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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Thirteenth meeting of the Africa
Regional Coordinating Committee
for the Integration of Women in
Development (ARCC)

8-10 April 1992
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Reports of the Subregional Committee
meetings and Priorities for the Subregions

B. Lusaka MULPOC Report

United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

Multinational Programming and Operational Centre
(MULPOC) - Lusaka

Subregional Committee Meeting for the
Integration of Women in Development

3-5 March 1992
Lusaka, Zambia

Report of the Meeting

I. Introduction

1. The subregional committee Meeting for the Integration of Women in Development of the Lusaka-based Multinational Programming and Operational Centre (ECA/MULPOC) for Eastern and Southern African States was held from 3 to 4 March 1992 at the Mulungushi International Conference Centre in Lusaka, Zambia. The Subregional Committee Meeting was organized as a series of meetings held at the subregional level put in motion by resolution 714 (XXVI) of the ECA Conference of Ministers.
2. At the opening of the meeting, statements were made on behalf of the Deputy Minister, Economic Affairs, Office of the President, by the Permanent Secretary of NCDP and the Officer-in-Charge of the MULPOC of Eastern and Southern Africa, on behalf of the Executive Secretary of ECA. A list of delegates and participants is attached to this report as *Annex i*.
3. The Permanent Secretary for Economic Co-operation, Office of the President, Mr. Liswaniso welcomed all the delegates and participants to the subregional meeting. He conveyed the sincere apologies of the Deputy Minister and delivered a speech on his behalf. He stated that the Government of Zambia was indeed pleased to host the meeting. The African Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC) and the subregional committee were established in 1979. The long-term objective of ARCC was to promote the advancement of women in Africa in the economic, political and cultural fields of their respective countries.
4. He went on to elaborate on the many measures that African member States and the international community have had to adopt in the past. As a measure for the future, African governments adopted the "Abuja Declaration on Participatory Development: The Role of Women in Africa in the 1990s". The meeting was called to assess the implementation of the Abuja Declaration and review the implementation of the Arusha and Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, and the initiatives that were put in place for that purpose.
5. Mr. Liswaniso stated that Zambia recognized the important role women had played over the years. A lot had been done to integrate women in development but there was room for some more progress in the field of decision-making and the role of rural women.
6. The almost uninterrupted socio-economic decline that characterized most African countries left most households at their most vulnerable. He identified illiteracy among African women as a growing phenomenon. The increase of women's participation in the informal sector was considered to be as a result of the constraints in the formal sector. The Government of Zambia was doing everything in its power to accord women with a policy on affirmative action on gender issues.

7. He went on to reaffirm the Zambian people's commitment to working closely with regional and subregional organisations. The Zambian Government believed that the integration of women in development process was no longer a luxury but a historical necessity. In the efforts to reconstruct the economies of the subregion, the full, equal and meaningful participation of all women and men was needed.

8. The concern over the present drought in the subregion was raised by Mr. Liswaniso. He wanted to know what measures should be taken to promote food security at the subregional, national and household levels. The food crisis was exacerbated by the economic crisis which had a particularly devastating effect on women. He implored the meeting to come up with tangible recommendations on what steps were to be taken to ensure that the women of the subregion survive and function effectively. He welcomed the fact that the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) had an agenda item and stated that it was in line with the terms of reference of ARCC. He declared the meeting open.

9. The Officer-in-Charge of Lusaka-based MULPOC welcomed all the delegates to the meeting on behalf of the Executive Secretary and proceeded to read the Executive Secretary's statement. He mentioned that, for ECA and for its African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW), in particular, the meeting was of significant importance. He thanked the Permanent Secretary for taking part in the meeting.

10. He went on to provide background on the women's programme of ECA as well as highlighting the condition and situation of women in Africa based on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Arusha (1984) and Nairobi (1985) Strategies for the Advancement of Women. He pointed out that as an outcome of the review and appraisal of the situation of women, African governments adopted at the Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development, the "Abuja Declaration on Participatory Development: The Role of Women in Africa in the 1990s". Member States were urged to fully implement the recommendations of the Declaration.

