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Policy Brief

Assessing the level of Integration of Climate Change in National Policy Frameworks and Institutional Capacity to Implement Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies

IMTF 2024

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Introduction

Climate change, directly and indirectly, impacts food systems, food trade, food and nutrition security, and the attainment of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, such as achieving zero hunger, ending poverty, ensuring healthy lives, and promoting well-being. Evidence shows an increased intensity and occurrence of observed extreme climate changes such as heavy precipitation, agricultural and ecological droughts, heatwaves, and tropical cyclones. Recent El Nino and La Nina phenomenon across the continent driving atypical drought in southern and Western African regions are testament to the reality of climate change. These climate changes significantly impact food systems, ecosystem services, economic growth and development with disproportionately high impacts on the vulnerable systems and communities. Given the vulnerability of food systems to climate change variability and extremes, building resilience is crucial to help countries meet the growing demand for healthy and safe diets while achieving socio-economic and sustainability goals.

The Africa Food Trade and Resilience (AFTR) Programme is a seven-year programme (2018 – 2025) that is being implemented by AGRA with funding from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The programme aims to stimulate an increase in regional food trade in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), contributing to satisfying a growing food demand and to addressing food shortages through regional food production, processing and trade, and generating more rural jobs, climate resilience and income for farmers. The overall outcome of the programme is to stimulate an increase in regional food trade in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), contributing to satisfying a growing food demand and to addressing food shortages through regional food production, processing and trade, and generating more rural jobs, climate resilience and income for farmers. The key approaches of the programme include a) working with companies that source, process, and trade food in the region, to maximize investment, coordination, and benefits to poor farmers; and b) contributing to improving the transparency and predictability of government policies to unlock regional food trade.

The Regional Food Trade and Resilience (RFTR) Programme applies to the International Climate Fund (ICF) Key Performance Indicator (KPI) 13 indicator scorecard to track country performance in integrating climate change in national agricultural policies. The ICF KPI 13 indicator scorecard survey assesses the integration of climate change considerations in national agriculture policies and interventions. The ICF KPI 13 indicator scorecard is based on five criteria¹ relating to the treatment of climate change in planning documents and the extent and maturity of activities and mechanisms to address climate change in planning processes.

AGRA has been undertaking surveys to assess the extent to which countries are integrating climate change into national policy frameworks, as well as ascertaining progress in bolstering institutional capacity to effectively implement climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. In 2024, an assessment questionnaire was sent to the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment and/or other relevant regulatory authorities through AGRA country offices. The questionnaire was administered in all 12 AGRA countries: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

Overall, we observe improvements in these countries' approach to climate adaptation mitigation over the years with significant improvements in particularly 2024. Most of these countries are now more deliberate in integration climate change into national policy frameworks and ensuring climate information dissemination and risks assessment on vulnerability, hazards and impacts to support decision-making, strengthening institutional capacity for planning at least at the national level, implementation, and monitoring climate change.

¹ Q1: Is there a climate change plan or strategy set out in a dedicated strategy document and/or embedded in the principal planning documents at the level being assessed (e.g. national, sector, ministry)? Q2: Has an authoritative body been budgeted and staffed with coordinating climate change planning, and actions? Q3: Have specific measures to address climate change (adaptation/mitigation) been identified? Q4: Are climate-relevant initiatives routinely screened for climate risks? Q5: Is there a formal climate safeguards system in place that integrates climate risk screening, climate risk assessment (where required), climate risk reduction measures (identification, prioritization, implementation), evaluation and learning into planning? **SCORE (No. of "YES" answers x 2, plus no. of "PARTIAL" answers x 1)**

The Results

Integration of Climate Change into National Policies

Mainstreaming climate change in national policy frameworks is essential to ensure countries have intentional and systematic way to reduce the adverse impacts of climate change risks and better prepare to respond to projected future changes. Integrating climate change into national policies is crucial for fostering sustainable development and resilience. By embedding climate considerations into policy frameworks, governments can ensure that economic growth, infrastructure development, and social progress are aligned with environmental sustainability. This approach helps mitigate the adverse effects of climate change, such as extreme weather events and rising sea levels, while promoting adaptive strategies that protect vulnerable communities and ecosystems. Moreover, it encourages innovation in green technologies and renewable energy, driving a transition towards a low-carbon economy. Ultimately, integrating climate change into national policies is essential for safeguarding the planet for future generations.

