ICAM conference 2025 Day 3 - Questions and Answers

Presentation	Question	Answer	Answer Name
3.2	Dr Patel - I know this presentation is about dogs, but I am curious to know if you also have a program to control cat overpopulation. Thanks.	No, currently our primary focus is on street dogs, as managing their population and controlling rabies are our most urgent concerns. However, we do collaborate with small communities to support the sterilization of feral cats wherever possible.	P Patel
3.2	A question for Dr Patel. Have community attitudes in India towards street dog management changed in the past 10 years? If so, how?	Over the past decade, we have witnessed significant transformation in many communities. In the beginning, our efforts were often met with strong resistance—people were wary, distrustful, and sometimes openly hostile. But with consistent engagement, patient dialogue, and transparency in our work, we've been able to create a common ground. While not everyone may grow to love street dogs, many now understand the value of humane dog population management. They give us space to work and agree to spay/neuter interventions, especially when they see that the laws and policies support these efforts and that the outcomes are beneficial for both the community and the animals.	P Patel
3.2	Question for Dr. Patel, for hand catching do you require all your staff to have pre-exposure vaccination for rabies? How do you conduct hand catching for aggressive / scared dogs? Thank you	Yes, of course. All our team members receive regular anti-rabies booster vaccinations, and in case of a dog bite, they are immediately given post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) as per protocol. When it comes to handling aggressive or fearful dogs, we always try to approach them gently by hand first. However, if that's not possible or safe, we resort to using a net for safe and humane capture. This ensures the safety of both the dog and the team.	P Patel

3.2	Hi Dr Piyush, Meera from Mauritius. The Government in Mauritius is planning to implement a catch-neuter-shelter program on the island. can you please your insight on the pros and cons of such a measure as a way to control the canine population?	Hi Meera, Street dogs are happiest and most stable when left in their own territories. Impounding them not only raises serious animal welfare concerns, but also disrupts the local ecological balance. The only sustainable and humane solution is long-term, consistent spay/neuter programs where dogs are sterilized and returned to the same areas they came from. This approach respects their natural behavior and ensures population control over time.	P Patel
3.2	Dr. Patel, sorry if you already addressed it, but can you speak on where the funding for this program comes from?	As per the ABC (Animal Birth Control) Rules, 2023, it is the responsibility of the local government to provide financial support for this program. However, in practice, this support is extended through a tendering process, where the contract is awarded to the lowest bidder. While this may appear cost-effective on paper, it often leads to serious compromises from a welfare standpoint. To cut costs, some organizations may resort to using low-quality medicines or adopt shortcuts in procedures, which can significantly affect the well-being of animals. In our case, the government funding typically covers around 60% of our total program expenses. The remaining 40% is made possible through the support of our generous donors, whose contributions ensure that we can uphold the highest standards of animal care and welfare.	P Patel
3.2	Dr Patel, is CNVR a better option than impounding for stray dog population management?	CNVR is definitely the best option for street dogs. Impounding should never be chosen - because of the lack of welfare, the extensive resources that are required to keep animals for a long period of time - it severely compromises welfare.	Keren Nazareth

3.2	Q for Dr. Patel: Is dog/cat culling punishable by law? If yes are the penalties implemented?	Yes. It is punishable offense. Penalty is the painful part.	P Patel
3.2	Do You have any way to sistematicly spay and neuter the dogs at an specific city in order to get the 70% goal? or was it sprade out?	We generally create a geogrphical strategy to cover areas - zonewise.	Keren Nazareth
3.2	So what would be your advise as a comprehensive strategy? Is 90% sterilisation financially possible? How do you know how many is 90%?	Yes, once we have sterilized around 90% of the street dog population in an area, the focus shifts to sustaining the impact. This means building a strong local system—either by developing local capacity or setting up a mechanism to ensure a steady number of dogs continue to be sterilized as new ones appear. To estimate when we've reached that 90% target, we conduct regular street dog population surveys. These surveys help us track sterilization coverage, identify gaps, and plan follow-up interventions effectively.	P Patel
3.2	in capacity building, can Humane World for animals also share the tools and apps it uses for catching/release and for community engagement?	We can definitely share our resources around community engagement and can provide training on this as well, apart from veterinary training and capacity building. Please email djacob@humaneworld.org to know more about community engagement resources.	Keren Nazareth
3.2	Why there are many rabies in India ?	India is home to an estimated 70–80 million street dogs and around 30 million pet dogs. The vast majority of human rabies cases in the country are caused by dog bites, primarily due to the high human-animal interface. With dogs living in close proximity to people—especially in densely populated urban and semi-urban areas—there is a higher risk of bite incidents, which, when combined with low vaccination coverage, leads to preventable rabies deaths.	P Patel
3.2	Dr. Patel: with whom do you create educational materials?	We hire experts and we do have big in-house community engagement and media team.	P Patel

