

# VOICES

from



Efforts in collaboration: A roundup of the past months

Mar-June 2024

It has been a productive and collaborative time for HomeNet South Asia as it organised several national, regional and international events. It also supported many of its affiliates around the region to conduct diverse training on organizing, disaster risk reduction management, climate change and curbing violence against women home based workers.

Parallel sessions at Commission on the Status of Women - CSW68 NGO forum (both physical and virtual) were highly appreciated, mainly because HNSA continued to keep the home based workers at the centre stage to narrate their stories themselves.

Networking with partners and change makers also provided HNSA several opportunities to spark important conversations around collaboration to amplify the voice and visibility of home-based workers.



# BANGLADESH

## DISASTER RISK REDUCTION TRAINING FOR HOME-BASED WORKERS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF BANGLADESH AFFILIATES OF HNSA

**30 May, 2024 - 1 June, 2024**

Conducted in Dhaka, this event brought together 25 home-based workers (HBWs) and staff members to be trained on crucial skills to navigate phases of a disaster. Participants were made aware of disaster trends, root causes and specific vulnerabilities that HBWs face while coping with disasters.

The event was organised by HNSA and Occupational Safety and Health Environment, Bangladesh (OSHE), an organisation that specialises in the issues of climate change and labour rights. The sessions were conducted by disaster management experts and government officials like the Former DG of Department of Fire Service and Civil Defense and Meteorologist from Bangladesh Meteorological Department.



# BHUTAN

## DE-NORMALISING VIOLENCE: ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN HOME-BASED WORKERS 27-29

**March, 2024**

This critical training for home-based workers was held in March, 2024 at Thimphu, Bhutan. Hosted by Sabah Bhutan in collaboration with RENEW and supported by HomeNet South Asia, this 3-day training session raised awareness around violence through group discussions and interactive exercises.

It equipped home-based workers to recognise and prevent violence, be aware of the legal support frameworks available and contribute towards safer communities.



# INDIA

## NATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE HOME BASED WORKERS: SEWA

One thousand home-based leaders from across India who are a part of Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) participated in the National Convention for the Home Based Workers. Held at the Tagore Hall of Ahmedabad, Gujarat, the event aimed to enhance visibility of HBWs as contributors to the country's GDP. Aside from recognising the contribution of HBWs, the event also saw the submission of a memorandum to Sister Michiko Miyamoto from SEWA, underscoring the demands of an estimated 30 million Home Based Workers in India. This memorandum demanded ILO's support in pushing the Government to form a comprehensive policy for home-based workers in India while the C177 on home work is ratified.

The demands also included a call for research study of HBWs in five states to understand the impact of climate change on their trades, the development of a local R&D centre for innovation to resolve issues like workplace design, occupational health hazards, lack of skill development and limited knowledge on latest market trends. Ms. Michiko Miyamoto pledged her support on working with SEWA for pushing the Government to form National Policy for HBWs as well as for the ratification of the ILO Convention 177.



Scan to read more



# MALDIVES

## TRAINING THE TRAINERS: DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND PREPAREDNESS

Hosted in Male, Maldives in April, this 1-day session was hosted through HomeNet South Asia's technical partner U-Inspire Maldives. Here, 20 home-based workers gained knowledge about the fire hazards, flood risks and other vulnerabilities they are prone to.

In addition to awareness, the participants also went back with crucial knowledge about being prepared and protecting their ventures against these risks, thus building resilience.



# NEPAL

## CLIMATE CHANGE REFRESHER TRAINING FOR HOME-BASED WORKERS (HBWS)

**11-13 June, 2024**

This training fostered awareness around the impact of climate change on home-based workers, and helped build unity and resilience. Hosted by trainers from Mahila Housing Trust (MHT), the training included interactive sessions, discussions, and panel engagements around the topic.

**Day 1:** Opened with a welcome from Sristi Joshi Malla, the training program touched upon the impact of climate change, helped participants identify their vulnerabilities, sparked discussions around proper resource and waste management practices and looked at the historical conditions around the environment.

**Day 2:** The second day focussed on unity, community action, and financial resilience through engaging games and discussion around collective actions.



### Day 3: Multi-stakeholder meeting on Climate Change

HNSA organised a multi-stakeholder meeting in Kathmandu to discuss the issue of climate change on home-based workers.