Table 1 below presents the countries' scores on the integration of climate change considerations in agricultural sector planning for 2019 to 2024.

Table 1: Scorecard and changes in the level of integration of climate change considerations in agriculture sector planning

Country	Score in 2019	Score in 2020	2020 change from baseline	Score in 2021	2021 change from baseline	Score in 2022	2022 change from baseline	Score in 2023	2023 change from baseline	Score in 2024	2024 change from baseline
Burkina Faso	8			9	13	7	-13	8	0	9	13
Ethiopia	7	10	43	10	43			9	29	8	14
Ghana	7	4	-43	8	14	6	-14	10	43	10	43
Kenya	5	7	40	8	60	8	60	8	60	8	60
Malawi	10	10	0	7	-30	7	-30	8	-20	8	-20
Mali	8			8	0					9	13
Mozambique	5	7	40	8	60	8	60	8	60	8	60
Nigeria	7	4	-43	5	-29	8	14	7	0	10	43
Rwanda	10	10	0	10	0			10	0	10	0
Tanzania	8	8	0	8	0	7	-13	8	0	8	0
Uganda	9	9	0	8	-11			5	-44	8	-11
Zambia	9			9	0						

Note: Baseline = 2019 values. ● = no change; ↓ = decrease, ↑ = increase

Source: AGRA country survey: 2019; 2020; 2021; 2022; 2023; and 2024

Compared to the 2019 baseline results, seven countries (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Mali, and Nigeria) recorded improvements in the ICF KPI 13 indicator scorecard in 2024. Compared to last year's scores, Nigeria has moved up registering 43% improvement in its score. Other notable improvements were in Kenya and Mozambique at 60% in their ICF KPI 13 indicator scorecard, followed by Ghana at 43%. The evidence provided from supporting documents in the responses indicates that these countries have developed national climate change plans or frameworks that are being integrated across the agriculture sector. On the other hand, Malawi and Uganda have recorded deterioration in their ICF KPI 13 indicator scorecards from the 2019 baseline. Malawi recorded 20% decline just as last year, while Uganda's ICF KPI 13 indicator scorecards deteriorated by 11%, although an improvement from last year, which was 44%. There is, however, no change in the scores of Rwanda and Tanzania from the baseline. Overall, Kenya, Mozambique, and Rwanda have maintained the same consistency over the years.



Institutional Capacity in Implementing Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies

Evidence from literature such as (UNDP, UNEP, & GEF, 2020; Alves, et al., 2020; Mataya, Vincent, & Dougill, 2020) show that institutional capacity is one of the key challenges in the implementation of climate change adaptation policies in developing countries. It is evident that participatory and inclusive involvement of all relevant stakeholders across all governance levels, including at the local level, is crucial for sustainable integrating and mainstreaming of national climate change adaptation priorities and implementation of the same at the sub-national levels. The assessment adapts the FAO and UNDP institutional capacity assessment approach for national adaptation planning in the agriculture sectors (FAO & UNDP, 2018). The survey covers climate information dissemination and risk assessment, long-term vision and mandate of climate change adaptation and mitigation through strategies and policies, planning and implementation, coordination and partnering, as well as monitoring and evaluation of vulnerability, hazards and impacts of climate risks and implementation strategies.

From the survey results, on average, all monitored countries have moderate to high capacity in climate information dissemination and risks assessment on vulnerability, hazards and impacts to support decision-making, institutional capacity for planning, implementation, and monitoring climate change metrics. While this is the case at the national level, the local level does not have the same level of capacity in climate risk assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring. Similarly, whereas all of these countries have adequate climate change strategies and policies at national level, these strategies are seldom adequately disseminated to the local levels, and this further manifests in inadequate staffing and knowledge of staff on climate change adaptation and mitigation at the local levels.

