



THE
BANDAPTAI ECONOMIC
EMPOWERMENT PROJECT
CASE STUDY

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BANDAPTAI ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Goal:

The Bandaptai Economic Empowerment Project (BEEP) has been implemented in the Chebunyo, Kaboson and Lelaitich locations of Chepalungu sub-county in Bomet since 2016.

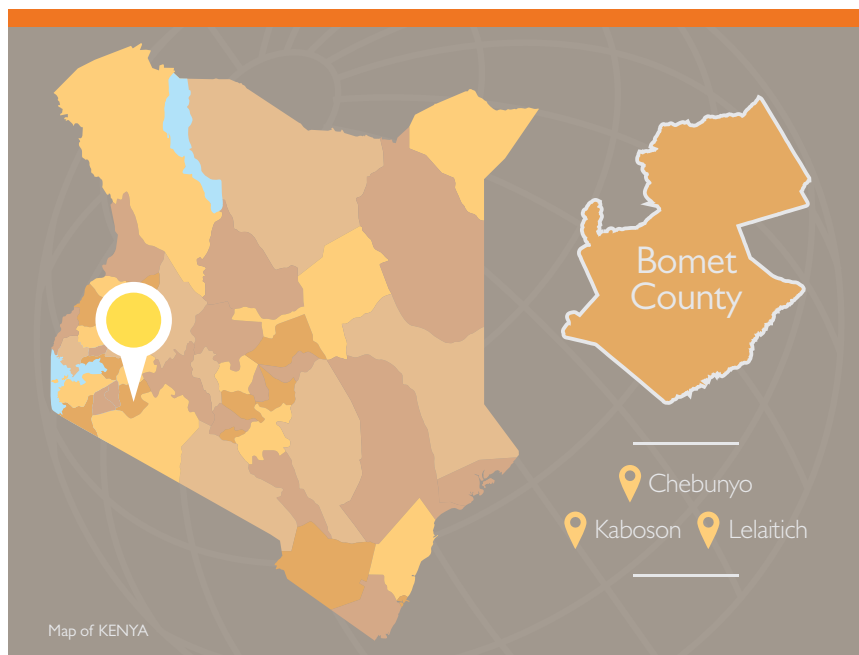
The project was initiated by World Vision Kenya to enable vulnerable households in the region to sustainably provide for their children's essential needs. This is by transforming smallholder farmers and their families from dependence to an empowered world view.

It targeted 2500 of the most vulnerable rural households and 500 youths through interventions that will enable them provide sustainably for their children by 2021. The area has a population of 56,600 people out of which 29,000 are children, according to the Kenya National Housing and Population Census 2019.

Issues that necessitated the project:

The project was informed by a number of issues.

- Farmers were still steeped in traditional agricultural production methods which do yield much.
- There was no co-ordination in marketing and farmers were subjected to exploitation by middlemen who bought their produce at low prices.
- High malnutrition and poverty levels. Poverty rate was at 53% in 2016 but this has now gone down to 38% in 2020.
- High unemployment among the youth



Interventions:

The strategy phase 2018 - 2020 focused on programs around livelihoods and households resilience, community engagement and empowerment.

The interventions were:

1. Developing value chains predominantly practiced by the locals. These included the dairy, orange flesh sweet potatoes and the poultry value chains.
2. The Savings 4 Transformation. The Village Savings and Loans (VSLA) model allows for accumulation and conversion of small amounts of cash into savings that can then be lent to members as credit. Families can accumulate savings and access loans to create and strengthen their livelihood opportunities.
3. Skills for life: The issue of youth unemployment, which is rampant in

the area, is also addressed through skills for life initiative.

Partnerships:

Partnerships were at two levels: - The County Government of Bomet and the Bandaptai Community. The creation of synergies between World Vision and the County Government of Bomet was important as the three value chains promoted are also embedded in the Bomet County Development Plan (BCDP 2018-2023).

The county contributed technical expertise and funds for construction for agro-processing plants for dairy products and orange flesh sweet potatoes.

The BCDP model targets development at the grassroots which is best achieved by mobilizing people into groups and co-operatives.