The meeting featured a panel discussion moderated by HNSA's Regional Coordinator Ms. Sristi Joshi Malla with local government representatives and experts from various organisations, including:

The meeting featured a panel discussion with local government representatives and experts from various organisations, including:

- Ms. Srijana Burlakoti, Tarkeshwor Nagarpalika
- Ms. Basanti Tamang Dangol, Dakshinkali Nagarpalika
- Mr. Nitin Macwan, Mahila Housing Trust (MHT)
- Ms. Anu Joshi Shrestha, ICIMOD
- Mr. Amun Thapa, Khalisisi
- Ms Goma Pandey, Class Nepal

The session focused on the impact of climate change on HBWs, highlighted various health and environmental challenges, and explored the importance of awareness and sustainable practices. The discussion touched upon vulnerability mapping, sustainable production, and integrating climate resilience into economic activities. As a key outcome, the local government representatives committed to incorporating HBWs into future planning and budgeting.



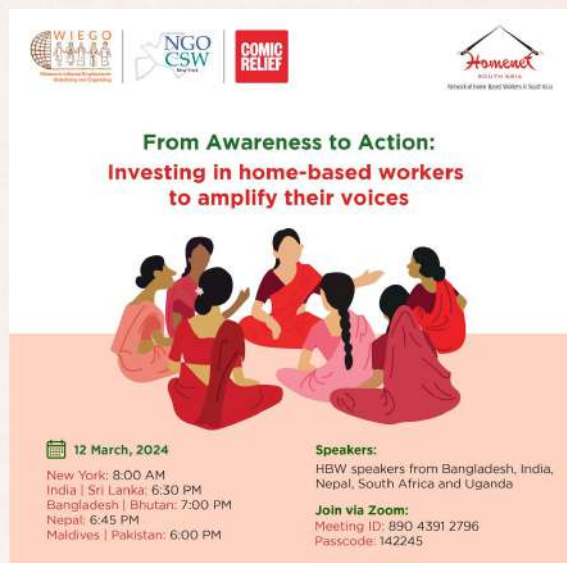
# HOMENET SOUTH ASIA

## PARALLEL SESSION AT COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN CSW 68 NGO FORUM, NEW YORK, MARCH 2024

Our representatives attended this event held in New York in March 2024. We took the platform to organise virtual and in-person sessions like:

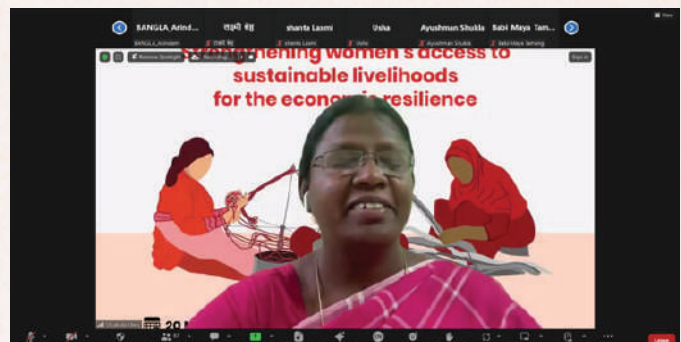
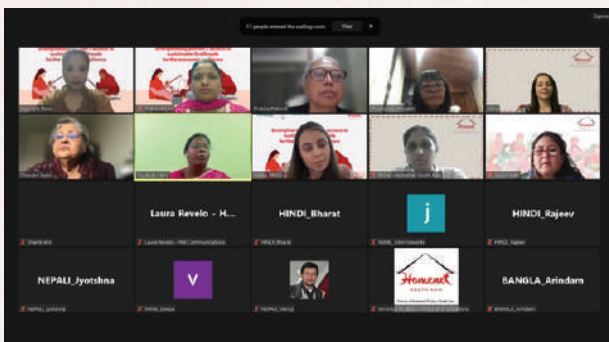
### From Awareness to Action: Investing in home-based workers to amplify their voices Virtual session | 12 March, 2024

This event was conducted together with WIEGO and Comic Relief. It recognised the significant achievements of home-based workers, highlighted the challenges they continue to face, and underlined the importance of organising, training, and taking collective action to pave the way for sustainable improvements in their working conditions. The session set the foundation for continued solidarity among home-based workers worldwide.