Overall, Nigeria's performance dominates other countries with high performances related to "climate information and risk assessment", "long term visioning and mandate", and "coordination and partnership" but has gaps in "monitoring and evaluation" as well as "planning and implementation" (**Figure 1**). Also, Burkina Faso is doing relatively well on "climate information and risk assessment", "monitoring and evaluation", and less on "planning and implementation". Similarly, Ethiopia is doing relatively well in "Long term vision and mandate", but gaps remain in "Planning and Implementation" and "climate information and risk assessment".

Inadequate climate financing remains overall weak in all surveyed countries. Except Malawi and Nigeria, most countries report low to moderate financial resources availability to meet climate change adaptation and mitigation objectives. Coordination and partnership remain overall high in climate change adaptation and mitigation planning, implementation, and monitoring. High political commitments exist to ensure that partners and stakeholders have adequate access to information and knowledge necessary to support the implementation of the national adaptation priorities. At minimum, most countries have existing M&E system/framework/procedures for monitoring and evaluation of vulnerability, hazards and impacts of climate risks and implementation strategies.

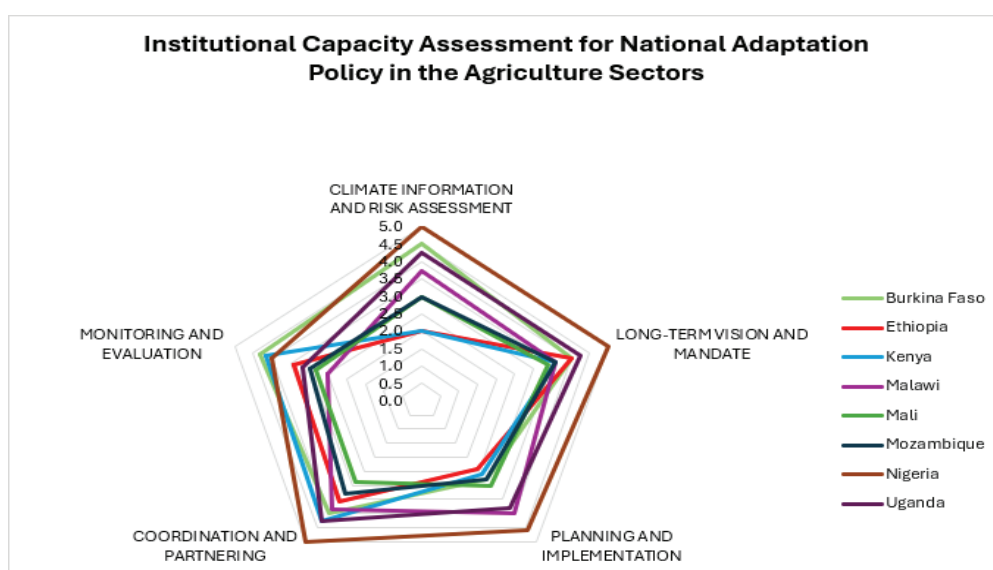


Figure 1: Institutional Capacity Assessment for National Adaptation Policy in the Agriculture Sectors

Conclusion and Recommendations

As the reality of climate change continues to impact heavily agri-food systems on the continent, governments and partners continue to respond positively by strengthening policies and strategies as well as institutional capacities. This is evidenced in the improvements seen over the years in the focus countries of this assessment. Nonetheless, there are still gaps that need addressing and below are some recommendations or gaps that were picked up from this assessment:

- Strengthening research and innovation, data analysis, GIS and spatial analysis, and communication skills both at national and community levels.
- There is need to conduct comprehensive assessment of existing skills and evaluate existing systems for adaptation and mitigation to establish the exact gaps.
- Capacity building on climate vulnerability models, risk assessment, adaptation technology/strategy, GHG calculation, climate and scenario modelling, and alternative livelihood
- Training and retraining of staff on innovations in the climate system.
- Support to develop and validate an M&E system in Nigeria
- Data collection, data management, modelling, knowledge management, etc. on climate and responses of forest resources to different climate scenarios.
- Capacity building on planning and implementing adaptation and disaster risk reduction responses, leveraging climate finance, addressing climate risks and opportunities, and appraising and identifying adaptation are needed.
- Strengthen skills in agroclimatology and climate information interpretation for agriculture and risk assessment to inform decision making by the sector.
- Build capacity in climate change and resilience policy analysis and in related fields including ecosystem-based adaptation and other resilience building areas in relation to food systems.
- Strengthening technical capacities of agricultural engineers and technicians in ecological or environmental engineering
- Capacity building on adaptation assessment, measurement of the impact of strategies and policies to combat climate change.
- Create awareness on the tools developed for adaptation.





