

Senegal Social Review

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1. Background and Country Context

In Senegal, 60% of the active population live in rural areas and earn most of their income from activities in the primary sector of agriculture; animal farming, fishing and forest produce (AICS, 2018). Majority of the rural population is afflicted by severe poverty, especially women, young people and micro-farmers who survive on subsistence agriculture and little or no access to most basic services. In 2016/17, the population of Senegal (also known as the Gateway to Africa) was estimated at 15.4 million, placing 23% of its population in the greater Dakar region and 40% in other urban areas. The 2017 Human Development Index (HDI) ranks Senegal at 164 out of 189 countries and territories and Gender Inequality Index (GII) value of 0.515, ranking it 124 out of 160 countries in the 2017 index. The country faces not only massive youth unemployment – with 44% of its population now under 15 – but also shrinking agriculture, depleting fish stocks, persistent food insecurity and long-term infrastructure challenges (UNDP, 2012).

From a women's economic empowerment front, women especially those living in rural areas are highly active in the processing and marketing of agricultural, livestock and fishery products (FAO, 2016). Women represent 70% of the agriculture workforce in the country. However, they are confronted with several hurdles including constraints related to; access to land and land tenure security; access to financing mechanisms; access to factors of production and extension services; effects of climate change; and access to markets (UN Women, 2019). According to World Bank, Senegal is relatively a stable African democracy with high economic growth forecast despite the high unemployment and fertility rates. It has a vast youth population, high levels of poverty and low levels of social protection, all of which have implications for gender equality (Equal Measures 2030)

Women represent 52% of Senegal's population and it is therefore crucial to ensure that decisions affecting women's lives reflect their priorities and views in all manners of development. Studies have shown that countries which have more women in politics tend to be more successful in several areas e.g. quality of governance, quality of education systems, infrastructure investment and perceptions of corruption. The Constitution of Senegal clearly spells out basic civil and socio-economic rights for women including the right to education. Gender parity is nearly achieved in basic education enrollment, but the challenge is retention and significant drop out rates from primary school to university. Notwithstanding the dropout rate, figures are quite encouraging when it comes to levels of representation of women in the education system, and there is a growing number of women with high school and university degrees, and more women working in all professional sectors (WPR, 2016).

The warming oceans, extreme disparities in weather conditions, land degradation, rising sea levels harming fish stocks and other effects of climate change in Senegal continues to lead to drought and food insecurities, effects that are mostly felt by the women in the country; livelihoods and job opportunities. Because of all this, women face higher risks and bear a disproportionate burden of climate change impacts in the country, especially in poor rural communities. The achievement of gender equality in Senegal with a complex socio-cultural environment requires greater recognition of women's place and their contribution to socio-economic growth. Achievement of green growth in the country therefore rests with the extent to which joint efforts and priorities in the country are inclusive and transformative.

Social barriers and funding issues create obstacles in addressing green growth in many countries including Senegal and preventing broader and effective discussion of gender inequalities. Other challenges include difficulties in enforcing civil laws where customary laws are the norm; women's less access capital, assets especially land; and girls secondary education dropout rates which are high due to factors like child pregnancy and child marriage (IMF, 2019).

With regards to the gender machinery and its institutional arrangements, the Ministry of Woman, Family and Childhood provides the overall technical leadership on gender equality, family relations and children's welfare. It is also responsible for coordination and implementation of the gender related activities and laws. The Government has also put in place Gender Focal Points in each ministry for provision of technical support and review of mainstreaming of gender in their respective government ministries and departments. There are also various non-state actors who are playing a critical role in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. Other mechanisms for promoting, monitoring and control to ensure greater implementation of policies and programs for gender equality and the elimination of discrimination against women includes the Advisory Committee on Women (brings together CSO's and representatives from different institutions) and the network of parliamentarians' wives.

2. Overview of the Policy Framework

Senegal has subscribed to almost all the legal instruments for the promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls. These include the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on Human Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Additional Act A / SA.02 / 05/15 on the equal rights of men and women to sustainable development in space the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The country has also adhered to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, United Nations Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union Agenda 2063 in which gender equality and the empowerment of women is a priority.

