



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

WAR
CHILDHOOD
MUSEUM



2025 IN NUMBERS

7,000⁺

objects in WCM
global collection
from 21 armed conflicts

793

new objects
added to the
collection

46,500⁺

visitors to
traveling
exhibitions

32,000⁺

visitors to the
permanent
exhibition

700⁺

peacebuilding
workshops held in the
Museum and in schools
across BiH

13,000⁺

students and pupils
participated in
workshops

COUNTRY-WIDE PEACE EDUCATION EFFORT

01



PEACESTORY

Throughout 2025, the War Childhood Museum continued implementing PEACESTORY, the flagship peace education program supported by the United Nations Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).

The program was launched in 2024. PEACESTORY is a nationwide initiative

that places peace at the center of public dialogue in Bosnia and Herzegovina. By introducing peace education into schools and opening space for dialogue across diverse local communities, the program actively contributes to strengthening a culture of positive peace throughout the country.

Creativity for Peace

Through its *Creativity for Peace* component, PEACESTORY creates safe and supportive environments in which young people—guided by their teachers and the Museum’s team—develop knowledge in peace pedagogy and translate it into practice.

Participants are empowered to share what they learn with their peers, fostering peer-to-peer learning and contributing to long-term peacebuilding in their communities.

To date, the program has reached more than 12,000 students, equipping them with practical skills and knowledge to engage in peacebuilding at the local level.

The program continues to grow organically, with many teachers and peer educators expressing interest in hosting additional workshops beyond those originally planned for the school year.



As an educator, I am often repeatedly surprised by how deeply young people can think about the world they live in when they are given space and a sense of safety. During peace workshops inspired by the work and material-based approach of the War Childhood Museum, I had the opportunity to guide a group of students through topics that, in a subtle yet powerful way, address questions of identity, safety, loss, hope, and empathy.

Teacher from Bužim

Program Reach in 2025

250

teachers and peer educators trained

650+

workshops held

12,000+

students participated in peacebuilding workshops

60+

schools involved

40+

communities across Bosnia and Herzegovina



FURAJ MIR

The FURAJ MIR component of the program mobilizes young people in 24 locations across Bosnia and Herzegovina to critically explore what peace means in their own communities. More than 120 youth divided in 20 teams received hands-on training in research, project management, public communication, and exhibition development. Building toward the program's goal of realizing 20 exhibitions in 20 locations, participants began translating their work into locally produced exhibitions that address peace-related topics relevant to their communities and foster public dialogue. The very first exhibition was opened in Mostar, where it attracted significant attention and engagement from a wide range of local stakeholders.

FURAJ MIR teams further expand public dialogue on peace through numerous local and national media appearances, with the Mostar team's exhibition featured in more than 20 media outlets and the Banja Luka team appearing on the public broadcaster RTRS to discuss the importance of peace for younger generations.



Over the past year, the War Childhood Museum engaged thousands of young people across Bosnia and Herzegovina through creative peacebuilding and educational initiatives implemented in diverse communities. Drawing on the Museum's collection, grounded in youth-empowering creative and educational practices, and guided by active hope, our programs equip young people with the confidence, skills, and sense of responsibility to actively contribute to building a society rooted in positive peace.

Amina Krvavac
Country Director
Bosnia and Herzegovina



Through this topic, we want to show that Srebrenica is not only a city of a heavy past and painful memories, but also a city of hope, kindness, and strength. A city that, through small and warm stories, still has something to say—not only about the past, but about the future as well. We want that other side to be heard too—the brighter, gentler, more humane one.

Milica
program participant, Bratunac

This is a very interesting way of presenting and portraying the reality of Mostar. The exhibition truly fascinated me—through it, young people in Mostar who are living peace are sending a strong message that invites all of us to pause and reflect on our city, our surroundings, and our lives. If we are not ready to listen to young people now, then nothing really makes sense. I am glad to see such a proactive approach, where young people want to express their views, and I hope all of this will have a meaningful impact.

Đani Rahimić
President of the Mostar City Council

The program, which will continue throughout 2026, is one of the most significant peacebuilding initiatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina for new generations.

DOCUMENTATION AND COLLECTION

02

The War Childhood Museum continued to expand its Bosnian and Global collections, ensuring that personal war childhood stories and experiences from diverse contexts remain preserved, visible, and accessible.

