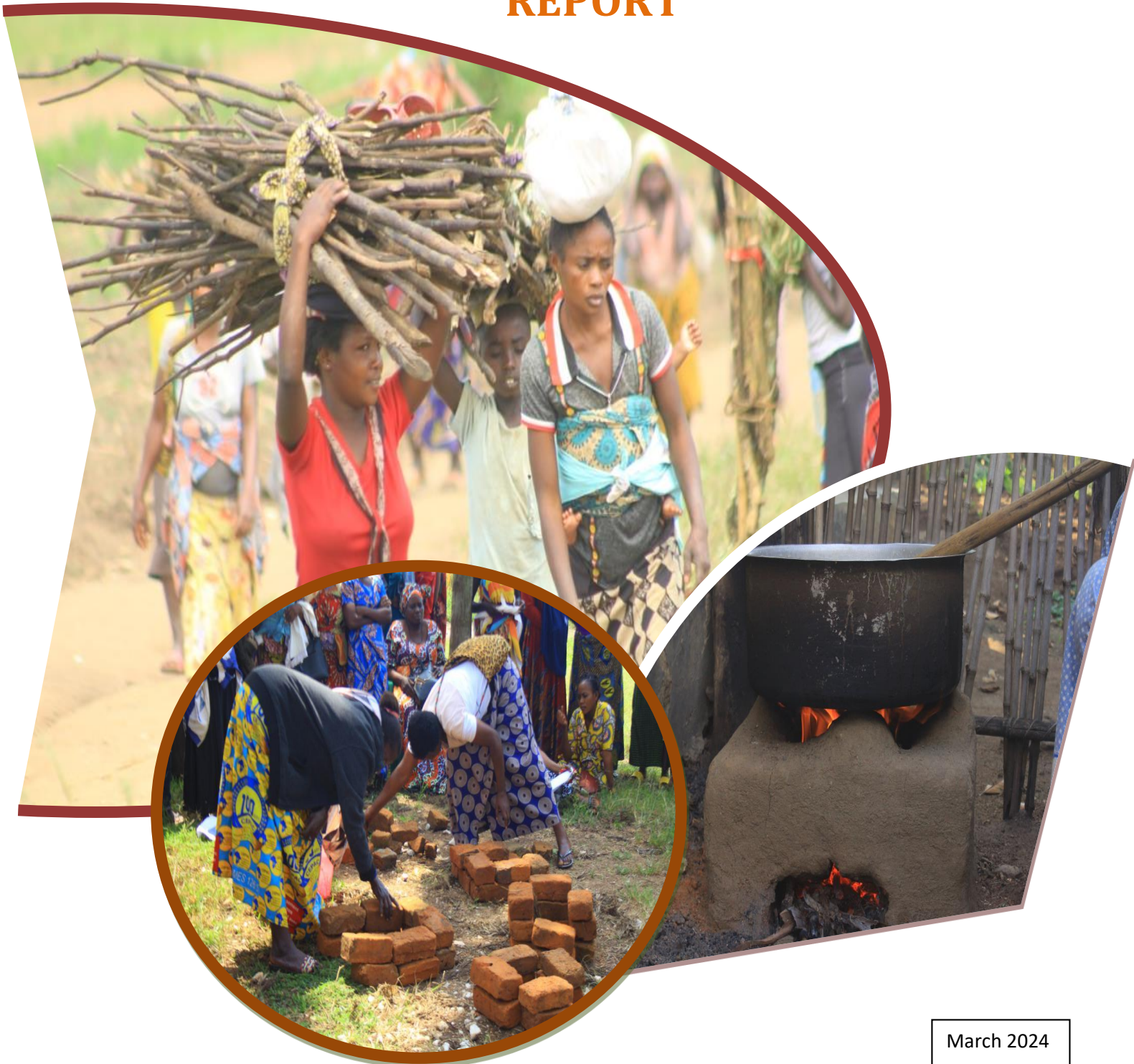




The Monitoring and Evaluation the Energy Saving Cookstoves Project in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement

REPORT



March 2024

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0.0 OVERVIEW

Introduction:

The Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, home to a diverse population of more than 126,000 people fleeing conflict and persecution from Uganda's neighbouring countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan and Somalia, who faces numerous challenges, including limited access to clean cooking technologies. In response to these challenges, in November 2023, Let's Help International (LHI) partnered with SUN24 for a collaborative project titled "Empowering Women for Sustainable Cooking in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, Kyegegwa District, Uganda."

