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Development for All

Towards a disability-inclusive Australian aid program 2009–2014

Achievement highlights—the first two years





Australia is strongly committed to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

People with disability are entitled to the same rights as all others. Australia formally recognised this by ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008, and acceding to the Optional Protocol in 2009. In this context, people with disability are viewed as citizens with rights, not objects of charity.

The purpose of the Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all people with disability, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

Article 32 of the Convention requires parties to ensure that international cooperation, including international development programs, is inclusive of and accessible to people with disability.

Australia recognises that to meet our obligations under the Convention and achieve the Millennium Development Goals, it is essential that international cooperation not only reaches people with disability—who make up 20 per cent of the poorest—but also empowers them to play an active role in development processes.

Ministerial foreword

I am very proud to release this first report on our progress towards ensuring that Australian aid benefits people with disability.

Ten percent of the world's population—an estimated 650 million people—are living with disability and 80 per cent of these people live in developing countries. In Asia and the Pacific region this translates to more than 400 million people, across all communities.

All too frequently, people with disability do not share the same rights and cannot access the same services as others. They are much less likely to go to school, get a job, own a home or have a family. A range of barriers prevent them from fully participating in social, economic and political life. Existing development programs do not always reach the poorest of the poor—only 3 to 4 per cent of people with disability are estimated to benefit from international development assistance.

In December 2008, on the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, I declared in Parliament the Australian Government's commitment to advancing human rights at home as well as abroad. One of the most important ways Australia can contribute to advancing human rights is through achieving the Millennium Development Goals for all.



We moved quickly to put this commitment into action with the launch of the first disability strategy for Australia's aid program—*Development for All: Towards a disability-inclusive Australian aid program 2009–2014*. In May 2010, the government reaffirmed this commitment to people with disability through a new \$30.2 million budget initiative to fund the disability-specific measures in the strategy, bringing the total budget allocated to disability since 2008 to \$88 million.

This report highlights the early achievements in making Australia's aid program more effective through a focus on including people with disability. I am especially pleased to see the contribution and strong leadership from people with disability and our partner governments in promoting inclusive national development.

This is a solid beginning, but it is just a beginning. There is much more that can be done and the Australian Government remains committed to pursuing the vision articulated in *Development for All* in the coming years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Rudd', written in a cursive style.

Kevin Rudd
Minister for Foreign Affairs
December 2010

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Introduction

In November 2008, Australia launched its first disability strategy for the aid program—*Development for All: Towards a disability-inclusive Australian aid program*—marking a change in the way the aid program is designed and delivered. Two years into its implementation, there are strong signs that the strategy is working and improving the reach and effectiveness of Australia’s aid program.

People with disability are increasingly taking a central role in decision making, ensuring that policies and programs are shaped to better take account of their requirements.

Australia’s partnerships with the governments of Cambodia and East Timor are bolstering efforts towards more equitable national development that benefits all citizens, including people with disability.

Our international leadership in this area is reaping tangible benefits. The global community is increasing the priority given to disability. More resources are being allocated to effect change. This is especially evident in ensuring that people with disability are no longer invisible from global action to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

AusAID is progressively changing how we work to ensure that people with disability participate in, contribute to and benefit equally from Australia’s aid program. Our processes and systems and information about our programs are becoming increasingly accessible to and inclusive of people with disability. The design and evaluation of

programs are being strengthened by better analysis on the situation of people with disability and their families and communities.

Given that people with disability make up at least 20 per cent of the poorest in developing countries, these improvements in how Australian aid is being designed and delivered will go a long way to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.



Pictured are the first Samoan students with hearing impairment that are accessing secondary education in a regular setting at Faatuatua Christian Secondary School in Samoa.

