

ANNUAL REVIEW 2012/2013

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2012/2013



Foreword

As Consul General to the UK for Morocco, I'm delighted to have met such a dynamic team. It is without a shadow of a doubt that Al-Hasaniya is serving an inestimable number of women and their families. The team is as passionate as they are dedicated and professionally up to the task.

I have read forewords produced by the local MP and indeed a former British Ambassador to Morocco, as did a member of the House of Lords and they all say the same thing in different ways and that is that Al-Hasaniya must stay and continue to serve the needy and vulnerable.

We are all working very hard to support this award-winning organisation, as we are happy to support and work with all those concerned with our community.

An example of good partnership making real difference to our community, is our multi-partnership with the Al-Hasaniya, BMCE Bank UK and the Metropolitan Police with the **Inspire Youth Programme** supporting young people achieve academic excellence; enhancing their citizenship participation and contribution.

I am grateful to all those who contributed to the success of the project and continue to do so.

Rachid Agassim

**Consul General
Moroccan Consulate - London**

Introduction

Another year of excitement, trepidation and challenges

I'm often asked what it is that drives me to keep the momentum going and the centre open. My reply is rather simple: *it is my passion for what the centre stands for.*

I care passionately about the women we serve and support on a daily basis at Al-Hasaniya. This passion has been cemented by sheer determination and commitment, not only on my part, but on the part of every individual in the wonderful team that I am lucky to work with. Since its founding 28 years ago, Al-Hasaniya has been incredibly fortunate to have attracted not only fully committed trustees but equally dedicated members of staff. Each complement the other and are devoted to serving the Moroccan and Arabic-speaking women of London and their families.

The last year has brought us a mix of excitement, trepidation and challenges.

Excitement: because last year saw the birth of two new projects within our centre and the addition of a new member of staff, to enhance the excellent team we already have.

Trepidation: because yet again we found ourselves without funding to cover the vital running costs of the centre. Without this financial support we would have seen the centre and its activities grind to a halt. In addition we also had the funding for the manager's post cut from five days to four days, as a consequence of the 'austerity measures' being applied nationally.

Challenges: because despite everything we were not going to give up. 'Austerity measures' are still hitting us hard and hurting the work that we do far more than we had anticipated. Our elderly people need support at home, our younger generations need guidance and our most vulnerable women, who are fleeing domestic violence, need urgent help and protection. If we are to continue to help these women, we require funding to carry out our work.

All said, I have no doubt in my mind that the devotion and loyalty, of all those who support and work for and with Al-Hasaniya, will see it beyond this year and for many more to come.

Here's to the next 28 years!

Souad Talsi MBE
Founder of Al Hasaniya

Chair's Word

I am pleased to present this Annual Report for the year 2012/13. It has probably been one of the most challenging years that the organisation has faced for some time. Dealing with an ever increasing number of callers and with a much tighter budget, it has been exceptionally tough.

Like all other organisations in the voluntary sector, we were warned to tighten our belts, prepare for transformation and of course reduce costs. This challenge has been met with much more success than I had imagined possible. Change is indeed occurring – a change that calls for adaptation and creating new horizons; a change that requires the voluntary sector to conduct itself as a business and social enterprise. But we have also managed to maintain a sense of continuity, which keeps the momentum going.

We are working in an increasingly demanding climate, as the expectations placed on us grow day by day during this time of continuing financial constraint. In such circumstances it is essential to remain focused on the mission, objectives and values of the organisation, to ensure that any potential risks to those we seek to serve are managed effectively.

I want first to pay tribute to all of our staff, for maintaining their high standards and ensuring that we continue with business as usual throughout this challenging time. It is their professionalism and commitment, to both the women and their families, which is at the heart of our achievements.

I am also deeply grateful to our local authority the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, for being our bravest supporter in times of widespread financial uncertainty.

Our society needs organisations like Al-Hasaniya, in order that we can support and assist the hidden and vulnerable in our community and to encourage tolerance, integration and good citizenship, so as to build a true community spirit in the face of the extremism we now encounter.

I extend a huge thank you to the staff, for it is their continued resilience and outstanding performance which allows us to achieve these aims.

