'Isawiya Town Profile

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Background

This report is part of a series of booklets, which contain compiled information about each city, village, and town in the Jerusalem Governorate. These booklets came as a result of a comprehensive study of all villages in Jerusalem Governorate, which aims at depicting the overall living conditions in the governorate and presenting developmental plans to assist in developing the livelihood of the population in the area. It was accomplished through the "Village Profiles and Needs Assessment;" the project funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID).

The "Village Profiles and Needs Assessment" was designed to study, investigate, analyze and document the socio-economic conditions and the needed programs and activities to mitigate the impact of the current unsecure political, economic and social conditions in the Jerusalem Governorate.

The project's objectives are to survey, analyze, and document the available natural, human, socioeconomic and environmental resources, and the existing limitations and needs assessment for the development of the rural and marginalized areas in the Jerusalem Governorate. In addition, the project aims at preparing strategic developmental programs and activities to mitigate the impact of the current political, social, and economic instability with the focus on the agricultural sector.

All village profiles in Arabic and English are available online at http://vprofile.arij.org.

Table of Content

'Isawiya Town Profile

Location and Physical Characteristics

'Isawiya is a Palestinian town in Jerusalem Governorate located (horizontally) 2.9km north of Jerusalem City. It is bordered by El 'Eizariya and Al Ka'abina lands to the east, 'Anata and Shu'fat to the north, Jerusalem (Bait al Maqdis) to the west, and Jerusalem and Az Za'ayyem to the south (ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012) (See map 1).

Map 1: 'Isawiya location and borders
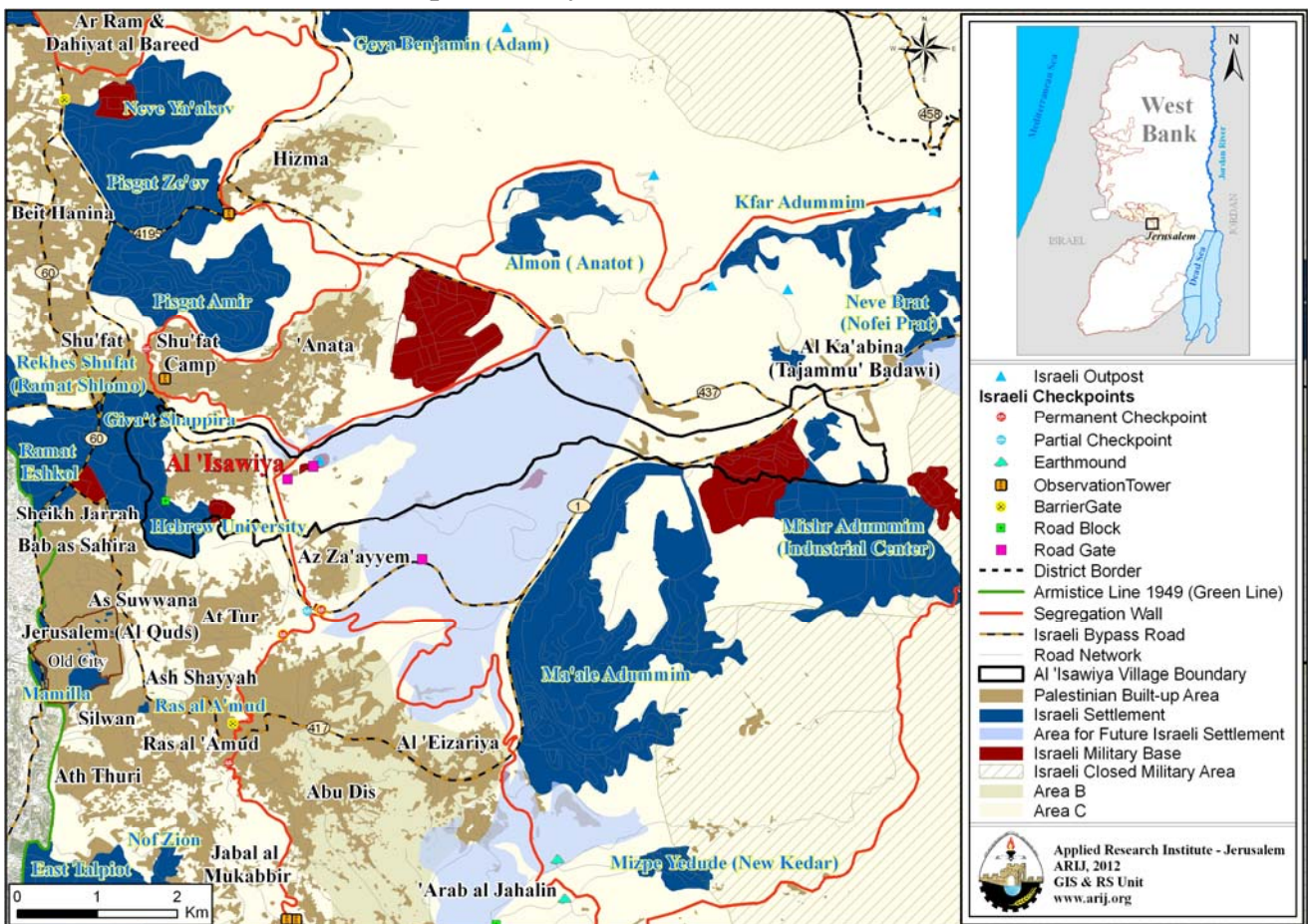
Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012

'Isawiya is located at an altitude of 731m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 366.5mm. The average annual temperature is 17 °C and the average annual humidity is approximately 60% (ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012).