Annex 1: Level of integration of climate change in national, sectoral or institutional planning

Country	1. Is there a climate change plan or strategy set out in a dedicated strategy document and/ or embedded in the principal planning documents at the level being assessed (e.g. national, sector, ministry)?	2. Has an authoritative body been budgeted and staffed with coordinating climate change planning, and actions?	3. Have specific measures to address climate change (adaptation/ mitigation) been identified?	4. Are climate-relevant initiatives routinely screened for climate risks?	5. Is there a formal climate safeguards system in place that integrates climate risk screening, climate risk assessment (where required), climate risk reduction measures (identification, prioritisation, implementation), evaluation and learning into planning?	SCORE (No. of "YES" answers x 2, plus no. of "PARTIAL" answers x 1)
Burkina Faso	2	1	2	2	2	9
Ethiopia	2	2	2	1	1	8
Ghana	2	2	2	2	2	10
Kenya	2	2	2	1	1	8
Malawi	2	1	2	1	2	8
Mali	1	2	2	2	2	9
Mozambique	2	2	2	1	1	8
Nigeria	2	2	2	2	2	10
Rwanda	2	2	2	2	2	10
Tanzania	2	2	1	2	1	8
Uganda	2	1	2	1	2	8
Zambia						0

QUESTION	Conditions necessary for answer of:		
	NO	PARTIAL	YES
1	No mention of climate change in planning documents, or treatment of climate change restricted to aspirational statements with no discussion of specific risks/issues and measures to address these.	Risks/issues and measures discussed along with broad strategies to address them, but do not cover all relevant areas or sectors (e.g. some but not all climate sensitive sectors for a national plan).	Risks/issues and measures discussed along with broad strategies to address them, for all relevant (e.g. climate-sensitive) areas or sectors.
2	No coordinating body	Coordinating body but with limited mandate and/or funding.	Authoritative body with strong mandate, staffing and financial resources/ authority (e.g. Ministry of Finance or Planning).
3	No specific measures to address climate change identified.	Some measures to address climate change identified, but only in certain relevant areas or sectors, with limited discussion of costs, timescales & implementation mechanisms.	All relevant areas/ sectors associated with specific measures to address climate change, accompanied by details of costs, timescales and implementation mechanisms.
4	No screening.	Screening is patchy, ad hoc, or limited to only some relevant areas or sectors.	Screening is routine in all relevant sectors.
5	No safeguards system that goes beyond screening.	Some mechanisms or guidance to ensure that screening is followed by climate risk assessment but falls short of comprehensive safeguards system and/or only in some relevant areas or sectors.	All relevant areas or sectors incorporate safeguards system or guidance representing integration cycle from screening through climate risk assessment to identification, prioritization and implementation of risk reduction measures, and evaluation and learning.

Annex 2: Institutional capacity assessment for National Adaptation Policy in the agriculture sectors