11. In the light of the Fifth Regional Conference in 1994 and the Women World Conference in 1995 it was important to determine to what extent priority actions have been implemented in the member States. The role of African women in the World Conference was a crucial one. The role of women in agricultural production and their participation in industrial activities deserved sustained attention, given the concern among governments about the centrality of the agricultural sector in the rehabilitation of the African economy. Hence, the Abuja Declaration called for measures to be taken to eliminate all impediments to women being able to acquire and own land.

12. It was in this context that the meeting was requested to review the situation of African women in agriculture and their participation in the industrial sector. Another priority area was the specific needs of women in food technologies. Studies had shown that women lacked technological skills needed.

13. The Officer-in-Charge then provided information with regard to the elections for membership of ARCC. He reminded the delegates of the terms of reference as members of the subregional committee, which were amongst others:

- (a) dissemination of information and dealing with matters relating to mass communications;
- (b) exchange of knowledge and experience through workshops, seminars, study tours and other types of technical meeting;
- (c) ensure that subregional development programmes provide fully for the integration of women in development;
- (d) initiate country studies and assist national institutions to identify the types of information needed for a proper understanding of the situation of women;
- (e) assist in the design and implementation of surveys carried out for the purpose of collecting statistical data and other information; and
- (f) provide clearing house facilities for the exchange of information and for the sharing of relevant experience among the countries of the subregion.

14. In elaborating the above-mentioned terms of reference, he also called on the delegates to give every possible support and co-operation to the Lusaka MULPOC and the PTA on their programme on women in the subregion. He reported that ATRCW had continued to serve as a regional focal point to promote the advancement of women in the region. In recent years, ATRCW had addressed certain areas of concern, namely:

- (i) increasing the participation of women in development through research and case studies and advisory services to member States;
- (ii) improving skills and opportunities through training and workshops as well as economic empowerment of women through strengthening their entrepreneurial capabilities.

15. At this juncture, the Officer-in-Charge informed the delegates that an expert group meeting with a view to considering modalities of establishing a regional association of women entrepreneurs was held from 22 to 25 October 1991 in Nairobi, Kenya. He elaborated on the major objectives and the establishment of a Federation of African Women Entrepreneurs (FAWE). He recommended the full participation of African women at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) scheduled for June 1992. To this end, women of the region were urged to pursue the objective of the environmental programme for Africa.

16. In closing, he emphasized that the major objective of the meeting was to each delegate to examine the special problems facing women of the respective countries and the subregion and elaborate strategies, policies and programmes to meet the priorities of the 1990s. He wished the delegates success.

II. Adoption of the Agenda

17. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening Ceremony
2. Adoption of the Agenda and organization of work
3. Progress in Implementation of the Abuja Declaration
4. Situation of Women in Agriculture and Industrial Transformation in the context of AAF-SAP
5. New priorities for the subregion:
 - (a) Briefing on the PTA's new programme on Women in Development
 - (b) Lusaka-based MULPOC programme of work and activities
6. Elections for membership of ARCC
7. Any other business
8. Consideration and adoption of the report
9. Closing remarks

III. Progress in the implementation of the Abuja Declaration

18. A presentation was made by the Chief of ATRCW on the implementation of the "Abuja Declaration on Participatory Development: The Role of Women in Africa in the 1990s". She explained that the Abuja meeting had been organised in 1989 as a follow-up to the Nairobi World Conference on Women. She mentioned that conferences are scheduled for 1994 (the Fifth Regional Conference on the Integration of women in Development) and 1995 (the World Conference on the Integration of Women

in Development). She drew the delegates' attention to the Abuja Declaration document and explained that the targets set by members States were for the year 2000. ECA was eager to find out what progress had been made in the implementation of the Declaration. It was also the hope of the ECA that by the year 2000, all countries would have signed the convention against all forms of discrimination against women. There was a need to ensure the follow-up of all conventions and declarations either signed or adopted by member States. She urged the delegates to follow-up on the implementation of the Declaration. She stated that the Declaration provides guidelines.

19. With regard to the implementation of the Abuja Declaration, in 1990 the ECA Conference of Ministers recommended that information on the Declaration should be widely disseminated. The Abuja Declaration was adopted to fit the needs of the Africa region. The Declaration was something to be used by the member States for programming. A report is to be submitted in 1994 on the implementation of the Declaration.