The Bosnian collection of the Museum last year expanded by new objects originating from Sarajevo, Velika Kladuša, Donji Vakuf, Konjic, Jajce, Višegrad, and Gračanica.

The Museum's global collection now includes objects from 21 armed conflicts, ranging from the Second World War to the present day. During the year, the Museum continued collecting testimonies and objects from Ukraine, Palestine, and other conflict and post-conflict contexts.

NEW OBJECTS IN THE COLLECTION

The Ball That Survived

Before the war, I was part of our school's football club here in Gaza. Then the war began, and our school turned into a shelter for displaced people. We could no longer attend classes or play sports as we used to, but we continued playing football in our neighborhood whenever we could.

One morning in October 2023, my friends and I were outside, playing our usual game. Suddenly, the bombing started. It was only 10 a.m., but the explosion was so close that everything went completely dark. One of my friends was killed right then and there. He was burned alive.

I somehow managed to escape, and ran home to check on my family. Our front door had been blown off, there were shards of glass everywhere, but, thankfully, everyone survived.

When things calmed down and it was safe to go outside, I returned to the spot where we were playing. That's when I found our football. It was torn, but it survived. I decided to keep it. I don't play with it anymore. It just sits there, gathering dust. But it's more than a ball now; it's a memory of my friend and the time we shared.

Omer, b. 2013
Gaza



Buried Treasure



When shooting broke out in Višegrad and the surrounding areas, we fled our home with only the essentials: food, water, and a change of clothes or two. That was in early April 1992, a little more than three months before my eighth birthday.

Unlike me, my parents had sensed for months that something was about to happen. As they used to say, there had been “rumours” of war long before it began.

That is why, at the beginning of 1992, they buried our valuables in the yard of the house, in case we had to flee or the house was burned down.

It was only in 2018 that my father dug them up and brought them to America, where we have lived since 1996. Among those items were these two toys, important enough to be buried together with jewellery and other family valuables. My father brought them in a plastic bag, still dirty from the soil in which they had been hidden.

For years, I kept them carefully in a kitchen drawer in America, in the same plastic bag, still covered with the earth that was my foundation and my homeland. They remind me of my pre-war childhood, when my sister and I often played with them. We lined them up on the windowsills and on the floor; they were often left scattered around the living room, while my mother would “scold” us to pick them up and put them away.

Mirela, b. 1984
Bosnia and Herzegovina

EXHIBITIONS

03

In 2025, the War Childhood Museum presented objects and stories from its collection nationally and internationally. In Sarajevo, alongside the permanent exhibition, two temporary exhibitions opened: *Children of War, People of Peace*, marking the Museum's eighth anniversary, and *Speaking Out*, co-created with survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

In addition, the first of 20 planned youth co-created exhibitions as part of PEACESTORY opened in Mostar. Internationally, two major exhibitions opened in Sweden, while the exhibition in South Korea, which had been on display since December 2024, concluded in May 2025.



Permanent Exhibition

In 2025, the permanent exhibition in Sarajevo was rotated as part of the Museum's annual practice, alongside renovation works supported by the European Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Museum also introduced an online ticketing system and launched a new multilingual mobile guide. The permanent exhibition welcomed more than 32,000 visitors during the year.

Children Of War, People Of Peace

In March, the WCM marked its 8th anniversary by hosting a special exhibition in collaboration with renowned Bosnian photographer Milomir Kovačević Strašni. Titled *Children of War, People of Peace*, the exhibition focused on a photographic series created across two time periods. During the war, Kovačević documented the daily lives of children living in besieged Sarajevo. Years later, he reconnected with those individuals as adults and produced new portraits illustrating their lives in the present day.

Have a glimpse of the exhibition opening atmosphere.



Speaking Out



In June, the War Childhood Museum opened the exhibition *Speaking Out* at the European House of Culture and National Minorities in Sarajevo. The exhibition was co-created with women who survived conflict-related sexual violence and with children born as a result of that violence.

Speaking Out was part of the cultural and educational program Women Lead. Peace Follows, organized as a side event of the high-level international conference on Women, Peace and Security to mark the 25th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.