### Strengthening Women's access to sustainable livelihoods for economic resilience Virtual session | 20 March, 2024

This virtual panel was organised together with WHR, with the aim of strengthening women's access to sustainable livelihoods for economic resilience. Aside from identifying the challenges faced by HBWs, it delved into how networks and trade unions can play a crucial role in empowering them. It also touched upon the different empowerment models and made recommendations around policy reforms, capacity building, social protection and more. The session was enriched with real-world experiences shared by HBWs of Bhutan, India, and Nepal, and an interactive Q&A session to discuss the topics further.











## Beyond Boundaries: Tackling Poverty and Strengthening Institutions of Home-based workers

In-person panel discussion | 13 March, 2024

HNSA along with WIEGO also organised one physical panel discussion on “Beyond Boundaries: Tackling Poverty and Strengthening Institutions of Home-based Workers” on 13th March 2024 in New York.

The poster features the HomeNet South Asia logo at the top center, with the event title below it. It displays eight speaker portraits in two rows. The bottom section includes event details: date (Wednesday, 13 March 2024), time (2:00 pm - 4:00 pm), location (730 Third Avenue, Room 2E, 2nd Floor, between 45th & 46th Street, New York), a QR code, and the text 'RSVP TO ATTEND IN PERSON'.

 Honi. Ms. Nilofar Bakhtiar Chairperson National Commission on the Status of Women, Pakistan	 Ms. Chandni Joshi Enforcer HomeNet South Asia	 Mr. Ziad Sheikh Special Advisor, Generation Equality Office of the Executive Director UN Women	 Ms. Katia Araujo Programme Advisor WIEGO
 Ms. Sabita Maharjan Home Based Worker Leader Sunakothi, Lalitpur Nepal	 Ms. Shanti Maharjan Home Based Worker Leader Chandragiri, Kathmandu Nepal	 Ms. Richa Macsuedon Senior Programme Coordinator HomeNet South Asia	 Ms. Sristi Joshi Regional Coordinator HomeNet South Asia

**Ms. Sabita Maharjan** and **Ms. Shanti Maharjan**, Home-based worker leaders from WHR Nepal, spoke about the victories and challenges faced by HBWs and how strengthening institutions of Home Based workers empowers them and helps HBWs advocate for their rights. They stressed on the importance of organising HBWs who are invisible and unrecognised and face exploitation as they are not organised and at the bottom of the value chain, with limited access to the market. They recognized the pivotal role played by HNSA in building solidarity, facilitating knowledge sharing and capacity building of HBWs at the regional level.

**Ms. Katia Araujo**, Programme Advisor, WIEGO spoke about empowering Home Based Workers from the ground and how HNSA and WIEGO have partnered to design interventions which are based on inputs from the Home Based workers. She spoke about how capacity building helps strengthen social capital, which is the heart and soul of the HBWs movement. She pointed out that organising is the spine of the movement which helps ensure that HBWs have a collective voice and bargaining power to address the wide range of issues that they face. She mentioned HNSA’s contribution towards successfully advocating for domestic violence to be included as workplace violence in the ILO C190.

**Mr. Ziad Sheikh**, Special Advisor, Generation Equality Office of the Executive Director, UN Women, spoke about creating safe spaces for HBWs. He referred to his experience in Nepal with UN WOMEN post the 2015 earthquake, where the Women Friendly Disaster Management Group, which consisted of the HNSA affiliates came forward to help engender the disaster response and address the needs of vulnerable women and HBWs. Ensuring that their voices are heard and recognized in a more institutionalised manner, lead to their advice being heard by the government on the reconstruction work post the earthquake, be it the planning commission or the finance ministry on engendering the budget. Another noteworthy initiative was capacity building effort which included training on Income generation as well as Political Participation and leadership for about 2000 women. Several women went on to contest elections and some went on to become Deputy Mayor and Ward Chairperson. It becomes crucial to provide a supportive environment through policies and legislation.