Back row (L-R): Melissa Resitala, Leone L Peteru, Cassandra Havili. Front row (L-R): Seinafo Mavaega, Simona Simati, Russell Watts, Maselina Iuta, Eli Tafola

Photo: Sue Rasmussen, Photo Centre

With Australian support through the Samoa Inclusive Education Demonstration Program, SENESE is assisting local staff at Faatuatua to include students who are deaf in school lessons. Two of these students have completed work experience in 2010 and have gained full-time employment for 2011 as a result. Families of these children receive support in their village by a local outreach worker who teaches weekly sign language lessons. SENESE is also being supported by Australian volunteer Russell Watts to train local staff in advanced-level interpreting.

People with disability: speaking out on disability rights

People with disability traditionally have lacked a voice on the global social, political and economic stage. In developing countries, the conservative estimate is that they make up 20 per cent of the poorest. For development to reach and benefit all, people with disability must be included as active participants.

Empowerment and active participation of people with disability is an important objective of Australia's *Development for All* strategy.

Having a voice—the Disability Rights Fund

Australia contributes to and is a steering committee member of the Disability Rights Fund. This global pooled fund enables disabled people's organisations (DPOs) to raise awareness and support efforts towards achieving the objectives of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

From 2008–09 to 2010–11 Australia will have contributed \$2 million to the Disability Rights Fund, enabling it to expand its reach to DPOs in 14 Pacific Island countries and Indonesia. Examples of projects funded in the region include:

- › \$20 000 to People with Disabilities Solomon Islands to expand awareness of the Convention through outreach to remote areas and building partnerships with service providers and other DPOs
- › \$15 000 to Fiji Youth Champs for Mental Health to build a media bank of youth who speak out about their experience with psycho-social disabilities.



Disability Rights Fund Director Diana Samarasan visits grantee Little People of Uganda.
Photo: Frederick Ouko Alucheli, Disability Rights Fund Advisor

Little People of Uganda is a marginalised group, excluded even from their national disability movement. Through a \$5000 grant from the Disability Rights Fund in 2009, Little People of Uganda gathered their membership from across the country to learn about the Convention and to build an advocacy plan addressing their rights. Within a few months, they had gained national media attention and secured a meeting with the Commissioner for Disability and the Elderly. During a meeting of fund grantees, they successfully confronted their exclusion from the disability movement. Today, with additional financial support, Little People of Uganda is collecting data on and addressing human rights abuses against people of short stature in Uganda.

Building strong, effective disabled people's organisations

DPOs are organisations established and run by people with disability. They work towards inclusive, barrier-free and gender-equitable societies that recognise the rights, citizenship, participation and contributions of people with disability. DPOs are mandated under the Convention to work with governments for the achievement of rights of people with disability. As people with disability are often denied access to education and other development opportunities, they can lack basic literacy, numeracy and computer skills as well as experience in organisational management.

An important early initiative under *Development for All* has been assisting DPOs to strengthen their capacity to deliver on their mandate to drive more equitable development.

- › In 2009, Australia provided \$150 000 to people with disability and their representative organisations in Cambodia to strengthen capacity in rural provinces and provide opportunities to develop leadership skills. Around 80 people with disability received leadership training in 2009–10, including provincial members. More than 60 people with disability are enrolled in English language courses which will enable them to apply for Australian Development Scholarships in 2012.

- › Australia has partnered with the Government of New Zealand to support the Pacific Disability Forum, the Pacific region's umbrella DPO. Since 2009, Australia's support of \$450 000 is enabling the forum to increase the scale and effectiveness of its activities. These include strengthening members' capacity to raise awareness of disability rights and to provide advice to governments on policies and budgets, to ensure equal access and full participation by people with disability.



Setareki S Macanawai, Chief Executive Officer, Pacific Disability Forum (centre), chairing a panel discussion at the 2010 Australian Disability and Development Consortium Conference with Dame Carol Kidu, DBE, Minister for Community Development in Papua New Guinea (right), and David Lewis, CBM Australia (left). Photo: Christine Walton, Australian Disability and Development Consortium



Australia supported the inaugural Pacific Islands Forum Disability Ministers' Meeting in the Cook Islands, October 2009. For the first time, civil society including DPOs were engaged as formal members of the delegations to the forum.