The 2001 Senegal Constitution guarantees equality between women and men in its article 7. The Government of Senegal (GoS) ratified the Convention of United Nations on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)¹ in 1985 and the Optional Protocol on violence against women in 2000. The country ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa in 2005. The Republic of Senegal submitted its new climate action plan to the UNFCCC in 2015. The GoS made significant progress for the promotion of a gender-sensitive environment, including adoption of the *Parity Law*, the *Standard Operating Procedures on GBV*, a *National Action Plan on GBV/Human Rights and the Empowerment of Women*, and the *National Strategy for Gender Equality and Equity*. The adoption of the Gender Parity Law in 2010 is a welcome development as it demands parity on electoral lists, and this has led to an increase in the proportion of seats held by women in national parliament from 19.2% in 2001 to 43% in the 2017 elections.

¹ On 18 December 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.
<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>

In 2014, Senegal adopted the Senegal Emerging Plan (PSE) as its new development strategy and economic policy reference framework, which is based on three strategic pillars namely; (i) structural transformation of the economy and growth; (ii) human capital, social protection and sustainable development; and (iii) governance, institutions, peace and security. All these key priorities have gender and social inclusion aspects which are key in achievement of the same. In order to ensure that women, girls, men and boys have same opportunities to participate in and benefit equally from development, Senegal adopted the 2016 – 2026 National Strategy for Equity and Gender Equality (SNEEG). This strategy also mandates gender budgeting at national level. More effort is still needed to address gender inequality issues in areas of education (high dropout rates for girls in secondary school), access to assets, discrimination in the labor market, and health related outcomes.

The OECD's Social Institutions and Gender Index scores Senegal as 'medium' (on a scale ranging from very low to very high) on its gender discrimination scale due to its discriminatory family laws regarding ownership of assets, inheritance and other legal rights. Aligned with the PSE which aims to "contribute to make Senegal an emerging country in 2035 with a society of solidarity in a state of law, without discrimination, where men and women will have the same opportunities to participate in its development and enjoy the benefits of its growth", the updated SNEEG aims to eliminate inequalities between women and men so as to ensure women's rights and protection, by ensuring their full participation in decision-making processes and equitable access to development resources and benefits (UN Women, 2019).

Other key sector plans and national policies in the country in the areas of climate change, poverty and food security includes; the National Forest Policy (2005-2025); National Social Protection Strategy; the National Adaptation Plan; National Strategy for Social Protection (2016-2035); the National Strategy for Food Security and Resilience (2015-2035) and a national agricultural investment programme for 2009 to 2020.

Despite the significance progress made in the country with regards to gender equality and women's empowerment, there is still discrimination of women in law and in practice; strong socio-cultural and legal constraints continue to stand in the way to achieve gender equality. For example, while the *1972 Family Code grants* women and men equal access to land, there are still prevalent traditional customs that prevents equality in practice, women often unable to inherit land and husbands often opposing the acquisition of land by their wives; additionally, child/early/forced marriages are still widespread despite prohibited under article 108 of the Family Code (Equal Measures 2030). Women continue to be main victims of gender-based violence in the country.

3. Risk and Opportunities for Inclusive Green Growth

Women, who form the majority of the world's 2 billion poorest people, are often disproportionately affected by climate change impacts as a result of persisting gender norms and discriminations, and additionally, women and men also contribute to climate change responses in different ways (ODI, 2016). Gender inequality is now widely acknowledged as a central aspect of development. Green growth cannot be achieved if other groups of people are socially excluded hence gender equality apart from being a right, it is also an end in itself. Tailoring policies, strategies and investments with inclusive green growth lenses has multiple benefits. Over 80% of

active women work in the informal sector, not benefiting from basic social services and often working long hours in substandard and even dangerous conditions (UNOHCHR, 2015). Below are some of the risks and opportunities related to Senegal's inclusive green growth in the areas of urban development, rural development and green growth governance.