Fatima Mourad
Chair

Manager's Report

“The test of our progress is not whether we add to the abundance of those who have much. It is whether we provide enough to those who have little.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt

The above quote was used by my colleague Souad Talsi MBE back in 2009 and I'm using it again because it perfectly sums up our ethos.

I originally joined Al-Hasaniya as a volunteer fresh from university eleven years ago and have seen at first hand the incredible difference we make to the clients we support. Working directly with individuals, their families and friends, statutory, local and national services, Al-Hasaniya has always maintained a holistic approach to helping people. It is this approach which creates the unique, high quality service which we provide. The growth in our networks during this period is not only visible at a local level, but we are recognised nationally and internationally for the extraordinary difference we make from our small community centre in Trellick Tower.

Being a descendent of Moroccan migrants myself, I am truly honoured to be in a position where I can give back to my community and make a real tangible difference to the lives of others. This is what Al-Hasaniya does.

This year I was given the task of managing the service, a challenge which I was both honoured and excited to take on. It has proved to be a very demanding role, especially with local and national government 'austerity measures' being applied across the services we work with. But we remain optimistic and determined in our continued ability to deliver.

As you read this report you will see for yourself the tremendous work which we have undertaken this last year; and that despite the restrictions we have faced and the unstable financial climate, the team's spirit has remained and continues to be positive. We continue to attract more women and their families to visit our centre and use our services. Over the course of a week we see approximately 30 people come into our drop-in sessions, seeking help for a range of problems; and we see approaching 100 others using our companion telephone service. At the same time we are forging relationships with new partners. We recognise that through working closely with partner organisations we are able to maximise the work we can do; and as a result of this our funding is going further.

Al-Hasaniya continues to thrive in what I can only describe as a truly remarkable multidisciplinary capacity and this is thanks to all those who have supported us: the team of staff who are all truly passionate about what we do; the funders who recognise that our work and experience speaks for itself; our trustees who maintain their trust in our high standards of delivery; and the working relationships which we have built with our partners and our friends worldwide.

We are deeply grateful to all those who recognise our work. Without the support of each individual and organisation and service, the centre would simply not be able to operate and serve the many thousands who come to our door.

Finally I would like to extend a special thank you to our local council The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, which has remained truly instrumental in enabling us to continue to deliver our service.

Esma Dukali
Centre Manager

What's new . . .

Supporting Vulnerable Women Project

The project's main aims are to reach out to isolated members of the Moroccan community living in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the boroughs of Westminster and Hammersmith and Fulham. Women who suffer from low self-esteem and a lack of confidence find it hard to integrate, because they are not able to engage with and participate in the local and wider community. Women who are isolated socially find it difficult to access support from local organisations and have many anxieties about their ability to receive the help and support which they need.

These women face the risk of sinking into a depressive state and developing mental health problems, because of their isolation. This vital project aims to break through these barriers in order to reach these women and give them a voice, so as to empower each individual woman and bring them together to create a support network for them within their community.

The project works by delivering a programme of weekly workshops. We have 31 women registered so far and a further 30 women are due to register. We have delivered ten workshops and have 30 more scheduled to be completed by the end of April 2014.

The future for this project looks very promising and we are confident that it will continue to run for many years to come. We are providing an excellent service and producing tangible outcomes for our users, in order that we can strengthen our community relations by integrating, contributing and being proud members of our society.

Zohra Davis
Project Leader

Volunteering project

I would like to introduce myself as the new Shared Volunteer Coordinator. I am pleased to be able to join the teams across Meanwhile Gardens, the Venture Centre and Al-Hasaniya.

I have over ten years' experience working with and coordinating volunteers. The projects I have worked on usually focus on enabling volunteers to overcome their personal barriers, so that they can find sustained employment or training; or improving their personal situation through building confidence, self-esteem and acknowledging previous successes.

Al-Hasaniya requested that I recruit a volunteer designer to refurbish their crèche. In order to do this we also needed an electrician, to complete the task in line with Health and Safety regulations. The budget for the refurbishment was small, so in order to be as cost effective as possible I reached out to local businesses, some of which gave supplies for free and others at a discount. We also identified the need for new flooring in the crèche and I have been trying to encourage large corporations to donate supplies for this. Four volunteers were recruited, who have supported the designer with the preparation and decoration of the crèche.