This initiative aimed to address the multifaceted challenges faced by women in the settlement, including environmental degradation, safety concerns during firewood collection, and economic vulnerability. The project focused on introducing energy-saving stoves as a catalyst for positive change. As part of the effort, 200 women leaders were trained in stove construction techniques to equip them with the knowledge to train and empower their communities. The project also involved collaborative efforts with women leaders in the settlement to ensure timely materials sharing, follow-up activities, and community collaboration.

Monitoring and evaluation activities were planned to assess the quality of stove installations, gather feedback, and document project impact, with interim and final evaluation reports expected in February 2024 to enable adaptive strategies for enhanced effectiveness and sustainability. This concerted effort aimed to promote sustainable cooking practices, empower women, and create lasting positive change within the community.

This evaluation report provides a comprehensive overview of the project's implementation, outcomes, and recommendations for future interventions.

Project Objectives:

The primary objective of the Energy Saving Cooking Stoves project was to introduce energy-efficient cooking stoves to address the multifaceted challenges faced by women in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement. Specifically, the project aimed to:

- Reduce the environmental impact of traditional cooking methods
- Improve indoor air quality and reduce health risks associated with smoke inhalation
- Enhance women's safety and economic resilience
- Empower women through capacity-building and skill development

Methodology:

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to assess the project's impact comprehensively. Surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and site visits were conducted to gather data from project beneficiaries. The sample size 126 of 200 beneficiaries who attended training were interviewed in data collection. The



paper-based questionnaires were used to collect data from beneficiaries which was later entered onto Microsoft excel for data analysis purpose. Paper questionnaire data collection methods were preferred due to the lack of data collection electronic devices.

0.0.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT:

The Energy Saving Cooking Stoves project in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement confronts a significant challenge rooted in the traditional practice of collecting firewood, which poses grave risks to the safety and well-being of women and children in the community. Traditionally, women and children, tasked with gathering



firewood for cooking, embark on perilous journeys spanning vast distances to reach Kabamba, a national forest area housing military barracks. This arduous trek exposes them to a myriad of dangers, including the threat of bombing or shooting because it is the place for military training, assaults, violence, and exploitation.

The reliance on traditional cooking methods not only jeopardizes the immediate safety of women but also perpetuates cycles of gender-based violence and exploitation, further marginalizing vulnerable individuals within the refugee community. Additionally, children, compelled to forego educational opportunities due to their

involvement in firewood collection, face the long-term consequences of child labour and diminished prospects for their future.



Kyaka II's refugee children coming from collecting fire woods instead of going at school. ©LHI 2024

This complex challenge underscores the urgent need for sustainable alternatives, such as energy-saving cooking stoves, to mitigate risks, enhance safety, and empower women and children in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement. Addressing this pressing issue requires holistic interventions that prioritize the safety, well-being, and rights of vulnerable populations while promoting sustainable development and environmental conservation within the refugee context. By addressing the root causes of gender-based violence and child labour associated with traditional cooking practices, the Energy Saving Cooking Stoves project aims to create a safer, more equitable, and resilient environment for all residents of the settlement.



“Given the fact that there are no forest or bushes where we can collect woods easily make us travel a way into the Kabamba army barracks forests, where we have to cross river for us to get there. One day while we were cutting firewood, a bomb fell close to where my daughter was standing and fainted right away. And me adding to my blood pressure health condition I recovered my senses later in the afternoon being lied on a mat at home without knowing how I got there.”

Francoise, Kaborogota resident.

I.0. Introduction:

In a groundbreaking initiative spearheaded by Let's Help International (LHI) in collaboration with SUN24, the empowerment of 200 women leaders in Kyaka has been realized through a comprehensive training program. This transformative endeavour encompasses essential skills in brick-making, Energy Saving Cook stoves, and Briquettes, underscoring a profound commitment to environmental protection and sustainability. By equipping these women with the tools and knowledge necessary for sustainable cooking practices, this project not only mitigates environmental degradation but also enhances community resilience and economic empowerment.