**Ms. Chandni Joshi**, Enforcer HNSA spoke about HNSA's role in bridging the gap between realities on the ground and advocating to secure the rights of HBWs with respect to policies and programs. She spoke about the gains that the women's movement had fought hard for and CSW becomes a platform to ensure that these gains are not taken away. She spoke of HNSA's journey when SEWA and UNIFEM partnered to look at the issues of HBWs. In 2000 the Kathmandu declaration was adopted in the presence of the SAARC Secretary General and delegates from the SAARC member countries. It is still a live document, with many concerns of HBWs which still need to be addressed. There were many challenges - this was an invisible category with no statistics. It was important to map the HBWs and the work they do. Today HNSA is a network of 1.2 Million HBWs from South Asia. The growth of the membership has been a silent revolution. HNSA has helped provide a voice and visibility to the issue faced by HBWs. It has played an important role in advocating for ILO Conventions 177 and 190 and their ratification. She concluded by saying that it is not just Financing for development but financing for Women's Agency which we should focus on.

The panel discussion was moderated by Ms. Sristi Joshi Malla, Regional Coordinator, HNSA and the vote of thanks was given by Ms. Richa Macsuedon, Senior Programme Coordinator, HNSA.

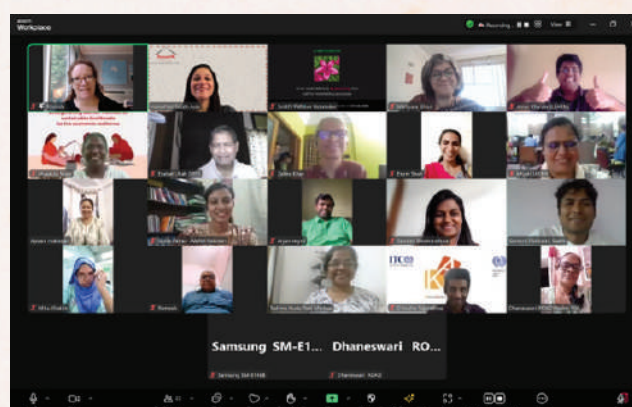
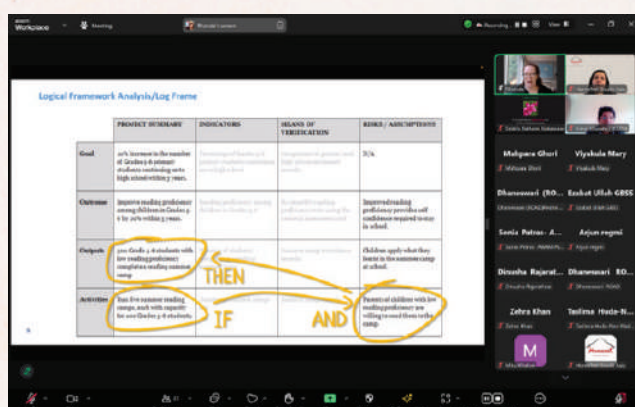


# FUND-RAISING AND PROPOSAL WRITING TRAINING - PART I

**June 2024**

With fundraising being a key part of our affiliates' success, we at HomeNet South Asia organised a virtual 3-day session in June, 2024 – designed to amplify their capacity in this area. The workshop dealt with the crucial aspect of fundraising – proposal building. The event was attended by 15 organisations from 7 countries across South Asia.

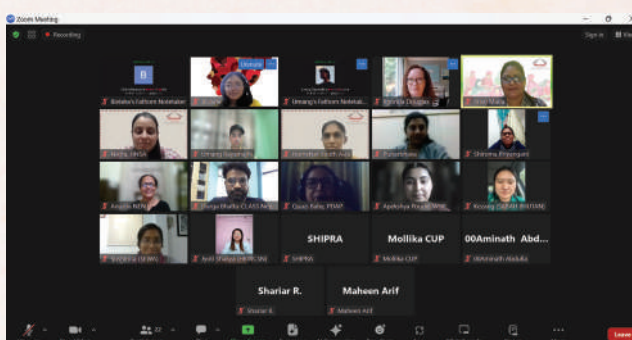
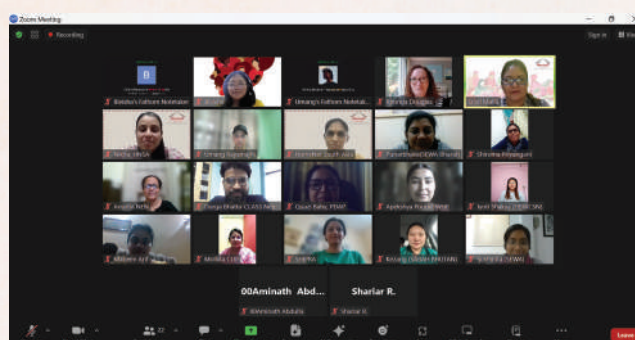
Over the course of 3 days, the workshop explored the core principles of effective project design, donor identification and relationship building, and grant proposal writing. The event was interactive and collaborative, thus maximising impact.



