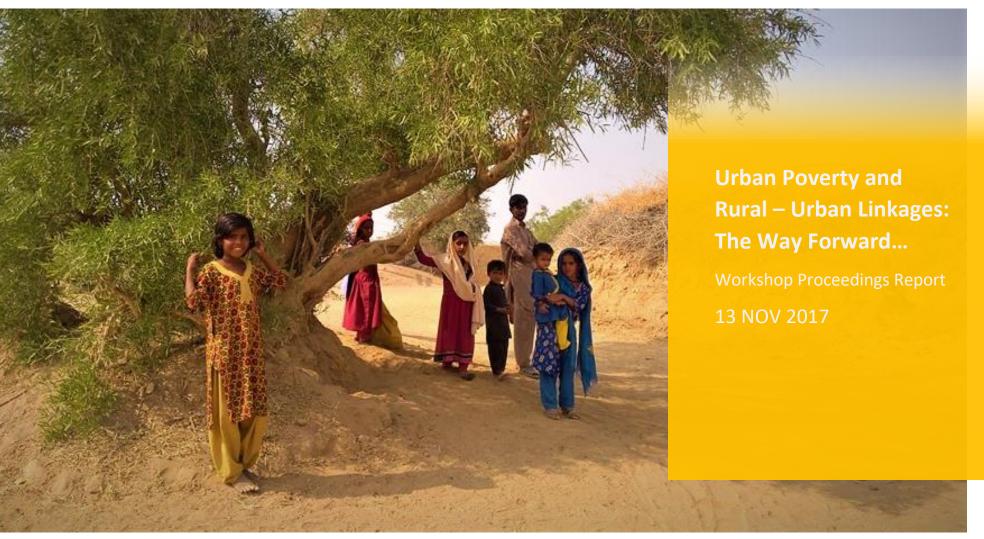


Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support Programme

SUCCESS is funded by the European Union















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Every effort has been made to verify the accuracy of the information contained in this report. All information was deemed to be correct as of December 2017. Nevertheless, the Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN) cannot accept responsibility of the consequences of its use for other purposes or in other contexts.

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Programme of the Workshop

Time	Activity	Responsibility/ Presenter
09.00am-09.25am	Registration	
09.25am-09.30am	Recitation from the Holy Quran	
09.30am-09.40am	Welcome	Ernst & Young and RSPN
09.40am-09.55am	Inaugural Address	Ms Shereen Narejo, Secretary P&D, GoS
09.55am-10.15am	RSPs approach to CDD	Ms Shandana Khan, C.E.O RSPN
10.15am-10.35am	Presentation: Technical Assistance in EU-financed SUCCESS Program	Mrs Kathryn Ennis-Carter, Team Leader, Technical Assistance
10.35am-10.55am	Presentation: Profiles of Poverty	Dr Kaiser Bengali, Economist
10.55am-11.15am	Government of Sindh Poverty Reduction Program (UCBPRP)	Mr Ali Khoso, Program Director (Union Council Based Poverty Reduction Program),
11.15am-11.35am	Presentation: Orangi Pilot Project	Mr Rashid Anwar, Orangi Pilot Project
11.35am-11.55am	Tackling Urban Poverty; A new approach	Mr Tasneem Siddiqui, Urban development expert
11.55am-12.10pm	Community entrepreneurship	Community entrepreneurs, Swat
12.10pm-13.30pm	Discussion – The Way Forward	All Participants
13.30pm-14.30pm	Lunch	



Background

An integrated approach towards development and poverty reduction is necessary to ensure that the phenomenon of poverty is tackled in the best way possible. The discussion must go beyond the conventional spectrum of policy discussions and address rural-urban linkages in light of the rapidly increasing urbanisation on both urban areas, and urban areas within rural districts. The benefits of such a coordination are extremely high such as better land planning, optimised use of resources and better institutions and linkage structures. In light of this, Ernst and Young (EY), a multinational professional services firm operating in Pakistan, was made a part of the SUCCESS Programme as the Technical Assistance (TA) component to aid the Government of Sindh in development of a Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and CDLD policy for the province of Sindh.

