



# **Institutional Strengthening to Safeguard Food Security in South Africa**

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# Objectives and Structure

- Focus: Institutional analysis of existing food security strategies and implementation
- Methodology: Literature review, key informant interviews, field observations, application of change model
- Structure:
  - Situational analysis
  - Critique of existing institutional arrangements
  - Proposed way forward

# Food Security is a Complex Challenge

*The very nature of food security dictates that any response strategy should be multi-sectoral and interdisciplinary in nature*

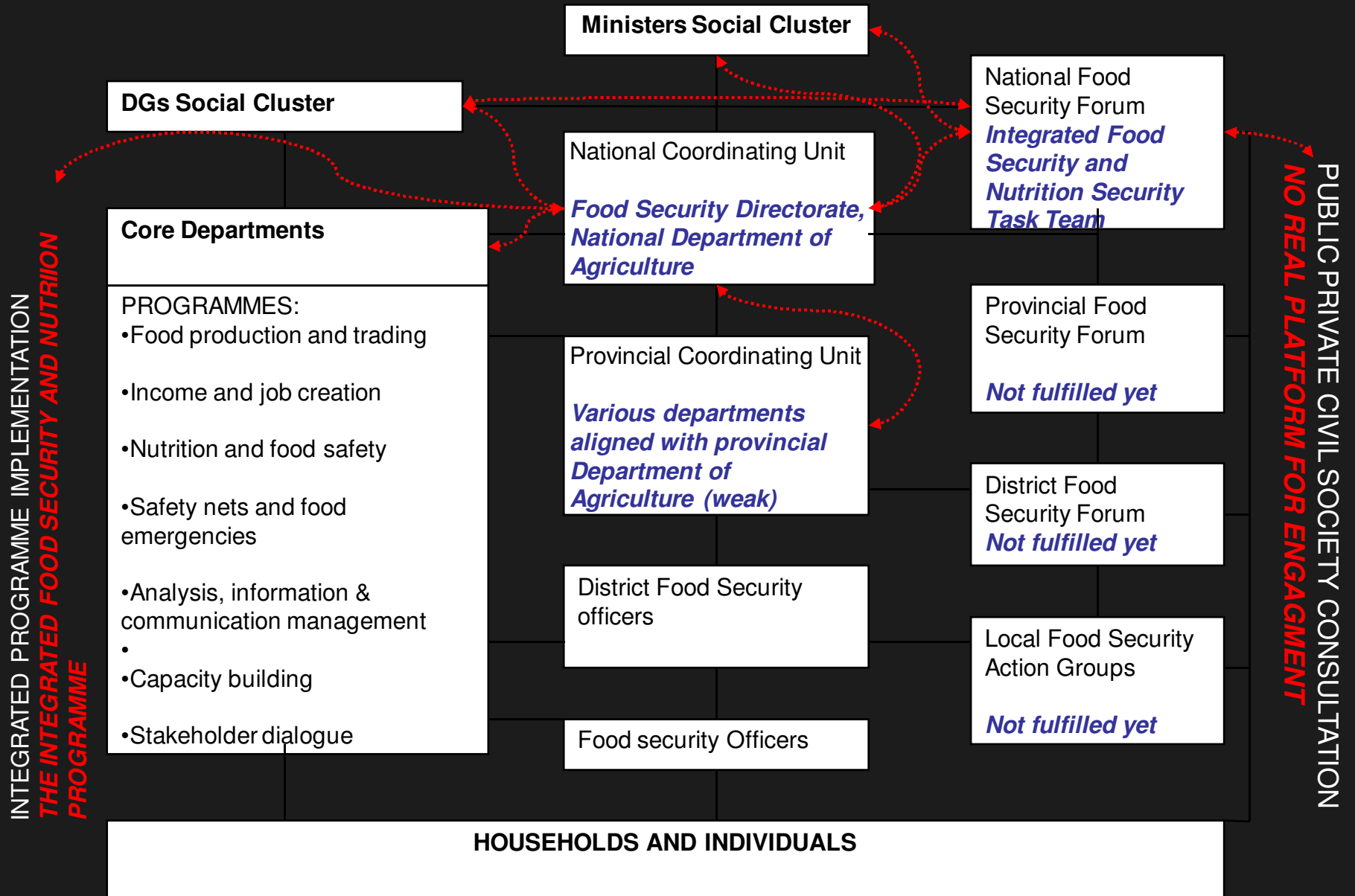
People enjoy food security when they have access to sufficient, nutritious food for an active and healthy life. Achieving this involves:

