

Pakistan

October 2022

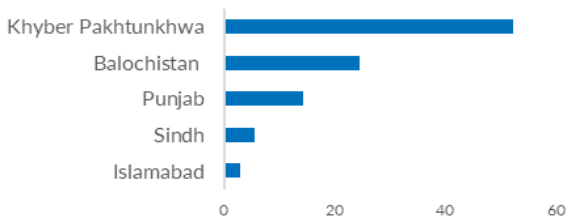
Pakistan continues to be **one of the world's largest refugee hosting** countries providing safety to some **1.3M people** forced to flee their countries

UNHCR supports efforts undertaken by the Government of Pakistan to provide **protection** and **assistance**, while strengthening cohesion in host communities

With a focus on global solidarity, the **Solution Strategy for the Afghan Refugees (SSAR)** guides the strategic direction of refugee programming in **Pakistan**

REGISTERED REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS IN PAKISTAN: 1.3MILLION (99% AFGHANS, 1% OTHERS)

Per province



- 69 per cent of Afghan refugees live in urban/semi-urban localities
- 31 per cent continue to reside in the remaining 54 refugee villages

* Data source: UNHCR Operational Data Portal, Sept 2022
<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/country/pak>

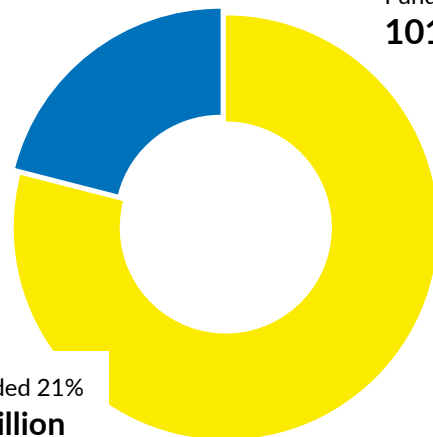
FUNDING (AS OF 30 SEPTEMBER)

