



Office of the  
**Ombudsman**  
for United Nations Funds and Programmes

# Mediating Around the World

WORKING TOGETHER TO FIND SOLUTIONS

Mediation Newsletter

12th Edition

January 2026



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MEDIATION  
HIGHLIGHTS

2025

# MEDIATION HIGHLIGHTS 2025

## CASE NUMBERS

|              | Mediation cases received per agency | Mediation cases closed per agency |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| UNICEF       | 43                                  | 52                                |
| UNDP         | 36                                  | 30                                |
| UNFPA        | 16                                  | 14                                |
| UNOPS        | 15                                  | 23                                |
| UN Women     | 11                                  | 8                                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>121</b>                          | <b>127</b>                        |

Mediation cases originated from **58 countries.** Most volume came from the U.S. (14%) and Switzerland (8%)

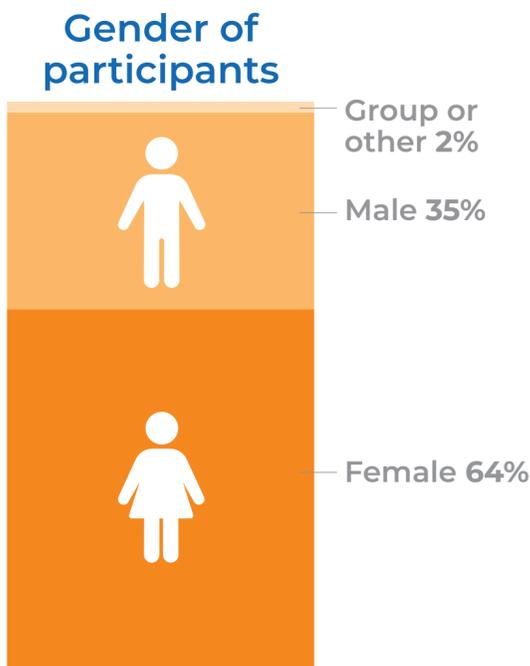
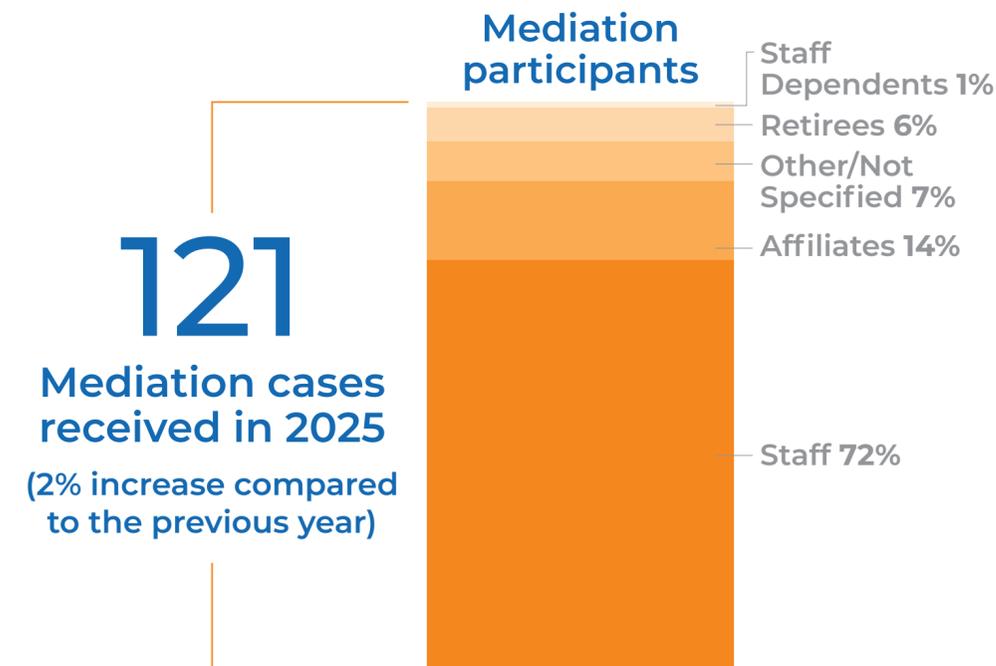
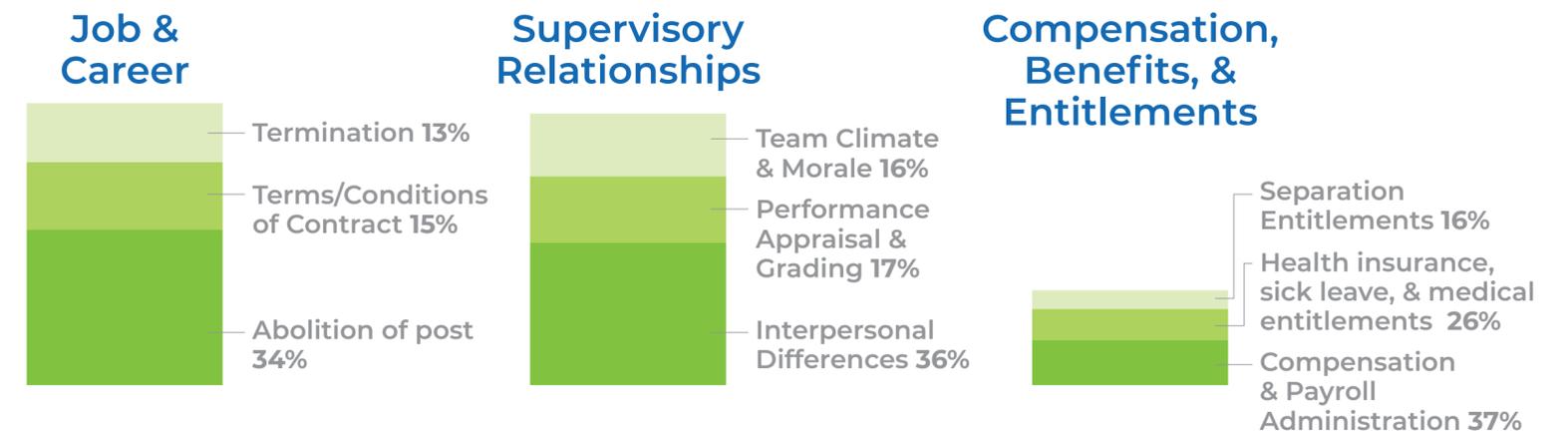
## CASE ISSUES\*

