



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

Guidelines for addressing rural employment and decent work in the Country Programming Framework (CPF)

1. Purpose

These guidelines provide practical guidance to support all practitioners and partners involved in the formulation of the Country Programming Framework (CPF) ¹ in integrating rural employment and decent work (RE&DW) ² concerns.

2. Background

Food insecurity, poverty, income inequalities and the lack of employment opportunities reinforce each other in a vicious cycle by eroding human capital and decreasing labour productivity, thereby perpetuating poverty and social inequalities across generations. Poor people rely mainly on the use of their labour for earning their livelihood, whether through wage-labour or self-employment. Creating productive employment opportunities for the rural poor is therefore the fundamental link for economic growth to ensure poverty reduction, inclusive rural development and more equitable societies.

Rural employment refers to any activity, occupation, work, business or service performed by rural people, for remuneration, profit, social or family gain, in cash or in kind, or by force, including both agricultural and non-agricultural activities.

Promoting rural employment is not only about creating new employment opportunities. It is also about increasing labour productivity in the rural economy and addressing the whole range of decent work deficits that people in rural areas face³. In rural areas, working conditions are poor, labour legislation is rarely enforced and social dialogue is weak. Furthermore, due to low labour productivity, underemployment or any form of exploitation, most rural jobs do not ensure decent levels of income and sustainable livelihoods.



There is increasing recognition of the importance of employment promotion for sustainable development. The Decent Work Agenda⁴ developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1999 and subsequently endorsed by the United Nations (UN) System raises global awareness of the need to address both the *quantity* and the *quality* of employment. The inclusion of the target 1.B⁵: “Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people” in Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 1: “Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger” acknowledged explicitly the centrality of employment promotion for the achievement of food security and poverty reduction.

Given its main mandate to defeat hunger, achieve food security and reduce poverty, FAO has a significant responsibility to specifically address MDG 1. Fully addressing the employment dimensions of this goal is therefore vital for achieving FAO’s mandate and global goals.

¹ The name “NMTPF” is now known as the **Country Programming Framework** (in brief, **CPF**).

² For more information on rural employment and decent work (RE&DW) please refer to the *Guidance on how to address rural employment and decent work concerns in FAO country activities* found at: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1937e/i1937e.pdf>

³ “Decent work involves opportunities for work that: is productive and delivers a fair income; provides security in the workplace and social protection for workers and their families; offers prospects for personal development and encourages social integration; gives people the freedom to express their concerns, to organize and to participate in decisions that affect their lives; and guarantees equal opportunities and equal treatment for all.” ILO. *Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work*. Geneva: ILO, 2007; p. vi.

⁴ The four pillars of the decent work agenda are employment creation and enterprise development, social protection, standards and rights at work, and governance and social dialogue.

⁵ For further information on the employment indicators in the MDGs, refer to [ILO Guide to the New Millennium Development Goals Employment Indicators](#).

3. Mainstreaming rural employment and decent work concerns in the Country Programming Framework

Addressing rural employment is part of FAO's Strategic Framework (SF). Specifically, under FAO Strategic Objective (SO) G "Enabling environment for markets to improve livelihoods and rural development" the Organizational Result (OR) G02 commits FAO to ensure that "Rural employment creation, access to land and income diversification are integrated into agricultural and rural development policies, projects and partnerships". In addition to OR G02, employment issues are directly or indirectly addressed in most of the other SOs/ORs, and in departmental/divisional work programmes⁶.

For example, FAO is dealing with issues of rural employment through several employment generation and enterprise development programmes in agriculture and rural areas, livelihoods support and diversification programmes, gender-equality promotion, promotion of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), occupational safety and health (OSH) in agriculture, etc. However, a more coherent approach, acknowledging the centrality of the employment dimension within FAO's work, harnessing the multidisciplinary of different FAO technical units and involving FAO decentralized offices and their partners in knowledge generation and the establishment of successful mechanisms at country level, is the task ahead.