USD 129 million

requested for Pakistan Operation

Funded 79%
101 million

Unfunded 21%
28 million

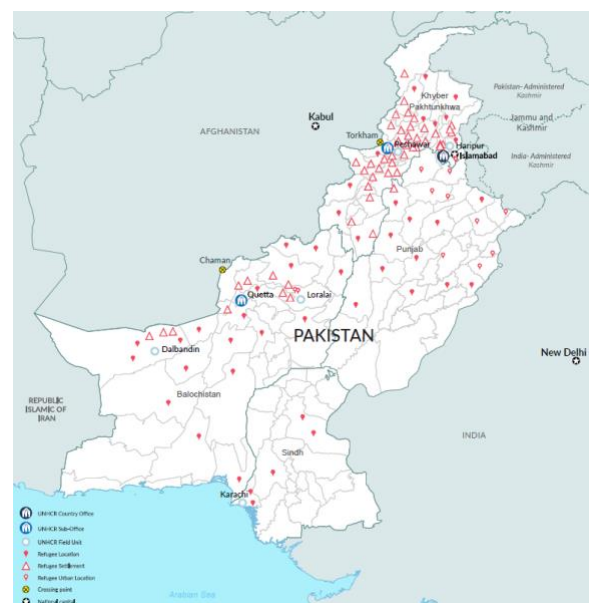


UNHCR PRESENCE

332 Staff:
281 National Staff
51 International Staff

1 Country Office in Islamabad
2 Sub-Offices in Peshawar and Quetta

Presence in Dalbandin, Haripur, Karachi, Kohat, Loralai, Chaman, Torkham



Operational Context

For four decades, Pakistan has been one of the largest refugee-hosting countries globally. The country and its people have shown remarkable generosity by providing refuge to some 1.3 million registered Afghan women, children and men, including granting them access to public health and education facilities. Afghans are one of the most protracted refugee populations in the world, with second and third generations being born in exile, growing up as refugees and raising their own children as refugees. Prospects for voluntary return—the durable solution for the majority of refugees—remain uncertain, with less than one percent having returned in the last five years. UNHCR’s resettlement programme has scaled up in 2022 but will benefit a small number of the population. Far from being self-reliant, many from this protracted refugee population survive below the poverty line and, like their Pakistani hosts, primarily work in the informal market as day laborers. This situation largely reflects the broader challenges facing Pakistan, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the economic opportunities of refugees and host communities alike. Despite its own constraints, the Government of Pakistan included Afghan refugees in its COVID-19 response, including access to vaccinations. An estimated 250,000 Afghans have fled their country since the developments of mid-August 2021. Access to Pakistan territory by Afghans who did not have valid travel documents, but may be in need international protection, is constrained. UNHCR is currently discussing with the Government of Pakistan on the way forward on registration and documentation of Afghan new arrivals, and hopes that through continuous engagement the current challenges will be addressed.

UNHCR IMPACT

Support Platform for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees

On 8 April 2021, an inaugural meeting was held at the Ambassador level to establish the Local Core Group (LCG) in Islamabad with two levels – Ambassadorial and Technical. The LCG aims at unlocking political and technical expertise and contributions beyond solely financial. Under the chair of the EU Ambassador a delegation of LCG Ambassadors (+ UNHCR) met the SAFRON Minister three times to start a dialogue on refugee solutions, support, and protection. At the technical level, two thematic working groups under the leadership of the US were created: 1) a Livelihoods Thematic Working Group (LTWG), and 2) an Education Thematic Working Group (ETWG). Members of these groups are participating in deep dives on sector specific programming, consulting with refugees and developing a short/medium/long-term plan for discussion with the Government of Pakistan.

The Local Core Group provided \$46.5 million to UNHCR Pakistan in support for refugees in 2021 (not including contributions of nearly US\$ 100 million softly earmarked to the Afghanistan situation).

Durable Solutions

Voluntary Repatriation: As of 30 September, a total of 3,549 Afghan refugees have been assisted by UNHCR to return to their communities through our Voluntary Repatriation Program in 2022. This brings the total number of Afghan refugees supported by UNHCR with “Vol Rep” to some 4.38 million people since 2002.

Considering the deteriorating economic situation in Afghanistan and increased transportation costs, UNHCR has recently adjusted the voluntary repatriation grant to US \$375 per individual from US \$275 for registered refugees who express their intention to return to their communities in their home country. The amount is received at the designated encashment centers in Afghanistan with the support of UNHCR. Other Afghan refugees may have been also returning to Afghanistan, but have not reported to UNHCR for assistance. Afghans of other status (ACC holders, undocumented) are not eligible for UNHCR assistance, and may have returned already.

Resettlement: As part of efforts to demonstrate international solidarity and responsibility-sharing with Pakistan and reflecting an increased interest by resettlement countries to offer third country solutions following the events of August 2021 in Afghanistan, UNHCR increased its resettlement programme in 2022. The Agency committed to submit 3,500 Afghan refugees in total to six different resettlement countries while also expanding complementary pathways. As of the third quarter, UNHCR Pakistan submitted 585 cases representing 2,047 refugees, for resettlement to Australia, Canada and the United States of America, meeting the agreed targets. More than 50 percent (123 cases) were assessed and submitted as women and girls at risk. Pakistan significantly upscaled its staffing through the recruitment of 40 international and 64 national staff dedicated to, or supporting, resettlement and complementary pathways activities.

Work on expanding complementary pathways programmes also commenced. Preparatory work was undertaken for the implementation of the pilot project with Talent Beyond Borders (TBB) starting in July. Additionally, the operation is working closely with IRAP to identify refugees who may qualify for family reunification or directly with resettlement countries of persons of concern who have active reunification applications to better coordinate solutions activities and facilitate family reunification/ sponsorship process.

Protection

DRIVE: Following the successful roll-out of the Documentation Renewal and Information Verification Exercise (DRIVE), in mid-October, 11 PoR Card Modification Centers will be launched by CCAR and NADRA with the support of UNHCR. Those centers will record and document vital events of the registered Afghan refugees. They will also achieve continuous updating of the data of refugees verified during DRIVE. They will further ensure that protection and assistance needs are identified.