20. The Chairperson requested that member States give a summary on the implementation of the Declaration. The Chairperson described the situation in his country, Zimbabwe. A concerted effort had been made by the government to put women and the population first. This involved enhancing the role of women in all facets of life in Zimbabwe. It involved earmarking a number of posts for women. He touched on the programme enacted to review the Nairobi Strategies in preparation for the 1995 World Conference in China.

21. The Zambian delegate referred to a national meeting organised by the government to discuss the strategies emanating from the Abuja Conference in 1989. The Government had had a meeting on 24 February 1992 to prepare for the subregional meeting. Targets set were reviewed and it was generally felt that none of the targets had been reached. The delegate felt that it was necessary to revive the women in development programme of the MULPOCs. She pointed out that the national meeting had advocated the use of 50 per cent of the contribution to the MULPOC on WID related programmes. Even a study was recommended to be carried out by ECA to find out which machineries were operational in the member States.

22. In her contribution on this agenda item, the delegate from Malawi reported that considerable progress had been made in the implementation of the recommendation of Abuja Declaration. Among the changes cited included were deliberate efforts to increase and retain the female population in primary schools, review of cultural practices and their effect on female education, and the establishment of child spacing and family welfare council. In addition, the delegate reported that following a seminar on possible law reform all laws concerning women have been compiled into a single booklet, which is to be distributed to women at all levels in order to create awareness. The delegate further reported that

a special ministry was recently created on women and children's affairs which also encompasses a commission for women in development and the creation of a national association of business women.

23. In reporting progress made since the Abuja Declaration, the delegate from Kenya reported that the Kenyan government continued to support women's issues in national development. This was clearly shown by the creation of the Women's Bureau as a government machinery to monitor, implement and evaluate the women's programme. The Women's Bureau has established projects such as small-scale enterprise development, food security, rural enterprise fund and revolving loan schemes with the help of donor institutions. The creation of gender awareness through seminars was yet another move by the Bureau to enhance the role of women in Kenyan society. It was also reported that the Bureau was helping various entrepreneurs to establish a national association of entrepreneurs that would cater for rural women. This federation was in its final stage of formation and would be registered soon. The proposed name for the federation was the Kenyan Association of Women Entrepreneurs (KAWE). A move to establish free legal clinics for legal education of women by lawyers along with the federation were considered to be the crucial developments since the Abuja meeting.

24. The delegate went to explain that in the light of the move for multi-party democracy, Kenyan women had held a series of meetings and national conventions in an effort to educate women with regard to their right to vote, in preparation for the coming general elections. She further stated that it was the hope of Kenyan women to secure at least 40 per cent of available seats in the next Parliament.

25. In her contribution on this agenda item the delegate from Tanzania reported that considerable progress had been made in promoting women in development since Abuja. Examples cited included the continued retention of the 15 seats reserved for women in Parliament since the 1970s. Other examples of progress reported included a) the creation of a special Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs which in turn has worked out many special programmes for women, e.g., the creation of a special fund for women scholarships in collaboration with CIDA-Canada and a credit scheme for rural women in collaboration with UNIFEM; b) the creation of a special committee to look at cultural practices harmful to women; c) the establishment of legal clinics to educate and assist women on legal matters; and, d) the education and fight of violence against women as taken up by Tanzania Women Media Association (TAMWA).

26. Similarly the delegate from Uganda reported some progress since the Abuja Declaration which include the appointment of more women judges, the creation of appropriate conditions for the participation of women in the political process by reserving a seat in Parliament for women at every district level, and their involvement in the democratic process of rewriting the constitution for Uganda, among other things.

27. The delegate from Angola indicated that an organ had been created to handle all issues related to women. He stated that an association of women entrepreneurs had been formed by Angolan Women.

28. In her contribution on this agenda item, the delegate from Namibia stated that the situation in her country was quite different from all the other member States, with more than 42 political organizations. While there is a multiplicity of NGOs involved on women in development issues the rural women were not covered and as such the government was going to establish a national body which would provide coordination to all existing NGOs to ensure that their efforts are properly directed.