| Issues Mediated                                    | % of Total of Cases |
|--|---------------------|
| Job and Career                                     | 30%                 |
| Supervisory Relationships                          | 28%                 |
| Compensation, Benefits and Entitlements            | 11%                 |
| Peer and Colleague Relationships                   | 7%                  |
| Prohibited Conduct and Compliance                  | 7%                  |
| Organizational, Leadership and Management          | 6%                  |
| Safety, Health, Wellbeing and Physical Environment | 5%                  |
| Values, Ethics and Standards                       | 5%                  |

Job and Career became the leading mediation issue in 2025, surpassing Supervisory Relationships for the first time within the 2020-2025 data

\* Some cases are still being updated based on emerging issues.

## Leading sub-issues from the top 3 issues in mediation cases



# MEDIATION SURVEY DATA

The mediator was effective in managing the session  
**4.54/5**  
 with 76.92% strongly agree

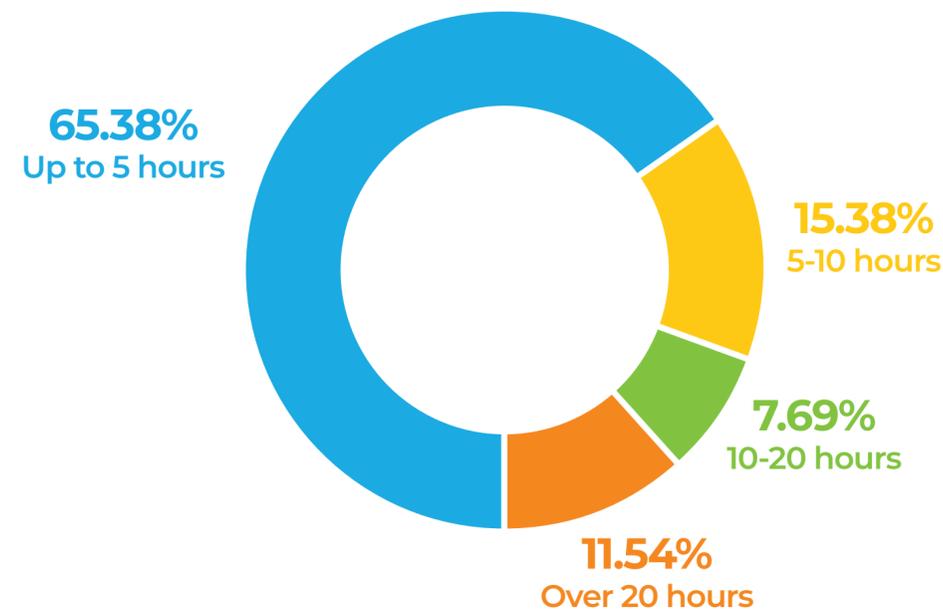
I would choose the same mediator again  
**4.56/5**  
 with 76.92% strongly agree