Photo: Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat



Active central role for people with disability

People with disability are best placed to inform and guide decisions, policies and programs to ensure their particular requirements are accounted for. However, they have historically been left out of consultation and decision-making processes.

Development for All recognises that how the aid program works is as important as what is done. Promoting and enabling active participation of people with disability is a fundamental guiding principle for AusAID's work.

People with disability improving aid effectiveness

AusAID is increasingly including people with disability in program design and decision-making and measuring outcomes of development activities so that Australian aid reaches and benefits everyone.

- › People with disability have been represented on the Australian Development Research Awards selection committee since 2008.
- › The Pacific Disability Forum was consulted on the design of the new phase of the Australia–Pacific Technical College.
- › AusAID's scholarships team has engaged a consultant with disability to develop a reasonable adjustments policy—improving access to appropriate assistance so scholars with disabilities can fulfil their learning objectives.

Disability-Inclusive Development Reference Group

In June 2009, AusAID established a Disability-Inclusive Development Reference Group to provide high-level guidance and help shape the implementation of *Development for All*. The five-member reference group is an honorary panel of leaders drawn from development agencies, civil society and academia. The group has extensive experience in inclusive development and includes people with disability.

The reference group has convened four times with the most recent meeting held in Cambodia in August 2010. Group members met with Australian Embassy staff, Cambodian Government counterparts, DPOs and NGOs. They witnessed first-hand the Australian aid program's positive impact on Cambodian people with disability and broadened their understanding of how *Development for All* is changing AusAID's work abroad.



Members of AusAID's Disability-Inclusive Development Reference Group with AusAID Director Disability-Inclusive Development, Kristen Pratt, and observer Ingar Düring, Head of the Sector Initiative Persons with Disabilities, Social Protection Section, GTZ, during their August 2010 meeting in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Reference group member Rosemary Kayess, Visiting Fellow, International Human Rights Law, Faculty of Law, University of New South Wales, was unable to be present for this photo.

Front (L-R): Kristen Pratt; Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo, Senior Operations Officer, World Bank; Megan McCoy, Pacific Regional Human Development Programme Officer, NZAID.

Back (L-R): Christine Walton, Executive Officer, Australian Disability and Development Consortium; Setareki S Macanawai, Chief Executive Officer, Pacific Disability Forum; Ingar Düring.

Photo: Sokunthea Chhor

Partner governments meeting the needs of all citizens

Good governance meets the needs of all citizens, including people with disability. Australia is supporting partner governments' efforts where there is strong national commitment and action to ensure the rights of people with disability.

East Timor

The Government of East Timor has demonstrated an increasing commitment to ensuring that its citizens with disability are able to participate in, contribute to and benefit from national development. In 2009, Australia provided \$300 000 to enable the Ministry of Social Solidarity to finalise East Timor's disability strategy and implementation framework. This assistance also included support for:

- › establishing a government–civil society working group to oversee policy implementation, including the membership of East Timor's first DPO, the Association for the Equality of the Disabled People of Timor, or ASSERT
- › expanding community-based rehabilitation to promote collaboration among local leaders, people with disability, their families, and other concerned citizens to provide equal opportunities for all people in the community
- › developing the draft 'National disability policy for Timor-Leste—Towards a disability-inclusive Timor-Leste' for public comment. The document is expected to be finalised in late 2010.

Cambodia

In February 2009, Australia recognised the Royal Government of Cambodia's commitment to addressing the barriers experienced by people with disability in accessing social and economic opportunities. Australia has provided \$1.5 million in support since 2009 towards efforts for inclusive national development. The Royal Government of Cambodia's achievements include:

- › enacting a law to promote the rights of people with disability
- › developing a national plan of action for people with disability
- › appointing a national disability-inclusive development adviser to strengthen leadership and management of the disability sector and work of staff in relevant ministries
- › establishing a technical working group to implement a 10-stage process towards ratification of the Convention.