3.2	Do You vaccinate all dogs during surgery? rabies? other vaccines?	Yes. We do provide Anti-rabies shot to each dog undergo surgery	P Patel
3.2	barbara from mauritiuswe are still at stage of trying to get CNRlaws are there but not respectedin any case we do need to work on communitieshow is this done in your case, you have team just for that, go to villages or cities, ecc?	Hi Barbara, this would be great to have a longer conversation around. Please do reach out to me at knazareth@humaneworld.org	Keren Nazareth
3.2	How does religion influences behaviour related to dogs in India?	Interesting question. Yes, we do face considerable resistance from certain communities, often rooted in cultural or religious beliefs. In some areas, for instance, dogs are considered taboo, so while the community may allow us to catch and sterilize them, they strongly oppose releasing the dogs back into the same locality—even though the law requires it. Additionally, there are groups that believe spay/neuter is unethical or against their values. In such situations, we prioritize respectful dialogue and long-term community engagement, helping people understand the public health importance of sterilization and the legal framework that supports it.	P Patel
3.2	Where are we in our Zero by 2030 target for rabies?	The govt in India has made a framework around National Rabies Control Program but there is lot of uncertainties about implementations. Orgs like us have been conducting vaccination drives but when you have 80 millions dogs you need something concrete from govt, right?	P Patel

3.3	for Dog Trust speaker, is it possible for you to share a Theory of Changes guidance? it seems a very useful and simple model to use for small projects	There is an emormous online resource presence for Theory of Change which is always teaching me new and novel ways to approach and use the methodology. New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) and NCVO (National Council of Voluntary Organisations) have some excellent resources, as does the UK Government website if you search through the Civil Service analysis function resources. So I would recommend taking a look through those if you wanted to grow your understanding in this area. But do keep in mind that Theory of Change are for projects of all sizes, just be confident to search around for projects that are aiming for similar things to yourselves in other parts of the world as the chances are there may already be information or even a similar Theory of Change out there.	Cameron Williams
3.3	For Cam and Dr. Lauren, do you tend to put quantitative metrics on every one of the Outcomes? If so, how often do you get around the fact that organizations may not always have the resources needed to measure those metrics?	Hi Philip, I hope I somewhat addressed this question during the Q&A at the end of the presentation. But to take this opportunity to reiterate, evidence is always important to inform the understanding of your work, however, of course scale is certainly somewhat dependent upon resources. Therefore, as I said I think it is important to try and gather information where you can, however, small scale or resource light information gathering done right can still give invaluable insights. So I would always encourage developing metrics where you can, however, it is always important to be realistic both internally and externally as to what you can do and to be transparent to how your metrics have been developed and how you would develop them, any gaps or opportunities given greater resource - this will allow for oppenness on what can be taken away from your results but also as an opportunity potentially to engage fundraising in specific areas.	Cameron Williams
3.3	Question for Dog Trust - in Cambogia do they implement ORV for wildlife (foxes)	Hello- I am not sure about elsewhere in Cambodia, but the Mission Rabies project in Cambodia only focuses only on dogs, not other animals, as far as I know (please see more detailed update from Karen Reed)	Lauren Harris

3.3	What are the success factors in Cambodia? What are the best practices and key lessons learned?	One of the outcomes I personally think is especially important is the Integrated Bite Case Management (IBCM) project- this is a great collaboration with government orgs and universities to collect data about the prevalence and spread of rabies. I think it highlights the importance of collaboration with varied stakeholders to tackle the issue from multiple perpectives.	Lauren Harris
3.3	What are the success factors in Cambodia? What are the best practices and key lessons learned?	There have been many success stories from the Cambodia project, you can see some of them on this page: https://cambodia.missionrabies.com/past-work/	Lauren Harris
3.3		Mission Rabies do work with other stakeholders to develop and licence the use of appropriate ORV (for dogs, not wildlife) in different countries, and this will be useful in certain groups of dogs in different contexts who cannot be caught. But I do not believe there is anything currently licensed for use in Cambodia.	Karen Reed

