Combined Project Information Documents / Integrated Safeguards Datasheet (PID/ISDS)
BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

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<td>P160295</td>
<td>Sierra Leone Agro-Processing Competitiveness Project</td>
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<td>09-Jul-2018</td>
<td>Finance, Competitiveness and Innovation</td>
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| Financing Instrument | Borrower(s) | Implementing Agency | |
|----------------------|--------------|---------------------||
| Investment Project Financing | Republic of Sierra Leone | Ministry of Trade and Industry | |

Proposed Development Objective(s)

To improve business environment in agribusiness sector and increase productivity of targeted agro-processing firms in Sierra Leone.

Components

Promote enabling environment for expansion, and growth of agribusiness firms
Firm level support to increase productivity and strengthen competitiveness
Project implementation, coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US$, Millions)

SUMMARY

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DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing

| International Development Association (IDA) | 10.00 |
B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

Sierra Leone—a fragile, low-income country situated at the West Africa Atlantic coast, bordering Guinea to the west and north and Liberia to the east—has a population of 7.1 million people. The country has made good progress toward political stability and economic growth after more than a decade-long civil war that ended in 2002. Since then, the country has had three relatively peaceful national elections and recorded average annual growth of 7.8 percent from 2003–14. Postwar economic growth continued to be robust, bolstered by the resumption of iron ore exports, increased inflows of foreign direct investment (FDI), and rising government revenues. After more than a decade of robust economic growth, Sierra Leone’s economy deteriorated significantly since mid-2014 because of twin shocks from the Ebola virus disease and falling international iron ore prices. This resulted in sharp deterioration in economic outcomes with growth declining dramatically from 20.7 percent in 2013, to 4.6 percent in 2014, and further to −21.1 percent in 2015. Despite the decade-long growth, 2015 gross domestic product (GDP) per capita was US$653.1, well below the Sub-Saharan Africa average of US$1588.5.

In March 2016, the country was officially declared Ebola-free, which gradually led to normalization of economic activities to pre-Ebola levels, particularly in services and primary sectors such as agriculture that had demonstrated resilience during the crisis. Projected growth in household consumption and resumption in mining activities are expected to accelerate economic activity and improvements in living conditions compared with the height of the Ebola crisis. The medium-term outlook is positive but highly uncertain, with growth projected to recover gradually to about 6.5 percent in 2020, mostly driven by the non-iron ore sectors.¹

Sierra Leone has vast natural resources, and the economy is heavily dependent on its land endowments, especially agriculture and mining. Almost 75 percent of the total land area of about 72,300 square kilometers is arable. Agriculture, including forestry and fisheries, accounts for the largest GDP share, but that share declined from 57 percent in 2012 to 41 percent in 2013. The mining sector’s contribution to GDP—based on exploitation of mainly rutile, diamonds, gold, chromite, and iron ore—increased substantially from 8.5 percent in 2011 to 16.8 percent in 2012 and on to 27.2 percent in 2013 because of the expansion of large-scale iron ore operations. The service sector, led by banking, retail, transport, and tourism, accounted for 28.8 percent of GDP in 2013, down from 35.5 percent in 2011, while the manufacturing sector, dominated by cement and light manufacturing, accounts for only 2 percent of GDP.² Other promising growth sectors are tourism,

fisheries, and manufacturing.

**Poverty levels remain high, even though the poverty headcount declined from 66.4 percent in 2003 to 52.9 percent in 2011.** Strong growth in rural areas, where poverty declined from 78.7 percent in 2003 to 66.1 percent in 2011, explains much of the overall reductions in poverty. However, the rural poverty level is still higher than urban poverty, which declined from 46.9 percent in 2003 to 31.2 percent in 2011. Although about 62 percent of the working-age population is employed (formally or informally), there is a dearth of good-quality jobs, particularly among urban youth and in rural areas. Youth labor earnings are a key source of household income in Sierra Leone. According to the country’s most recent labor force survey, 55.7 percent of individuals ages 15–35 participate in the labor force, deriving labor income mainly from self-employment. The lack of sufficient technical and vocational skills needed for the labor market compounds the unemployment problem, despite the potential offered by a growing workforce dominated by young people.

