerandamovieseries.com)



COMMUNITY REGENERATION (?)

- Rebuilding communities and social links within, together with the inhabitants which have suffered from economic, social and environmental decline: *restoring the balance of opportunities and life-chances for a deprived community.*

Social Cohesion

- from disorganization and lack of interest to cohesiveness

Civic Fabric

- fostering and enhancing local organizations and networks;

Infrastructure

- increasing the quality and standards of housing and amenities

Services

- equitable access to health, education and learning, social and cultural services

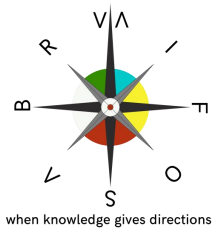
Opportunities

- creating economic and local endogenous growth opportunities

External links

- consolidating external networks and countering social & spatial isolation

Expectations:
embedding attitudes and expectations of residents into long-term planning.

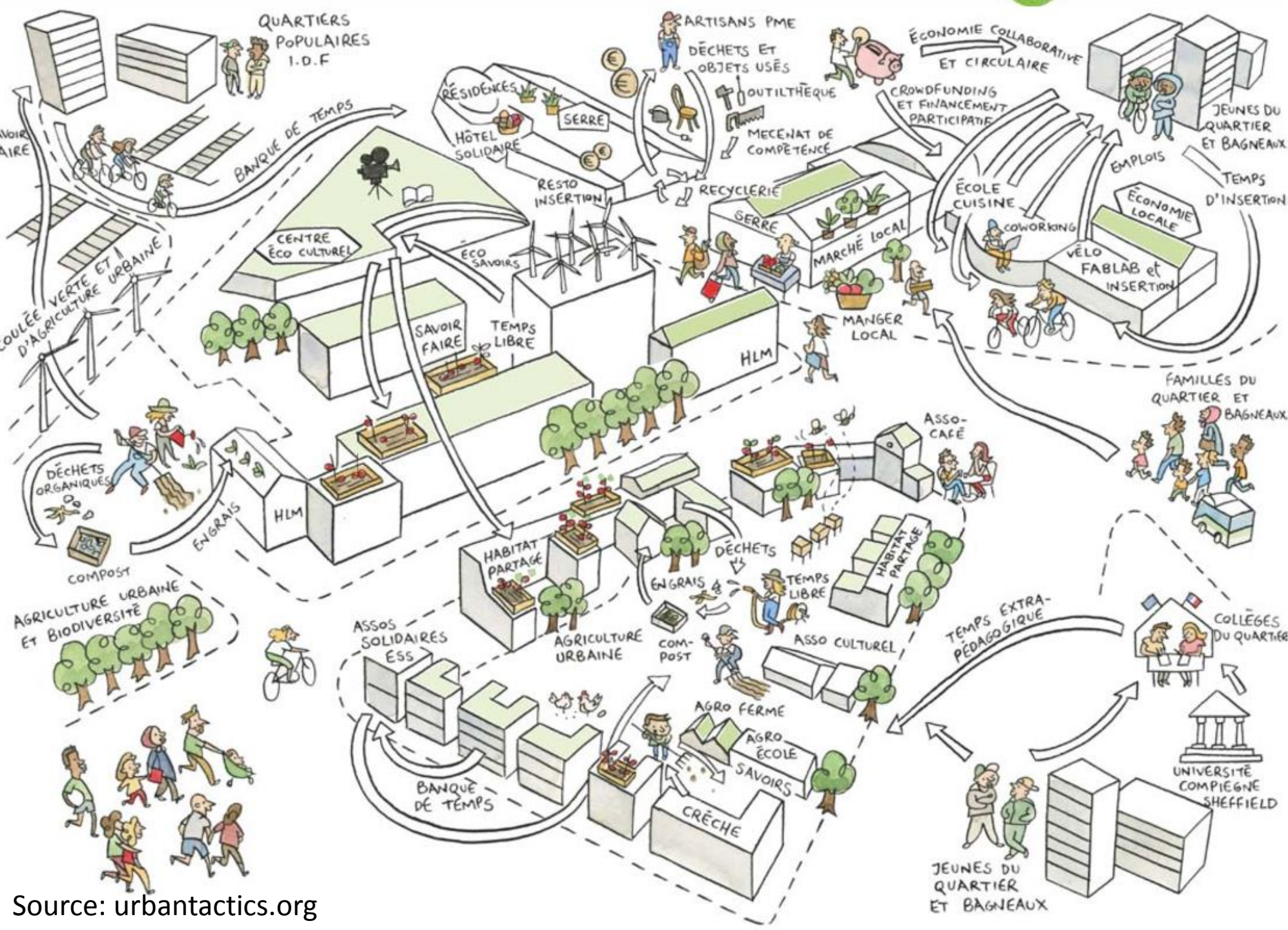


URBAN PERMACULTURE: A SOCIAL VECTOR

- Unused urban space, an opportunity: common resources, joint reclaiming – common strategy for valorization and management;
- Starting point for community crystallization: supporting ownership of assets, self organization, entrepreneurship;
- Economically productive activity with a low entry barrier

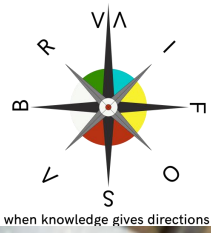
Source: 100thseed.org





Bagneux, France -
*Atelier d'Architecture
Autogérée*

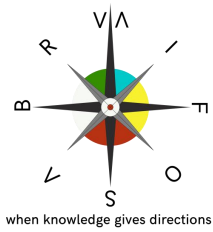
- Co-conception
- Co-construction
- Insertion programs
- Training
- Fostering collective identity and pride



GROWING POWER

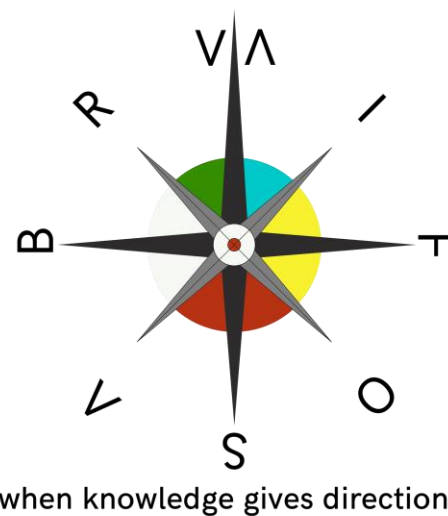
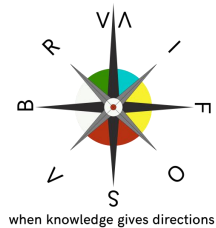
Farm-city link,
Wisconsin, USA

- Urban Food Production system – reuse, recycle, reclaim
- Training, technical assistance, production and distribution
- Support for local innovation (5 projects)



TOWARDS A UNIQUE IDENTITY FOR MONTERUSCIELLO – a few take-aways

1. Understanding neighbourhood context and avoiding assumptions about what local residents desire: Forge relationships, appoint liaisons, find project “champions”
2. Identifying ways in which the project can provide services which the community values and respects: incorporate meaningful individual and community goals into the project
3. Avoiding perceptions of “outsider project”: gain buy-in and include local residents into the planning process
4. Making urban farming easy to understand and accessible as a concept: training, discussions, sharing examples of other successful initiatives
5. Planning for permanence: sustainability after the project ends



**GRAZIE PER L'ATTENZIONE
&
IN ATTESA DELLE VOSTRE DOMANDE**

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