The DRIVE exercise was undertaken by the Government - the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), the Chief Commissioner for Afghan Refugees (CCAR), and the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) – with the support from UNHCR to update population data and records from the 2010 exercise, and to address challenges faced by refugees by issuing new, recognized and secure physical documentation.

The exercise also aimed at identifying and recording additional information related to Afghan refugees to better inform voluntary repatriation activities and strengthen evidence-based assistance interventions in Pakistan, and solutions initiatives in Pakistan and Afghanistan. DRIVE was also supporting family unity by recording unregistered immediate family members of registered refugees. DRIVE implementation was formally launched across 35 sites from 15 April 2021, additionally being supported with seven mobile registration vans. Implementation concluded formally on 31 December 2021, but followed with a grace period until 28 February 2022. During its implementation, 1,418,676 interviews were conducted.

During and following the exercise, 954,653 new smartcards were issued by the Government of Pakistan. Some 1 million refugees above five years of age have received the new documentation. These cards are an essential protection tool, they provide proof of identity, entitlement to temporary stay in Pakistan, and freedom of movement. They facilitate access to certain essential services, including education and healthcare. The new smart cards are technologically compatible with systems used in Pakistan to authenticate the identities of nationals.

Legal Aid: UNHCR operates nine Advice and Legal Aid Centres (ALACs) in the main refugee-hosting areas run by two partners. These centres directly secure release of persons of concern who are arrested/detained, conduct legal awareness raising sessions with the community and capacity building activities with law enforcement agencies on the rights of refugees.

Community-based protection: With the support of Outreach Volunteers (OVs), refugee elders and focal points in the community, UNHCR empowers refugees and their host communities to mitigate protection risks, mobilise behavioural change, and to identify community-led initiatives aimed at sustainable solutions. UNHCR also supports Social Cohesion Hubs to bring together the refugee and hosting communities and build existing capacities among its members.

Child Protection and Gender-based Violence: UNHCR and partners implement programmes for child protection and gender-based violence survivors, including case management, psychosocial support, life skills programmes, safe houses and friendly spaces, alternative care, family tracing and reunification, in addition to community outreach and awareness programmes. Prevention, risk mitigation of and response to GBV are also part of the response, with women and girls' empowerment activities.

Education

UNHCR's education strategy aims to increase enrolment and improve student retention rate of Afghan and local children in nearby public schools by expanding their accessibility and absorption capacity with better equipped schools and trained teachers. Inclusion of refugees in public schools contributes to peaceful co-existence in host communities, maximises investment in public resources and infrastructure and avoids provision of a parallel education system. This is particularly relevant in Pakistan, where 70% of refugees live outside of refugee villages alongside their Pakistani hosts and are attending national schools. Recognising that inclusive and disaggregated data is key for effective educational planning and decision making to ensure quality education for all children, significant efforts are also underway for strengthening partnerships for inclusion of refugees in the national/ provincial education management information system (EMIS).

There are currently over 300,000 primary school-aged refugee children, with approximately 50,000 enrolled in public schools and another 53,573 children enrolled in 144 primary schools across the remaining 54 refugee villages, which are supported by UNHCR. This means that around 200,000 primary school-aged refugee children are currently out of school, disproportionately affecting girls as only 23% of girls are enrolled in primary school compared to 47% of boys. In response, UNHCR launched [Accelerated Learning Programmes and Home-Based Girls classes](#) in KP and Balochistan reaching more than 1,500 girls. Additional resources are critical to scale-up these programmes and reach more girls. For secondary grades, essential transportation allowances are provided to prevent drop out.

Building on efforts in 2021, the transition to the Pakistani curriculum is now complete in all 101 Refugee Village formal schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. In Baluchistan, the transition is complete up to Grade 5. To supplement the transition and to ensure the continuation of quality education, 15,600 Pakistani textbooks were procured and provided to all the primary level students.