Key challenges:

The COVID-19 pandemic was also a major set-back due to containment measures, which banned social gathering. This led to deferment of a lot of project activities.

- The vocational training programme which was affected by closure of schools and tertiary institution.
- The Saving for Transformation initiative was also affected as it requires people to come together for saving. The groups were trained on saving through the Mpesa mobile money transfer app but many deferred.
- The youth who were involved through skills development, and supporting them with start-up kits for income generating. Because of their mobile nature, monitoring the progress of their projects was not easy.

Lessons learnt:

The involvement of the beneficiaries in the implementation of the project was a critical success factor. The targeted households were at the forefront at every stage and even contributed

their resources to achieve the goals of the project. “This also resulted in self replication of project activities like in group mobilization where several groups sprung from the ones we had brought together and our work was just to facilitate their training,” says Tabitha.

Impact: The project has exceeded its targets benefiting some 3,200 people up from 2,500. About 1,200 have benefited from the dairy value chain targeting farmers, transporters, milk vendors and processors, 1,000 from poultry farming and another 700 from orange flesh sweet potatoes.

Sustainability: The project was meant to address transformational development through skills transfer which is important for sustainability.

Savings 4 Transformation: Under saving for transformation model we link the groups to micro-finance institutions once they reach a certain level where they have shown ability to repay loans. At that point they have developed and invested to make it easy to repay.

Skills for Life: Targeting youth with skills for life is preparing them to engage in

gainful employment. Once one has skills, he or she is able to progress with or without support.

Empowerment world view: The project also promoted the empowerment world view model which addresses mind-sets change, which is key for transformational development. The communities have some retrogressive cultural practices like those that prevent women from owning land and animals but we have seen change. Families are also giving equal opportunities to boys and girls.

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“This also resulted in self replication of project activities like in group mobilization where several groups sprung from the ones we had brought together and our work was just to facilitate their training,” says Tabitha.



Project Achievements

- Children live in families that enjoy increasing income security.
- Smallholder farmers and their families have transformed from dependence to an empowered world view.
- Adoption of climate smart technologies rose from 13.6% to 77.1 %.
- Increased market access and linkages for the prioritized value chains of dairy, indigenous poultry and orange-fleshed sweet potato.
- Enhanced contribution of livestock and crops as main source of livelihoods has increased 84.3%.
- Increased participation by community members on local governance issues.

About the project

Project duration

2018-2020

Geographic coverage

📍 Chebunyo
📍 Kaboson 📍 Lelaitich

Population number



56,600
people



29,000
Children

Target group



2,500
household



500
Youths

Total beneficiaries:
3,200 Households



1200

Dairy value chain



1000

Poultry value chain



700

Orange Flesh Potatoes value



500

Skills for life youths

Poverty rates

2016 ↑53%↑

2020 ↓38%↓

VSLA



128
Groups



4091
Children



90%

Members used loans
to pay school fees



ULTRA-MODERN DAIRY PLANT TRANSFORMING LIVES IN BOMET

High demand for a produce in an area always brings good tidings for farmers who enjoy ready market and good prices. However, this was not the case for dairy farmers in Chepalungu sub-county of Bomet. Demand for milk products comes from multinational tea estates in Bomet and Sotik, and towns in neighbouring counties of Kericho and Kisumu.



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“It was burdensome feeding a large herd of cattle only to get very few litres of milk. The middlemen who bought milk from us would also pay very little hence we had nothing to smile about,” recalls Ruth.

However, factors ranging from low productivity to poor husbandry, inefficient animal research, poor feeding, inadequate breeding services, lack of extension and advisory services from veterinarians and low market access have been a major hindrance to farmers' success. Ruth Serbai, who hails from Kamsinga in Chebunyo location is one of the farmers who in spite of having a huge herd of cattle, could not reap well from dairy farming. From a herd of 15, all that Ruth could get was an average of three (3) litres of milk from every cow in a day.

She would sell the milk to her neighbours and take some to a local milk collection point where independent milk processors would buy. Selling directly to middlemen and independent processors meant low prices for the produce. This denies many local dairy farmers income that would help cater for their food and other basic needs. “It was burdensome feeding a large herd of cattle only to get very few litres of milk. The middlemen who bought milk from us would also pay

very little hence we had nothing to smile about,” recalls Ruth.