At country level, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) coordination mechanism provides several entry points for FAO to raise awareness of its partners on RE&DW concerns. The Common Country Assessment (CCA), in particular, represents an opportunity for FAO to include rural employment aspects in the situation analysis and the policy review. The CCA analysis will then support the prioritization exercise in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) where, ideally, RE&DW concerns should be addressed explicitly as a cross-cutting issue as well as in dedicated outcomes or outputs depending on country priorities. FAO focal points in inter-agency groups around UNDAF outcomes should also ensure that RE&DW concerns are taken into account. Participation in these groups can facilitate contacts with partners that may not be FAO's traditional partners, but which should be part of complex coordination mechanisms that address RE&DW, such as Ministries of Labour (MoL), Education (MoE), Health (MoH), Trade (MoT), Youth (MoY), Gender or Women (MoG or MoW), Social Affairs (MoSA), and so on. UNDAF groups may also be seen as leverage to lobby within the UNCT for the need to focus on rural areas, smallholder agriculture and specific informal agricultural workers' concerns. Finally, joint UN programmes present a unique opportunity for FAO to engage in and pilot rural employment promotion schemes and programmes. Collaboration can be sought with other agencies that have strong comparative advantages in addressing employment issues (e.g. ILO, IOM, UNDP, UNIDO, etc).

As the major FAO input into the CCA and UNDAF, the CPF process provides institutional space to mainstream RE&DW concerns in the country-level strategic prioritization and overall medium-term country-level programming of FAO's assistance.

At this time, several CPFs already support (directly or indirectly) rural employment or provide some entry points to stimulate rural employment opportunities and to generate rural incomes. Less frequently, aspects of social protection, standards and rights at work, as well as social dialogue and governance are explicitly addressed. They are often considered as falling within ILO's mandate. However, while the ILO leads the Global Employment and

The Four Pillars of Decent Work

1. Employment creation and enterprise development
2. Social protection
3. Standards and rights at work
4. Governance and social dialogue

⁶FAO's engagement in RE&DW is in line with FAO's Independent External Evaluation's (IEE, 2007) recommendation to shift FAO's approach and strategic emphasis and programme for rural and agricultural based development to facilitating the production environment, opportunity for value added and employment for income generation and food access.

Decent Work Agenda⁷, FAO has a crucial complementary role in promoting decent and productive employment in agriculture and rural areas. This builds on FAO’s comparative advantage in supporting agricultural and rural development and also on the proven potential that agricultural growth has for poverty reduction in developing countries. In addition, FAO has a strong focus on and expertise in small-scale, self-employed and informal agricultural occupations in which the majority of workers in developing countries are found. Furthermore, FAO has an extensive presence at the field level and a longstanding collaboration with many agricultural and rural stakeholders.

Rural employment is often linked to income generating opportunities, livelihoods diversification and farm development, but not mentioned explicitly. Nevertheless, explicitly addressing the employment dimension of agricultural and rural development can be particularly advantageous, especially when taking into account that employment-intensive growth is now recognized as a necessary condition for achieving sustainable growth and poverty reduction. A reorientation of macroeconomic policies to explicitly target employment creation is needed in developing countries in order to permanently reduce poverty and vulnerability. Agricultural and rural development strategies and policies also need to make this shift, explicitly addressing rural employment issues and concerns. Focusing on employment naturally allows concentrating on people, mostly on the poorest, who suffer from the most severe decent work deficits. Focusing on employment can support an opportunities & challenges’ assessment in the CPF analysis where the different beneficiary groups are identified in relation to each CPF outcome. Groupings should be linked to the beneficiaries’ employment status (smallholders / hired workers / informal workers / migrant workers / etc.). This analysis will help reflecting on the trade-offs of different strategic options. Finally, addressing employment is mainly investing in people’s human capital, realising their capabilities and helping them to live fulfilling lives.

There are also advantages in viewing development issues, including issues of agricultural development and rural employment, through the lens of decent work: in terms of a broader reflection on the sources of income, but also of the existing working conditions in rural settings and in the agricultural sector, prevalent types of contracts, child labour occurrence, gender inequalities, and standards and rights at work.