IV. Situation of Women In Agriculture and Industrial transformation in the context of AAF-SAP

29. The Chief of ATRCW presented document ECA/MULPOC/Lusaka/ARCC/4. She stated that there was a need for discussions to be held on the issue of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). As a result of the economic crisis of the 1970s most African countries were forced to embark upon a series of economic adjustments. The economic adjustments were conducted more or less uniformly. The first phase was generally a programme spreading over two or three years during which efforts were made to secure national economic survival. This stage was followed by a three to four year phase during which the economy was stabilized and its growth stimulated. The objective was to help countries in their adjustment and growth and more particularly help restore relations between creditor and debtor countries.

30. With regard to the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programme (AAF-SAP), she stated that AAF-SAP proceeds on the premise that African economies have a production base that is narrow from the standpoint of both the volume and range of products manufactured. Indeed, Africa's dependence on a limited number of products and markets made it highly vulnerable. Most African countries are dependent on agriculture for jobs, income, foreign exchange earnings and public revenue. Similarly, the industrial sector is based on a weak agricultural sector and has remained not on rudimentary but highly dependent on imported factors of production. Very few countries have been able to develop the manufacturing sector.

31. Another major handicap identified in AAF-SAP was the fragmentation of African economies which has compelled the countries to turn to markets outside the continent.

32. Based on this analysis, AAF-SAP advocates human-centred development for improving the living standards of people. In this context, the priority objectives are food self sufficiency and the satisfaction of such basic needs as drinking water supply, housing, sanitation, primary health care, education and low-cost transport.

33. In order to meet those needs, AAF-SAP indicates that the countries should intensify production while the people change their food habits and consumption patterns in order to accord priority to the consumption of foods produced in the region. According to AAF-SAP, the production structure also needs to undergo transformation in terms of the type of goods produced and the mode of production. Indeed, the diversification of products and the mastering of modern manufacturing technologies would enhance production capacity and the viability of the production system.

34. One other essential element of AAF-SAP is economic integration with a view to achieving collective self-reliance. Agriculture, energy and transport were among the sectors identified as deserving priority in the integration process to the extent that it would facilitate the use of research development conducted in the field and encourage complementarity in producing on a larger scale along with the transformation of national production structures into regional structures, AAF-SAP accords priority to the industrial manufacture of intermediate and capital goods. Obviously, for these objectives to be attained, all the people must participate at all the levels of transformation.

35. It was clear that simply sopping up red ink by cutting government spending and balancing imports and exports would not deal with African underlying problems. These problems, being structural rather than merely financial, have to be dealt with structurally. They are not purely economic. They are political and social as well. They must therefore be confronted as a whole.

36. A Zambian observer informed the meeting that Zambia had implemented the structural adjustment programme from 1983 to 1987. This programme was abandoned in 1987 when Zambia formulated and implemented her own New Economic Recovery Programme. Yet once again Zambia was implementing the original structural adjustment programme despite the existence of alternative programmes like AAF-SAP.

37. Another observer commented that the negotiating capacity of member States was very weak viz-à-viz the international financial community. She felt that African countries were not doing their homework, hence lacked the preparedness needed to negotiate.

38. The Committee noted that the ECA had scaled down its activities with regard to the advancement of women at the subregional level. The MULPOC women's programme had been discontinued at a time when member States required assistance the most. The Committee also recognized the need to involve women in the structural adjustment process. It was noted that for the proper implementation of the Abuja Declaration, governments would have to recognize the importance of rural women.

V. New Priorities for the Subregion

(a) Briefing on the PTA's New Programme on Women in Development

39. A representative of the PTA briefed the meeting on the PTA Women in Development (WID) programme. In the presentation, she first gave background information on the establishment of the PTA, its objectives and some of the major achievements in the sectors of industry, trade and customs, monetary cooperation, transport and communications, agriculture, etc. She observed that in the 9½ years since the inception of the PTA, a lot of facilitation measures had been implemented and some degree of trade liberalisation achieved yet Intra-PTA trade had increased only by two (2) per cent above the percentage of intra-African trade. She cited structural economic imbalances, rigidities in industrial and manufacturing structures, lack of harmonized macro-economic policies, inadequate participation of the private sector in national and regional programmes, fiscal, physical, administrative and legal barriers and the fragmentation of the regional market as the main hindrances to increased intra-PTA trade and investment. It was clear that the preferential trading system would not remove most of the constraints. It was obvious that greater regional integration through a Common Market was the only way to foster and strengthen the region's collective abilities and the only way through which the constraints could be removed. The decision of the Tenth Summit of the PTA for PTA to be transformed into a Common Market sooner than the target year 2000 was timely.