Today, she is all smiles as she narrates how the dairy value addition initiative implemented by World Vision and the County Government of Bomet has transformed her family's living standards. Through the project, dairy farmers have been supported to improve their herds with new breeds of heifers and this has tremendously increased milk production. They have also been mobilized into groups and this has enabled them sell the produce competitively, earning more income. Through the Chebunyo Dairy Co-operatives Society, farmers like Ruth are also able to access various agricultural training services and inputs cost effectively.

John Kiplangat, a board member of the co-operative society, says the project is a godsend to dairy farmers in the area. “We have been trained on best feeding practices for dairy cows and how to grow napier grass, which is the major feed for our stock. Our milk production has gone



up and the good news is that we have a dairy processing plant in the area which offers good prices,” says Kiplangat.

The KSh60 million milk processing plant installed through a partnership between World Vision and the County Government of Bomet offers farmers KSh33 per litre of milk. The same fetches between KSh25 and KSh30 when sold to middlemen or independent milk processors. “Our lives have undergone great transformation. From milk proceeds we are able to feed our children, pay for their school fees and buy them clothes,” he says. The plant has a capacity to process about 32,000 litres a day but currently receives 600 litres from aggregators and individual farmers.

The equipment includes a 200-litre per hour pasteuriser; a 200-litre per hour homogeniser; pouch filling machine, ice water accumulator; steam boiler; yoghurt

and sour milk processor; World Vision donated KSh13 million while the county government contributed KSh30 million for equipment and the plant, which was constructed at a cost KSh17 million. Cyrus Ngeno, the production manager at the plant says it has contributed a lot to value addition as milk is processed to yoghurt.

“Initially, we were not able to handle late deliveries from farmers since we didn’t have coolers to chill the milk for sale the following day. It meant that farmers would only deliver milk in the morning only. At the moment we are also able to process between 50 litres and 100 litres into yoghurt for sale at good prices,” says Ngeno. The project is benefiting about 1,200 dairy value chain actors, including farmers, transporters and milk vendors within the three sub-locations of Chepalungu.

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“Our lives have undergone great transformation. From milk proceeds we are able to feed our children, pay for their school fees and buy them clothes,”







YOUTH GET LIFE SKILLS TO PROVIDE SUSTAINABLY FOR THEIR CHILDREN

Cynthia Tonui, 28, did not to pursue her quest for education beyond the primary level due to abject poverty that her family was languishing in. Born in the west Kenyan rural village of Chebunyo in Chepalungu, Bomet, Cynthia's family was one among many whose household incomes could not provide for essential needs.



“We learnt leadership, entrepreneurship and communication skills before we got opportunity to pursue vocational training, tailoring was my choice...”

She was forced into early marriage at the age of 18 after she failed to join secondary school due to lack of fees. And within six years in marriage, Cynthia had already given birth to three children, thrusting on her the responsibility of taking care of a family at a time when her age mates were still in school. Cynthia is, however, confident that her past will not define the future of her children, thanks to World Vision's Bandaptai Economic

Empowerment's skills for life project. The project implemented in Chebunyo, Lelaitich and Kaboson locations is aimed equipping the youth with skills to enable them provide sustainably for their children. It targeted 500 youths who were introduced to skills for life before undergoing a vocational training programme in a course of their choice. Cynthia who learnt of the project from her neighbours says on enrolment, she

underwent a life skills training programme supported by World Vision before studying tailoring. “We learnt leadership, entrepreneurship and communication skills before we got opportunity to pursue vocational training. Tailoring was my choice.... I knew it was easy to learn and would enable me generate money much earlier than the other courses,” she says.



“A number of youths are now self-employed and have even succeeded further to create opportunities for their colleagues. This has significantly contributed towards addressing the high rates of employment among the youth in the rural areas,” says Tabitha.

On completion, Cynthia got a sewing machine from World Vision and raised an additional capital to start the business. She may not be getting much out of tailoring due to limited capital; but she

is optimistic that her dreams are valid and the future is bright due to the high demand for her services. The mother of three does tailoring at her house and sells the dresses at the local market every Monday, making Ksh3,000 in profits. With the amount, Cynthia is able to feed her family, pay school fees and buy decent clothes for the children and still afford to save.