The purpose of this workshop was to support the Technical Assistance Team to formulate the Poverty Reduction Strategy to aid the GoS, specifically focusing on the urban poverty component. This workshop brought together main stakeholders and experts for both urban and rural development and poverty reduction under one roof to discuss the best way forward for poverty reduction in Sindh.

Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Programme (SUCCESS)



The SUCCESS Programme is based on the Rural Support Programmes' (RSPs) social mobilisation approach to Community Driven Local Development (CDLD). Social mobilisation centres around the belief that poor people have an innate potential to help themselves and that they can better manage their limited resources if they organise and are provided technical and financial support. The RSPs under the SUCCESS Programme provide social guidance, technical and financial assistance to the rural poor in Sindh.

SUCCESS is a six-year long (2015-2021) programme funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN), National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), Sindh Rural Support Organisation (SRSO) and Thardeep Rural Development Programme (TRDP) in eight districts of Sindh, namely Kambar Shahdadkot, Larkana, Dadu, Jamshoro, Matiari, Sujawal, Tando Allahyar and Tando Muhammad Khan.

The programme has a Technical Assistance (TA) component, implemented by Ernst & Young (EY), which is tasked to assist the Government of Sindh to formulate and implement a provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy for both urban and rural Sindh and a Community Driven Local Development (CDLD) policy, with associated budget and monitoring framework. The TA Team works in collaboration with the RSPs. It is expected that with this policy in place the government departments will be able to link their services with the community institutions and effectively promote development of the poor.

The Secretary (Planning), Planning and Development Department, Government of Sindh highlighted that the continuation in planning, interaction, and development is extremely important, especially for poverty reduction programmes such as UCBPRP. There is a need to have a policy but in order to develop a reliable and continuous strategy, continuous dialogue is needed and time is required. She shed light on how it was initially thought that the state should just go ahead with the programmes first and hence the UCBPRP was initiated in four districts and good results were achieved, leading to further dialogue with the EU. A Strategy and Policy Dialogue Committee (SPDC) was formed where all stakeholders, including civil society were involved who agreed that poverty cannot be addressed by just undertaking one or two programmes and there are different challenges with different dynamics so SPDC started its work. The SPDC reviewed and approved the inception report prepared by the EU TA team. A journey which began from zero and now moving towards a trajectory is seeing some positive results.

She further stressed that the difference between urban and rural poverty must be understood. By pointing towards SDG 11, she stressed the importance of opportunities and inclusiveness of people in development policies. She said it is important that we start dissecting the term 'inclusiveness', which takes us to the point regarding creation of resilience, engaging communities, and promoting community driven development. She encouraged the participants to discuss the way forward from what has already been achieved, and focus especially on how urbanisation effects poverty in both urban and rural areas in order to develop a viable and relevant solution. She acknowledged the extremely important role played by all the stakeholders in reviving institutions and giving them their due role. She also highlighted the significance of housing in ensuring good living conditions and said that the Government of Sindh P&D welcomes the suggestions of the participants.

Speaker 1: Shereen Narejo

Secretary (Planning), Planning and Development Department, Government of Sindh



Speaker 2: Shandana Humayun Khan

Chief Executive Officer
Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN)



Chief Executive Officer, RSPN gave a brief introduction regarding RSPN and the RSPs in the country and how they are working towards improving the living conditions of rural poor. She further elaborated the SUCCESS programme and talked about rural women empowerment and CDLD approach undertaken through the programme. However, she also pointed to the fact that there is little awareness that this is a GoS led initiative and a flagship programme targeting the poorest of the poor households at such a large scale. She explained the use of the Poverty Scorecard (PSC) in identification of the poorest households and targeting different bands of poverty in relevant ways. She highlighted that this is probably the first time that RSPs have structured the process with the help of the government. She said, "We will be able to tell everybody that this is how many households are in the poorest band and this is how they will be helped."

Shandana further explained that the work that RSPN does is centred around policy advocacy, harmonising the RSPs' work, and ensuring that their social mobilisation process is following the same strategies and processes in various districts of the programme. She noted that by the end of five years, 18 districts out of 24 will be covered through the UCBPRP and SUCCESS programmes. She highlighted the work of RSPN in piloting innovations, communication and documentation in areas of social mobilisation, monitoring and evaluation, and gender sensitisation.