Mr Yi Veasna, Director of Cambodia's National Centre of Disabled People, speaking at the national workshop in May 2010 to promote the adoption of the law and endorsement of the national plan of action. Australia's Ambassador, HE Ms Margaret Adamson, was a keynote speaker at the workshop, which drew more than 300 attendees. Photo: AusAID

Education for all children

'Strikingly, 98 per cent of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school.'

UNESCO, Policy brief on early childhood, June 2009

Australia recognises that education is a great enabler. It opens two doors—social inclusion and economic opportunities—and is the platform for all other development objectives.

Universal primary education goals set out in MDG 2 will not be met unless barriers to education for children with disability are removed.

Australia is working to address the range of barriers, such as inaccessible school buildings, poorly trained teachers, inflexible curricula and a lack of disability-specific resources. Stigma and societal prejudices that fail to acknowledge the capacity and strengths of children with disabilities are also being addressed.

- › In Samoa, Australia provided \$1.3 million in 2009–10 to support the transition of children with hearing impairment and intellectual disability from primary to secondary school. The Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture is developing inclusive education policies and programs with our support.
- › In Indonesia, the Australia Indonesia Basic Education Program is developing ministerial regulations on inclusive education, training personnel from the 2000 schools in the program, and piloting a model for inclusive education in five districts.



Front (L): Robert Yendegl, student at Taurama Primary School in Papua New Guinea. Photo: Rocky Roe

Robert Yendegl dreams of becoming a pilot—and he wants to fly big planes, not small ones. Robbie is in Grade 5 at Taurama Primary School, a small mainstream school on the outskirts of Port Moresby. Papua New Guinea’s Department of Education is focusing its efforts for students like Robbie, by training teachers to integrate students with special needs into mainstream schools. While some encouraging work is underway, there are still challenges.

‘It basically comes down to a lack of manpower’, explained Jennifer Tamarua, who is Head of Inclusive Education with the Department of Education. There are 21 Special Education Resource Centres covering 17 provinces in Papua New Guinea, with 4 to 11 staff in each centre.

‘If we can reach up to 10 schools each year, and bring them on board to thinking about students with a disability and how they can best educate them in the context of a mainstream education system, we are getting there’, said Mrs Tamarua.

And as for Robbie, the 12-year-old has a big goal for 2011: to be a vice class captain.

- › In Papua New Guinea, Australia has provided disability-inclusive training to 50 Special Education Resource Centre staff, 25 teacher education lecturers and approximately 300 school-based counselors.

Accessible environments

Accessible, barrier-free built environments are essential for making sure that people with disability can participate in all areas of community life. However, many cannot access services or the communities in which they live. Accessible infrastructure provides a better environment for all, including older people, people with temporary impairments, pregnant women and parents with young children.

Australia is working with partners to ensure that new roads, buildings, facilities and transport, including rebuilding after natural disasters and conflict, are accessible to all.

- › In Indonesia, approximately 1000 junior secondary schools constructed with Australian assistance have been built with ramps and accessible toilets, enhancing access to education for students with disability.
- › The Australia – Papua New Guinea Basic Education Development Program is supporting the Department of Education to produce infrastructure guidelines for elementary, community and primary schools, including access for students with disability.
- › A new AusAID Civil Society Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Fund of \$32.6 million will strengthen NGO activities to improve water quality, sanitation and hygiene, ensuring access for people with disability.



Local work crews outside the Auki Courthouse in Malaita, Solomon Islands. Photo: Sinclair Knight Merz

Funded by Australia through the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, the Auki Courthouse was modified during construction to comply with *Development for All*. The toilet, bathroom and kitchen facilities are accessible for people with disability and a ramp was added to improve access to the courtrooms and registry.

- › Jointly supported by the Australian and New Zealand governments, the Pacific Eye Institute in Fiji provides eye care training for ophthalmologists, doctors and nurses from around the Pacific and served 20 000 patients in 2009. Universal design principles were applied in the design and construction of the institute's new building so that it can be accessed by everyone. The building will be a model of accessible infrastructure in the Pacific.