**The government of Sierra Leone’s strategy for social and economic development is articulated in the third-generation Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Agenda for Prosperity (AfP) for 2013–18.** The AfP is part of the government’s vision to become a middle-income country by 2035 based on a private sector–led economy generating widespread employment opportunities. The AfP identifies eight priority pillars for interventions, including two related to the drivers of private sector–led economic growth and diversification. The 2014–16 Ebola outbreak in West Africa derailed implementation of initiatives and activities in Sierra Leone aimed at achieving the goals and strategic objectives of the AfP. The priorities related to private sector development aimed to create 10,000 agricultural jobs and increase growth and competitiveness of 1,000 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) across key value chains such as rice, cassava, cocoa, and oil palm.

**Sectoral and Institutional Context**

**Agriculture, including agribusiness, is a key sector of the economy, contributing more than half of the GDP and accounting for the largest share of labor markets, both by type of employment and sector contribution.** The sector is dominated by smallholder production of staple crops, mainly rice and cassava, which together account for about three-quarters of the volume of agricultural production. Commercial farming and primary processing of commodities, such as oil palm, cocoa, coffee, other niche crops, and livestock, is becoming increasingly important, contributing about 16 percent of agricultural value added in 2014. However, low productivity and several market, policy, and institutional coordination failures dampen agriculture competitiveness.

**World Bank–supported diagnostics on sector competitiveness in Sierra Leone highlighted strong prospects for agro-processing to help drive economic growth more effectively compared with other sectors.** Agro-processing investment opportunities are concentrated in oil palm (mainly for exports), and processed rice and poultry for domestic and regional markets. Some processors are involved in niche commodities, such as fruit juices, lemongrass, and rubber for exports, mainly to the European Union (EU) and the United States. However, the agribusiness industry, including agro-processing, is highly fragmented. Local agro-processors tend to be involved in a wide range of products, but they operate mostly in local markets. A few medium-size formal firms and a vast number of small, low-productivity informal firms coexist with a small number of large domestic and international companies that have operations linked to foreign investments. By contrast, large domestic and foreign investors operate modern processing plants that involve few commodities, such as oil palm, rice, and forestry products. Most agro-processors, regardless of size or technology used, have

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4 Sierra Leone Growth Pole Diagnostic, World Bank, July 2013.
underutilized capacity and face challenges getting access to domestic and international markets.

Although Sierra Leone has good potential for agroindustry to be an important driver of economic growth, diversification, and poverty reduction, there are many challenges facing the sector and its investment attractiveness. The country ranks 135 out of 137 in the Global Entrepreneurship Index globally and 28 out of 30 in Sub-Saharan Africa. It ranks 132 out of 138 in the Global Competitiveness Index (2016–17 rankings). Creating an enabling environment for investments in agribusiness, strengthening institutions, and improving firm productivity are critical elements of a sector reform and growth agenda to catalyze investments in the agribusiness sector and agro-processing.

Several market failures are impeding competitiveness in the agribusiness sector and the productivity of agro-processing firms, including SMEs. These include policy, institutional, and coordination failures that raise the cost of doing business for agribusiness and agro-processing investors, as well as information asymmetries on both the demand and supply sides that limit SME market opportunities and links with larger domestic and foreign agro-processors. In addition, weak supply chain linkages, lack of access to finance and technology, and limited demand-led skills development pose challenges to agro-processing firm productivity and agribusiness sector competitiveness in Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone has implemented a wide range of business environment reforms and developed policies aimed at improving the business environment. However, the record is mixed on implementation effectiveness and sustained impact. Lack of coordination and consistent application of policies, rather than a lack of policies themselves, hinder the development of the sector. Despite some improvements in the business and regulatory environment, investors point to the current business environment as a major constraint to the growth and expansion of agro-processing investments.

Many agribusiness investors face serious issues that are hindering the success of their operations and are leading them to downsize, abandon planned operations, or totally withdraw their investments in the country. According to a 2017 survey of 13 large foreign and domestic agribusiness investors and seven business intermediaries in Sierra Leone, the three main areas of concern for investors are the annual Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) fees administered by the Environment Protection Agency (EPA), import procedures, and export procedures. A 2017 agribusiness investors’ forum also cited these areas as having the most detrimental impact on the success of companies’ operations. Agribusiness investors consider the annual EIA fees, which can reduce enterprise profits by up to 80 percent, to be very high when compared with other countries in the region. Eight of the 13 companies interviewed stated that the challenges they face are posing significant risks to the feasibility of their business operations in Sierra Leone, which could result in a loss of about US$560 million in existing and potential investments and more than 47,000 direct and indirect jobs, and loss of cultivation of more than 76,500 hectares of agricultural land.