While support to RV schools remains critical to ensure that children in RVs are not left behind, the priority is to include refugee children into public schools. Significant policy milestones have been achieved by the GoP in this regard, including the inclusion of refugee education needs in the 2020-2025 Provincial Education Sector Plans in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, registration of RV schools in provincial EMIS systems, and same university tuition fee concessions for registered Afghan refugees agreed by the Higher Education Commission. To further advance the inclusion of refugees into the national education system, UNHCR and partners are strengthening the absorption capacity of public schools. Development funding is also being channelled to support inclusive public education services [e.g., EU, World Bank (IDA-18 RSW projects in KP and Balochistan), Education Cannot Wait].

Concerted efforts to support access to tertiary education were also undertaken. To increase refugees' access to tertiary education, UNHCR provides tertiary-level scholarships to Afghan refugees between 17-30 years through the [Albert Einstein German Academics Refugee Initiative \(DAFI\)](#), and since 1992 has supported more than 1,700 refugee students in Pakistan. In Quetta, UNHCR in collaboration with Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS), organized a one-month preparatory course for 30 students (refugee; 20, Pakistani 10) to prepare for the National Testing Service and other standardized university level entrance exams in English, Mathematics and ICT. The International Center for Refugee and Migration Studies (ICRMS) department at BUIITEMS also carried out three career counselling sessions at refugee villages and settlements. Some 144 secondary school students (M: 56, F 88) participated and were invited to BUIITEMS for exposure visit to encourage enrolment in higher education. A total of 466 refugee students (M:352, F:114) were supported through DAFI scholarship program. In addition, interviews for the recruitment of additional 75 students are underway.

Livelihoods and Economic inclusion

The majority of refugees continue to engage in low-skilled manual work and daily labour due to limited skills linked to the lack of opportunities to develop skills or pursue higher education, and restrictions on their right to work. Currently, refugees do not have the right to work in the formal sector, register business, own property and hold driving licenses. Host communities likewise struggle, with only 27.5% of the labour force (71.76 million people) being employed in the formal sector, according to ILO's 2020/21 Labour Force Survey¹. In response, UNHCR and partners are pursuing a multi-prong approach, focusing on a number of interlinked interventions including the graduation approach, vocational training, and the expansion of private sector engagement and value chain businesses within and outside of Pakistan. To date, seven private sector and industry partners are actively supporting efforts to link refugees to markets. One of the most successful examples to date, which we hope to be able to repeat in the near future, is Chloé, the luxury fashion house, which hired refugee women in 2021 to produce artisanal items for their brand products, helping to generate revenue for refugee households and Pakistan. Other

¹ See https://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/labour_force/publications/lfs2020_21/LFS_2020-21_Report.pdf.

examples include women being engaged in carpet weaving, an activity they can do from their homes, hence addressing some of the barriers linked to creating livelihood opportunities for women.

Health

Refugees in general can access all levels of healthcare without any discrimination throughout Pakistan, and are included in government health plans and programmes such as maternal and child healthcare (MCH), nutrition, vaccination, malaria, TB, HIV control etc. UNHCR provides support that enables refugees to reach national services, when available, and to support host communities to have better access to public health services, including through the provision of medical equipment in public hospitals. This year, UNHCR procured and donated critical equipment for various public hospitals in Pakistan, including specialised items for a Dialysis unit, Thalassaemia Unit, a Gastroenterology Unit as well as a number of state-of-the-art CT scanners in areas hosting refugees. With a focus on enabling factors for inclusion, UNHCR is transitioning from support to parallel refugee facilities towards harmonized area-based programmes covering both host communities and refugee villages. UNHCR and partners continue to support separate health facilities in RVs.

Environment

Solarization of Host Community Infrastructure: UNHCR in consultation with the government provincial departments identified a total of 63 government facilities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Balochistan, Punjab and Islamabad to be solarized. Out of 63 sites, actions/interventions in 12 sites are aimed at improvement of health services, including Basic Health Units, Tertiary and district government hospitals. Efforts in 41 sites are geared towards improvement/support in education including in primary, secondary, middle and high government schools. Six sites will see the improvement in livelihoods locations including government technical and vocational institutes, while in the remaining four other sites efforts will be made for community self-management and empowerment of both host population and refugees. All these sites have also been targeted for the installation of the solar system for the provision of alternate energy / electricity sources to serve both host and refugee population.