Would you recommend mediation to a colleague?  
**96.15%**  
 say yes

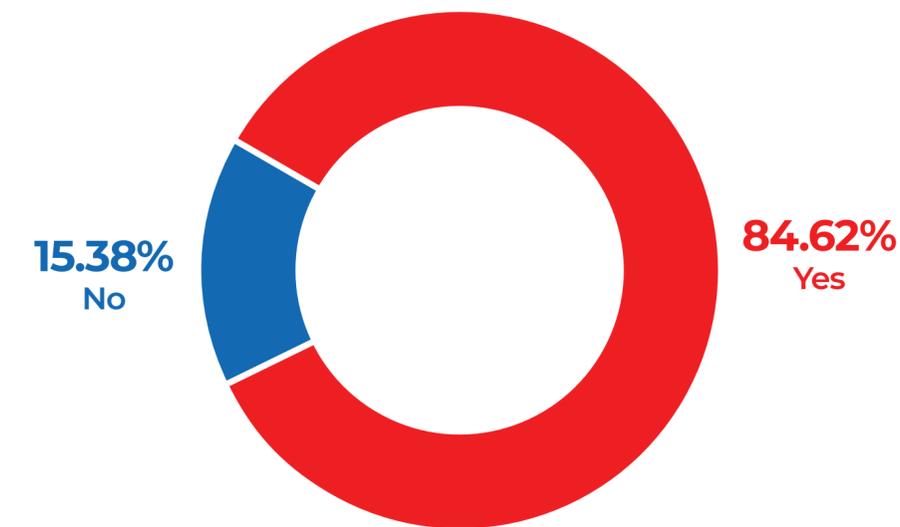
Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the mediation process  
**4.38/5**

| Mediation case outcome               | Number of cases | Percentage of cases |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Mediated—Resolution reached          | 103             | 82%                 |
| Party(ies) declined to mediate       | 17              | 13%                 |
| Mediated—No resolution               | 4               | 3%                  |
| Matter not appropriate for mediation | 3               | 2%                  |

How long did mediation take?



Was an agreement reached during the mediation?



# CONVERSATION WITH THE MEDIATOR PROGRAMME (FINAL YEAR)

Recap of the past 4 years of the CWM Programme

Number of country offices who participated

136

Total number of participants

7,902

Number of registrations for A Conversation

386

Conversations with Colleagues on Individual Conflicts

179

## 2025 CWM Programme

### List of Countries and Number of Participants

|                                  |     |   |             |
|----------------------------------|-----|---|-------------|
| Guatemala                        | 138 | Denmark (HQ) / Bahrain / Qatar / Kuwait / United Arab Emirates / Oman | 177         |
| Seychelles                       | 16  | Poland  | 23          |
| Chad                             | 2   | Tajikistan (+Kyrgyzstan)  | 54          |
| Equatorial Guinea                | 5   | Bhutan / Haiti  | 65          |
| Gambia                           | 22  | Sri Lanka   | 88          |
| DRC                              | 83  | Samoa / Cambodia / Korea  | 79          |
| Lebanon                          | 156 | Indonesia   | 95          |
| Cabo Verde / Sao Tome & Principe | 69  | Lao / Timor-Leste   | 72          |
| Comoros                          | 36  | Georgia   | 55          |
| Guyana and Suriname              | 104 | Afghanistan   | 240         |
| Djibouti                         | 31  | Philippines   | 207         |
| Tunisia                          | 85  | Vietnam   | 214         |
| Palestine                        | 58  | Mozambique  | 120         |
| Yemen                            | 99  | Malawi  | 292         |
| Syria                            | 54  | <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>3167</b> |
| Mexico                           | 311 |   |             |
| Algeria                          | 57  |   |             |
| Albania (+Kosovo+Montenegro)     | 60  |   |             |