The capacity of public sector institutions dealing with private sector development and the business regulatory environment is limited. Inconsistent application of policies, regulations, and fiscal incentives significantly increase the cost (time and money) of doing business compared with alternative investment destinations. With a complex business and regulatory environment and wide-ranging policy agenda, there are significant challenges to effective implementation of government and development partner initiatives. Several

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5 Some market failures affect the entire agribusiness sector, defined as commercial entities within any segment from upstream input supply to commercial production and downstream agro-processing and trade, while others are specific to the agro-processing segments of the value chain.


government agencies are involved with designing and implementing initiatives on business and the regulatory environment, investment promotion, and SME development, but coordination among them is limited.

Scant data exist on SMEs in Sierra Leone. An agribusiness entrepreneurship diagnostic conducted in August 2017 revealed that agro-processing SMEs in Sierra Leone generally lack access to stable, viable markets for their products. The entire agribusiness sector, including agro-processing, is highly fragmented, consisting of few medium- and large-size formal firms, and a vast number of small, low-productivity firms operating in few commodities, such as oil palm, rice, coffee, and cocoa. The market for business development services (BDS), entrepreneurial training, and agribusiness-focused content is fragmented. Business development service providers have basic business training materials, but they lack proper information and experience in agribusiness and the food sector, and programmatic offerings typically do not extend beyond basic business plans and start-up advice. Agricultural productivity remains low, combined with low levels of farmer organization and coordination, which lead to highly unstable markets for agricultural commodities and unpredictability for inputs to agro-processing SMEs.

To design agro-processing competitiveness interventions successfully, it is necessary to place the project in the context of sector-specific interventions that improve the enabling business environment and firm-level interventions that increase productivity and encourage innovations. Therefore, the proposed project will focus on addressing sector- and firm-level challenges that can boost the competitiveness of agro-processing in Sierra Leone. At the sector level, project interventions will focus on the agribusiness sector, specifically on high-priority agribusiness reform areas, institutional development, and public-private dialogue. At the firm level, the focus will be on the agro-processing or value addition segments of value chains and the companies that are providing services, such as packaging, equipment, and technologies to such agro-processing firms. In this project, agro-processing firms are defined as those involved in the processing and transformation of primary agricultural products—through quality upgrading or manufacturing—into consumable goods, generating value added. Project interventions at the firm level will emphasize improving firm-level productivity by upgrading local firms through tailored technical assistance (TA) to businesses at various stages of development, facilitating market linkages provision of market information, access to grants for specific expansion projects, and by upgrading the quality of local BDS.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)
To improve business environment in agribusiness sector and increase productivity of targeted agro-processing firms in Sierra Leone.

Key Results

The following will be key indicators tracked under the project:

- Number of new investments in agribusiness sector
- Average cost to comply with EPA regulations
- Increased volume of processed products by SMEs

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8 Sector-level interventions will focus on the entire agribusiness sector, which is defined as any commercial entity within agricultural value chains, from upstream input supply, to production, and to downstream agro-processing and trade.
D. Project Description

The proposed project will focus on providing solutions to key market failures inhibiting competitiveness of the agro-processing sector and limiting firm and SME productivity. The project consists of three components which are designed to address market failures and are meant to complement other World Bank–supported initiatives that address other market failures holding back the development of agriculture and agribusiness value chains in Sierra Leone.

Component 1: Promote enabling environment for agro processing sector competitiveness and growth of agribusiness firms (US$2 million)

A program of activities to help reduce burdensome agribusiness sector regulations that constrain productivity and weaken incentives of existing agribusiness firms and SMEs to reinvest earnings or make new investments for sector growth and competitiveness, including technical assistance to:

(a) the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in (i) generating evidence and good practices on environmental impact assessment for agribusiness to simplify procedures and reduce cost for obtaining environmental licenses; and (ii) strengthening the mechanism for public-private dialogue to provide a structured platform for systematic engagement between the public sector and private investors in the agribusiness subsector;

(b) the Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA) in developing and implementing an aftercare program for the retention and expansion for agribusiness investors;

(c) the Sierra Leone Standards Bureau (SLSB) in improving its capabilities for compliance with standards and conformity assessments; and

(d) the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) and SME Development Agency (SMEDA) in strengthening their capacity to provide clearly defined services to support agro-processing, including enhanced institutional coordination for SMEs and other private sector actors, strategic planning, and priority setting.