4. Opportunities for integrating rural employment and decent work in the CPF process

The table below places steps in the CPF process side-by-side with opportunities to incorporate RE&DW concerns. The CPF process is outlined in more detail in the CPF general guide. The guidance provided here should be used together with those guidelines.

Steps in CPF	Opportunities for integrating RE&DW concerns
1. Taking into account RE&DW in the <i>starting phase</i>	
Government & FAO agree to start the CPF process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that employment-related focal points (e.g. employment, agribusiness, enterprises, livelihoods, gender equality, extension focal points, etc.) in the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and other ministries responsible for RE&DW related issues are invited to any initial information workshops or other dissemination activities (e.g. Ministry of Labour (MoL), Ministry of Trade [MoT] for marketing opportunities, etc.). If the communication information strategy is extended to other development partners (e.g. representatives of the donor community, civil society, NGOs, private sector), ensure that relevant groups participate, especially worker and producer organizations (both formal and informal), but also women and youth groups.

⁷ Global Employment and Decent Work Agenda: <http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/decent-work-agenda/lang--en/index.htm>

Mobilization of financial resources for CPF formulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When defining resource requirements for the formulation of the CPF and securing their availability, remember to allocate resources, both human and financial, for work on rural employment issues.
Establishment of a CPF Country Core Team led by FAO Rep, and the Steering Committee led by the Government (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When establishing the CPF Country Core Team, ensure that FAO country office focal points for employment-related issues are involved (e.g. focal points for micro, small and medium enterprises [MSMEs], livelihoods diversification, child labour, Occupational Safety and Health [OSH] and good agricultural practices [GAP], etc.). If employment-related issues are recognized as top government priorities or if, for instance, the need to address specific employment-related gaps has already emerged in UN-wide assessments, ensure the presence in the task force of a consultant specialized in addressing RE&DW concerns. The Decent Rural Employment Team (DRET) of the Gender, Equity and Rural Employment (ESW) Division at FAO headquarters and respective focal points in the regional and subregional offices can provide guidance on the key rural employment dimensions in FAO's mandate areas or redirect CPF Country Core Team's members to relevant technical departments. (Support may be provided either on request, or be foreseen in advance since the setting up of the task force through a designated CPF technical focal point depending on the relevance of the topic).
Preparation of a concept note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the concept note includes employment-related stakeholders in the list of stakeholders to be involved.
Validation of the concept note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the DRE Team in ESW and/or respective focal points in the regional and sub-regional offices are involved in the validation process of the CPF concept note.
2. Mainstreaming RE&DW when setting CPF priorities	
Situational analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that employment-related focal points (e.g. employment, agribusiness, enterprises, livelihoods, gender equality, extension focal points, etc.) in the MoA and other ministries responsible for RE&DW issues are invited to consultations with the government at the earliest stage of the process. Ensure that UN Employment Theme Groups (where they exist) and/or individual UN Agencies tasked with rural employment issues (especially ILO and UNIDO) are part of any consultations with other UN agencies. Ensure that ILO rural employment focal point in the country (where they exist) is consulted (see link in section 7 for the list of focal points up to November 2010). Ensure that relevant national stakeholders (other than the government) participate in the consultation process, especially workers' and producers' organizations and networks (both formal and informal), but also women and youth groups, other employment-related Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), private