3.3	What makes the Theory of Change more useful to measure outcome than the system an organization has already developed and used for years?	Hi Khalisya, thank you for your question. I do not believe there is a one size fits all model for outcome measurement, different approaches, done well, have great potential to be brilliantly helpful in the ways we have described. With the Theory of Change, I believe there are several benefits; the structured approach undertaken through Theory of Change is growing in familiarity globally across sectors and this may be of benefit having that potential for initial familiarity when engaging with the key stakeholders you are trying to reach with the demonstration of your Impact, outcomes or beyond - this could accelerate understanding of what you are trying to represent beyond what may be a individual organisation approaches. Additionally being a tried and tested methodology with a great amount of information and discussion in the great online community in this area, which can provide and drive opportunity for the great breadth that the Theory of Change can be of utilised and benefit an organisation. There is also the element mentioned in our presentation that it is integral that a Theory of Change is a living document, giving opportunity to bring together your key stakeholders to update your Theory of Change and the understanding that comes with it.	Cameron Williams
3.3	Do you think the sector would benefit from mutually agreed indicators for outcomes? i.e. should we be measuring the same things in the same way?	im interested in other answers. I have felt that the same measures dont often apply universally, even in the same country at times, becasue laws vary, cultural practices vary, and goals will vary. but i believe there are indicators that are more useful than others and more readily comparable across time and geography. Its complicated.	Christian Pace

3.3	Do you think the sector would benefit from mutually agreed indicators for outcomes? i.e. should we be measuring the same things in the same way?	dogs. We do not go as far as to select an agreed core set - its an	Elly Hiby
		option, but as the problems releated to dogs vary between contexts, so the goals/outcomes between locations vary, and therefore which indicators are relevant also change.	
3.3	Do you think the sector would benefit from mutually agreed indicators for outcomes? i.e. should we be measuring the same things in the same way?	Thank you for your excellent question and Christian, thank you for continuing this conversation. I encourage collaboration between organisations with shared missions in given areas where it makes sense - in this way shared indicators have the ability to grow understanding for both organisations. However, this will not always be appropriate, organisations as the experts in their field must be prepared to interrogate what indicators are relevant to them to avoid mission drift. Outcomes when designed should focus on being driven by what you expect to see in the changes brought by your organisations work in your given area. Therefore, I certainly see value where appropriate to share indicators, this can enhance communication of the work you do and can open the door to further collaboration or funding for projects through shared understanding - however, this importantly must be done only when first recognising the context within which your project is acting, as mentioned by Christian, to avoid diluting or even reducing acknowledgement of the effect your project is having - representing your project appropriately, with well thought out and justifiable metrics is vitally important for demonstrating robust impact.	Cameron Williams
3.4	Do You give parvo and distemper vaccines besides rabies on your spay neuter clínics?	This depends on country-specific legislation and the municipal partners we are working with. In most programs we currently only vaccinate against rabies.	Manuela Rowlings

3.4	What's the reasoning/criteria used to define zones within the area?	Answered live by Manuela Rowlings - they used these zones to help catching teams focus their efforts in one area at a time, getting good sterilisation coverage before moving to the next area. They had community and local government input into prioritising the zones.	Elly Hiby
3.4	Question for Four Paws - did you repeat stray dog street surveys, how often	Yes, we repeated surveys frequently and used different methodologies for different areas. In total we had 6 different survey events within 2.5 years. That was very intensive and helped us to understand the dynamics and refine our efforts. One learning we drew that we should always survey before moving on to a next zone in terms of catching as we tended to overestimate sterilisation rates and missed pockets of animals that were not always on the streets.	Manuela Rowlings
3.4	how was coperation with National/local Veterinary service	CNVR projects in Romania are mostly led by NGOs, there was no direct cooperation with the national veterinary association or similar. We always encourage local administrations to create a way to collaborate and include their local veterinarians e.g. through a voucher system in order to achieve sustainability of our "frontloading" efforts.	Manuela Rowlings
3.4	'@Manuela: did you color-code/map the cities yourself? or is this something that can be done by talea too?	The mapping was custome done by our M&E specialist Tamara using local boundaries and landmarks that we were aware of, but you might be able to use already existing borders e.g. sub-districts.	Manuela Rowlings
3.4	Dogs are often brought into the UK from Romania (as well as other countries) and then adopted by people here. Is this the best way for people to help? Is there anything you would suggest to people coming from abroad who would like to help with the dog population going forwards?	A lot of these dogs are presenting increasing challenges to meet their veterinary care needs as the cohort has aged: Older dogs need more intervention and even basical interventions are having to be done under sedation in many of this group. It has created a significant caregiver burden, often for owners who thought they were over the worst of it years ago once the dog has "settled" - if it ever truly did.	lan MacFarlaine