Component 2: Firm-level support to increase productivity and strengthen competitiveness of agro-processing firms and SMEs in selected value chains (US$6 million)

A program of activities to increase the productivity and competitiveness of agro-processing SMEs and their suppliers in selected value chains, including:

(a) establishment of an SME Technical Assistance Facility for the provision of hands-on business advisory and technical assistance to selected SMEs, upstream and downstream market linkages for such SMEs, and investments in business innovations to companies at different stages of development within the agro-processing sub sector, as well as to those providing goods and services to the agro-processing sub sector; and

(b) Provision of matching grants (“Matching Grants”) to selected SMEs participating in the SME Technical Assistance Facility to fund business or operational needs.

Component 3: Project Implementation, Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation (US$2 million)

Support for the PCU and the PFMU in the preparation, coordination and supervision of Project activities, including, inter alia, preparation of Safeguard Instruments and safeguards implementation, procurement, financial management, monitoring and evaluation and contract management.
E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

The overall day-to-day coordination and management of the project will be carried out by a dedicated Project Coordination Unit (PCU) that will be established under the MTI. The PCU will consist of a lean team of specialists with strong project management experience whose sole function will be coordinating and managing the technical components of the project. The PCU will seek strong coordination with the PCU of the Smallholder Commercialization and Agribusiness Development Project (SCADeP) and Skills Development Project, given their complementarities.

Effective July 1, 2017 at the request of the government of Sierra Leone, all fiduciary aspects of new World Bank projects will be managed centrally by the Project Fiduciary Management Unit (PFMU) under the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. Therefore, all fiduciary functions (that is, financial management, internal audit, procurement, and M&E for the proposed project) will be carried out by the PFMU. It is expected that specific officers from the PFMU will be assigned to the project.

The PCU will work with the assigned officers from the PFMU to develop the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB), procurement plans, and M&E systems design and implementation plan, including the planning for internal and external audits, preparation of interim financial statements as required for periodic submission to the World Bank, and preparation of quarterly progress reports. The detailed implementation arrangements for the proposed project are provided in annex 3 (Implementation Arrangements), and further details will be provided in the Project Operation Manual. The implementation arrangements—that is, the PFMU managing all the fiduciary and M&E issues for the project while the PCU will be responsible for overall coordination of project—will be reviewed at the midterm review.

Implementation arrangements for Component 1: The PCU will implement all activities in component 1. It will work closely with other development partners; industry associations; ministries, departments, and agencies (MDA); and other stakeholders that are directly involved in those activities. The TA to support reform of EIA for agribusiness will be implemented in collaboration with the EPA, EU, SLIEPA, and MAFFS. The implementation of the PPD will be implemented in collaboration with GIZ, IFC, and SCADeP. The PCU will implement activities relating to agribusiness investment retention and capacity building at SLIEPA, and institutional development at SLSB, the MTI, MAFFS, and SMEDA. To the extent possible, support for institutional development at SLSB will be in collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). This will build on UNIDO’s past and current interventions on National Quality Infrastructure and SMEs in Sierra Leone and other developing countries. The PCU will work closely with SLeCAD, an advocacy group and industry association, to implement the business and regulatory reform and the PPD. The PCU will have technical oversight over all implementation partners. It will also work closely with SCADeP and other development partners to avoid duplication and maximize complementarities and synergies.

Implementation arrangements for Component 2: The PCU will provide overall coordination of component 2, but a TA facility manager will be recruited through competitive selection to manage and implement activities in the SME TA facility, including the matching grants. The TA facility manager will be supported by an independent evaluation team with technical skills in relevant areas (such as impact/investment finance, agribusiness, and SME development) for implementation of the SME matching grants. The SME TA facility will have resources to hire national and international business advisers with commercial and investment experience in the agro-processing subsector. The facility manager will work closely with the project coordinator in the PCU to deliver the work program of the TA facility.
F. Project location and Salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

The project is national and will be implemented in all the geographic areas of Sierra Leone. Project activities will be closely aligned with the complementary WB supported SCADeP project that support agribusiness and farmer producer organizations.

G. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Anita Bimunka Takura Tingbani, Environmental Safeguards Specialist
Charles Ankisiba, Social Safeguards Specialist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY</th>
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<td><strong>Safeguard Policies</strong></td>
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<td>Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01</td>
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<td>Performance Standards for Private Sector Activities OP/BP 4.03</td>
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**KEY SAFEGUARD POLICY ISSUES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT**

**A. Summary of Key Safeguard Issues**

1. Describe any safeguard issues and impacts associated with the proposed project. Identify and describe any potential large scale, significant and/or irreversible impacts:

   The Environmental Category assigned for the project is B (Partial assessment), since it is expected that environmental and social impacts will be moderate and in most cases manageable through the implementation of mitigation measures.