This evaluation report serves as a comprehensive examination of the Kyaka II Energy Saving Cookstoves project, delving into its inception, implementation, and outcomes. Central to this assessment is the rigorous monitoring activities conducted by LHI to gauge the utilization of skills imparted to women during training sessions, as well as the subsequent dissemination of these skills within the community.

Through an analysis of the project's methodology, findings, and recommendations, this report endeavours to shed light on the tangible impacts and challenges encountered throughout the project's lifecycle. By providing insights gleaned from the evaluation process, this report aims to inform stakeholders, policymakers, and practitioners engaged in humanitarian interventions, facilitating informed decision-making and the advancement of initiatives aimed at enhancing the livelihoods of refugee women in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement.



II. ABOUT KYAKA II REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

Kyaka II refugee settlement was established in 2005 to receive the remaining population of Kyaka I following the mass repatriation of Rwandan refugees the same year. After this movement, Kyaka I was closed. Around mid-December 2017, renewed violence in DRC - Democratic Republic of Congo led to a new refugee influx into Uganda, with an estimated 17,000 new refugee arrivals in Kyaka II. Since December 2017, Kyaka II refugee population has quadrupled, following

the arrival of tens of thousands of refugees from DRC fleeing conflict and inter-ethnic violence in North Kivu and Ituri. Current updates state that this camp hosts over 126,928 people, that counts 9% of the total refugee populations in Uganda, and almost half of which are under 18 years of age (UNHCR, 31 January 2023).



III. Methodology:

The evaluation of the Energy Saving Cooking Stoves project in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement employed a mixed-methods approach to comprehensively assess the project's impact.

This methodology integrated both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to capture a diverse range of perspectives and insights.

Quantitative Data Collection:

1. Surveys: Structured surveys were administered to a sample of project beneficiaries to gather quantitative data on stove utilization rates, fuel consumption patterns, and perceived health benefits. Surveys were designed to collect standardized information, allowing for statistical analysis and comparison across different demographic groups.

2. Quantitative Metrics: Quantitative metrics, such as the number of energy-saving stoves constructed, fuel savings achieved, and reductions in carbon emissions, were systematically tracked and recorded throughout the project duration. These metrics provided objective indicators of the project's environmental and socioeconomic impact.

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

RESPONSE	n.	%
AGE:		
18-30	54	43
31-45	49	39
46-58	15	12
62-67	8	6
SEX:		
FEMALE	126	100
MALE	0	0
FAMILY SIZE:		
1-5	83	66
6-10	36	28
11-15	6	5
16-20	1	1
MARITAL STATUS:		
Single	29	23
Married	53	42
Widow	44	35
PROFESSION		
Farmers	30	24
Merchant	24	19
Jobless	72	57



One day a bomb hit Kibili and cut the leg of my neighbour's child while they were collecting firewood in the forest.

Mignonne, Kaborogota Resident

Qualitative Data Collection:

1. Interviews: In-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including project implementers, community leaders, and beneficiary households. These semi-structured interviews facilitated in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, perceptions, and attitudes towards the Energy Saving Cooking Stoves project, allowing for a nuanced understanding of its impact.

2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): FGDs were convened with groups of project beneficiaries to facilitate open dialogue and collective reflection on the project's outcomes and challenges. FGDs provided a forum for participants to share their experiences, exchange ideas, and offer suggestions for improvement, enriching the qualitative data collection process.

3. Direct Observation: Project activities, including stove construction workshops and community outreach events, were observed firsthand by evaluators to gain insights into implementation processes, community dynamics, and participant engagement.