She stressed to the participants that urban-rural linkages must be explored and the phenomenon of excessive rural to urban migration and its impact must be discussed and acknowledged that the RSPN and RSPs are working in areas which need change in process as they encounter a mix of communities. She also highlighted that it is important to discuss the meaning of 'urban-rural' and 'poverty' in order to devise the best strategies. She also said that large programmes need to look at markets, vocational training, with follow-up, which is usually a weak aspect. She said, "We as RSPs need to look at urban-rural links, from the point of view of how our work in rural areas is impacted by urbanisation and vice versa."

She thanked all the partners for being part of this workshop which will define how the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) for Government of Sindh (GoS) will be formulated. She moved on to explain the role of the TA and the partnership between the EU and GoS. She explained that there are three main components: GoS's own flagship programme UCBPRP, SUCCESS programme which is EU's replication of GoS's programme, and the TA policy component. She said, "Our overall objective is to help GoS to develop and monitor an overall PRS for Sindh and a Community Driven Local Development (CDLD) policy. This is different from past initiatives and approaches as this will inform an overall strategy for the province for both urban and rural poverty. This strategy will have particular focus on CDLD. Our key tasks are to help GoS to build PRS through consultation and research and build on the foundational work of RSPs in communities." She highlighted that the communities and households cannot be brought out of poverty unless they participate in their own development. She also stressed the importance of developing a budget framework, and the options for mainstreaming PRS and a community development based approach. She talked about the TA component and its process over four years and stressed that this programme will not just put strategies on shelves – but move forward from that. Once the policy/strategy has been developed, the EU TA will look at implementation and a roadmap for the operational stage. She said, "Basically, we are coming towards the end of a few months of consultation phase in different locations of the province, and it is important that you have yours say today. We need different views on how the distinction between urban and rural is becoming less defined and more mixed. We need to focus on rural-urban linkages in how to reduce both urban and rural poverty and for example, the impact on rural women of migration of men to urban areas for work. These are things we need to think about. Over the next month, the TA team will signal P&D about directions for PRS and key interventions that we would want to suggest to the GoS. If we succeed and go beyond this initial phase of development, we can work with the government in the next fiscal years to define the implementation strategy to take the PRS forward and implement it in reality." She highlighted that there are two types of strategies: one which deals with survival mode in poverty and the second which address access to opportunities and services and vocational and skills trainings that can bring people out of poverty, and this platform is an opportunity for all the experts and stakeholders to pitch in their valuable inputs. elements in the PRS for the GoS.



Speaker 3: Kathryn Ennis-Carter

Team Leader – EU TA Team



Speaker 4: Ali Khoso

Programme Director UCBPRP

Mr Khoso firstly congratulated EU TA and RSPN on arranging the workshop and then proceeded to explain the UCBPRP programme. He gave a background of the programme and highlighted that it is the GoS flagship programme in CDLD, that was started in two poorest of the poor districts in 2009, Kashmore and Shikarpur, with the basic concept of social mobilisation at a cost of PKR. 3.3 billion for 3 years. It was, based on its success, expanded to two more districts – Jacobabad and Tharparkar at a cost of PKR. 2 billion. He proceeded to explain the progress to the third phase of the programme which has expanded the project's scope to six more districts of Sindh: Thatta, Umerkot, Mirpur Khas, Sanghar, Badin, and Khairpur. The programme started in June 2017 at a cost of Rs. 4.9 billion He also talked about urban poverty in comparison to rural poverty. The EU funded SUCCESS programme follows the legacy of the UCBPRP and works with the GoS in its efforts to alleviate poverty. He highlighted the issues faced in UCBPRP and the observations which can help better inform the PRS being developed for the GoS.