- **availability**: ensuring that a wide variety of food is available in local markets and fields;
- **access**: people are able to produce or purchase affordable, sufficient quantities of foods that are nutritionally adequate and culturally acceptable, at all times; and
- **utilisation**: food is stored, prepared, distributed and eaten in ways that are nutritionally adequate for all members of the household, including men and women, girls and boys.
- **Stability** of all three

# Existing Institutional Arrangements

- South Africa's response to food insecurity derived through the **Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS)** and the **Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Programme (IFSNP)**.
- Politically motivated by Cabinet's view of "unsatisfactory" situation of a "lack of a unified approach" to food security (2002).
- Other institutional mechanisms in place include the **Constitutional Provision** for the right to food (clause 27(1)(b)) and the **Social Cluster** that has been mandated by the Cabinet to ensure that the IFSS is effective.

# INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR FOOD SECURITY



.....> These connections not adequately addressed

# Food Emergency Scheme

- In response to worsening food insecurity in 2003, the FES was launched to provide emergency food parcels for three months (**Dept Social Development**) by which time the agricultural starter packs (**Dept Agriculture**) would have enabled households to be producing own food.
- However, FES was undermined by a lack of coordination:
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> phase (starter packs) experienced long delays
  - Problematic to assume that those people receiving food packs would have land and water to allow them to create food gardens
  - Challenges of internal administration, including problems around incomplete lists of the indigent eligible for hand-outs (targeting)
  - No formal evaluation to inform current food distribution programmes (Health)

# Community Gardens: GDACE

- Community gardens “key pillar of GDACE food security strategy” (MEC, July 2008)
- 2007 evaluation revealed poor retention of beneficiaries and weak linkages with other institutions that had a bearing on FS:
  - No links with Clinics and nutrition gardens
  - Links with Schools but no consolidation once gardens started
- No market analysis and linkages - sustainability
- Poor understanding of why gardens not functioning; partly about lack of alignment, integration, working cross-sectorally

# Food Garden Initiatives

- Food garden initiatives are “being implemented in ad hoc ways by a number of *different Government Departments* (Health, Social Welfare, Agriculture, Water Affairs and Forestry, Environmental and Tourism, Public Works, Education, Housing, Land Affairs and District and Local Municipalities) as well as *Non-Government groups* such as World Vision, CINDI (Children in Distress Network), ACAT (African Co-operative Action Trust) and many others.
- In all cases, there appears to be *a lack of clarity* around the expected contribution towards food security that food gardens could or should provide.
- *Mostly community gardens are still promoted, although a few initiatives in homestead food production have been attempted* (LIMA Rural Development Foundation, 2007)

# Examples of Local Level Success

- New Hanover, KZN:
  - Department of Social Development (disability grants) working with CINDI and LIMA (Agric Development) to provide integrated service for PLHIV
- District Health Information Centre
  - Collecting child nutrition data on master chart in each clinic to enable monitoring and response
- KZN Food Security Programme, Umsunduzi Pilot
  - In partnership with KZN Agric, LIMA facilitating a Multi-Sectoral Stakeholder Forum which holds line departments accountable to FS targets

# Why has the strategy not succeeded?

- The arrangements proven to be **superficial** and overridden by departmental **line-function demands** on budgets and personnel rather than on working together.
- Agencies tend to define their **own intervention** packages, often with limited coordination.
- Synergy between departments difficult without a clear **coordination mechanism**. Need for a national body (outside of NDA) to provide leadership and coordination.
- Requires a **clear goal and set of objectives** that can filter down to provinces, districts and municipalities.