3.1 Urban Development

In 2014, 39.4 percent of the urban population in Senegal lived in informal settlements (Craig, 2019), and it still registers rapid population. Informal settlements characterize urban inhabitants, and this increases the vulnerability to flooding, affecting the wellbeing and health of the people living in urban settlements and overall the development of the urban areas. Rural farmers experiencing drought are being forced to migrate to urban areas, with 40% of rural Senegalese migrants find themselves living in flood-prone informal settlements of Dakar (Ibid). As farmers rely heavily on agriculture (food and income), the climatic shocks affect them even more leading to water scarcity, loss of livestock and crop failure. In October 2016, a new program for cities was made, aiming at achieving sustainable cities and human settlements for all, and promoting among other objectives 'gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls' echoing the Senegalese Government strategy for Equity and Gender Equality for the 2016 – 2016 period (WUF, 2018).

Urbanization is often associated with greater independence and opportunity for women but at the same time it also increases their risk to violence, presents constraints on employment, mobility and their participation in leadership (IIED, 2013) reflecting deep gender-based inequalities. Urban settings are generally more favorable to women's empowerment compared to rural areas (RPCA, 2019), however, there are gender relations in both formal and informal employment sectors that requires redress. The salaries of women in the formal sector labor force are above the world average as a percentage of male salaries, but not equal to those of men for equal work in Senegal. 2016 government statistics reported an average monthly salary of 116,164 FCFA (West Africa CFA francs) for men as compared to 108,984 FCFA for salaried women (93, 8 percent of the wages of men) (ANSD, 2016c), and there are fewer women than men in Senegal are in salaried employment.

While all urban populations face threats to their well-being in disaster situations, women, particularly poor women, face heightened risks (UN Habitat, 2015). Urban development therefore requires that the Government provides adequate and proper infrastructure such as water, sanitation, electricity and transport to tally with the growing urbanization and for families living on the urban peripheries. In the urban context people develop new kinds of livelihoods: salaried jobs, entrepreneurship, trade, and crafts, etc.; and on the labor market men and women face the same problems but differently (Sida, 2004), showing that unemployment is principally an urban problem.

As identified in the green secondary cities transition in Senegal, some of the following key issues and risks need to be taken into consideration;

- **Increased access to renewable energy and energy efficiency:** Senegal electricity access reached 88% of the population in urban areas, while in rural areas is still limited to 38%, although increasing. The national overall electricity access rate is 64%. This rate is one of the

highest in the sub region². The majority of poor people of Senegal living in rural areas do not have access electricity. Women bear the burden as they walk long distances to find firewood for household use. Alternative sources of clean energy and inclusive energy technologies for the socially excluded groups will increase access to the same.

ECREEE launched a flagship program entitled ECOWAS Program on Gender Integration in Energy Access (ECOW-GEN) in 2013. The program was established in the context that the potential of women in the region of ECOWAS, as producers and providers of energy services, is underutilized and that the empowerment of women and men to make meaningful contributions to the implementation of the policies adopted is necessary for the achievement of Sustainable Energy Goals for All (SEforALL) in West Africa. The establishment of ECOWAS-GEN is based on the principles set out in the ECOWAS Gender Policy and aims to contribute to the achievement of the SE4All objectives in West Africa and regional policy. of ECOWAS on renewable energies and energy efficiency, putting women at the center of energy development. Two of the main achievements of ECOWAS-GEN are the adoption of the ECOWAS policy for gender mainstreaming in access to energy and the validation of the ECOWAS Directive on Gender Assessments in Projects.

- **Innovation and green technologies in public transport and urban planning:** Public transport planning, for the urban areas in Senegal provides an opportunity for stakeholders to ensure inclusive planning and gender responsive transport and urban planning. This will help in ensuring that public transport and urban plans responds to the various travel needs of women, girls, men, boys, people with disabilities, and other socially excluded and vulnerable groups. Gender blind transport infrastructure not only does it put women and girls at risk of gender-based violence and exploitation but it also exacerbates the disparities in access to services and productive resources.
- **Water for consumption and production;** at household level and in the agricultural fields, women largely use water and the availability of clean water is important. Improved sanitation conditions in the urban and rural areas has a bearing on the good sanitary living conditions of the inhabitants. The reduction of rainfall over the last two decades and poor infrastructure in Senegal makes it difficult to find water in close proximity; impacting on both the agricultural products and the home (FAO, 2016). Reduced rainfall may also put women at risk as they spend much of their time looking for water at the expense of other creative and productive opportunities. It is even more risky if no particular attention is paid to companies and organizations in the urbanization sector; ensuring that there are measures put in place that do not compromise the sanitation of the people and contribute towards the pollution of the existing water resources in the urban areas. The effects of the same impacts on people's livelihoods and overall development of the country.