Dr Bengali highlighted that poverty is a macro-economic variant and cannot be alleviated through micro initiatives alone. He said that growth is necessary for a poverty reduction strategy, but it alone will not reduce poverty. Poverty reduction requires a range of very specific measures. Over the last seven decades, there have been schemes and plans at macro level, and community level initiatives but the results have been disappointing, as the total incidence of poverty over the past decade have increased by 2% and the incidence of rural poverty have increased by 8%. He said that poverty incidence in small towns is higher than in rural areas and this must be kept in mind when devising a relevant PRS and hence GoS has asked EU to include urban poverty as part of the PRS. The reason is that rural areas are marked by joint families, housing does not cost much, but in urban areas there are nuclear families and the entire household structure depends on the breadwinner. He stressed that the basic determinant of rural poverty is lack of assets (45% is explained by lack of assets) while in urban poverty assets come last, it is explained 55% by unemployment. There has been macro, meso, and micro level initiatives and he explained the three in detail.

He also highlighted that job creation is an element which is common for urban and rural areas. Stressing the importance of a cluster approach to poverty reduction in both rural and urban set ups, he said that levels of agglomeration and clusters impact how policies are defined and what infrastructural facilities are provided, because for example it is not possible to provide a school to a village which has only 15 households. He talked about how microlevel initiatives have three objectives: enhancing household income through local income generating schemes, reduce per day household expenditures through collective provision of facilities by the State, and third is expenditures which household incurs that diverts income to other needs such as health issues, in turn compromising the quality of life. He stressed the need to develop a new approach towards poverty alleviation in light of the failures of past policies and strategies and the changing dynamics due to rapid urbanisation. The State has a capacity to intervene on a macro-level but it does not have the capacity to reach villages and households at a micro-level. Community organisations can reach at that level, and a combination of the two can result in a successful public-private partnership for poverty alleviation. He gave examples of incidents where the partnership between SRSO and GoS helped reach out to flood victims successfully and help them.

Speaker 5: Kaiser Bengali

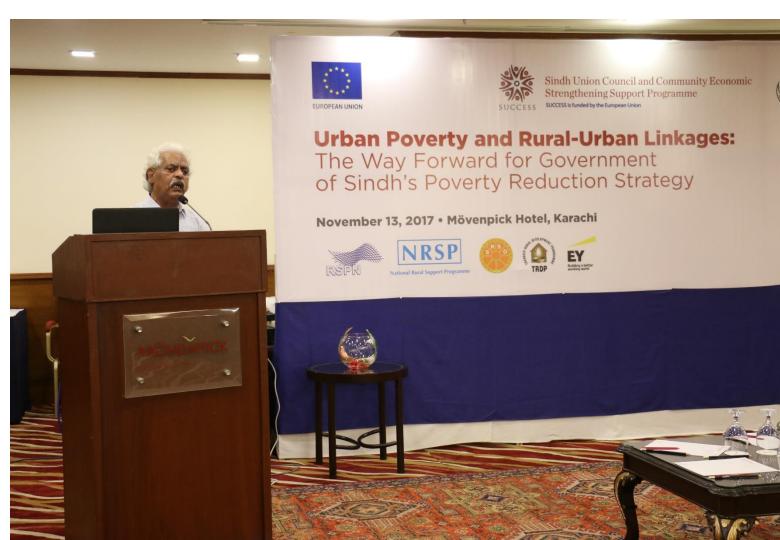
Senior Expert and Advisor to the EU TA Team



This speaker explained the concept behind the OPP, the initial stages and how the programme was amended and expanded. He highlighted that it was difficult to organise communities in the beginning and it was a self-managed, self-financed, and self-maintained effort by the people initially and it was pitched to the Government, it was a reverse effort, and ultimately was a private-public partnership. He highlighted that focusing on community participation is not required, the participation is there at community level and it is the Government which needs to step forward because the community is already working. He stressed development of linkages along with skills in order to help generate income and reduce poverty. He said, "In a nutshell, development cannot be in isolation, it has to be a partnership, and the Government needs to step forward."