Listen at the Swedish Air Force Museum

The *Listen* exhibition was open at the Swedish Air Force Museum in Linköping from May 2025 until the end of January 2026. It explored childhoods affected by war—from children evacuated from Finland during World War II to Bosnian and Lebanese refugees now living in Sweden, as well as individuals from Palestine, Syria, Ukraine, and other war-affected countries. The exhibition was complemented by the *Share* space, an interactive zone designed for visitors to reflect on the exhibition, express their emotions, and share memories of their own childhoods. By the end of 2025, the exhibition had been visited by more than 30,000 people.



Listen at the Sundsvall Museum



In September 2025, the WCM opened its second exhibition in Sweden at the Sundsvall Museum, showcasing stories of children affected by conflicts worldwide, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Yemen, Croatia, and Kosovo. The exhibition attracted more than 12,500 visitors.

Childhood Under Siege

Following a successful presentation at the Seoul Museum of History from May to August 2024, where it attracted over 200,000 visitors, the War Childhood Museum's traveling exhibition *Childhood Under Siege* continued its tour in Jeju and was on display at the Jeju April 3 Peace Memorial Hall until May 2025.



A City in Traces—Mostar Through Memory and Dialogue

As part of FURAJ MIR, the first of the 20 planned exhibitions was held at the Abrašević Youth Cultural Center in Mostar. Titled *A City in Traces—Mostar Through Memory and Dialogue*, the exhibition guided visitors through six symbolic locations in the city. Produced by the local youth team with the support of professional mentors, the exhibition attracted more than 500 visitors and received wide media coverage.

The remaining exhibitions will be held across Bosnia and Herzegovina in the following locations: Banja Luka, Bihać, Brčko, Breza, Bugojno, Donji Vakuf, Modriča, Mostar, Prozor–Rama, Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Teočak, Tešanj, Teslić, Tuzla, Prnjavor, Zavidovići, and Zenica.



This experience was exciting because I learned many new things, but also challenging, as it was my first project. Precisely because of these new challenges, I gained new skills and confidence that will help me continue to engage in similar initiatives.

Almedina
program participant

EDUCATION

04

In 2025, the War Childhood Museum continued to prioritize peace education as one of the core areas of its work. Through PEACESTORY and the Museum's regular educational programming, more than 700 peacebuilding workshops were organized. Peacebuilding workshops paired with guided visits to the Museum's exhibitions were attended by 770 children from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

During the year, 65 schools from Gradačac, Tuzla, Visoko, Cazin, Tešanj, Živinice, Fojnica, Maglaj, and other cities visited the Museum as part of organized educational activities.

In addition to local participants, the Museum welcomed international students who took part in peacebuilding workshops from countries including



Japan, Serbia, North Macedonia, Germany, Sweden, Czechia, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark, among others, reflecting the growing international reach of the Museum's educational programs.



STORIES OF IMPACT

05



As part of the *Creativity for Peace* program, a significant breakthrough was achieved within the "two schools under one roof" system—a segregated education model in which Bosniak and Croat children share the same school building but attend separate classes, use different entrances, follow different curricula, and have little to no interaction.



A teacher at the Vitez Mixed Secondary School initiated collaboration by inviting colleagues from the Vitez Secondary School, both operating within the same building, to jointly host a peace education workshop. During a two-hour session, peer educators led interactive activities for students from the other school, fostering dialogue, connection, and shared learning across entrenched divides.

The workshop was warmly received by students, whose positive responses led both schools to express interest in continuing this form of collaboration. The initiative represents a small but meaningful step toward dialogue and relationship-building in a divided educational setting.

Global Advisory Board



In 2025, the War Childhood Museum established the Global Advisory Board (GAB), bringing together distinguished professionals to provide strategic guidance and strengthen the Museum's international profile.

Global Advisory Board members are: Vesna Bajšanski-Agić, Marc D'Silva, Mary Fitzgerald, Dunja Mijatović, Eric Nelson, Helene Rånlund, Ann Skelton, and Deyan Sudjic.