	<p>sector, rural finance institutions, relevant research institutes, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure consultation of FAO relevant units on employment-related issues at an early stage of the CPF process (ESW and other technical units should be consulted depending on specific issues, e.g. AGS's on agro-enterprise and industry and on strengthening of farmers' organizations and women's groups to enable their participation in value chains and value adding activities). • Identify employment-related issues in rural areas, challenges and national priorities: use information from the most recent reports, e.g. if already completed, analysis from the Common Country Assessment (CCA), ILO Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP). • Ensure that an employment analysis is included in all subsector background papers commissioned: include most recent age and sex-disaggregated data were available, and identify Labour Market Information System (LMIS) gaps in rural areas (e.g. contribution of a number of subsectors -agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry- to employment and their growth trends; prevailing types of working relations and working conditions; prevailing wages and child labour rates, by age and sex). Also include labour productivity trends and constraints. • Review existing government commitments (especially MoA) to RE&DW in agricultural and rural development strategies, policies, plans as well as National Poverty Reduction Strategies (NPRSs). For example, see what explicit employment priorities are and respective budget allocations in strategies, policies, and/or programmes (i.e. in public expenditure reviews). • In the absence of clearly defined and explicit RE&DW national priorities, it should be the task of FAO to undertake a dialogue with the Government and relevant national and international stakeholders (including ILO and UNIDO) so that realistic assumptions are made about a set of plausible national priorities. (In this case, specific analytical efforts should be foreseen.) • Assess employment-related capacities of ARD institutions.
<p>Assessing comparative advantages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When conducting the mapping of the government, FAO and other development partners' activities in the country, ensure that the external support environment is analyzed to understand to what extent it is already contributing to RE&DW promotion. • When thinking about FAO's mandate and technical capacities in normative and standard-setting work and technical assistance consider FAO's comparative advantage in promoting productive and decent employment in rural areas, especially in agriculture and the informal rural economy dependent on agriculture⁸. • When looking at the concrete experience that FAO has accumulated in the country, and similar experience in surrounding countries of the region, consider that often FAO

⁸ The term "agriculture" includes cultivation of crops and animal husbandry as well as forestry, fisheries, and the development of land and water resources. (Source: FAOTERM)

	addresses employment issues indirectly (e.g. by supporting agricultural productivity and GAPs, etc.).
Prioritising FAO's work: The Priority Matrix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When defining the CPF Priority Areas consider that employment is explicitly addressed in FAO SF (SO G/OR G02) and was a core recommendation of the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) of FAO in 2007. • Take into account existing commitments of the Government in relation to employment promotion. • Depending on the specific country situation and CPF process, employment aspects could either represent a dedicated CPF priority area, to be reflected in the Priority Matrix, and/or be made explicit later at the outcome/output level.
Review of the strategic CPF priority areas by relevant FAO and in-country stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the DRE Team in ESW and/or respective focal points in the regional and subregional offices are involved in the internal FAO review of the CPF priority matrix.
3. Mainstreaming RE&DW when programming for results	
Building the CPF Results Matrix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is strongly suggested to explicitly mention main employment-related dimensions at the outcome level to emphasize the centrality of employment-enhancing interventions for inclusive growth and sustainable food security. Employment-related results should at least be integrated at the output level. Corresponding employment indicators and resource requirements should also be made explicit. It is strongly suggested not to mention employment-related aspects only at the level of the specific country activities in the FAO Country Work Plan. • When available, refer to employment outcomes and outputs in the UN programming documents (United Nations Development Assistance Framework [UNDAF], DWCP, etc.) and emphasize areas of convergence (with special attention to the ILO). Results formulation could however need a better adaptation to the specific needs of rural areas. • Specifically target the employment-related needs of disadvantaged groups' in the agricultural and rural sectors, i.e. foster rural women and youth employability, entrepreneurship and employment; address child labour reduction and prevention. Depending on the context, include specific focus on migrant workers, landless people, refugees, internally displaced people (IDPs), demobilized soldiers, the disabled, people living with and affected by HIV, indigenous people, and the elderly.
M&E and implementation arrangements (M&E plan and Country Work Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure to include thematic employment-related RE&DW indicators, baselines and targets, disaggregated by age and sex, in the M&E plan. Align them to the extent possible with national indicators (e.g. MDG 1 employment and decent work indicators

	<p>for target 1b, ILO decent work indicators used in the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP),⁹etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the rural employment focal point in the MoA, the MoL and other ministries responsible for RE&DW related issues are involved in developing the M&E plan. • Involve the employment-related focal points (e.g. employment, agribusiness, enterprises, livelihoods, gender equality, extension focal points, etc.) in the MoA and other ministries and national stakeholders responsible for RE&DW issues in any consultations to develop the Country Work Plan. • Consider employment-related interventions as potential areas of joint programming and resource mobilization, especially with ILO and UNIDO.
<p>Validation and endorsement of the CPF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the DRE Team in ESW and/or respective focal points in the regional and subregional offices are involved in the multi-disciplinary technical review of the full draft of the CPF document. • Ensure that the rural employment focal point in the MoA, the MoL and other ministries, as well as national stakeholders responsible for RE&DW related issues are involved in the country-level review of the full draft of the CPF document.