In addition to policies and procedures, I have been compiling job descriptions for new volunteering roles at Al-Hasaniya. As with many organisations, it is not that Al-Hasaniya is unwilling to create more volunteering opportunities which prevents it from doing so; rather it is practicalities, such as a lack of space and resources, which make things difficult. I have managed to create three new volunteering roles: Finance Volunteer, Reception Volunteer and Advice Drop-in Service Volunteer. I have already recruited a volunteer for the Advice role and she has completed her first successful volunteering session. We are now in the process of second stage interviews for the other two roles.

The Volunteer project complements the other projects running in the centre and through it we hope that more Moroccan and Arabic-speaking women will be able to gain the experience needed to venture into the world of gainful employment.

Michelle Poponne
Shared Volunteer Coordinator

Projects

Inspire Well Women Project

The Inspire Well Women Programme is a joint initiative led by Al-Hasaniya and Midaye Somali Development Network.

The overall aim of the programme is to provide Arabic and Somali-speaking women with the support, skills and services necessary to enable them to take more control of their own physical and mental well being. The programme is delivered jointly due to recognition of the similarities between the service users of both organisations, when it comes to physical and mental health: isolation and mental health difficulties leading to physical illness and a dislocation from society.

Both Al-Hasaniya and Midaye Somali Development Network are well established in our communities and have close links with each other and their service users, which is essential if we are to develop the trust required to enable us to engage on this level with vulnerable adults and children.

This past year the project has:

- Improved the mental health of 24 deprived and isolated women from the two communities
- Improved the physical health and well being of 24 women from the two communities
- Improved the knowledge and understanding of health issues and how to access healthcare professionals for 40 women
- Provided individual one-to-one support to access services and make referrals for 46 women
- Increased the independence, self-sufficiency and self-advocacy skills of 24 women from the two communities, leading to their improved health and lifestyle and increased access to health services

The Inspire Well Women programme offers service users holistic support, combining talking therapies, self-advocacy and confidence-building with regular opportunities to take part in exercise and so nurture physical and mental well being. It aims to bring about self-reliance and independence, by providing users with the skills and knowledge which they need in order to advocate confidently for themselves and make informed choices in life. The project aims to enable users to access health services more effectively and in so doing prevent escalating health problems.

Zohra Davis
Project Coordinator

Projects

The 3E's Project: Educate, Empower and Engage

Funded by the Big Lottery Fund, the 3E's Project is an innovative and exciting project, which continues to go from strength to strength. The project seeks to reach out to and support Moroccan and Arabic-speaking women, encouraging them to further their lives and realise their potential. The women are helped to access local services, undertake training and seek employment. Through raising their confidence levels and increasing their knowledge of the opportunities which lie before them, the women are encouraged to play a more active role within their local community.

The project supports the women to access:

- training
- courses
- education
- better work
- CV and career support
- We also accompany women who need extra support to assessments with external agencies/colleges

The project also seeks to identify and address any issues which may be preventing the women from accessing any of the above, such as problems securing childcare or financial difficulties. We also endeavour to help the women successfully apply for any financial support which is available to them.

To date the project has supported 148 women. These women have undertaken training courses, secured voluntary placements, engaged in job search workshops, attended cultural trips and secured paid employment.

In order to achieve these goals, we have forged partnerships with an array of local services. During the past year the project presented six workshops and organised four outings. For more information on these please visit our website.

The project's biggest and most significant partnership has been with the DWP. We have developed an initiative with the job centres for the boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster, whereby they refer Arabic-speaking women to our weekly job search. It has also been agreed that those who attend the job centre with little to no English will be referred to us for help with their language skills.

The women who use the services provided by the 3E's Project face enormous barriers and hurdles, in their attempts to better their lives, and those of their families. Many are single parents, many are struggling with health problems and many face social challenges in their daily lives. These women are living in poverty and need help and support, if they are to be able to move on from their dependency on welfare benefits.

It is to the credit of Al-Hasaniya that without the workshops, advocacy and training provided by the 3E's Project, these women would not know where to begin in their quest to forge independent lives for themselves and their families.