Speaker 6: Rashid Anwar

Head of Project
Orangi Pilot Project (OPP)





Speaker 7: Tasneem Siddique

Chairman SAIBAN

> The speaker talked about the importance of macro policies in Pakistan and understanding why the various policies introduced in the last 70 years have not worked. He stressed that poverty is not a separate sector, it is a result of all policies combined. He also shed light on the fiscal policies and planning paradigm in Pakistan and how it excludes people from decision making by adopting a top-down approach and favouring those who are already rich. He critiqued the absence of Local Government in resolving issues of local communities. He said we should not expect help from outside when we have all the resources. "Poverty in Pakistan is neither accidental, nor natural, it is a political issue and we must be very clear about it. Unless we don't accept it, things will not improve." While talking about the Benazir Income Support Programme he said it is not a sufficient poverty alleviation programme alone. He talked about the dearth of jobs in the cities and the ever-increasing ruralurban migration in search of jobs, resulting in high unemployment and development of slums in cities, further burdening the infrastructure provided by the State in the cities. He highlighted that the Government is not aware of the informal urban settlements, which is a depressing situation, because it is burdening the State facilities as they are ill-planned and inadequate for the number of people actually residing in the cities. It is the survival mechanism of the people that they rely on informal income because they have no other alternative to survive. At macro-level, the planning paradigm should change, it should be bottom-up and people should contribute and their demands should be taken into account. He said, "Government has the capacity, resources, and the mandate, then why it is not continuing good work which has already been tested and working, this is therefore a political issue." Conventional approaches, he claimed, would not work, so the Government has to change the way they tackle poverty with community participation as the focus.



Speaker 8: Talat Beghum

VO Manager and CRP UC Fatehpur, Chikrai, Swat

She is the president of the Village Organisation (VO) and a Community Resource Person (CRP) in her area. She explained her VO's structure and the ten Community Organisations under it. She talked about how the SRSP has helped in developing skills of the women of her area and expanding the programme to more women. She claimed that these women are now earning PKR 10,000 to 40,000 per month. She talked about various value chained production work they are doing in the VO such as embroidery, drying and selling red persimmon, walnut production etc. She highlighted how market linkages to nearby areas have helped the women expand their reach and sell to a wider customer base. She also claimed that now the metropolitan cities have also been linked with their women, and they are going as far as Lahore to supply their products. She brought some of the products with her for display and selling by setting up a stall at the workshop and said that they have shops in Peshawar and Charsadda and supply products to Islamabad, Mardan, and Lahore through exhibitions and orders. She said that their VO is now training more women in her area, and she has trained around 200 women of her area in different skills and has enabled them to earn for their household by forming linkages with the markets. She highlighted how income earning has led to these women earning the right to have a say in decision making process of the households, which was not possible before, and increased income has also led to these women focusing on education of their children, both girls and boys. She gave examples of a few women with heart-wrenching stories and how they turned their lives around through CDLD initiatives.



Discussion

- L. Defining poverty: It was unanimously agreed by all the participants that there is a dire need to first explain the term 'poverty' in order to take relevant action. It was commonly believed that lack of income is not the only problem, but issues like social and institutional poverty are also critical. It is necessary that along with basic necessities of life, facilities such as institutions for education, health, transportation etc., must be prevalent to improve quality of life.
- 2. Head for rural and urban development in Sindh Annual Development Budget: the discussion highlighted that the Annual Development Budget (ADB) of Sindh does not have any head for urban or rural development alike. The example of Balochistan was quoted in this case, as the province at least has a Head for Urban Development in its ADB. Hence, in order for corrective action to be taken, first the issue at hand has to be recognised and a budget must be allocated towards it.
- 3. Profiling of existing projects, data, and policies: the participants highlighted that numerous projects have been undertaken by both the public and the private sector, however, the data collected has not been profiled and mapped in an accessible form. The information exists, but is scattered and owned by different stakeholders, which in turn has reduced access to information, consequently leading to duplication of work and wastage of resources. Once the data is accumulated at one place, it can be used to devise future policies which are relevant and effective as they will be targeted to specific areas.

It was further discussed by the participants that when rural problems of Sindh are discussed, the rural parts of Karachi are overlooked. These areas, especially slums, have an extremely low standard of living as they do not have basic infrastructural facilities. The Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) was discussed as being one of the projects that worked on undocumented residents occupying land. OPP tried to regularise this, however, they paid a high price by losing the life of Ms. Parveen Rehman, Director OPP, in dealing with land issues. The data gathered by OPP has not been mainstreamed even though it has been successful. It was proposed that there should be a monitoring team which should assess and evaluate the paperwork against the physical work done on ground.

It was highlighted that small projects must not be ignored. Their findings are very important and can feed crucial data into devising relevant policies. At times, the data gathered can highlight negative aspects of project areas as well which can be extremely important to plan further development work.