Dogs are often brought into the UK from Part of our work with commu	unities is to always work on increasing	
Romania (as well as other countries) and then local adoptions. We believe to adopted by people here. Is this the best way for term success and sustainability people to help? Is there anything you would critically as it is very resources.	this is very very important for long- lity. We see cross-border adoption e-intense, comes with many risks as es not tackle the underlying issues, but ecial cases and some individual dogs it	Manuela Rowlings
homeless animals. municipalities that want to example the state of the	nd poses many challenges for individual explore more humane methods. We s that might be watching this	Manuela Rowlings
John - maybe you'll expand on this later, but can Commonly referred to as dar you explain what chemical capturing entails? word gun for various reasons		John Peaveler
Elly, could you ask John to tell us a bit more about the cylindrical cat traps - why they exist and pros and cons? uses a trigger plate and a spr different size, shape, and app traps, I like to think we aren't asking animals to catch them that are very consistently effects.	imilar way to traditional box traps. It ring-loaded door. This trap offers a peal than a rectangular trap. With 't actually catching animals. We are nselves. While there are traps and baits fective, offering alternatives can help h those traditional options to not have	John Peaveler
difficult dogs. Something dist how close were your team able to approach the difficult dogs? difficult dogs. Something dist to see them through binocula flight distance of about 30m,	re even able to get a visual on the most sturbed their habits and we were lucky lars. The landfill dogs initially had a , but they were alerting and startled at some pressure they were rarely seen	John Peaveler

3.5	Hi John. Is there a reason/justification for your team to use red lights when assessing the dogs?	Have you tried blue light, ie short wavelengths? It may be gentler on the eyes of both the animals and human. I have used blue a little. I've found it's quite dim. Most of the blue lights are designed for hunters and medics to highlight blood trails and bleeding injuries. I've found that red works quite well for stress, and green is also very good for spotting eyes, which can be helpful for determining the number of individuals at a site.	Sumita Sugnaseelan
3.5	Hi John. Is there a reason/justification for your team to use red lights when assessing the dogs?	Yes. Red and Green light are far less aversive. We need to consider all stress to be bad, and lower it whenever we can. Red light keeps stress levels lower and makes us less visible to other animals and to the community. We aren't trying to be sneaky, and I'm not going to just show up in someones yard at 2am without telling them in advance, but having done that, I'd rather not wake everyone up. Red and green light also help to preserve trapper night vision.	John Peaveler
3.5	Is it correct that multiple dogs are caught in one cage? If so, what is the incidence of dogs fighting under the stress of capture in the cage?	Correct, you can use these to capture a single or multiple dogs. It's best to put a cage or trap or other item inside of the cage so that dogs can get away from each other and hide if they want. It's also often ideal to process them in the dark, as stress levels can be kept lower. It's important to use nets for handling if they are other than friendly, and it can be quicker and more humane to use darts to immobilize dogs in the trap in order to avoid very stressful and invasive handling. There can be significant time constraints though that will influence your decision making.	John Peaveler
3.5	How affordable are these systems? Given the resource constrained environments in many places, is this realistic and feasible?	That's a great question, and difficult to answer. Largely not very affordable, especially when you include shipping. However, the first colony traps I ever used, we had made with local parts. We found a fence contractor to build the cage and an RC plane/car business to build the trigger. So it also depends on the items.	John Peaveler