Ibtesam Hassan
Project Coordinator

Services

Domestic Violence Project

The main aim of the Domestic Violence Project is to reduce the domestic abuse that women and children suffer and increase their safety. The project helps to empower women who are victims of domestic violence so that they can rebuild their lives and bring stability to the lives of her children.

It is always sad to come across women who left their home country and all that is comfortable and familiar to them, to join their spouses here in the UK for what they imagined would be a happy and lasting marriage; only to find themselves victims of physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Unfortunately this is a recent phenomenon which we have encountered and it is fast becoming the norm. Young wives from abroad are promised love and riches, only to be faced with a harsh reality that often includes unimaginable abuse. Some of the women we have supported have had their very basic rights violated: the right to be educated, to learn English, to keep hold of their own passports; to have money to buy basic essentials, to access the internet and telephone to contact family back home; even the right to make friends. In our view this is nothing short of modern slavery.

The controlling behaviour inflicted on these women causes fear and isolation and marginalises these women in our society. In some cases we have seen it lead to an embedded clinically depressed mood, which all too often can lead to suicidal thoughts.

This project is funded by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and is only part-time, yet during this last year it has served an astonishing 297 women. A staggering number of 97 women were supported and assisted to achieve a state of safety and independence. We are indeed very proud to say that no woman has ever been turned away because of her postcode. If we cannot support any women under the funded agreement, we signpost her to another organisation which can help her, to ensure that she is supported helped to leave the violent home.

The emotional well being of the victims of domestic violence is paramount to us and we are proud to say that we have built a remarkable partnership with both the statutory and voluntary sectors to support victims in all their needs, from immigration to accessing courses to learn English and receiving assistance from the Department of Work and Pensions.

In order that such an excellent service can be delivered, we require continuous professional development. During this last year my completion of the CAADA Independent Domestic Violence Advisor training in April was a milestone.

We are proud that this centre continues to be the first port of call for Moroccan and Arabic-speaking women and their dependents who are suffering domestic violence. This project is here to stay and will continue to offer emotional and practical one-to-one support to all those vulnerable women and their families. We have a strong partnership with all local services and will continue to refer the women to our 3E's project, so that they can improve their language and work prospects, in order that they can integrate into society. This coming year we will be planning both leisure and educational visits to local museums and organising trips so as to reduce isolation.

I am confident that this project will continue to flourish, as we have the expertise and the dedication to make a difference.

Mouna El-Ogbani
Project Leader

Services

Mental Health Project

The main aims of the project are:

- To provide one-to-one practical and emotional support to Arabic-speaking women living in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea who suffer from enduring mental health problems.
- To offer a programme of advice, advocacy and referral to help women deal with their practical problems and access mainstream services.
- To reduce isolation, raise awareness of mental health issues and provide holistic and educational workshops.

As part of the Mental Health Project we provide a weekly drop-in advice session, support through one-to-one appointments and workshops to promote mental health and wellbeing. On average we see 35 women each month accessing this service.

During the last few months I have supported a number of women who have been experiencing difficulties due to the government's recent welfare reforms. This is a trend which is set to continue, with the introduction of Universal Credit. Many women have found themselves in rent arrears and struggling to make ends meet, due to the new 'Benefit Cap' and so-called 'Bedroom Tax'. In addition some of the women that we see have experienced challenges due to the programme of review for all Incapacity Benefit claims and the introduction of Employment Support Allowance. I have provided practical support in helping women to overcome these difficulties and have advocated on their behalf when liaising with statutory services and businesses.

Our team of staff received training from the Benefits Service at the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and we are now in discussion as to the possibility of providing one-to-one support to Al-Hasaniya clients with their online application for Universal Credit when it is rolled out. This would provide a much needed service, as many of our clients do not have access to or even know how to use a computer. We are also discussing training in budgeting for our clients.

I have been encouraging as many women as possible to sign up for our in-house ESOL class, IT class and where relevant to start them thinking about employment.

The Mental Health Project also supported the *Change for Children* project, by conducting surveys with our clients on poverty in the borough. The findings from this project, which is delivered by Kensington and Chelsea Social Council, will enable partners to better develop the services according to their clients' needs.