In many ways, urbanization is an important and positive transformation, linked to economic growth and a better educated and more productive labor force (UNFPA, 2012). The GoS therefore needs to analyze all aspects including women's engagement in both paid work (often informal, subject to increasing insecurities and low earnings) and unpaid work (which results in time poverty for women). Further to that, the differential access to shelter and basic services and their importance

² <https://www.se4all-africa.org/seforall-in-africa/country-data/senegal/>

for safety, security and well-being of the people of its inhabitants. This in return contributes towards a greater environmental sustainability, more efficient use of resources, improved social welfare and better and equitable access to services.

3.2 Rural Development

Over half of the 13 million people in Senegal live in rural areas, and over 30% live on less than \$1.25 per day (CREATE, 2018). Resulting from climate change, rural Senegal experiences drought, deforestation and desertification. Limited access to electricity and water the rural poor are more reliant on and vulnerable to environment and climate than those who live in the cities with easy access to resources and amenities. Women in rural Senegal spend the majority of their day producing food, collecting resources, and managing households, with no running water and limited electricity. All these factors have led to poor health and safety, increased time spent finding and collecting water and firewood, increased workload to produce food, potential for increased conflict and forced migration to cities.

The gender gap in rural Senegal contributes to more risks for the most poor and marginalized people; for example, the following statistics and social status analyzed by CREATE perpetuates gender disparities in the country (CREATE, 2018)³.

- 67.9% of women in Senegal are illiterate, 66.8% of the unemployed population are women
- Women are twice as likely to perform unpaid labor as men
- Women constitute around 70% of the labor force in rural areas
- Women are less likely to have gone to school, and thus have fewer marketable skills for paid labor
- Although 70% of women are active in the agricultural sector (both paid and unpaid), they only own 13.4% of land

Rural poverty in Senegal is exacerbated by shortage of infrastructure and basic services as access to these services remains very limited especially in rural areas: the electricity access rate was 86.9% in urban areas compared to 24.2% in rural areas in 2013; the drinking water access rate was 55.48% in urban areas compared to 19.54% in rural areas in 2013; the education access rate (final year of primary school) was 17.52% in urban areas relative to 14.71% in rural areas in 2013 (African Development Bank, 2016).

Unemployment remains high nationally; according to data from the 2015 published national survey on employment in Senegal, the unemployment rate for persons aged 15 years and above, was estimated at 13.4%, with 40% of the unemployed having no certificate. Unemployment affects women (16.7%) more than men (9.5%). The combined underemployment rate, related to the time of work and unemployment, was estimated at 39%, comprising 54.5% for women and 29.8% for men.

Provision of basic services in rural areas in the country need to be accompanied by actions that strengthen the governance of local institutions which are responsible for providing these services.

³ Center for Renewable Energy and Appropriate Technology for the Environment (CREATE) <https://www.createaction.org/blog/women-and-climate-change-in-senegal/>

Similarly, issues of governance of national and local institutions responsible for sustainable natural resource management should be addressed to improve the resilience of communities and secure rural incomes (UNDP, 2012).

3.3 Green Growth Governance

Senegal's national development plan, Plan Senegal Emergent (PSE) is clear in its commitment to an inclusive, holistic approach to sustainable development, noting that "meeting basic social needs is a key factor in promoting sustainable human development and the green economy" (PAGE⁴, 2019). Achieving inclusive green economy needs to not only look at the government branches and departments but wholistic structures and stakeholders with a bearing governance in general. Despite the progress made regarding governance and women political participation, UN Women found that, it remains unclear to fully engage men in gender parity and, more generally, in the struggle for gender equality; the Gender Parity Law is quite unpopular among male parliamentarians and not followed; lastly, the parliamentarians do not have the same understanding of the parity law and particularly the parity concept.