“I didn’t go to school to the level I would have loved to, but I am determined to give the best to my children. I am saving through our group to ensure that I pay their school fees to the highest possible level of learning,” says Cynthia. Cynthia’s story of transformation is shared by many youths across the county, who are beneficiaries of the project. World Vision project manager Tabitha Otieno says through training in life skills, the youth who forms the largest segment of unemployed population are able to have gainful engagement in various sectors.



“A number of youths are now self-employed and have even succeeded further to create opportunities for their colleagues.

This has significantly contributed towards addressing the high rates of employment among the youth in the rural areas,” says Tabitha. Under another initiative of transformation from a mindset of dependence to an empowered worldview about 17 youth were supported to attend vocational training

colleges. Another 50 youth, targeted through the savings groups, also received a business start-up tool kit to jump-start their income-generating enterprises to support their households.

However, the project was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic that disrupted social activities, including the calendar of learning institutions, due to stringent containment measures.

Tabitha explains: “Vocational training centres and other learning institutions were closed for more than six months to allow for social distancing. The outbreak came when some had just reported for training and unfortunately the project is ending before they graduate. This will make monitoring very difficult,” she says.

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“Through training in life skills, the youth who forms the largest segment of unemployed population are able to have gainful engagement in various sectors.”







POULTRY PROJECT BOOSTS FAMILIES' INCOMES, NUTRITION AND FOOD SECURITY

If there is one thing Jane Cheruiyot dreaded most, then it was having her children sent away from school due to lack of fees. This would make her visit the school every time to plead with the head teacher, always promising to pay as soon as she gets money even when she wasn't expecting anything.



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“There is no regular income from crop farming. I had to wait from one season to the other to be engaged in the farm and after the harvest, there was nothing to do,” she says.

If there is one thing Jane Cheruiyot dreaded most, then it was having her children sent away from school due to lack of fees. This would make her visit the school every time to plead with the head teacher, always promising to pay as soon as she gets money even when she wasn't expecting anything. Jane who hails from Kamosorio village in Bomet had never been employed and only relied on crop farming to make ends meet. But erratic rainfall patterns meant she could not earn any meaningful income from growing maize and sorghum. “There is no regular income from crop farming. I had to wait from one season to the other to be

engaged in the farm and after the harvest, there was nothing to do,” she says.

But that was before World Vision introduced Jane and other farmers in Chepalungu to improved indigenous poultry farming. Today, she is busy throughout the day, all year round, attending to an eggs incubator which has tremendously transformed her life. Jane is a beneficiary of the poultry value chain project, which is aimed at increasing family incomes and enhancing the general wellbeing of populations in the three locations of the sub-county.

When Word Vision started the intervention in the area, a group of farmers were taken for a Training of Trainers (ToT) programme in Kitale where they learnt various poultry farming best practices, poultry feeds, egg incubation, and pest and disease control. The group then trained Jane and other interested community members on the same aspects of poultry farming. World Vision also set up a field demonstration



site in the area where the farmers would get practical skills in poultry farming. Jane chose the egg incubation project after realizing the high demand for day-old chicks in the area. “There were few incubators in the area and people would book and wait for days to have their eggs hatch. The prospects of succeeding were therefore very high,” she says. Since she began the incubator business, she has witnessed great changes in her life and that of her family. “My children are no longer sent away for school fees as I always pay in time. When I am not able to, I just talk to the head teacher knowing very well that I cannot go for more than a week or two before someone brings eggs for incubation at a fee,” says Jane.



“There were few incubators in the area and people would book and wait for days to have their eggs hatch. The prospects of succeeding were therefore very high,” she says.

From the money she gets selling day old chicks and mature chicken, she has been able to buy 11 goats and two dairy cows. Her family are also benefiting from feeding on the eggs and meat from the chicken she keeps.