Trainees receiving the molds to be used in making bricks for stoves construction. ©LHI/SUN24/2023

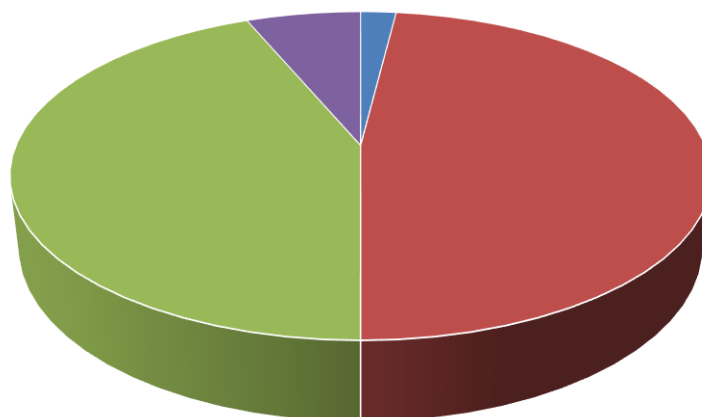
IV. FINDINGS:

Among the 126 women interviewed, representing the larger cohort of 200 participants in the Kyaka II Energy Saving Cooking Stoves project, various key findings emerged. When queried about prior experience with energy-saving stoves, 5 respondents, constituting approximately 3.97% reported utilizing such stoves in their home countries for daily cooking activities having learnt the practical skills and diverse importance of using energy saving stoves from a certain community informally organized occasion. Conversely, 121 respondents, comprising approximately 96% of the sample, indicated acquiring the necessary skills through the project's sessions.

Moreover, of the interviewed women, as an impact of the training program, 110, accounting for approximately 87.3% of the sample, have already constructed stoves and incorporated the stoves into their household cooking routines. Additionally, 10 respondents expressed intentions to construct stoves in the future, while 6 acknowledged delays in stove construction but confirmed plans to do so shortly.

Furthermore, a significant majority of respondents, totalling 110 individuals or approximately 87.3% of the sample, expressed positive sentiments towards the project and its utilization of energy-saving cooking stoves. This strong affirmation underscores the project's effectiveness in addressing cooking-related challenges within the Kyaka II Refugee Settlement and highlights the widespread acceptance and adoption of energy-saving cooking stoves among beneficiaries.

The qualitative findings of the Energy Saving Cooking Stoves project in Kyaka II Refugee Settlement reflect positive outcomes across various dimensions, including environmental, health, socioeconomic, and community empowerment aspects.



- Utilized energy saving before the training
- Acquired skills from training sessions
- Adopted new way of cooking after training
- Expressed delays in constructing stoves due to some challenges.

1. Environmental Impact:

- Significant reduction in carbon emissions due to decreased fuel consumption associated with energy-saving stoves.
- Preservation of local natural resources, such as forests, as a result of reduced reliance on traditional biomass fuels.

- Mitigation of deforestation and environmental degradation, contributing to long-term ecological sustainability within the settlement.



The river where women cross when they are going to collect firewood in Kabamba army barracks. Without money to pay the boat, they cross on foot.

2. Health Benefits:



- Improved indoor air quality within households, leading to a reduction in respiratory illnesses and related health complications among beneficiaries.
- Decreased incidence of eye irritation, respiratory infections, and other health issues associated with exposure to indoor air pollutants generated by traditional cooking methods.
- Enhanced overall well-being and quality of life for women and their families through the adoption of cleaner and safer cooking technologies.

3. Socioeconomic Empowerment:

- Increased economic resilience among beneficiary households through savings on fuel expenses and enhanced productivity resulting from improved health outcomes.
- Creation of income-generating opportunities for women involved in stove construction and dissemination activities, leading to enhanced financial autonomy and self-sufficiency.
- Expansion of women's social networks and support systems through their involvement in community-based initiatives, fostering a sense of empowerment and collective agency.

4. Community Empowerment:

- Strengthening of social cohesion and community solidarity through collaborative efforts to promote energy-saving practices and environmental stewardship.
- Enhanced capacity of local institutions and organizations to sustainably manage and support energy-saving initiatives, fostering community ownership and leadership.
- Empowerment of women as change agents and community leaders, driving positive social and environmental change within the settlement.

5. Sustainable Development:

- Alignment of project outcomes with broader sustainable development goals, including those related to gender equality, health and well-being, and environmental sustainability.
- Integration of energy-saving cooking technologies into broader development strategies and initiatives aimed at improving living conditions and livelihood opportunities within the refugee settlement.
- Demonstration of the potential for scalable and replicable solutions to address energy poverty and promote sustainable development in similar contexts globally.