	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Malawi	Mali	Mozambique	Nigeria	Rwanda	Tanzania	Uganda	Zambia	Average
CLIMATE INFORMATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT													
Dimension 1: Enabling Environment													
Does the ministry/department/unit have a mandate to manage and provide information on climate vulnerability, hazards and impacts to support decision-making on adaptation?	5	3		1	4	3	3	5			4		4
Dimension 2: Organisation / Institution						3	3	5					4
To what extent can the ministry/department/unit access, manage and provide information on climate vulnerability, hazards and impacts to support decision-making on adaptation?	5	3		2	4	3	3	5			4		4
Does the ministry/department/unit have the staff capacity and operational procedures to provide information on climate vulnerability, hazards and impacts to support decision-making on adaptation?	4	1		2	3	3	3	5			5		3
Dimension 3: Individual													
To what extent is the staff knowledgeable, adequately qualified and competent in analysis of climate scenarios, climate vulnerability assessments, provision of information on hazards and impacts to support decision-making on adaptation?	4	1		3	4	3	3	5			4		3
What additional skills will be needed to perform effectively? What are the capacity strengths and gaps?													
LONG-TERM VISION AND MANDATE													
Dimension 1: Enabling Environment													
Is the ministry/department/unit supported by robust policy frameworks (climate change strategies and policies at national or sectoral level, NAP) to address adaptation planning?	4	5		4	4	3	4	5			4		4
Is there alignment among the short-, medium- and long-term objectives and actions of the existing adaptation policy frameworks (climate change strategies, policies, NAP, National Development Plan)?	4	4		3	4	4	4	5					4
Dimension 2: Organisation / Institution													
Is there clarity of mandate, vision and mission within the ministry/department/unit with regard to adaptation planning?	4	3		5	3	4	4	5			5		4
Does the ministry/department/unit have the staff capacity and operational procedures to ensure appropriate priorities for the agricultural sector, as well as integrate agriculture into the NAP process?	4			2	3	3	3	5			4		3
Dimension 3: Individual													



	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Malawi	Mali	Mozambique	Nigeria	Rwanda	Tanzania	Uganda	Zambia	Average
To what extent is the staff knowledgeable, adequately qualified and competent in prioritizing adaptation for agriculture sectors in national and sectoral policy frameworks (climate change strategies, policies, NAP)?	4			4	4	3	3	5			4		4
What additional skills will be needed to perform effectively? What are the capacity strengths and gaps?	4												4
PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION													
Dimension 1: Enabling Environment													
Are financial resources available and managed in such a way that planned adaptation objectives can be met?	2	1		2	4	3	2	4			2		3
Dimension 2: Organisation / Institution													
Is there adequate thematic specialization in the ministry/ department/unit to support implementation of the adaptation policy frameworks (climate change strategies, policies, NAP)?	2	4		4	4	3	3	4			4		4
Does the ministry/department/unit have the staff capacity and operational procedures to support national and subnational adaptation planning and implementation to respond to the challenges faced by the country?	2	3		2	4	3	3	5			4		3
Is there sufficient and appropriate expertise on community-based adaptation approaches and gender mainstreaming in the Ministry/ Department/ Unit?	4	2		2	4	3	3	5			5		4
Dimension 3: Individual													
To what extent is the staff knowledgeable, adequately qualified and competent in planning and implementing adaptation and disaster risk reduction responses, leveraging climate finance, addressing climate risks and opportunities, and appraising and identifying adaptation options?	4	2		3	4	3	3	5			4		4
What additional skills will be needed to perform effectively? What are the capacity strengths and gaps?													
COORDINATION AND PARTNERING													
Dimension 1: Enabling Environment													
To what extent do the policy frameworks (climate change strategies, policies, NAP) and existing institutional arrangements support the ministry/ department/unit role in engagement with stakeholders on climate change adaptation?	4	5		4	4	3	4	5			4		4
Is there political commitment to ensure that partners and stakeholders have adequate access to the Ministry/ Department/Unit's information and knowledge necessary to support the implementation of the national adaptation priorities?	4	4		5	4	3	4	5			5		4