⁹ DWCPs are the ILO contribution to UN country programmes and are the expression of the ILO Programme and Budget in a country. Each DWCP is organized around a limited number of country programme priorities and outcomes. These are further detailed in an implementation plan.

5. Rural employment and decent work checklist for CPF preparation

CPF process	
✓	Have relevant employment-related focal points (e.g. employment, agribusiness, enterprises, livelihoods, gender equality, extension focal points, etc.) in the MoA and other ministries responsible for rural employment and decent work (RE&DW) issues actively participated in the process?
✓	Have relevant rural producers' and workers' organizations and networks participated in the process?
✓	Have relevant women and youth groups participated in the process?
✓	Have the regional or sub-regional FAO employment focal points (where they exist) been consulted?
✓	Have ESW HQ and other relevant FAO technical units on specific employment-related issues been consulted?
Information and analysis	
✓	Does the analysis identify employment-related issues and challenges in rural areas (disaggregated by age and sex), as well as national priorities and commitments?
✓	Have the employment-related capacities of ARD main stakeholders been assessed?
✓	Does the CPF build on the analysis of RE&DW aspects already present in the CCA and the ILO Decent Work Country Programme (if already completed)?
Partnerships	
✓	Have rural employment experts in regional/country mechanisms been consulted (e.g. in the United Nations Country Team [UNCT]; in the ILO or UNIDO)?
✓	Have the ILO country office and the ILO rural employment focal point in the country (where exists) been consulted?
✓	Have other development partners working on RE&DW issues in the country been consulted? (World Bank, bilateral cooperation agencies, etc.)
Priorities, Outcomes and Outputs	
✓	Have existing government commitments in relation to RE&DW been taken into account in the selection of priorities?
✓	Have links been made with UN-system-wide commitments to RE&DW in the selection of priority areas for the CPF?
✓	Do the CPF outcomes and outputs address explicitly RE&DW concerns in the agricultural sector?
✓	Have rural employment concerns been addressed strategically in the CPF Results Matrix at policy, institutional and field level?
✓	Have the priorities been reviewed by employment-related focal points (e.g. employment, agribusiness, enterprises, livelihoods, gender equality, extension focal points, etc.) in the MoA and other ministries responsible for RE&DW issues?
✓	Have employment-related results/activities and age- and sex-disaggregated indicators for M&E been included in the M&E plan and Country Work Plan?

6. Addressing rural employment and decent work in CPF outcomes and outputs

The table below highlights the main issues relevant for FAO's work under the four pillars of decent work (for more detailed information and suggestions for action please refer to the specific resources listed in section 7). At least some of these issues should be explicitly mentioned in the outcomes and outputs of the CPF, depending on the specific country situation and CPF prioritization. The employment dimension could represent a priority area and an outcome in itself (e.g. Improving the opportunities to access more and better jobs in rural areas and particularly in the agricultural sector; Promoting employment-centred agricultural and rural development strategies and policies) or a dimension of a more general outcome (e.g. Enhancing agricultural production and productivity, including labour productivity; Enhancing food security, including through better access to employment opportunities in rural areas). To provide another example, an outcome formulated as *"Diversification and commercialization of small-scale farming with value additions and agri-business development enhanced"* indirectly refer to the fact that this will lead to more jobs. However, by making this explicit by saying *"Diversification and commercialization of small-scale farming with value additions and agri-business development enhanced **towards more and better rural jobs**"* we could ensure that in planning the activities aspects such as the improvement of working conditions or the enhancement of rural people's employability are included.