   The potential environmental and social risks and impacts as well as the environmental management Framework in Sierra Leone has been detailed in the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) which has been undertaken as part of project preparation. During project implementation, sub-projects will be screened and where required, further assessments and mitigation measures will be put in place to address any potential negative social and environmental impacts.
2. Describe any potential indirect and/or long term impacts due to anticipated future activities in the project area: Project is focused on building capacity of agribusinesses and to increase productivity. These proposed activities are likely not to have significant direct or indirect long term impacts on the environment.

3. Describe any project alternatives (if relevant) considered to help avoid or minimize adverse impacts.

4. Describe measures taken by the borrower to address safeguard policy issues. Provide an assessment of borrower capacity to plan and implement the measures described.
An ESMF has been prepared by the borrower and it outlines the principles, rules, guidelines, and procedures to assess the environmental and social risks and impacts likely to result from proposed project activities. The ESMF will be used to guide decision making and to ensure that will be used as a decision-making tool to ensure that all the sub-projects selected and implemented under the project are environmentally and socially responsive and manageable. The framework will provide guidance for each subproject to be environmental and social assessed during implementation. The ESMF has developed screening checklist and criteria for sub-projects in order to minimize environmental and social impacts that are likely and also includes guidance on Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) to address project-related grievances. Institutional capacity for safeguards within the Ministry of Trade is non-existent. However, the implementation of the environmental and social risk management plans will be monitored by a safeguards officer within the Project Coordination Unit (PCU). The project is yet to establish a PCU but has been drawing on existing safeguards capacity at the Small Holder Commercial Agriculture Development Project (SCADEP) during the project preparatory phase. Two selected Staff of the Ministry of Trade participated in a safeguards training organized by SCADEP and supported by the World Bank safeguards officers across the Implementing Agencies of the project. These officers have collaborated with the consultant who worked on the ESMF and will continue to be provided with technical guidance when the project becomes effective.

5. Identify the key stakeholders and describe the mechanisms for consultation and disclosure on safeguard policies, with an emphasis on potentially affected people.
Direct beneficiaries of the project interventions include the Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA) and the Sierra Leone Standards Bureau (SLSB), regulatory authorities, the private sector and consumers. During the formulation of the ESMF, the following key stakeholders were consulted through workshops, key informant interviews and focus-group discussions: Officials of SLIEPA, SLSB, EPA, various government ministries, departments and agencies including: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Sierra Leone Chamber for Agribusiness Development, National Federation of Farmers of Sierra Leone, selected Agribusiness companies working in the rural provinces and representatives of farmers' organizations.

B. Disclosure Requirements

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<th>Date of submission for disclosure</th>
<th>For category A projects, date of distributing the Executive Summary of the EA to the Executive Directors</th>
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"In country" Disclosure

Sierra Leone

28-May-2018

Comments

For reference the link to the government’s website is http://www.mofed.gov.sl/index.php/development/public-notices

C. Compliance Monitoring Indicators at the Corporate Level (to be filled in when the ISDS is finalized by the project decision meeting)

OP/BP/GP 4.01 - Environment Assessment

Does the project require a stand-alone EA (including EMP) report?
Yes

If yes, then did the Regional Environment Unit or Practice Manager (PM) review and approve the EA report?
Yes

Are the cost and the accountabilities for the EMP incorporated in the credit/loan?
Yes

The World Bank Policy on Disclosure of Information

Have relevant safeguard policies documents been sent to the World Bank for disclosure?
Yes

Have relevant documents been disclosed in-country in a public place in a form and language that are understandable and accessible to project-affected groups and local NGOs?
Yes
All Safeguard Policies

Have satisfactory calendar, budget and clear institutional responsibilities been prepared for the implementation of measures related to safeguard policies?
  Yes

Have costs related to safeguard policy measures been included in the project cost?
  Yes

Does the Monitoring and Evaluation system of the project include the monitoring of safeguard impacts and measures related to safeguard policies?
  Yes

Have satisfactory implementation arrangements been agreed with the borrower and the same been adequately reflected in the project legal documents?
  Yes

CONTACT POINT

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Lead Private Sector Specialist

Borrower/Client/Recipient

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APPROVAL

<table>
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<th>Adesimi Freeman</th>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Safeguards Advisor:</td>
<td>Maman-Sani Issa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice Manager/Manager:</td>
<td>Douglas Pearce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country Director:</td>
<td>Gayle Martin</td>
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