All measures and efforts had to be made to ensure proposed facilities for solarization were in sites serving both refugees and the host population. Apart from the overall positive infrastructural development and benefits, careful consideration was given to the sustainability of the projects. Following completion of the extensive and thorough assessments (feasibility, impact on environment and population) and consultations with stakeholders including Government, the Operation is now in the next phase for the installation of solar systems at the sites.

Access to Green Energy: Utilizing the updated data of the DRIVE exercise, a blanket distribution of energy appliances including solar and energy efficient cooking stoves was initiated in June 2022. Eight refugee villages were initially targeted, and 8,225 sets of appliances were provided to families. The distribution is continuing throughout the rest of the year.

As part of UNHCR's efforts to engage development actors, a BMZ-funded energy project was also initiated in Pakistan in December 2021. As part of this project, so far 1,000 participants completed vocational trainings and environmental awareness sessions, with a further 1,000 participants to complete these training by end of 2022. In addition, 1,000 solar school bags were distributed to the participants who completed the vocational training and energy-environment sessions the previous year.

Solarization of water systems in refugee villages, aimed at improving access to clean and safe water: Examples include in Baluchistan province, where in Mohammed Khail RV, nine solar panels of 340 watts each were installed together with a steel frame and a faulty submersible pump was replaced with a brand-new water pump of 1.5 hp power. In Saranan Refugee Village, a submersible pump was repaired, and 18 router pumps re-installed on the main water source. In addition, two sluice valves were installed at various points on the main PVC pipeline from the main source that feeds the camp. In Malgagai RV, nine new sluice valves were installed on the main GI pipeline which is connected to the main spring source to the community as well as installation of two fibre water storage tanks of 500 gallons. These activities have hugely enhanced access to portable clean water and decreased the risk of waterborne diseases.

Overall, the support provided to refugees and host communities has been essential to ensure the use of environmentally friendly alternatives to power for community lighting, cooking and uninterrupted potable water supply. The use of energy efficient cooking stoves reduced dependence on unsustainable methods like use of firewood. Installation and repair of mechanized solar powered water pumps has also been crucial to ensure adequate supply of potable water to persons of concern.

Emergency Response to Flooding

UNHCR launched a Supplementary Appeal on 7 October 2022 seeking US\$65.8 million to help more than 650,000 refugees and members of their host communities affected by the recent devastating floods in Pakistan to address immediate needs including protection, shelter, health, water and sanitation, and education for affected refugees and host communities. It will also assist in the early recovery process, including building up the resilience of refugees and their host communities as well as contribute to rehabilitating damaged public services – schools, health, and water supplies. The overall UN inter-agency Floods Response Plan, first issued in early September 2022, was revised and launched on 4 October to support the Government of Pakistan with relief and early recovery activities until May 2023. UNHCR's Supplementary Appeal will run until December 2023. A national recovery plan is expected to be finalizing by mid-October 2022.

Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) provinces were most affected, with 80 districts declared "calamity hit". Of these, 41 host an estimated 800,000 Afghan refugees. Most are in just four districts: Peshawar (210,000), Quetta (170,000), Nowshera (77,700) and Karachi (71,500).

From the outset, UNHCR supported the response led by the Government in affected areas. In September 2022, UNHCR delivered over 10,000 metric tons of goods in less than four weeks from our warehouses and suppliers in Pakistan and our regional and global contingency stocks in Termez and Dubai, dispatching some 300 trucks and 23 airlifts. Working with Pakistan's disaster management authorities, UNHCR completed the first phase of its response, including assisting flood-affected families in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Sindh provinces with tents, solar lanterns, plastic sheeting, hygiene kits and other life-saving items.