3.5	what is your advice if you only have one car and dogs start hiding when seeing it?	Buy some car spray paint cans??	Ian MacFarlaine
3.5	thanks John for a great presentation. How successful were you in capturing the dogs you wanted to catch?	Quite successful. We have collectively caught the majority of freeroaming dogs on the island. The program is now in maintenance mode in terms of dogs. We had two strategies for this trip, 1 was for our expert team to capture dogs during our time there and 2 was to procure the equipment and train the local volunteers in how to use the equipment. Advanced capture can't always be done quickly (not for specific, capture adverse dogsit can if it's simply layered into basic capture methods, both used concurrently). We only missed one dog that we were targetting.	John Peaveler
3.5	hi John. what did you use for the chemical capture?	Which drugs? It's up to the veterinarian, but it's usually ketamine/xylazine, or tilazole/metatomodine. The latter is better and smoother for the animals. There are some additional combos that can be used, but it's best to consult with a veterinarian for this. Dr. Mark Johnson is always happy to answer such questions mjohnson@wildliferesources.com	John Peaveler

3.5	what is your advice if you only have one car and dogs start hiding when seeing it?	Don't drive that vehicle near where you need to capture difficult animals. Dogs especially will learn all about the capture program, people, and equipment. Keeping stress levels low from the very beginning of your program or in each distinct area is preferable from a behavior perspective. The more dynamic your capture efforts are (netting and neck capture, for instance), the more likely it is that other individuals will learn who you are and what your presence means. At that point you either have to layer in advanced capture tools if you have access to them, or you have to struggle against the superior senses of the dogs and effectively be as sneaky as possible. It's always a good idea to blend into the community as much as possible and allow dogs to engage with scent, then food, then you, in that specific order. If you start by paying them unwanted attention and looking concerning with strange equipment, population level capture will become more difficult even if you are successful with some individuals.	John Peaveler
3.5	It is possible to try to sedate them before trapping?	There is a lot of mix up between the terms tranquilize, sedeate, and immobilize. Trapping and chemical immobilization are not really used together. Either the dog is immobilized and rendered unconsious through the appropriate drug combinations, concentrations, and dosages, or they are trapped. Reducing the motor skills of a dog through the use of any agents is not helpful for trapping. We trap dogs using their senses, particularly sight, smell, and touch. Diminishing these cannot contribute meaningfully to capture. It might work with netting, but it's really only best practice to either use chemical capture or use another method of capture, not to mix them up. I belive I mentioned during the Q and A that I at least am not aware of an oral sedative that consistenly works to aid capture.	John Peaveler

3.5	Hi John, than you for a great presentation. Is there a structured action plan or standardized approach that you would suggest for organizing dog capture efforts in TNRM projects?	I don't think there is a one sized fits all approach. Cost, regulatory environment, staffing levels, surgical capacity, equipment availability, training availability, disposition of dogs, and community factors will all play a role. I would be happy to discuss with you	John Peaveler
		further if you'd like. john@humaneinnovations.com www.humaneinnovations.com	Joini Feaverer
14 5	hello john 🖑 do you do consult on site?	Yes, certainly. Feel free to email me. john@humaneinnovations.com	John Peaveler
1 4 5	How do you involve comunities in capture of dogs in their communities?	For the average person, I want to know what they know, and I want to see if they can help condition dogs to assist with capture (getting those dogs on a feeding schedule and comfortable with people). They can also watch my equipment for security reasons, and contact me if there is a successful capture or any issues. People want to have some agency is what happens in their comunities, so the more jobs we can give them, the better. This is more diffcult at scale, but we have to do things that are both strategic level and tactical level. At the tactical level, our capture teams need good community relationships and they need to know what animals are in target areas. No one knows their community better than the people who live there, especially young people and old people. If you're humane and professional at all times, then you can build real trust with communities and engage with them. It's not as if everyone in every community is going to engage and be supportive, but if you're truly open to finding ways people can help, then you'll find those people who can be valuable contributors and committed stakeholders.	John Peaveler