105

registrations for an intake process to explore mediation

3,337

participants

33

in-person intakes

6

in-person programs

(Guatemala, Mexico, Philippines, Vietnam, Mozambique, Malawi)

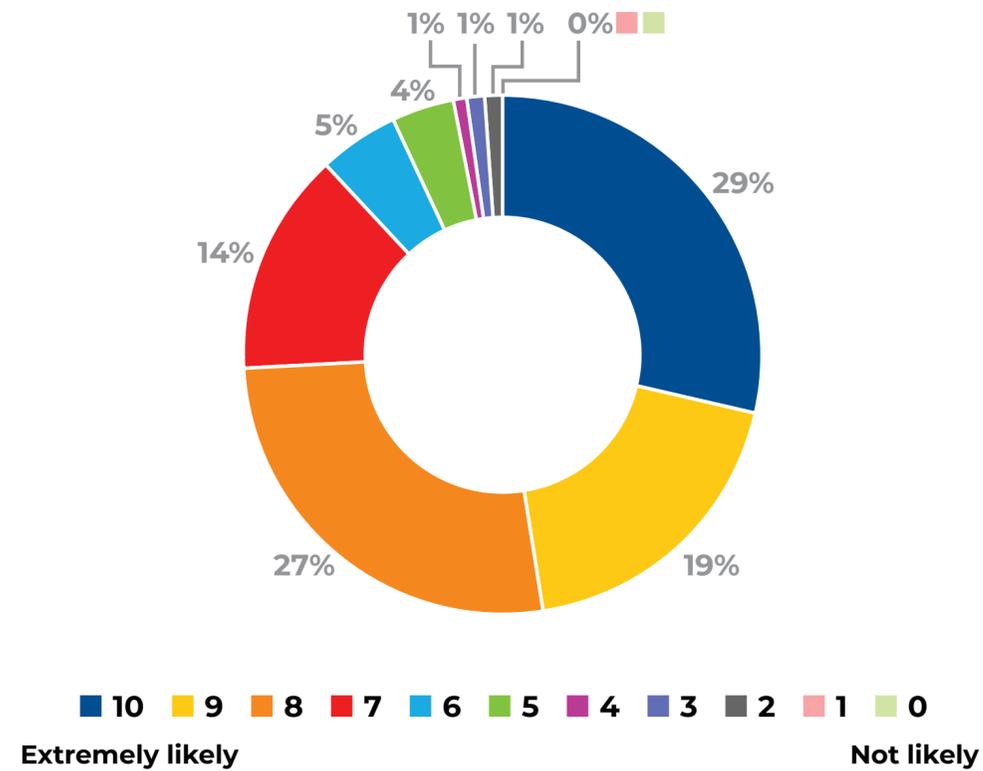
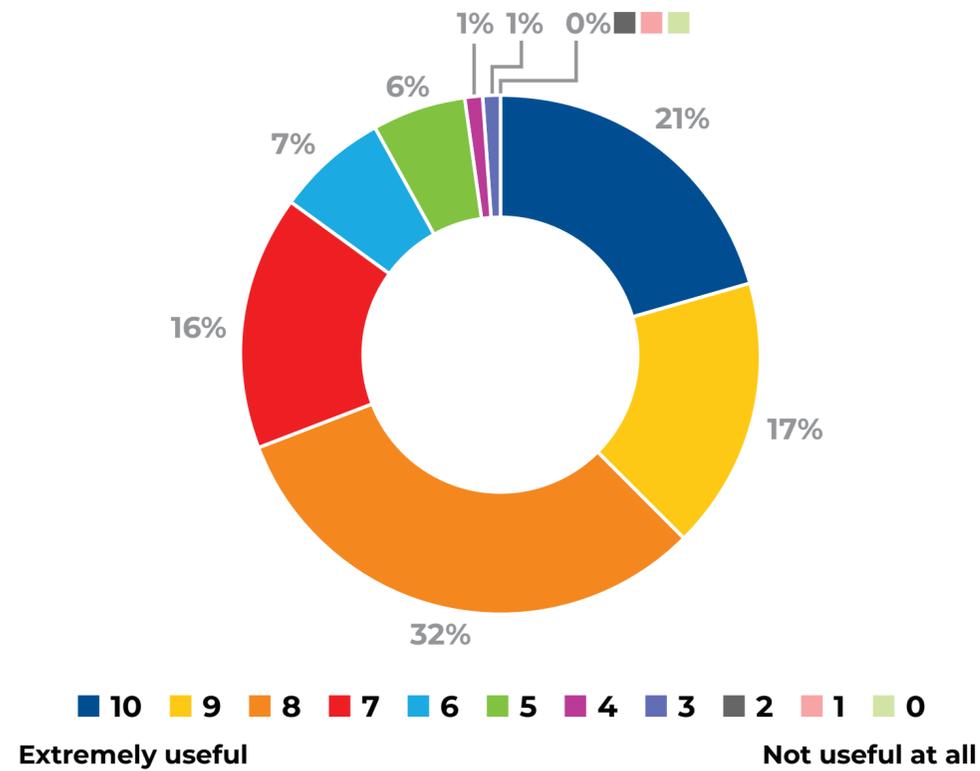
3