Over the course of the last 12 months we organised workshops in partnership with SMART as well as with BME Health Advocate for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

An estimated 60% of our users come from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, with 40% coming from Westminster and the surrounding boroughs. We are therefore keen to look at sourcing funding from other boroughs, to support the services we provide to their residents. With a view to this we have had contact with WAVE, who offer support in the commissioning process in Westminster.

Loubna Khamlichi
Project Leader

Services

Older People's Outreach Project

"We look forward to coming to the Lunch Club, as it gives us something to look forward to each week."

"This centre is like our home. You read our letters to us, as we tend to worry when we receive those brown envelopes and we can't sleep."

This project serves the needs of elderly Moroccan and Arabic-speaking men and women, providing practical and emotional support. We accompany elderly members of our community to any appointments where they need support and advocacy, help them access mainstream services and support them with any difficulties they may experience with debt, housing or benefits.

A key aim of the project is to reduce isolation. We offer outreach visits to those men and women who are housebound and therefore cannot visit our centre to access our services. This support is particularly vital for men and women who face language barriers when seeking help and do not have the support of family members. Many of these men and women are also suffering ill health.

Our women's Lunch Club on Fridays continues to be immensely popular with not only local women, but also women from other boroughs. We now have 55 women who attend the Lunch Club every week. The Lunch Club is a welcome opportunity for these women to get out of the house, socialise with their peers and reconnect with their culture.

During the past year we have worked with 180 women through this project, 91 of whom have seen their issues successfully brought to conclusion. We continue to work with social services, health professionals, solicitors and voluntary services such as Age UK, Pepper Pot, Nubian Life, Advocacy Plus and Third Age. We worked in partnership with Age UK to provide workshops on Oral Health, Dementia and Memory Loss, Healthy Hearts and Stroke Awareness. We took some of the women on a trip to visit Kew Gardens (in partnership with our 3E's Project). And we once again participated in the annual Health Fair at Kensington Town Hall with Age UK.

It is a sad fact that some of our elderly are silently and invisibly living with abuse in their own home. We presented a session on awareness of domestic violence, alerting the women to the support which is available to them through Vulnerable Adult Social Care.

Our elderly are indeed vulnerable and they can too often be ignored by society. The work done through this project continues to be an essential lifeline for these men and women.

Mouna El-Ogbani
Project Leader
(temporary maternity cover)

Nour Festival

Dardasha: a Cultural Evening at Leighton House Nour Festival 2013

Dardasha began life as a Heritage Lottery oral history project, which documented the migratory experiences of first generation Moroccan women who came to the UK between 1960-1990 and settled in the Portobello area of London. For the Nour Festival *Dardasha* brought the story up to the present day, to include the British born and raised daughters and grand-daughters of these pioneering women.

A large number of the Moroccans who first migrated to the UK were in fact women, but the emotional realities of their female experiences of migration, leaving behind their families and making a new life in a new country, had previously been largely hidden from view and thus often misunderstood. These women tend to live out their lives behind closed doors and are too often ignored in favour of their male counterparts when it comes to academic research.

Dardasha for the first time gave the women the opportunity to share their individual stories with the wider communities in which they live. These women have made a significant contribution to British society and the economy, providing a much-needed workforce and raising new generations in the spirit of cultural and religious tolerance and respect which is at the very heart of what it means to be both Moroccan and British.

In an age where there is much discussion and debate around issues of ethnicity and multiculturalism, *Dardasha* presents women who migrated to the UK alongside their real and metaphorical daughters and grand-daughters to reveal a group of individuals who are each developing their own unique identity and undergoing their own personal journey.

Al-Hasaniya was proud to be invited to present *Dardasha* at Leighton House as part of this year's prestigious Nour Festival, a festival which presents the very best in Middle Eastern and North African arts to a London audience. Leighton House is the former home of the Victorian artist Frederic Lord Leighton. It houses his extensive collection of art and artifacts and boasts the stunning Arab Hall, providing a grand and fitting setting for *Dardasha*.