Studies have shown that when women are put in leadership positions, they tend to put in place bills/policies which favor more women, children and communities at large. Gender disparities constrain women's abilities to engage in climate finance or to start or scale up initiatives aimed to respond to climate change e.g. women's disproportionately high illiteracy rates. Political and socio-economic imbalances often render women disproportionately vulnerable to climate change impacts. As Senegal mobilize funds for climate actions, it is important that the resources are channeled towards where they are needed the most, by among others ensuring that there is equity and transparency in fund disbursement and utilization, all of which have a bearing on climate finance governance and approaches. These must be sensitive to the gendered aspects of climate change impacts and contribute towards achieving aspirations put in place in the PSE, and overall poverty elimination and social policies.

Senegal has the opportunity to strengthen not only the participation/representation of women in politics but ensure that the performance of central and local governments is enhanced in supporting inclusive development priorities and provide public services which are inclusive. With decentralization reforms in place, there is need to address the imbalances with regards to distribution of power, resources and public services. The third priority of the 2035 PES i.e. governance, institutions, peace and security, provides opportunity for social inclusion in the country's development which will not only trigger economic expansion but also improve the delivery of inclusive social services and strengthen the governance system. Overall, in order to reduce inequalities and promote sustainable development, interventions on green growth governance need to focus on women and youth as agents of change, most vulnerable populations in the country including persons with disabilities, unemployed, women victims of violence, elderly, persons living with HIV and Aids, and victims of migration.

⁴ Partnership for Action and Green Economy https://www.un-page.org/files/public/senegal-results_factsheet_2018_final.pdf

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Despite some progress made on the institutional, statutory and legislative fronts, efforts still need to be made to ensure the greater empowerment of women and gender equality in Senegal. Climate change often impacts the responsibilities that women bear, which means they must adopt new practices and forgo some to adapt to the changing environment. The various gender and social disparities in the country requires approaches that would effectively address them for sustainable development. Gender mainstreaming and social inclusion are effective avenues in which women's, socially excluded groups and most poor people unique knowledge and skills are taken into consideration, especially related to urban/rural development and green growth governance in Senegal. Mainstreaming gender in climate change projects, policies and planning can help achieve the twin goals of advancing social policy (including gender equality) and ensuring greater returns on mitigative and adaptive investments (GGCA, 2013).

The recommendations presented below are some key entry points (not in any particular order) and ways towards improving gender-responsiveness and socially inclusive approaches to achieve the contribution towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) in Senegal. It further provides issues that would help to measure the likely social impacts of the implementation of the NDCs.

- 1) **Social and gender assessments:** Since the PSE provides a development and economic policy framework for the country, it is therefore critical that all development and economic interventions conduct social and gender assessments during the design/planning/needs assessment stages. These kinds of assessments provide guidance on key gender and social inclusion issues to focus in economy and growth; human capital, social protection and sustainable development; and, governance, institutions and peace security. Further to this, it enhances the mainstreaming of gender issues in all national and local interventions and operationalize the National Gender and Equality Strategy and promote inclusive and sustainable growth in Senegal.
- 2) **Creating inclusive economic and decent jobs;** The PSE has identified the creation of green jobs as one of its priorities. In contributing towards making inclusive economic growth in Senegal, there is need to improve productivity in sectors where the poor are more active and strengthening social protection mechanism. Deliberate efforts need to be made by having programs that focus on women and youth in rural and peri-urban areas of the country. Operationalizing green economy drive in the country needs sector focused actions as the Senegal has a young active population in the labour market. Additionally, the government and private sector need to reduce discrimination in labor markets, for instance, a 5-percentage point drop in the earning gap due to discrimination could elevate female labor force participation by 8.6 percentage points (IMF, 2019). A gender-transformative approach will ensure that women are included as beneficiaries and decision-makers, with economic opportunities and strengthened capacities that give them a stronger voice and improve their position in society.
- 3) **Gender sensitive urban planning:** Ensure that urban and rural planning and designs responds to the different gender needs identified by all gender and social groups. As urban

planning requires having in place urban guidelines/roadmaps, it is critical that the methodologies of these guidelines are engendered at all levels for greater social co benefits. Gender responsive climate programs have to take into consideration women's needs in transport such as their safety; affordability of the fares, schedule for the transport services fitting their needs. And ensuring that women and girls are central to the planning and development of the transport programs in urban development.