languages

(English, Spanish, French)

# CONVERSATION WITH THE MEDIATOR PROGRAMME (CONTINUED)

## Feedback on the CWM Programme from participants



Participants rated the usefulness of the training very positively, with an average score of approximately **8.1 out of 10**. Overall, **70% of respondents rated the session 8 or higher, including 21% who described it as "extremely useful."**

Participants reported a high likelihood of attending future trainings, with an average rating of approximately **8.4 out of 10**. Notably, **75% of respondents rated their likelihood as 8 or higher, including 29% who selected "Extremely likely."**

## Feedback survey responses per agency



Total number of feedback survey responses = 797

# GROUP MEDIATION FOR TEAMS PROGRAMME

## Introducing Group Mediation for Teams: Building Effective and More Collaborative Workplaces

Workplace challenges rarely exist in isolation. When communication breaks down, trust erodes, or tensions linger within a team, the effects are often felt well beyond the individuals directly involved. Recognizing this reality, the Mediation Unit of the Office of the Ombudsman for UN Funds and Programmes is introducing a new service: Group Mediation for Teams, designed to help teams address workplace-related conflict and rebuild effective, collaborative working relationships.

### What is Group Mediation for Teams?

Restorative group practices are structured, facilitated dialogues that focus on understanding impact, strengthening relationships, and creating shared commitments for the future. Rather than determining who is right or wrong, restorative approaches invite participants to reflect on how situations have affected them and the team as a whole, ensure that every voice is heard, and consider what is needed to move forward constructively.

### Why does this service matter, and when is it used?

As a confidential, informal, and impartial resource, the Office of the Ombudsman supports all contract holders in navigating concerns, resolving conflicts, and identifying patterns that may point to broader organizational issues. While individual consultations and mediation remain essential tools, some situations call for a team-wide approach.

Group mediation is particularly relevant when:

- Trust and communication within the team have significantly deteriorated.
- After a formal investigation is concluded, teams need to rebuild relationships.
- Organizational changes, such as restructurings or leadership transitions, have created ongoing tension.
- A major incident has affected team morale, collaboration, or psychological safety.

In these contexts, group mediation offers a way for teams to address impact, repair working relationships, and re-establish a shared foundation for collaboration.

### How does it work?

We use a three-phase framework designed to ensure safety, inclusion, and meaningful outcomes.

#### Phase 1: Understanding team needs

The process begins with a confidential and anonymous survey that allows team members to share experiences, concerns, and priorities. Facilitators may also offer optional individual conversations to better understand perspectives. This information is used exclusively to design the group dialogue and is not shared beyond the facilitation team.

#### Phase 2: Group dialogue

The core of the process consists of one or more facilitated sessions, typically lasting a full day. All affected team members participate together, with equal voice and responsibility. The sessions are carefully structured and guided by our mediator facilitators who remain impartial and non-judgmental.

Participants sit in a circle or U-shaped arrangement, establish shared ground rules, and engage in activities that support reflection, listening, and mutual understanding. The restorative space is intentionally different from everyday workplace meetings, allowing for deeper and more open dialogue.