Refugee-Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) Programme

RAHA is a government-led programme with financial support from donor countries and the United Nations. UNHCR, together with the Government of Pakistan, implement the RAHA programme, a humanitarian development nexus initiative which seeks to increase tolerance towards Afghan refugees and supports the overarching goals of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR). RAHA constitutes an effort to move away from prolonged dependence on open-ended humanitarian aid by enhancing social cohesion and building empowerment, resilience and productive capacities of refugees and host communities through targeted investments into national public service delivery systems (health, education, social protection etc.) and infrastructure.

Working with Partners

UNHCR works in coordination with the Government of Pakistan, UN agencies, humanitarian and development organizations, and civil society to find solutions for refugees and other persons of concern:

- **Governmental:** Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), including the Chief Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees and the Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees at provincial level is the main counterpart. At federal level, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Education and Professional training, National Health Regulation and Services, and the Planning Commission are key partners to continue strengthening services and support for refugees and host communities. UNHCR works jointly with the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) for registration of Afghan refugees. UNHCR also works in partnership with National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) at the federal level and Technical Education and Vocational Training Authorities (TEVTA) at the provincial level for the youth skill development. UNHCR collaborates with provincial department of health, education, social welfare, home, and tribal affairs along with other provincial and district level government line departments.
- **UN Agencies and NGOs:** UNHCR funds 16 national organizations, seven government partners and two international non-governmental organizations to provide protection and humanitarian assistance including:
 - **Government:** Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CCAR), National Database & Registration Authority (NADRA), National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC), Frontier Primary Health Care, Pakistan (FPHC), Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences
 - **National:** Inspire Pakistan, Society for Humanitarian Rights & Prisoners (SHARP), Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF), Imkaan Welfare Organization (IWO), Initiative For Development And Empowerment Axis (IDEA), Khwendo Kor, Hashoo Foundation, Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP), Drugs And Narcotics Educational Services For Humanity (DANESH), Society For Empowering Human Resources (SEHR), Water, Environment & Sanitation Society, Pakistan (WESS), Peoples Primary Healthcare Initiative (PPHI) Balochistan, Innovative Development Organization (IDO), Taraqee Foundation (TF), Society for Community Support to Primary Education (SCSPE), Tameer-e-Khalq Foundation (TKF)
 - **International:** International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Pathfinder International

The [UNHCR-led Inter-Agency Refugee Response Plan](#) greatly facilitates UN agencies' and other partners' contributions to Pakistan's refugee situation. It is improving coordination and fundraising efforts. 32 partners (including 13 UN agencies) joined the 2022 RRP and preparations are underway for a 2023 RRP. To enhance inter-agency collaboration, the Pakistan Refugee Consultation Forum (PRCF), co-chaired by SAFRON/CCAR and UNHCR, was established to provide the overall coordination of the response. The PRCF ensures effective communication with the Humanitarian Country team (HCT) and the UN Country Team as well as other relevant coordination fora. The PRCF also taps into the Sectoral Working Groups to draw on operational partners' sectoral expertise from both humanitarian and development communities. As of June 2022, the RRP is about 40% funded, hence demonstrating the urgent need for additional investments in Pakistan's refugee response.

Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

Country-level earmarked contributions

Canada | Denmark | European Union | France | Germany | International Islamic Charitable Org | Italy | Japan | Kong Frederik den Syvendes Stiftelse paa Jaegerspris | Novo Nordisk Foundation | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Sweden for UNHCR | Switzerland | United Kingdom | Unites States | Other private donors

Other softly earmarked contributions

Canada | Japan | Netherlands | Norway | Private donors

Unearmarked contributions

Sweden | Norway | Private donors Spain | United Kingdom | Netherlands | Private donors Japan | Denmark | Germany | Private donors USA | Private donors Republic of Korea | Japan | France | Switzerland | Private donors Italy | Belgium | Ireland | Private donors Canada | Italy

Algeria | Armenia | Australia | Austria | Azerbaijan | Bulgaria | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Kuwait | Liechtenstein | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | Philippines | Portugal | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Singapore | Thailand | Türkiye | Uruguay | Private donors

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