Employment aspects should then be made explicit at the output level. The employment dimension of agricultural and rural development is crucial and always addressed, directly or indirectly, through FAO interventions in a country. For instance, an output which aims at increasing the *"adoption of improved / efficient technologies for enhancing agriculture production and processing"* is already very relevant to employment promotion. Ensuring gender equality in accessing technology and training, considering the impacts of the adoption of the improved technologies on employment and on women workloads or on child labour would be the added value of applying an employment lens. Even if this will probably have to be specified at the activity level in the country work plan and not in the CPF document, it would be worth to anticipate this employment dimension already in the output formulation. The output could then be rephrased as *"improved / efficient and **socially sustainable** technologies for enhancing agriculture production and processing"*.

1. Employment creation and enterprise development

- Promotion of agriculture and rural development (ARD) with high employment rates
- RE&DW addressed explicitly in agriculture and rural development policies, strategies and programmes
- Increase of rural *labour* productivity through improved access to skills training, extension services and technology
- Entrepreneurship promotion in rural areas by supporting agribusiness and marketing micro, small and medium enterprises in accessing markets, training, financial services, land and other productive assets
- Employment-creation programmes in rural areas, particularly for youth and women and targetign areas with high migration incidence, e.g. green jobs
- Support to national institutions to collect and analyse age and sex disaggregated data (ASDD) on rural labour markets
- Support programmes that improve the productive use of remittances in rural areas of origin

2. Social protection

- Promotion of occupational safety and health standards in agricultural and informal rural employment

- Improvement of working conditions in rural areas, in particular with respect to maternity protection and minimum wages
- Extension of social protection coverage to cover small producers and informal economy workers in rural areas
- Support to the development of labour-saving technologies and care services for poor households in HIV- and AIDS- (or other diseases) affected areas and for reducing women's domestic and care tasks

3. Standards and rights at work

- Application of national and international labour standards in small-scale agriculture and the informal rural economy
- Child labour prevention and elimination of the worst forms of child labour in agriculture
- Support to freedom of association and right to organize, including revision of restrictive regulations on producers' organizations and workers' associations
- Elimination of discrimination and promotion of equality, e.g. seeking to reduce gender- and age-based discrimination
- Protection of rural migrant workers from conditions of forced labour, trafficking and abuse in origin and destination countries

4. Governance & social dialogue

- Support to countries in strengthening democratic organizations and networks of producers and workers in the informal rural food economy
- Empowerment and enhanced participation of rural people in social and policy dialogue through their organizations, especially women and youth
- Support participation of rural poor, and especially disadvantaged groups, in local decision-making and governance mechanisms

5. Additional resources for mainstreaming rural employment and decent work in the CPF:

FAO, 2011. *Guidance on How to Address Rural Employment and Decent Work Concerns in FAO Country Activities*: http://www.fao-ilo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fao_ilo/pdf/GuidanceRE.pdf and the *Quick Reference for Addressing Rural Employment and Decent Work*: http://www.fao-ilo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fao_ilo/pdf/GuidanceRE-QR.pdf

FAO/ILO/IFAD, 2011. *Gender and Rural Employment Policy Briefs*
<http://www.fao-ilo.org/publications3/workshop/presentations010/en/>

ILO, 2007. *CEB Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work*:
<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/pardev/relations/multilateral/toolkit.htm>

ILO. Over 38 Conventions and 23 Recommendations providing commitment and guidance in advancing rural decent work: <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/>

ILO resources on Decent Work indicators and evaluations:
http://www.ilo.org/integration/themes/mdw/lang--en/WCMS_123804/index.htm

ILO, 2008. Promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction, Report IV, International Labour Conference, 97th Session, 2008 (Geneva):
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/--relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_091721.pdf

List of ILO focal points:

http://www.fao-ilo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fao_ilo/pdf/ILOFocalPointList.pdf

Joint FAO-ILO website Food, Agriculture & Decent Work: <http://www.fao-ilo.org/>.

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