She sells one chick hatched from the incubator at Ksh100 and customers come from as far as neighbouring Kericho, Nakuru and Kisumu counties. For egg incubation services, she charges Ksh35 when she uses her own eggs or Ksh20 for those who bring eggs for hatching. When our team visited Jane at her home, she had just sold about 100 chicken to pay school fees for her children and retained about ten. Before she received the incubator she would keep not more than four hens which would hatch naturally by laying on the eggs for almost three weeks. Although she was trained on poultry health and welfare, Jane still faces the challenge of poultry diseases which has claimed her poultry in the past.

“People view poultry in terms of eggs and selling mature birds but there is more to be gained. The training on poultry value chain enterprising gave us completely new ideas which, I used to improve my poultry business perspective,” she says.

Jane says the intervention by World Vision has made poultry farming very popular in the area and farmers have mobilized themselves into groups to reap from economies of scale. Jane’s group of 23 members has already given rise to another one and several groups have come together into a co-operatives society. Through the society, members save and are able to get credit facilities to expand business or meet other financial needs.

Chicken production, in particular, supports household food and nutrition security for the most vulnerable families, headed by women or youth. The beneficiaries have also adopted new technology like the AGRIPAR mobile app, which directly links the seller and buyer and opens the opportunity to negotiate prices without physically traveling to the marketplace. About 1,000 farmers in the three target locations have benefited from the poultry value chain project.





ORANGE FLESHED SWEET POTATO UNLOCKS OPPORTUNITIES FOR FARMERS



Jessica Kirui never thought she would reap from farming. For years, Jessica and many small-holder farmers in Lalaitich location in Bomet County, were growing maize, sorghum and finger millet but they had nothing to show for their hard labour and resources.

This left farmers counting losses at the end of every season. “Maize used to be the main crop in this area but the yields were always low despite my hard work and efforts. I couldn’t harvest enough to feed my family and we were always experiencing hunger at home,” she says.



“Many farmers have diversified from maize to the new varieties of sweet potatoes and the yields are really good,” says Jessica.

The situation, however, changed following the intervention by World Vision, which introduced local farmers to Orange fleshed sweet potato farming. Through improved technologies like seed multiplication in green houses, the organisation has successfully unlocked opportunities for farmers in region.

World Vision has been implementing the Bandaptai Economic Empowerment Project in Chebunyo and Lalaitich locations, focusing on improving economic status of residents through

introduction of the orange flesh sweet potato variety and supporting value addition. Through the project, the organisation in partnership with the County Government of Bomet educated and trained farmers on modern agronomy techniques, and established a factory to enhance value addition for the potatoes. “We were trained on seedbed preparation, planting, farm management and harvesting of the root tubers. Many farmers have diversified from maize to the new varieties of sweet potatoes and the yields are really good,” says Jessica who is the chairperson of Bandaptai group. She is able to produce enough for family use and sell surplus at the



“We visited farmers in every village and trained many of them on how to grow vines for planting and the importance of using modern techniques. This has really enhanced food security and increased incomes for farmers,” says Ruto.

local market. Like other farmers, income from potato sale has been very helpful in paying school fees and buying clothes for her children. “The orange flesh sweet potato tubers are huge and I sell directly to the factory at Ksh20 per kilo. Previously I would sell the same at Ksh10 and the harvest was very low,” says Jessica.

The introduction of Orange fleshed sweet potatoes in Kenya has increased its popularity as compared to traditional varieties. The varieties are high yielding and take shorter time to mature which translates to higher income for farmers. They are also rich in Beta-carotene, a pre-cursor of vitamin A and a great source of vitamin E, in addition to providing essential nutrients and minerals. John Ruto, ward agriculture field officer, says before the intervention the farmers were growing indigenous sweet potatoes through traditional technologies.

And like other crops, it was often affected by prolonged droughts, which left farmers with no seeds to plant when rains set in.





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“When farmers sell the produce as individuals they get exploited by middlemen but as a society we are able to fetch good prices by selling in bulk,” says Kiragu.

“We visited farmers in every village and trained many of them on how to grow vines for planting and the importance of using modern techniques. This has really enhanced food security and increased incomes for farmers,” says Ruto. Production of sweet potatoes has doubled as farmers have embraced the new variety and increased the acreage under the crop. About 700 farmers were trained on the improved modern agronomy techniques, but the impact has trickled to several households who are replicating the same. The farmers are also reaping huge from value addition following the installation of an agro-

processing plant in the area. The county government constructed the factory at a cost of Ksh2.6 million while World Vision supplied the equipment.