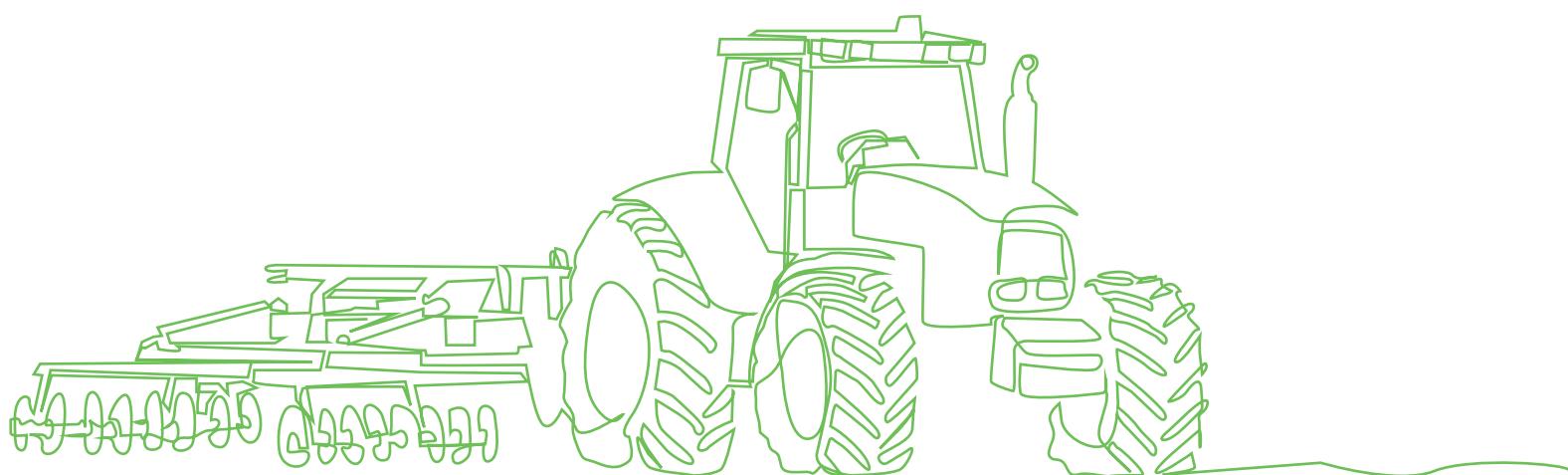


	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Malawi	Mali	Mozambique	Nigeria	Rwanda	Tanzania	Uganda	Zambia	Average
Is the ministry/department/unit part of a national coordination body, network or partnership to support climate change adaptation?	4	4		5	3	3	3	5			5		4
Dimension 2: Organisation / Institution													
To what extent does the ministry/department/unit coordinate and collaborate with actors and stakeholders at national and subnational levels for adaptation planning and implementation?	4	3		4	4	3	3	5			4		4
To what extent is stakeholder engagement and partnership building a priority for the ministry/department/unit in supporting implementation of the national adaptation priorities?	4	4		5	4	2	3	5			4		4
Does the ministry/department/unit have the staff capacity and operational procedures for mobilizing and engaging stakeholders and partners?	4	3		3	4	3	3	5			4		4
Dimension 3: Individual													
To what extent is the staff knowledgeable, adequately qualified and competent in coordinating and partnering with stakeholders at national and subnational levels on adaptation?	4	2		4	4	3	3	5			4		4
What additional skills will be needed to perform effectively? What are the capacity strengths and gaps?													
MONITORING AND EVALUATION													
Dimension 1: Enabling Environment													
Does the ministry/department/unit have a mandate for M&E of adaptation?	5	4		5	3	2	3	5			3		4
Is there an existing M&E system/framework/procedures for adaptation?	5			5	3	4	3	5			3		4
Dimension 2: Institution													
Is there adequate thematic specialization in the ministry/ department/unit to perform M&E of adaptation?	4	4		5	2	3	3	5			3		4
To what extent does the Ministry/ Department/ Unit use its M&E system/framework/procedures to assess its performance on adaptation?	4	3		4	3	3	3	3			3		3
Are there institutional arrangements to report on adaptation performance?	4	3		1	3	2	3	3			4		3
Dimension 3: Individual													
To what extent is the staff knowledgeable, adequately qualified and competent in M&E of programmes and projects, monitoring of financial resources allocated to adaptation and investigation of impact of adaptation policies?	4	3		5	1	3	3	3			3		3
What additional skills will be needed to perform effectively? What are the capacity strengths and gaps?													



Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the contributions of AGRA Country Directors (CDs), Country Program Leads (CPLs), and Officers who assisted in the application of the questionnaires for this assessment.





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