The *Dardasha* evening showcased a new exhibition of canvases, which presented images of the women during their early days in the UK alongside images of the women today, some with their daughters and grand- daughters. The highlight of the evening was the screening of Alan Stepney's documentary film '*Dardasha* (chi't-chat)', in which four women recount their very different experiences of migration. Each guest also received a copy of the book '*Dardasha: Testimonies of Migration by Moroccan Women*', a bilingual publication which I was privileged to edit.

Souad Talsi MBE and Mr. Rachid Agassim, Consul General for Morocco in the UK, hosted a discussion with the audience on issues raised by the film. Ms. Talsi spoke about the origins of *Dardasha*, recounting how the women would meet every Friday for a cous-cous lunch at the Al-Hasaniya centre and spend their time sharing stories with one another. Live music was provided by Moroccan *Oud* player Soufian Saihi and traditional Moroccan refreshments were served to guests.

I would like to thank all the wonderful and brave women who made *Dardasha* possible, for their generosity in sharing their stories and photographs.

Samantha Herron
***Dardasha* Project Manager**

Statement of Financial Activities 2012/2013

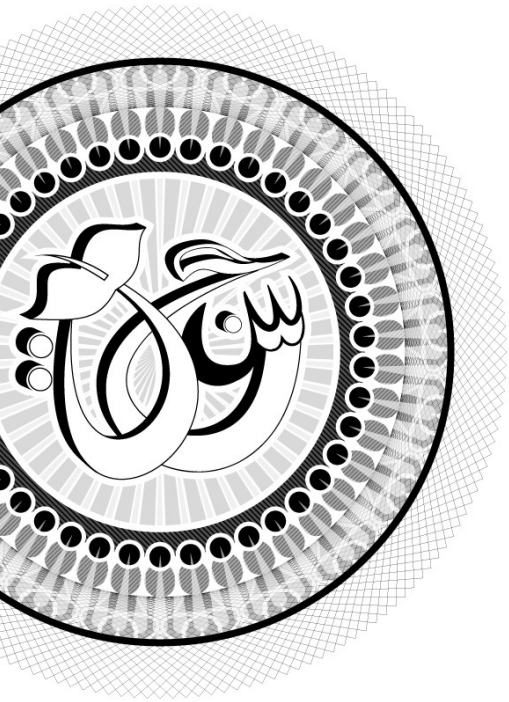
AL-HASANIYA MOROCCAN WOMEN'S PROJECT
(a company limited by guarantee)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2013
(INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)

				2013	2012
				£	£
				TOTAL	TOTAL
				FUNDS	FUNDS
		£	£	£	£
	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted		
		Funds	Funds		
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Grants	4		223420	223420	212297
Donations and Fundraising		1430		1430	3483
Bank interest		40		40	56
Total incoming resources		<u>1471</u>	<u>223420</u>	<u>224891</u>	<u>215836</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
<i>Charitable expenditure</i>					
Running Costs and Centre Manager		2500	49748	52248	55358
Mental Health Project			23066	23066	24686
Domestic Violence Project			18951	18951	17967
Older Peoples' Outreach Project			21482	21482	15379
Older Peoples' Luncheon Club			4740	4740	1015
Capacity Building			0	0	38193
Dardasha Project			0	0	15108
3 E's Project			44701	44701	27504
Inspire Well Women Project			22077	22077	20180
Eid El-Fitar Project			5480	5480	0
Strengthening Communities Project			2026	2026	0
Renovations Project			2398	2398	0
ICT Training Project			0	0	1676
Creche			0	0	137
<i>Governance costs - accountancy</i>			1750	1750	2250
Total resources expended		<u>2500</u>	<u>196418</u>	<u>198918</u>	<u>219454</u>
Net incoming resources before transfers		(1029)	27002	25972	(3618)
Transfers between funds	3	<u>(210)</u>	<u>210</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Net incoming resources after transfers		(1239)	27212	25972	(3618)
TOTAL FUNDS AT START OF YEAR	7	38622	44502	83124	86743
TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR		<u>37383</u>	<u>71714</u>	<u>109096</u>	<u>83125</u>

Movements in reserves and all recognised and losses are shown above.

The charity's incoming resources and resources expended all relate to continuing activities.



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