[Read more about the GAB and its members.](#)



Gaza Biennale

In October, the War Childhood Museum Bosnia and Herzegovina participated in the Gaza Biennale as part of the Sarajevo Pavilion. The Museum hosted a screening of *Escape from Farida* by Yahya Alsholy, followed by a conversation with Gazan artists Murad Al-Assar, who joined online from Gaza, and Hamada Elkept, who joined live from Sarajevo.

The Gaza Biennale is a global movement that brings artistic voices from Gaza to cities around the world. As original works could not leave Gaza, the artworks were recreated for display in Sarajevo by artist Danilo Kreso.



Here We Stand

In August, the city of Bradford hosted *Here We Stand*, an exhibition of short films created by young people from Sarajevo, Derry, and Bradford. The project was developed in collaboration with the War Childhood Museum, the Peace Museum, and the

Museum of Free Derry, with support from the British Council, as part of Bradford City of Culture 2025. In December, the films were also screened at the Cinematheque of Bosnia and Herzegovina, followed by a discussion with the authors.

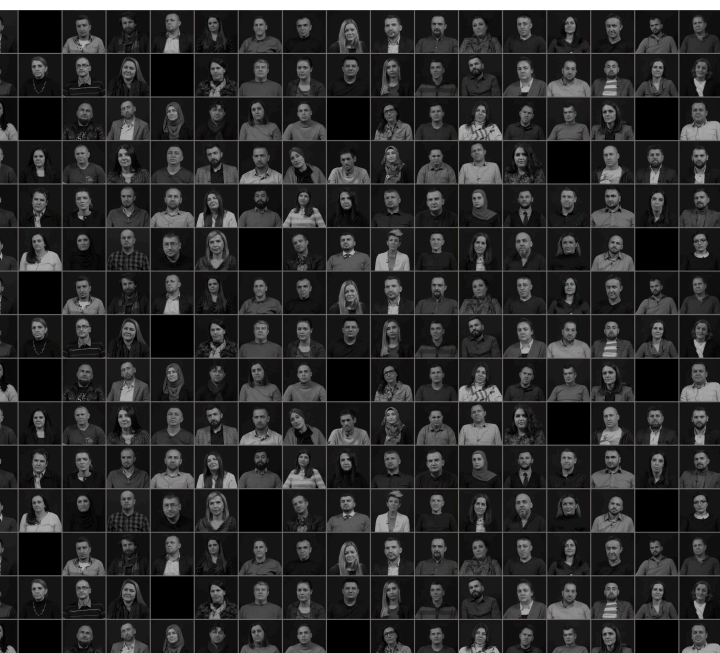


The War Childhood Museum is the world's largest archive of stories about growing up during war.

BBC

in an article about the *Here We Stand* project

30th Anniversary of the Srebrenica Genocide Campaign



The WCM Bosnia and Herzegovina launched a social media campaign marking the 30th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide, reaching 1,4 million viewers and generating tens of thousands of interactions across social media platforms.

“Lejla Hairlahović-Hušić” Scholarship

In 2025, the War Childhood Museum awarded the Lejla Hairlahović-Hušić Scholarship to Amer Maslo for his thesis *Childhood in Armed Conflict: The Case of the Uprising in Herzegovina and Bosnia (1875–1878)*. The scholarship supports research in Bosnia and Herzegovina by local and international PhD candidates conducting their studies within the country.



We Grew Up in War

We Grew Up in War is an interactive game based on the WCM collection that explores the experiences of children growing up in conflict zones, with a focus on Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ukraine. The game was developed by the award-winning indie studio Charles Games as part of the EU-supported MEMENTOES project.

The development process involved extensive consultation with the War Childhood Museum, as well as external experts, researchers, and collection contributors.

In 2025, a demo version was released, and the full game is scheduled for launch on mobile and PC in 2026.

Watch the
official trailer.



INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION



Throughout 2025, the War Childhood Museum actively contributed to global conversations on contemporary museum practice by participating in numerous international and regional events.

The Museum took part in the 27th ICOM General Conference in Dubai—the world’s largest gathering of museum and heritage professionals—bringing together more than 4,000 participants from around the world.

WCM also presented its work and led peacebuilding activities with young people at the Balkanika Festival in Italy, contributed to discussions on intergenerational learning at the *Museum Education and Family* conference in Serbia, and participated in an international roundtable on the role of civil society in advancing peace, held as part of the conference *A Call for Peace: The End of Wars and Respect for International Law*.