#### Phase 3: Shared outcomes

The process concludes with the team developing concrete agreements about how they will work together going forward. Facilitators provide a summary of key themes, and the team identifies ways to sustain progress, including follow-up actions and check-ins.

### What this process is not

Group mediation is not an investigation, a disciplinary process, or a mechanism for assigning blame. It does not establish facts, verify accounts, or result in formal decisions or documentation. It is also not a quick fix. Rebuilding trust and repairing relationships requires time and genuine engagement.

What it does offer is a confidential, structured opportunity for teams to reflect on impact, rebuild trust, and strengthen collaboration in a forward-looking way.

### A shared responsibility for healthier collaboration

By introducing the group mediation process, the Mediation Unit of the Office of the Ombudsman is expanding the ways it supports a workplace culture grounded in respect, psychological safety, and open communication. This service reflects a shared commitment to addressing conflict thoughtfully and transforming challenging experiences into opportunities for learning, growth, and stronger working relationships.



## WHAT DO COLLEAGUES WHO HAVE USED MEDIATION SERVICES SAY?

"[...] are great mediators. It was very helpful to get their perspective and support. Unfortunately, no agreement was found, but this has nothing to do with the service provided. They really did their best and I appreciated that."

"[...] is an outstanding mediator. He handled our case not only with the utmost professionalism but also with considerable empathy for my terminally ill friend. Moreover, [...] demonstrated a determination to use the issues raised in our case to try to influence UN policy."

"[...] was an amazing mediator who tried multiple times with multiple parties over the course of several months to find an amicable resolution for a complicated case. This was during a difficult period for me personally and the support the ombuds office was instrumental in helping to free time for my healing as otherwise I would have needed to manage many more difficult and triggering communications myself. I was grateful to avoid the legal route as navigating that while self-represented would have certainly worsened my condition. The ombuds office opened up an avenue for resolution that was best for both parties and ultimately best for my health."

"It was my first time to use this service and I am highly satisfied."

"About the mediation experience, I would like to say that it has been truly important. I had tried to address issues on my own, but the Organization would not even bother to reply to emails, let alone take action. However, once the mediator became involved, they took the time to respond. The mediator also helps you manage frustration and remain calmer and more serene when responding. They act as a buffer, which is especially valuable when one is already feeling very frustrated. Finally, they guide you through the options available and how to face challenges. For me, it has been a very positive experience. I had never encountered a problem in my professional life before, but the moment I raised a concern, I was mistreated. In that context, the support of the Ombudsman has been fundamental in helping me manage the situation."

"[...] was very professional, courteous, and facilitated the discussions in a very respectful manner. He listened well, never felt any judgement or biased, and made us feel we were in a safe space to share. I like how this has been resolved with both me and my colleague being fair with each other but also respectfully understanding where each other is coming from."

"I would just share my appreciation, the mediation changed (for better) the environment, as the issues were resolved and now everything is going well. I admired the professionalism of the Mediator; he conducted very well the process from the beginning to the end."

"The respectful and solution-oriented atmosphere created by the Mediator contributed to restoring trust and setting a positive foundation for future collaboration."

"The mediation has been effective in finding solutions that enabled to move forward in the contractual process."

"Excelente mediador me ayudo a resolver el problema — *Excellent mediator, helped me resolve the problem.*"

"Excelente servicio, se debería promover más, incluso para ayudar a Recursos Humanos. — *Excellent service. It should be promoted more, even to help Human Resources.*"

"Excelente la mediación, se logró el objetivo de entender el punto de vista de todos y llegar a un acuerdo — *Excellent mediation. The goal of understanding everyone's point of view and reaching an agreement was achieved.*"

"I would like to say a big Thank You, to you for all your time and efforts to mediate this case. I very much appreciate your guidance and support in navigating me through this very difficult and unpleasant phase of my professional life. I am relieved it is over and that a peaceful resolution and commitment to improve working conditions have been finally addressed and achieved today by all of us."



**We would greatly appreciate your  
feedback to our mediation services.**

PROVIDE FEEDBACK

**OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN  
FOR UNITED NATIONS  
FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES**

If you'd like to reach out to the Mediation Unit, you can  
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