Through the project, farmers were mobilized to form a co-operative society and supported to buy agro-processing equipment like solar driers. Peter Kiragu, the chairperson of Lelaitich Co-operatives Society, says the intervention has raised farmers' fortunes which had dwindled over the years due to low yields from maize and finger millet.

The society has 700 members, who are farming 350 acres of the orange flesh sweet potatoes in shifts. “When farmers sell the produce as individuals they get exploited by middlemen but as a society we are able to fetch good prices by selling in bulk,” says Kiragu. Through value addition, they are able to process products such as potato crisps, bread and cakes, which has increased incomes for the farmers.



VSLA TRANSFORMING CHILDREN'S WELLBEING AS FAMILIES ACCUMULATE SAVINGS



For long Josiah Tonui believed that savings and loans were a preserve for the wealthy. From his daily wages, he couldn't strike a balance between saving and spending what remains. In most cases he spent all in providing basic needs for his family and was always left with no savings at all.

Starting an income generating project or accumulating household assets was a real challenge for the father of three as a merry-go-round group he had joined was of little impact.

"We were 40 members in the group and our contributions were shared out to four members every month. One had to wait for 10 members to get his/her

share and by that time there would be various financial commitments and debts to be paid leaving one with no money to invest in business," he says. Many Kenyans like Tonui are faced with the challenge of accumulating savings due to their meagre daily wages and lack of access to banking and financial services such as loans.

The 2020 Comprehensive Poverty Report by the Kenya Bureau of Statistics (KBS) estimates that 5.9 million out of 44.2 million Kenyans are poor. The high rate of unemployment, especially in rural areas like Chepalungu in Bomet County



"However, life changed after their group was converted into a Savings for Transformation outfit supported by World Vision."



where Tonui lives, makes it difficult for parents to save for their children's needs like school fees.

However, his life changed for the better after their group was converted into a Savings for Transformation outfit supported by World Vision. Unlike in the merry-go-around groups where contributions are shared out immediately to members in turns, the Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) model allows for accumulation and conversion of small amounts of cash into savings that can then be lent to members as credit. Saving families can accumulate savings and access loans that they can use to create and strengthen their livelihood opportunities.

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“From my savings, I was able to get a loan to start a milk vending business which has helped me in paying school fees and buying food and clothes for my children,” he says.

Tonui and other group leaders were first taken for a training programme where they learnt basic skills for savings and personal financial management. When they shared the lesson with members of the group, they unanimously voted to set up a VSLA. “From my savings, I was able to get a loan to start a

milk vending business which has helped me a lot in paying school fees and buying food and clothes for my children,” he says.

Tonui buys 100 litres of milk from farmers and sells to processors at a profit of Ksh.5 per litre, raking in Ksh500 daily. From the amount he pays Ksh100 as transport expense and pockets the rest which he uses to repay his loan and provide for the family.

He says every time he repays his loan, which attracts a small interest, in full, he is able to access another credit facility which goes into various financial needs including purchase of assets. At the end of every cycle of saving, group members get their shares and interest accrued from loans extended to members. The group also earns money from income generating activities like renting out chairs to traders at a local market. The chairs were bought from member's savings.

World Vision cluster manager for Narok and Bomet counties, Nancy Migura says the Savings for Transformation model has seen an improvement in poverty indices within the communities. “The project has recorded significant improvement in incomes and number of children benefiting from VSLA activities through better nutrition and access to education,” says Migura.

Savings groups impacted 4,091 children, and nearly 90% of group members used funds generated to support school fees, clothing, and food for their children. These groups multiplied to a total of 128, supported by the trained savings agents. Tonui says although the group's activities was affected by Covid-19 pandemic and they had to stop before the full cycle in 2020, they have benefited immensely and will continue with the project even after the exit of World Vision.

They are currently in the fourth cycle of savings. During the third cycle, they were able to earn an interest of Ksh140,000 which was shared out to members.





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