It is critical that the missing links are identified first in order to devise a successful Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS). The capacity of the Government should be taken into account as there are tasks which the state can undertake and also others which it cannot, and these missing links must be identified. Resources, both human and financial exist, but are not properly documented or mapped and hence wrong recommendations and solutions are developed.

- 4. Market Linkages: It is critical to develop linkages between the markets and the producers in the rural areas because if this is not done then the rural producers get only a small fraction of the actual value of their produce. Especially for the rural women, it is business critical to link them with display centres/markets for their products. Once the middle-men are avoided, the profits for the poor increase. However, these linkages have to be created on both sides, if there are retailers who are willing to display their products, then there must also be entrepreneurs in rural areas who will lead the process at the rural end. Also in case of agriculture, this remains true. The farmers do not get good value for their produce in the markets and they end up selling at either a lower price or wasting their crop as it is perishable, which is exploitation. If the government provides them with proper storage facility and access to markets through better farm-to-market infrastructure, the situation may improve.
- 5. Linkage between stakeholders: Linkages are very important for poverty reduction, and not just between rural producers and markets, but also between the various stakeholders. State, civil society, academia, and relevant sectors must be created and strengthened where existing, in order to address the issue of poverty, which cannot be solved in silos. It would also increase productivity and effectiveness as data between different stakeholders will become accessible. The participants suggested that the Local Government partners and Urban Directorate of Planning sector should also have been invited.
- **6. Technology and Innovation:** With the advent of the 21st century, the world witnessed a massive boom in the reliance on technology for entrepreneurship. Today, many businesses have shifted their entire shops online which have global platforms for people from all walks of life. The business scenario is changing, as reliance on technology increases for customers.
- 7. Investment in Human Capital: another important topic under discussion was the investment in human capital in various forms. It was highlighted that education is a highly neglected sector in majority of rural, and some urban areas, with school-age children having lack of or no access to schools or unavailability of teachers in their areas. It was recommended that if nothing else is possible, at least the primary schools (in areas where they exist) should be converted to secondary schools by the evening to help girls who want to study.

Another important side of human capital is health standards. Pakistan has extremely high rates of malnutrition and stunting despite the fact that agricultural production is increasing, the levels of stunting and malnutrition have not decreased in the last 40 years but the overall situation has actually worsened. Stunting is irreversible and has severe life changing consequences and most importantly, it reduces income as it results in 40% lower lifetime earnings. Healthy development must be prioritised, not just physically but also mentally, with a special focus on pregnant women and children and their healthy growth to ensure future generations are healthy enough to improve their living.





3. Three critical areas for policy formation:

- A. Job creation: It was suggested that job creation is probably the most critical point for poverty alleviation. Sustainable job creation is extremely important because small projects are temporary. It was suggested that setting up industrial units is a workable idea and the example of setting up of rice husk units in Hafizabad's peri-urban units by NRSP and giving the Haris of the area a profit-sharing was a really successful model. Furthermore, options which add value to the produce/vield of the rural worker should be favoured, such as the development of value-added products from crops instead of just exporting ethanol. Moreover, the payment modes were discussed that if women are paid their due share of labour, household's living expenses would become better as women tend to spend more on their children's welfare such as health and education. Engaging women at all levels must therefore be encouraged and focused on. Also, the scope of vocational trainings was discussed that linkages to job-givers should be established by the vocational training institutes, and more on-the-job opportunities should be provided which will likely result in a secure income for the trainees and help in poverty eradication once they get sustainable incomes
- B. Housing shortage: As aforementioned, housing is the most visible drawback of a rapidly urbanising population and its shortage can result in an extremely poor standard of living with inadequate resources and infrastructure. In order to fulfil SDG 11 and making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, and resilient, it is necessary that proper and adequate housing should be provided.
- C. Public Transport: the reliance on commuter system provided by the state is high amongst the poor people as they do not normally own a means of private transport. Therefore, an efficient and effective system of public transportation would increase their chances of accessing the available facilities, especially of health and education, opportunities for employment in far-flung areas, and reducing expenses on health and job search/job related travel.



List of Participants

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