- 4) **Institutional capacity building in social inclusion and gender mainstreaming:** It is important that the country takes initiatives in building individual and institutional capacities for nationally-owned green economy processes for effective local ownership, success and sustainability of the same - deliberately targeting the Government line ministries and departments with the mandate of gender coordination and mainstreaming, women's groups/organizations/networks, academia and other non-state actors. All climate change capacity building activities need to ensure that gender and social inclusion forms part and parcel of the initiatives.
- 5) **Gender sensitive policy development:** The development (design/review) of climate related policy documents should ensure that gender considerations are taken on board. This should be coupled with ensuring that there are budget allocations which responds to the gender-specific needs identified in the policies/strategies/plans. The success of the green growth governance, rural and urban development will benefit from the extent to which gender considerations have been put in place in the guiding policies and regulations.
- 6) **Equal opportunities in access to/and land ownership:** Land is the most important agricultural resource in rural areas, representing both future potential and a definite asset for the sub-sector.
Considering women's empowerment drive and the desire to promote equal access to land for women and men, there is need for translation of the land laws and massive sensitization of the same in order to increase the awareness around women's land rights, and contribute towards women becoming more economically autonomous. Need to address the social cultural issues around land ownership, sensitization and capacity building on women's land rights and enforcement of these land related laws especially in rural areas.
- 7) **Village level social economics:** As rural development provides entry point for development of agriculture, agroforestry and livestock raising, there is need to recognize that measures to adapt to climate change must first and foremost be taken at village level, where social norms are largely built. In the same regard, since the villages are not homogeneous, the rural development models should consider the social and economic dynamics of each of the villages and may require a rapid social analysis for the villages to inform suitable initiatives.
- 8) **Inclusion and participation of socially excluded and marginalized groups:** Consultations for the planning and design of urban and rural services need to ensure that locals, especially the marginalized groups including women, women groups, youth and peri-urban poor people. It is critical that all the inhabitants of the urban and rural settings are included

throughout the process so that their specific needs, priorities and impacts of urbanization such as waste management, access to renewable energy, transport, water etc. are taken into consideration. Gender-responsive approach to ensure that all programme activities, outputs and outcomes involve women and men in their set-up, decision making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation,

- 9) **Inclusive and sustainable climate finance:** Government of Senegal and its Development Partners need to ensure that sustainable climate finance initiatives are properly designed and implemented by addressing the socio-political imbalances (including gender imbalances) at all levels, especially imbalances that weaken their resilience to climate change impacts. Marginalized groups such as poor women and men, differently abled people, migrants, unemployed youth, single and child headed households, children, at risk girls, elderly and other groups face higher barriers to accessing and benefiting from financial resources. It is therefore important that climate finance mechanisms explicitly lay out approaches for inclusion throughout planning/designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- 10) **Gender responsive investments and governance:** It is recommended that all types of green investments and governance framework should to be gender responsive in order to ensure that climate finance is effective and equitable. This could be done through policies, plans, tools and other strategic frameworks for the country; have gender perspectives at all levels of green the investments mechanisms including governance structures, procedures, processes and operations.
- 11) **Alternative energy technologies and income generation activities especially for women:** Promote alternative energy technologies and improve income generating activities that train and empower rural women to reduce deforestation and adapt to impacts of climate change. Alternative energy technologies could include solar-powered pumps in the villages, rehabilitated wells that provide year-round access to clean water without producing carbon emissions. These should be introduced when/after an inclusive gender needs assesment is done.

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About the Global Green Growth Institute

The Global Green Growth Institute was founded to support and promote a model of economic growth known as “green growth”, which targets key aspects of economic performance such as poverty reduction, job creation, social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

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