# Challenges of “Joined-up” Government

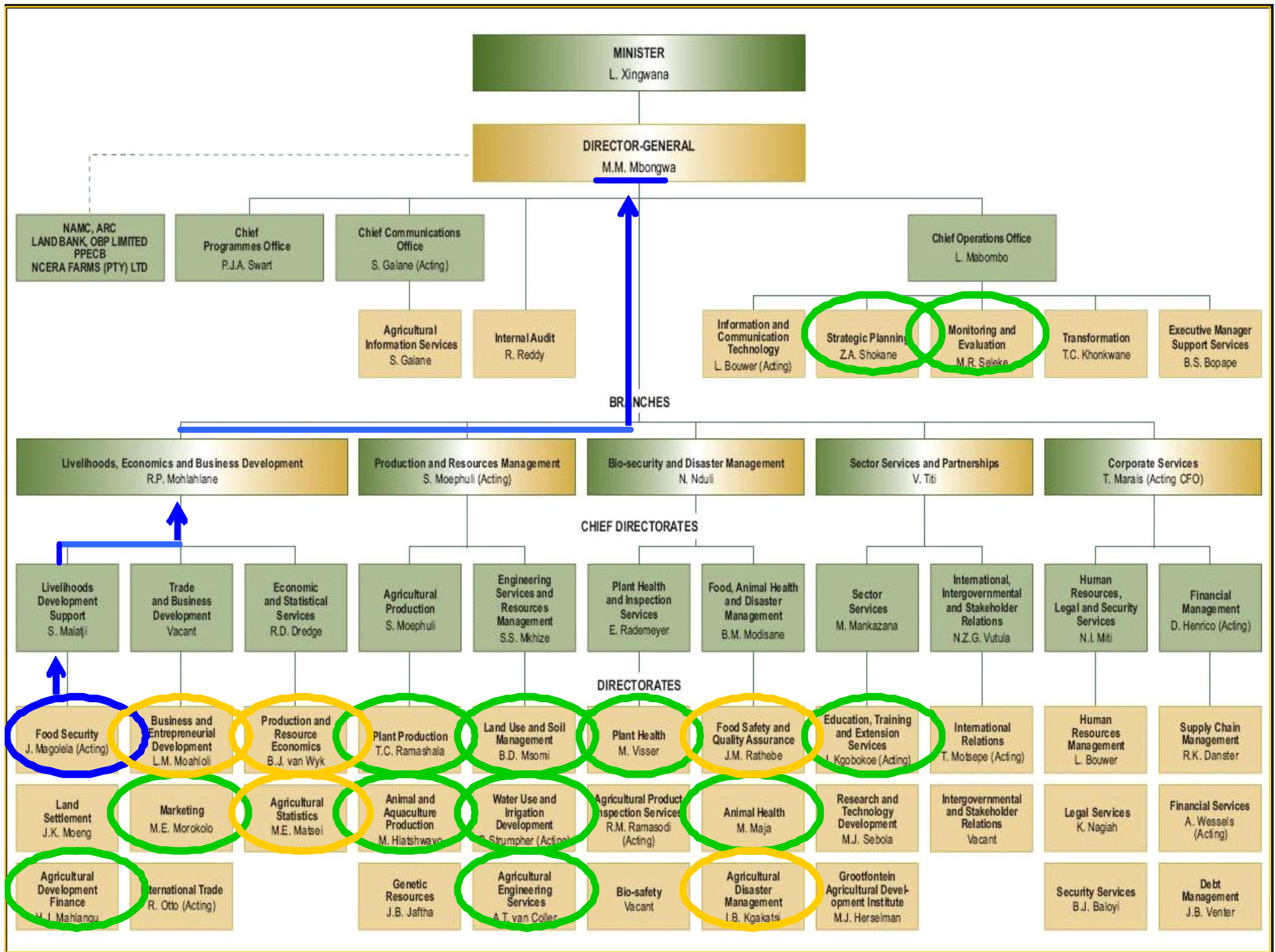
- The hierarchical and sector specific organisation of government contributes to limited communication and sharing of experiences for addressing food insecurity.
- Most public service managers receive no encouragement or reward for consulting other departments, much less civil society (Makgetla, 2008)
- Challenges of overriding financial context where fiscal arrangements of National Treasury have to be adhered to. These negate a blurring of funds to be used in joint projects:
  - “Unless budget is allocated to the clusters - which it isn’t - then it can’t be ‘joined-up’ decision-making” (Kader Asmal, 2007)

# Challenges of Coordination

- A key challenge regarding coordination is the lack of a policy framework and poor definitions of mandates and responsibilities for the various sectors that have specific roles (Steve Mohlabi, 2008).
- Maxwell identified the principal lessons for food security whereby planning should be integrated but have independent implementation (1989).
  - This would mean no ‘super-ministries’ but rather new modes of organization in multi-disciplinary team work using ‘task cultures’ not ‘role cultures’ .
- This reinforces need for a strong “national coordinating unit”