40. Referring to the PTA WID programme, she stated that PTA, in adopting a WID programme was cognisant of the fact that women comprise over 50 per cent of the population in the subregion and that they faced specific gender constraints that inhibited their participation in PTA activities. She informed the meeting that the PTA WID programme had three main objectives, namely:

- (a) the integration of women into PTA trade and development activities;
- (b) the improvement of the economic conditions of women; and
- (c) the increase of awareness on WID issues at policy level.

41. The meeting was informed that PTA Secretariat was preparing the details of the programme whose main aim would be to remove the afore-mentioned constraints which would cover issues such as access to credit, assistance for equity capital participation, assistance to existing enterprises, or new enterprises, assistance in the preparation of project documents, project monitoring and management, access to business and technical information, project tied training in management, costing and book-keeping, enterprise level assistance, development of export strategies, export promotion, market research, participation at trade fairs especially the PTA trade fairs, contact promotion and market tours, and the establishment of PTA Federation of Business Women Associations. Consultation with regional and subregional institutions with programmes similar to PTA WID programme as well as government

institutions and non-governmental organisations will be held on the details of various aspects covered by the programme. In addition, PTA was willing to cooperate with these institutions as well as other institutions that have actively promoted and/or funded WID programmes such as UNIFEM, ECA, UNITAR, etc.

42. In the discussions that ensued, the meeting commended PTA for having adopted a WID programme whose main elements were very good. The PTA was urged to mobilise adequate funds to enable it to implement all the aspects of the programme. The meeting observed that the programme would improve the economic conditions of women if it was implemented fully noting that implementation of WID programmes had always been the most difficult phase.

43. A lot of questions were raised, with delegates seeking to know more about details of some of the programme aspects. It was pointed out that the details of the programme had yet to be finalised. It was envisaged that technical assistance would be secured for this and the implementation of other aspects of the programme.

44. The meeting agreed to support the PTA WID programme and recommended it to ARCC for endorsement. The meeting suggested that the implementation of the PTA WID programme should be through close cooperation with ECA/MULPOC Lusaka and other institutions as earlier indicated.

(b) Review of the Lusaka-MULPOC Programme of Work and Activities

45. In presenting the above agenda item, a representative of the secretariat briefed the Committee on the functions of the MULPOC and its role in the promotion of economic co-operation and integration at the subregional level. He explained that the MULPOC programme had, up to 1987 included activities specifically aimed at promoting the integration of women in development which were monitored by the subregional committees for the integration of women in development. Finally, he noted the request to the MULPOC for the implementation of additional activities and informed the Committee of the resource implications of the requests.

46. In the discussion that ensued delegates reviewed the role of the MULPOC and emphasized the aspects of co-ordination particularly as it related to all aspects of women in development including gender issues. The importance of disseminating and sharing information was noted. Member States requested the MULPOC to ensure that documentation was timely distributed. Delegates emphasized the need to mobilize and sensitize their countries for the advancement of women in the subregion. It was felt that women need to be equipped with adequate skills, such as ability to negotiate, techniques of macro-economic analysis, for their advancement. The rotation of committee venues was also

requested. The need to revitalise the women in development at the MULPOC level was stressed, although this could take of several forms: i.e., through incorporating an NGO at the MULPOC secretariat to coordinate women's gender issues, or through creation of a position under the ECA regular budget. A framework to facilitate the participation of NGOs in decision-making was called for.

47. The committee recommended caution by member States on the use of concepts regarding women's gender issues.

48. In concluding discussions on this agenda item, the Officer-in-Charge explained the background behind the decision of the Conference of Ministers resolution 702 (XXV) which justifies the continued existence of the MULPOC in the subregion. He stated that the report of the evaluation team on the need for continued existence of the MULPOC recommended that the MULPOC were more relevant than ever and should be strengthened. He then thanked the Government of Zambia for all the assistance rendered.