Universal design guidelines are being finalised by AusAID to provide advice on how Australian aid activities involving the development of infrastructure (schools, health facilities, public buildings, roads and transport) can be more accessible to people with disability.

Changing how AusAID works: improving aid effectiveness

Significant progress has been made to ensure that information about AusAID's programs is available in accessible formats. Increasingly, programs are being designed and delivered so that people with disability are included and benefit from them—making the aid program more effective.

Joel has just completed a master's degree in information technology at the University of Southern Queensland, which will help him overcome barriers to employment. The lack of adaptive supports and negative social attitudes have made it difficult for Joel as a person with a hearing impairment in Papua New Guinea. 'I wanted to show them that I can do it', said Joel, who now has an ambition to return to Papua New Guinea and establish e-learning and distance education opportunities for other students with disability. In 2010, Joel was among the first cohort of scholars awarded a Prime Minister's Pacific–Australia Award, which provides work placement and leadership training opportunities.



Joel Silas, an Australian Development Scholarship graduate at the University of Southern Queensland. Photo: Shannon Svenson, University of Southern Queensland

- › Since 2008, 120 students, most of whom were people with disability, have studied disability and development through the **Australian Leadership Award Fellowships**.
- › From 2009, **Australia's Human Rights Small Grants Scheme** has included a focus on disability rights. In the 2009 funding round, five of the 36 successful projects and almost \$400 000 was provided to organisations promoting rights of people with disability in Burkina Faso, Iraq, Jamaica, Somaliland and Togo.
- › Since 2008, 107 Australian **volunteers** have contributed to disability-related fields during their placements overseas. Almost 25 per cent of the current Australian volunteers in Bangladesh are working with locals with disability.
- › **Australian Development Research Awards** guidelines have been revised to include disability as a priority theme of research. In 2008 and 2009, Australian and international partners were awarded a total of nearly \$2 million to:
 - develop efficient ways of measuring the effectiveness of development activities that focus on or include people with disability
 - investigate the economic costs of disability-related stigma in Vietnam
 - examine ways to improve access for people with disability through inclusive infrastructure development in Papua New Guinea.
- › **Australian Development Scholarships** guidelines have been revised to promote access and inclusion, which has resulted in an increasing number of scholars with disability. Africa and Pakistan programs now include specific targets for awarding scholarships to people with disability or for study in a disability-related field.

Australian leadership to mobilise global action and resources

'The government ... stands proudly in the strong tradition of the defence and promotion of human rights ... [W]e believe in a creative use of diplomacy to build stronger human rights protections in every part of the world. Today this House affirms again ... our resolve as a nation, as a government and as a people to work on our own soil and to work with governments around the world towards the realisation of these rights for all peoples.'

Kevin Rudd, then Prime Minister of Australia, speech to the Parliament on the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, December 2008

Australia's increased focus and leadership on disability-inclusive development has contributed to a stronger response from the global community.

- › Australia provided \$200 000 to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to host the inaugural Forum Disability Ministers' Meeting in the Cook Islands, held in October 2009. Ministers, government representatives and DPOs all worked together to finalise and endorse the Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability 2010–2015 at the meeting. This was the first time a forum ministers' meeting included community representatives. Contributions by people with disability were welcomed and demonstrated the value of inclusive development partnerships.
- › Australia played a lead role in forming the resolution 'Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities', which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in November 2009.



Senior representatives at the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Australia–UNICEF side event, September 2009.

L–R: Victor Pineda, Victor Pineda Foundation; Bob McMullan, then Australian Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance; Hilde Johnson, Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF; Graeme Innes AM, Australia’s Disability Discrimination Commissioner. Photo: Trevor Collins

- › At the 2009 Conference of States Parties to the Convention in New York, Australia initiated and co-hosted a major event with UNICEF on meeting the needs of children with disability through the Convention. UNICEF publicly committed to do more on education for children with disability.