# FUND-RAISING AND PROPOSAL WRITING TRAINING - PART 2

**August 2024**

Given the massive success of the previous session, a similar workshop was conducted again in August of 2024, expanding the impact of this crucial knowledge to other affiliates.



# HOME-BASED WORKERS POWER UP MEETING: SHARING AND LEARNING

**23-26 April, 2024**

HNSA, WIEGO and Comic Relief hosted the 'Home-based Workers Power Up Meeting: Sharing and Learning' in Ahmedabad.

This event brought together diverse participants, mainly our HBW sisters from Bangladesh [Labour in Informal Economy (LIE)] and [Coalition of the Urban Poor (CUP)], India [Indian Academy for Self-Employed Women (IASEW)], Nepal [SAATHI and Women for Human Rights (WHR)] and Uganda [Ngalo Buwereza Organization]. Together, they generously shared knowledge and learned from each other.

The event enabled them to interact with Ms. Mirai Chatterjee, Chair of WIEGO, during the opening session.

They were warmly hosted by Ms. Reema Nanavaty, Director of SEWA at the self-sustaining Kamla Cafe, where the participants learnt much about running a successful social enterprise.

There was also an interaction programme with Ms. Namrata Bali, Director IASEW.

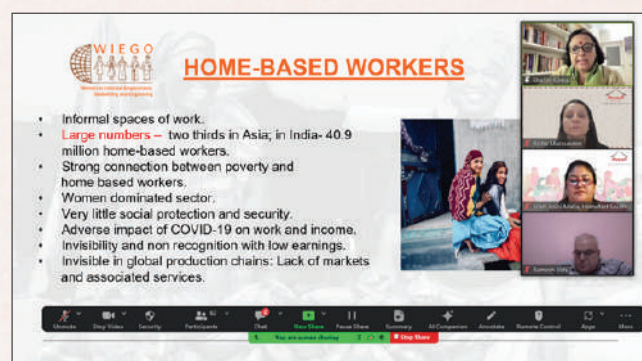
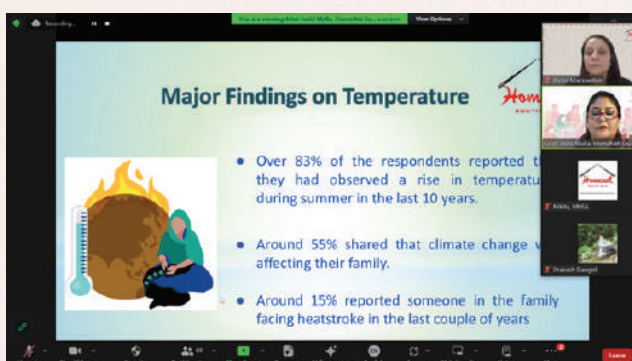
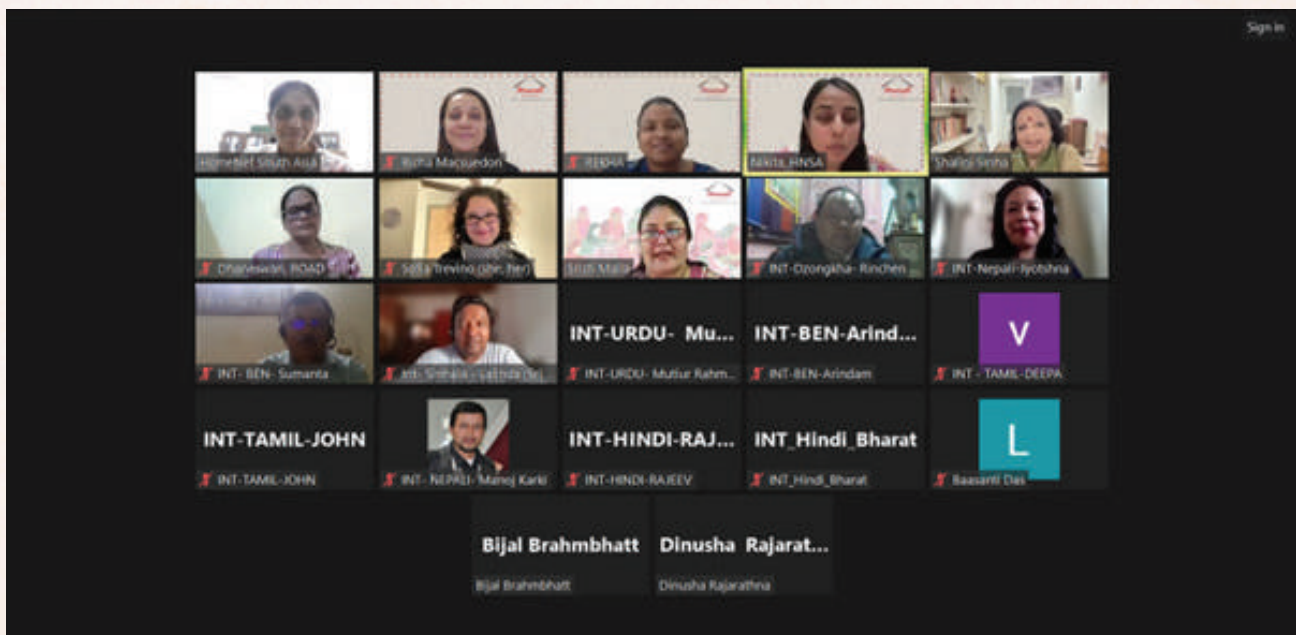