VI. Election for Membership of ARCC

49. Under this agenda item, the committee elected the following officers to the bureau of the Subregional Committee of the Lusaka MULPOC who also represent the subregion at ARCC:

- ▶ President - Uganda
- ▶ Vice-President - Namibia
- ▶ Rapporteur - Zambia

VII. Consideration and Adoption of the Report

50. The Committee considered the draft report and requested ECA to include the amendments and distribute the revised report to member States.

51. The following recommendations were considered and adopted by the committee:

- ▶ Aware of the important role women play in the socio-economic development of the Lusaka MULPOC subregion;
- ▶ Appreciating the efforts made by ECA/MULPOC to reactivate the functions of the subregional committee on Women in Development;

- ▶ Having considered the priority needs of the subregion of Lusaka;
- ▶ Taking into account the recommendations of the Abuja Declaration on Participatory Development: The Role of Women in Africa in the 1990s, recommends that:
 - (a) The WID Programme of ECA/MULPOC Lusaka, be revived and governments should undertake to commit funds for the programme. In this regard it is recommended that at least 50 per cent of member government pledges to UNTFAD for Lusaka MULPOC should be committed to the WID Programme. In addition to the pledge, a post should be created in the MULPOC for the WID Programme.
 - (b) ECA/MULPOC should mobilize extra budgetary resources to complement governments' contribution.
 - (c) ECA should undertake a study on the impact of the democratization process in the Region to establish structures with a view to establishing national institutions that would be able to face the challenges brought about by plural politics.
 - (d) ECA should continue to provide assistance and promotion of women entrepreneurs in Africa and should collaborate with PTA in the establishment of a Federation of African Women Entrepreneurs (FAWE) to assist enterprises owned by women (ENDOWS).
 - (e) While each country should establish institutions suitable to its condition, WID Co-ordinating organs which are independent of government and are non-partisan should be encouraged to co-ordinate, monitor, review and evaluate the implementation of WID programmes and receive periodic reports from government, non-government and other WID organs.
 - (f) It is recommended that the ECA and PTA work closely together in the implementation of their respective WID programmes.
 - (g) In the implementation of the Abuja Declaration, governments should prepare phased implementation timetables which could be on annual or bi-annual priorities from the Abuja Declaration for instance education, decision-making and entrepreneurship.
 - (h) A deliberate agricultural development effort be made to fully involve the rural women through consultations, formation or credit unions, literacy, nutrition, training mainly on

basic skills like marketing and financial management.

- (i) Lusaka MULPOC develop a comprehensive programme for women in development in consultation with subregional committees of women in development.
- (j) Lusaka MULPOC mobilize staff and financial resources in support of (i) above.
- (k) Lusaka MULPOC serves as a secretariat for the subregional committee of women in development.
- (l) In view of the wide and paramount importance of the activities of NGOs in the promotion of women in development, ECA/MULPOC should network with these institutions in this region for the purpose of information sharing, training and networking.
- (m) ECA/MULPOC should increase the information flow between the MULPOC and member States.
- (n) Member States should support the participation of women in the meetings of the MULPOC, ECA and PTA.
- (o) Training on macro-economic strategies, negotiating skills should be engaged by ECA/MULPOC to enhance the capabilities of women.

VIII. Closing of the Meeting

52. In his closing remarks, the chairperson expressed the committee's appreciation of the excellent work done by the secretariat. He then called on the delegate from Namibia to give a vote of thanks. The delegate thanked the chairperson for honouring Namibia with this very prestigious task. She thanked the host country, ECA and all delegates on the occasion of this very important meeting to discuss important issues related to women of the Eastern and Southern Africa subregion. She further stated that Zambia was always viewed as the mother country for all those neighbouring countries that have fought so hard for independence. The chairperson then called on the delegate from Zambia to close the meeting. The delegate was of the opinion that men had become more gender sensitive. She thanked the ECA/MULPOC's Officer-in-Charge for all the assistance rendered. She declared the meeting officially closed.

Done in Lusaka, Zambia, 5 March 1992

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