Senior Australian officials advocating for disability rights

‘Today development practices by and large exclude persons with disabilities. Australia’s leadership in disability inclusive development is highly regarded; not only at the strategic level such as influencing the recent UN resolution to realise the MDGs for persons with disabilities, but also at the program level—where senior Australian representatives are making a difference on the ground.’

Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo, World Bank Senior Operations Officer

The Convention calls for shared responsibility among all stakeholders and greater leadership by international donors so global development efforts are inclusive of and accessible to people with disability.

Australian advocacy in Cambodia

In August 2010, AusAID’s Disability-Inclusive Development Reference Group visited Australia’s mission in Cambodia. Australia’s Ambassador to Cambodia, HE Ms Margaret Adamson, led a meeting of the reference group with Minister Sam Heng, the Cambodian Minister for Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation, and committed Australian support for the government’s preparations to ratify the Convention.

The reference group recognised the impact of the mission’s high-level engagement with the Cambodian Government to promote the inclusion of Cambodians with disability in national development. The group also considered the mission a model of good practice in inclusion. For example, people with disability were recruited into temporary vacancies which has led to permanent employment elsewhere.



HE Mr Ian Kemish, Australian High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea, opening a refurbished physiotherapy centre at Cheshire Disability Services. Photo: William Natera, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

The main physiotherapy unit at Cheshire Disability Services in Papua New Guinea received much-needed renovations, furnishings for the exercise room and therapeutic equipment with the help of Australian Head of Mission Direct Aid Program funding. The upgraded facility will benefit residents with disability, staff and carers, and services will be extended to the community so that people can learn about disability.

Australian advocacy in Papua New Guinea

In September 2010, Australia's High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea, HE Mr Ian Kemish, and his partner, Ms Roxanne Martens, hosted a development partner function focused on disability-inclusive development. At the event, the United Nations committed to lead and coordinate donors' actions on disability, particularly around education, and ensure disability is added to the agenda of future development meetings in Papua New Guinea.

AusAID: an open, accessible and inclusive organisation

AusAID has strengthened corporate policies and practices, communication strategies and training programs to create a workplace that enables and promotes the inclusion of people with disability.

- › The AusAID Disability Action Plan builds on the Workplace Diversity Program 2007–2010 and sets out performance indicators, measures and reporting in relation to AusAID’s employer and purchaser roles. The plan applies to all AusAID employees in Australia and overseas. It is consistent with the Commonwealth Disability Strategy, which aims to enable full participation of people with disability in the Australian Government’s programs, services and facilities.
- › AusAID’s London Circuit headquarters in Canberra is physically accessible and regarded as a good practice example in the Australian Public Service.
- › AusAID has a strong focus on improving electronic publishing and online content to ensure accessibility of online materials.
- › AusAID is working towards meeting the latest international W3C Web Content and Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0), which will provide much greater access to AusAID information for people with disability using assistive technologies.



Joanne Webber has been the Inclusive Development Officer for CBM Australia since February 2010 and has been contracted by AusAID to develop reasonable adjustment guidelines for Australia's Development Scholarship programs. Coming from a background of promoting disability-inclusive education and having vision impairment herself, Joanne knows first-hand the impact of exclusion and the importance of an inclusive environment. Photo: CBM Australia

AusAID disability and development resources

AusAID Disability-Inclusive Development website

www.usaid.gov.au/keyaid/disability.cfm

Development for All: Towards a disability-inclusive Australian aid program 2009–2014


www.usaid.gov.au/developmentforall.cfm

Development for All: Companion volume

www.usaid.gov.au/developmentforall-companion.cfm

Abbreviations

Convention	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DPO	disabled people's organisation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	non-government organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
W3C	World Wide Web Consortium



Cover image: A young girl who uses a wheelchair with her classmates at a school in Anantpur, Andhra Pradesh, India. Photo: Chapal Khasnabis, Rural Development Trust

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Published by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), Canberra, December 2010.

This document is online at www.ausaid.gov.au/publications

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Edited by WHH, Canberra

Designed by GRI.D Communications, Canberra

Printed by Blue Star Print Group, Canberra

Accessible formats

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