These findings illustrate the diverse experiences and perceptions among project participants, emphasizing the significance of tailored interventions to accommodate varying levels of prior knowledge and readiness for stove construction. Additionally, the overwhelmingly positive reception of the project underscores its potential for long-term sustainability and scalability within the refugee settlement. Such insights are instrumental in informing future programming efforts and ensuring continued success in addressing the cooking needs of refugee communities while promoting environmental sustainability and socioeconomic empowerment.



V. TESTIMONIALS

My name is Chibalonza Mihigo. I liked this this kind of cooking. The energy saving cooking stoves are really helpful especially to us women. Frying beans with charcoal is very expensive but using my stove costs me nothing because fuel can be found easily close to my house. Also, this kind of stoves keep intense energy inside it which makes food gets ready very fast.



“

As you find me here cooking, I haven't expensed on charcoal because my stove applies very easy to find fuel like herbs, and other dry crop wastages. As long as I know that my cooking-stove is here I know I don't need to worry at all. Before using this new established stove, I used to suffer a lot due to the high price of charcoal which was very demanding considering the income of us refugees. But as for now, I no longer worry because I know that whenever I may look around, I can get enough fuel to cook with and feed my children.

Maombi, Sweswe Resident.



My name is Masikilizano Buma. I am grateful for the organizations that trained me on how to make this cooking stove. I used to suffer a lot over charcoal expenses before having this stove. But now with this stove even when I don't have charcoal, I prepare food using all around my houses' dry wastes and food gets ready in a no time to feed my children. May God bless you abundantly, and may you keep on adding us more skills to help us thrive using environment, and health friendly cooking stoves.



VI. CHALLENGES

1. Access to Resources: Limited access to affordable and appropriate materials for stove construction may hinder the widespread adoption of energy-saving cooking stoves.
2. Cultural Preferences: Cultural preferences and traditional cooking practices may pose challenges to the adoption of new cooking practices. Resistance to change or scepticism towards unfamiliar cooking methods could impede acceptance and utilization of energy-saving stoves.
3. Infrastructure Limitations: Inadequate infrastructure, such as poor housing conditions which make most refugees in Kyaka II build their stoves outside where different weather conditions, rain or sun waves, may damage them.
5. Technical Capacity: Limited skills and knowledge among beneficiaries may hinder the successful construction, and maintenance of energy-saving stoves. Adequate training is essential to address skill gaps and ensure sustainable stove use.
6. Environmental Considerations: Environmental factors, such as exposure to extreme weather conditions or natural disasters, may affect the durability and performance of energy-saving stoves.
7. Behavioural Change: Promoting behavioural change and encouraging sustained use of energy-saving stoves may require targeted communication strategies, community engagement, and ongoing awareness-raising initiatives. Overcoming ingrained habits and fostering a culture of stove adoption may take time and concerted effort.

Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that considers the diverse needs, preferences, and constraints of beneficiaries within the Kyaka II Refugee Settlement. Collaborative efforts involving stakeholders, implementing partners, and community members are essential to overcome barriers and

maximize the impact of energy-saving cooking stoves in improving livelihoods and promoting sustainable development within the settlement.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the identified challenges in implementing energy-saving cooking stoves in the Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the project:

1. Seek additional funding and partnerships to expand the project's reach.
2. Continuously monitor and evaluate the project's impact, adapting strategies based on feedback and evolving community needs.
3. Tailored Training Programs to expand the reach: Develop tailored training programs that address the specific needs, preferences, and cultural practices of beneficiaries within the refugee settlement. Incorporate practical demonstrations, hands-on workshops, and interactive sessions to ensure comprehensive understanding and ownership of stove construction and usage.
4. Awareness Campaigns: Launch targeted awareness campaigns to promote the benefits of energy-saving cooking stoves and foster behaviour change among beneficiaries. Utilize a variety of communication channels, including community meetings, radio broadcasts, and informational materials, to reach diverse audiences and reinforce key messages.
5. Training of Trainers-ToTs: incorporating Training of Trainers into the Energy Saving Cooking Stoves project enhances its effectiveness, sustainability, and scalability while also fostering local ownership and empowerment within the community.

By implementing these recommendations in a coordinated and participatory manner, the Energy Saving Cooking Stoves project can overcome challenges, maximize impact, and contribute to improved livelihoods, health, and environmental sustainability within the Kyaka II Refugee Settlement.

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