In addition, two WCM employees joined the MED 25 – *Le Bel Espoir* peace training ship, an eight-month Mediterranean youth expedition bringing together 200 young people for peacebuilding, dialogue, and intercultural exchange across the Mediterranean. WCM also took part in a series of events in Italy marking World Refugee Day.



WCM'S INTERNATIONAL OFFICES WORK

08

War Childhood Museum Ukraine



Throughout 2025, despite the ongoing full-scale invasion, the War Childhood Museum Ukraine continued its documentation work, collecting more than 690 objects and 295 testimonies.

With over 840 testimonies and 1,445 objects in total, the WCM Ukraine collection represents one of the most comprehensive records of the impact of the Russia–Ukraine war on children's lives.

Exhibitions In Ukraine

WCM Ukraine presented several exhibitions across the country. One exhibition was showcased at the International Book Arsenal Festival, Ukraine's most important book festival, featuring stories of Ukrainian children and the books that supported them during wartime. To mark the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II, the exhibition *War Childhood: The Experiences of World War II* was presented in Lviv. In addition, WCM Ukraine presented an exhibition as part of the forum marking the Day of Resistance to the Occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.



Educational Activities



WCM Ukraine was also active in the area of education. The team implemented a contemporary art and documentation project for a group of teenagers, resulting in a collective exhibition. Throughout the year, WCM Ukraine also organized workshops for researchers and cultural professionals focused on working with personal and local histories.

War Childhood Museum Netherlands

In 2025, the War Childhood Museum significantly strengthened its presence in the Netherlands by expanding its Dutch board, establishing a Dutch Recommendation Committee of 16 distinguished members, and initiating a comprehensive assessment of the feasibility of opening an exhibition in The Hague. These efforts were complemented by receiving an Erasmus partnership grant to develop a genocide education teacher pack for the WCM Education Resource Center, in partnership with HERMES Croatia.