# Challenges Facing the National Coordinating Unit

- National Department of Agriculture has stewardship of food security:
  - Natural bias towards food availability questions (production) – avoids complexity of food security in SA
  - Reinforces impression that food security is an agricultural issue
- Exacerbated by national and provincial functions of Agriculture (Constitution) whereby provincial DG of Agric has overall responsibility for food security
- However, the principal obstruction is the arrangements within NDA itself: appointed directorate is “institutionally weak” within department with no real ability to compel other departments to fall into line (for what?).



# FIVIMS: An attempt to resolve the impasse

- Attempt to develop a **clear goal and set of objectives** on who the food insecure are, where they are located, why they are food insecure and how vulnerable they are.
- The Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Management System (FIVIMS) revealed that information is not being shared across departments that are expected to work in an integrated, multi-sectoral manner from local through to national levels.
- Andries du Toit, PLAAS: “‘institutional co-operation’ is actually one of the things FIVIMS was supposed to ACHIEVE... which suggests that there is something wrong with the assumption that an information system can be expected to achieve integration”.

# In Summary: Institutional Constraints

- No department **assigned responsibility of addressing food security in a comprehensive fashion**. The NDA focuses on a prosperous agricultural sector rather than assuring “food security for all”.
- The coordination been tasked to a directorate that does not have much **institutional power**.
- There are **no dedicated funds** for government to spend on food security, on all administrative levels. All budgets have been allocated by sector, preventing the emergence of joint projects/ programmes, funded by one entity.
- The **absence of a Food Security Policy** prohibits government from providing a clear line of authority as well as means of enforcing non-collaboration and implementation of relevant programmes in a disjointed manner.
- **Stakeholder dialogue** with civil society has been minimal.

# Application of a “Change Model”

- Simplistic to make recommendations for institutional change - need to consider these within a change process considering how to work multi-sectorally
- Concept of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> order change and a change model (Theory U) can help structure conversations about what is needed to bring about high order of change in food security strategy (Pruitt & Waddell, 2005; McLachlan & Garrett, 2007)
  - Full paper will explore these analytical frameworks more fully
  - Essentially to enable reform of existing system
  - Open up to involve other stakeholders in design and decision-making processes (space for dialogue)
  - Strengthen capacity to develop new answers

# Application of a “Change Model”

- In essence process allows:
  - The **review and reform of** existing food security strategy
  - Greater **openness to reflect** on roles of different sectors, promotes **notions of shared leadership** and on **complex networks** of relationships between actors
  - Process stimulates individuals to reflect on their own roles and **facilitates rethink** about how public and private sector entities engage, what the “rules of engagement” are, and how reform can achieve food security
  - Develops **shared commitment** to doing things differently

# Steps Towards a Solution

1<sup>st</sup> Step: South Africa needs to know “where it stands” in terms of food insecurity:

**Why:** create a common vision with a set of goals and objectives that can be measured and reported on. No clear picture about extent of food insecurity – partly because of “incomplete FIVIMS”

**How:** we have the information (FIVIMS: Poverty Nodes, NFCS, StatsSA, Master Charts of Child Nutrition Data etc).  
Need to consolidate and agree targets.

2<sup>nd</sup> Step: Develop coherent policy with clear goals and objectives based on information.

**Why:** develop plan for action owned by all stakeholders, with clear roles and responsibilities – with legislative oversight

**How:** National Forum and Policy Working Group to facilitate dialogue

# Steps Towards a Solution

3<sup>rd</sup> Step: Establish high-level, non-line function National Coordinating Unit (with dedicated funds)

**Why:** to facilitate well coordinated system to assemble, analyse and disseminate information, advocate for resources and monitor implementation, that can filter down to provinces, districts and municipalities.

**How:** Constitutionally obligation to facilitate establishment of unit

4<sup>th</sup> Step: Align departmental programming with policy objectives facilitated by National Coordinating Unit

**Why:** to enable provinces and districts to align programmes and to enable civil society and private sector to play role.

**How:** National Forum established to facilitate dialogue; ongoing M&E (through FIVIMS) to guide overall process.

# With Thanks

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