I don't think that can really be done a scale, nor is it effective strategy. Dogs live where they live based on a lot of different factors, including safety, food, territory, and more. To convince a dog to live elsewhere, you'd have to provide the exact same level of everything without causing them stress, which is extremely difficult to do. It may be possible to try to anchor a dog quite nearby but in a less problemenatic area, such as behind a structure instead of in front of it, but moving them very far through luring John if capturing is really difficult, is it a good would be very difficult to achive. I think a better example might be strategy to just "relocate" or lure the stray dogs 3.5 John Peaveler a cat colony. Perhaps in front of a restaurant, that colony might be in areas farther away from the public? an issue for the business, but through feed and consistent care, you might be able to move that colony around the corner and out of sight. And just to be clear, relocation at scale is not an effective strategy and does not represent best practice for dog or cat population management. If you have individual animals that are problematic, you need to build options in to your program that may include various forms of removal, euthanasia, and rehoming. We cannot move the problem. It's usually more difficult during the day, but it depends on the individual animal, the community, and the methodology. Chemical immobilization, for instance, cannot be used at night. Generally, dawn and dusk are the best times to capture animals since they may be moving from sleeping to feeding areas or simply changing Question for John - did you see more behavior based on time of day. If it's hot or cold they will be John Peaveler 3.5 challanging catch during night or day time seeking comfort during the worst times for those things. But there are many factors at play. The more socilalized the dogs are, the more they might adjust themselves to human schedules and live a more diurnal life. Traffic patterns also play a role, where they may not be able to move safely during some times of day, for instance.

3.6	I noticed that the phrase 'spay and neuter' is often used together in presentations and program materials. Would you be able to clarify the reasoning behind this choice of terminology? Scientifically, 'spay' refers to the sterilization of females and 'castration' to that of males, while 'neuter' is a general term that applies to both sexes. Would it be more accurate and clearer to use either 'spay and castrate' or simply 'neuter' depending on the context?	Tipically, castration is more used for farm animals. Neuter is the most utilized term for pets.	Otávia Augusta de Mello
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3.6		Thank you Nat, that's a great point. "Neuter" is indeed widely used in the U.S., especially in public campaigns and clinic settings. However, for clarity, especially in professional or academic contexts, it's helpful to use the correct anatomical terms—spay for females and castrate for males. Using precise language ensures better understanding, particularly when discussing procedures or outcomes scientifically.	Sumita Sugnaseelan

3.6	how successful have your awareness campaign been in stopping the cruel and sadistic dog & cat meat trade in Vietnam? Do the government even care to ban the trade seriously?	Hi Malina! Our awareness campaigns are gaining increasing support among the Vietnamese public. Our initiative, "This is NOT Vietnam," has successfully gathered over 2 million signatures worldwide on a petition against the dog and cat meat trade (DCMT). Over 33,000 emails were sent to the Vietnamese Prime Minister's Office urging an end to this practice. We've also received numerous valuable reports from Vietnamese citizens regarding DCMT activities through our Reporting Tool, which will help us provide evidence-based solutions to the government. As part of the Companion Animal Technical Working Group within the Vietnam One Health Partnership, we have gained government support to collaborate with relevant authorities on issues related to companion animal welfare issues. Currently, we are working closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Vietnam to develop a roadmap for phasing out the dog and cat meat trade.	Hanh Nguyenminh
3.6	For Four Paws Thailand: Do you vaccine against parvo and distemper on your CNVR projects? If you do, do you have any protocol on this you can share?	Hi Carolina! Currently we don't vaccinate for those diseases, we do rabies as standard on our CNVR programs. However, it's something we are looking at and if we have any protocols on that in future we will share it. You can check out our e-learning materials here: https://www.four-paws.org/campaigns-topics/topics/companion-animals/companion-animals-elearning-hub. These will keep being developed and updated.	
3.6	For Pom and Hanh, did you run into problems when trying to persuading government officials / local partners with data? If so, how did you overcome those challenge?	We have collaborated with government agencies to provide workshop related to population survey management so we have gained their buy in to apply the population survey method. They experience this first hand so it does help convincing them to conduct the survey in order to yeild accurate data.	Chonnikarn Phochanakij

There is an interesting study that has looked into this across four Which social variable would be used to carry out countries, not only related to demographics but also movement: https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/veterinary-demographics and social context? Silva There is an interesting study that has looked into this across four countries, not only related to demographics but also movement: https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/veterinary-science/articles/10.3389/fvets.2021.617900/full Hope it is helpful
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