# CLIMATE CHANGE AND HOME-BASED WORK

1 March, 2024

This webinar highlighted HomeNet South Asia's efforts around raising climate change awareness. It offered a key platform for home-based workers to share their experiences and discuss mitigation strategies at individual, community, and organisational levels. Aside from the challenges faced by home-based workers, the event also underlined the positive contributions they make towards sustainability, through their work.

The discussion touched upon the vulnerabilities faced by home-based workers, and how they are often overlooked in climate change mitigation and adaptation policies. A presentation by Nitin Macwan from Mahila Housing Trust (MHT) highlighted MHT's efforts around climate change resilience in Nepal and Bangladesh. It delved into the importance of data collection, collaboration between stakeholders, the use of technology to combat climate change challenges, policy change advocacy and more.



# NETWORKING



During her visit to Mauritius in March 2024, HNSA Regional Coordinator, Ms. Sristi Joshi Malla, called upon the **Honorable Minister of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training, Mr. Soodesh Satkam CALLICHURN.**

She was accompanied by **Mr. Shameer Nabeebukus** and **Ms. Niteesha Muthoor-Mokram** from Rogers Capital and the Financial Advisor of HNSA, **Mr. Anuj Arora.**



During their visit, Ms. Joshi and Ms. Malla also paid a courtesy call to H.E. Mr. Lok Bahadur Thapa, Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations in New York.



Ms. Chandni Joshi, Enforcer of HomeNet South Asia and Ms. Sristi Joshi Malla, HNSA Regional Coordinator, had the opportunity to call upon **Ms. Sima Bahous**, Executive Director of UN Women and Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, while attending the CSW in New York in March 2024.



They also had a meaningful conversation with **Ms. Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda**, UN Women Deputy Executive Director for Normative Support, UN System Coordination and Programme Results. The contribution of Home-Based Workers in South Asia and the importance of including them in all empowerment programmes of UN Women were highlighted.






HNSA Regional Coordinator Ms. Sristi Joshi Malla and HNSA Senior Programme Coordinator Ms. Richa Macsuedon participated at “Leveraging the Moment to Mobilize Support for Women Worker Voice and Action” workshop organized by Ford Foundation at their office in New York on March 14, 2024.



HNSA Regional Coordinator also actively participated at the Convening of C190 organized by Human Rights Watch and Solidarity Center in New York, March 15-16, 2024



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