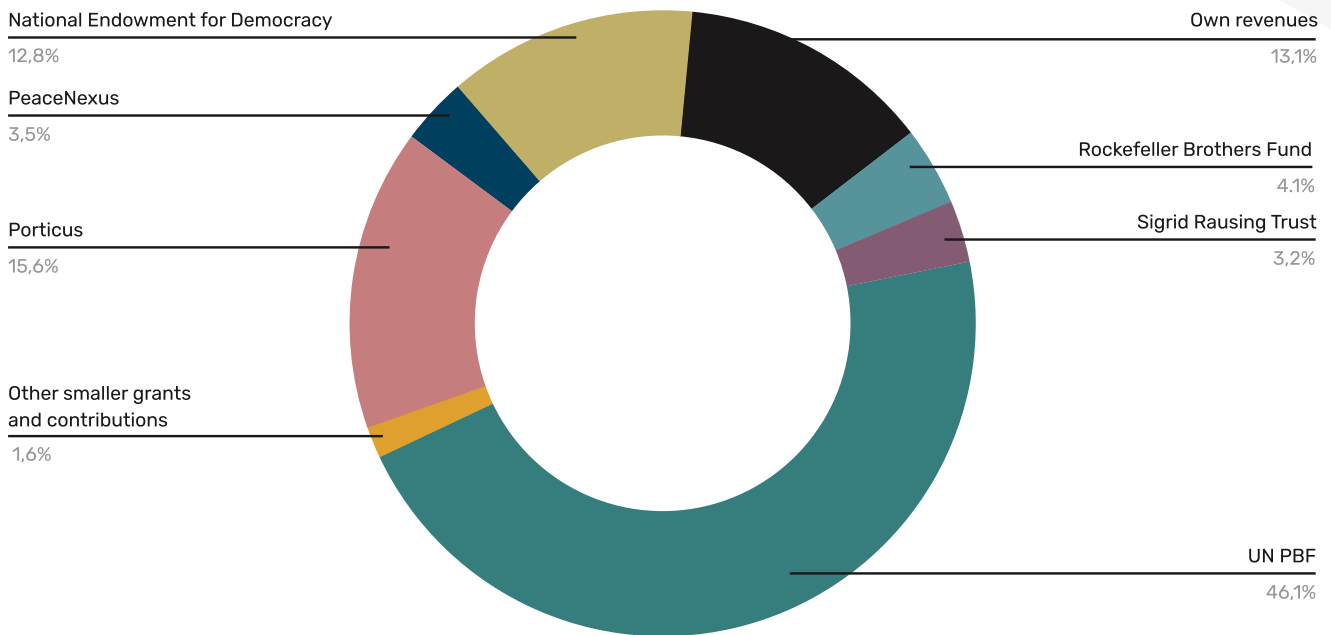


The international development and work of the War Childhood Museum is aligned with our 2030 organizational strategy, which defines the direction in which WCM is evolving. Our international presence is also consistent with the global character of our collection, as well as with the partnerships we are building with other museums and research institutions worldwide. By strengthening our presence in three locations that are key to the conversation on Europe's security and peace—Sarajevo, Kyiv, and The Hague—and by implementing exhibitions and documentation activities beyond Europe, WCM unequivocally positions itself as a globally relevant platform.

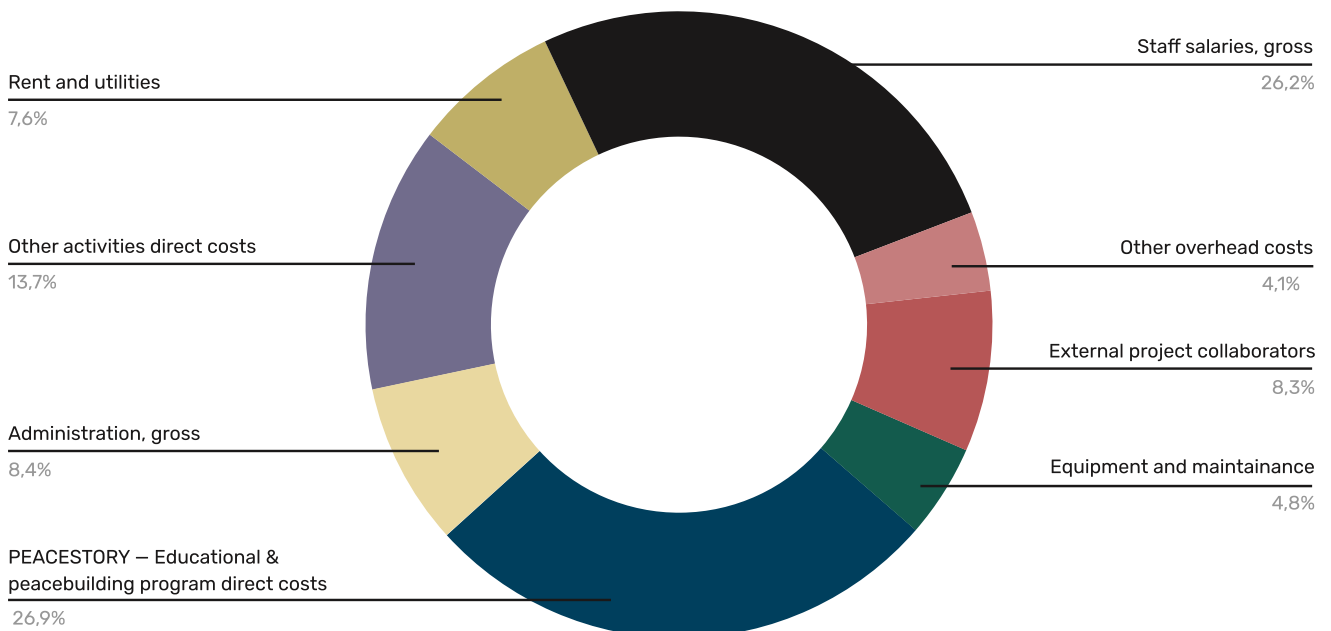
Jasminko Halilović

Founder and Director-General
of the War Childhood Museum

Income: **2,049,000 BAM**



Expenses: **1,639,000 BAM**



Note: This is a provisional overview of income and expenses for the 2025 financial year. It has been prepared prior to the issuance of the official 2025 financial statements and may therefore differ from the final audited figures. For example, income presented here may include funds received in 2025 for activities to be implemented in subsequent financial years.



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for their collaboration.**

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