Since the 1980s 'Isawiya has been governed by a development committee, which is currently administrated by 7 members in addition to 5 permanent employees. The Development Committee owns a permanent headquarters ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

It is the responsibility of the Development Committee to provide a number of services to the residents of 'Isawiya, including ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012):

- Providing information to visitors about 'Isawiya.
- Implementing projects and case studies for the town.
- Protecting historical and archeological sites.
- Providing workshops for youth development.
- Providing other social services.

History

'Isawiya town was named after King Issa, son of Salah ad Deen al 'Ayyubi who conquered Jerusalem and liberated it from the Crusaders ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

The town was established over 900 years ago, and its residents are descendants of Iraqi Kurds, Syrians, and some tribes from the Arabian Peninsula ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012) (See photo below for 'Isawiya town).

Photo 1: 'Isawiya town

Religious and Archaeological Sites

There are 5 mosques in the town, Al 'Arba'een, 'Uhod, As Sabireen, At Tawbah and Ash Shuhada' Mosques. In terms of archaeological sites, 'Isawiya's old city and the olive oil-press located there are of some interest. There is also a carob tree thought to be over 1000 years old ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

Population

Unfortunately, no census has been conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) to ascertain the population and housing in 'Isawiya town.

Families

'Isawiya residents are from several families, mainly the Darwish, 'Elayyan, Abu al Hummos, Mustafa, Mahmood, Dari abu Riyalah, Dirbas, 'Obeid, Hassan-Awad and Shludi families ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

Education

There are five schools in the town run by Jerusalem Municipality and one school run by a private body (see Table 1) ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

Table 1: Schools in 'Isawiya by name, stage, sex and supervising authority

School Name	Supervising Authority	Sex
The Future Scientific Academy Model School	Private	Mixed
Az Zahra' School	Jerusalem Municipality	Mixed
'Isawiya Girls Primary Schools	Jerusalem Municipality	Female
'Isawiya Girls Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Female
'Isawiya Boys Primary School	Jerusalem Municipality	Male
'Isawiya Boys Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Male

Source: 'Isawiya Development Committee, 2012 & Directorate of Education – Jerusalem, 2011

There is one local kindergarten in the town, Az Zahra' Model kindergarten, which is run by a private body and was attended by 152 children in 2011 (Directorate of Education – Jerusalem, 2011).

Due to the lack of some levels of education in 'Isawiya, students attend neighboring villages' schools, including Ar Rashidiya Boys School in Western Jerusalem, the Orphans Islamic Boys High School in the old city, Al Fatat al Laji'a Girls High School in Eastern Jerusalem (Bab as Sahira neighborhood), and Al Ma'muniya Girls School in Eastern Jerusalem (Wad al Jozz neighborhood). Each of these schools is 4-6km from the town. To complete their vocational and technical studies, some students go to Sakhneen

'Atarot school or the Lutheran School in Beit Hanina, each of which is 10km from the town ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

The educational sector in 'Isawiya town faces some obstacles, primarily:

1. The lack of nurseries and kindergartens.
2. The overcrowded classrooms due to large numbers of students.
3. The lack of means of transportation.
4. The weak preparatory education for students.

Health Status

There are some health centers available in 'Isawiya town: 4 health centers run by Israeli insurance companies (such as Maccabi, Clalit and Meuhedet), general physicians and specialized physicians in most fields, a motherhood and childcare center, a medical laboratory, a radiology center, two private dental clinics, two pharmacies and a physiotherapy center. In the absence of required health services or in emergencies, residents of 'Isawiya go to main hospitals in east and west Jerusalem, including Hadasa 'Isawiya, Ein Karem, Al Muttala', Ad Dajani, the Red Crescent, Al Maqasid and Al Faransawi hospitals, each 8 - 22km from the town ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

Economic Activities

The economy in 'Isawiya is dependent on several economic sectors, mainly the Israeli labor market, which absorbs 50% of the workforce ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012) (See Figure1).

A field survey conducted by ARIJ in 2012 showed that the distribution of labor by economic activity in 'Isawiya is as follows:

- Israeli labor market (50%)
- Services sector (29%)
- Government or private employees sector (10%)
- Trade sector (5%)
- Industry (5%)
- Agriculture sector (1%)

Figure 1: Economic activity in 'Isawiya town
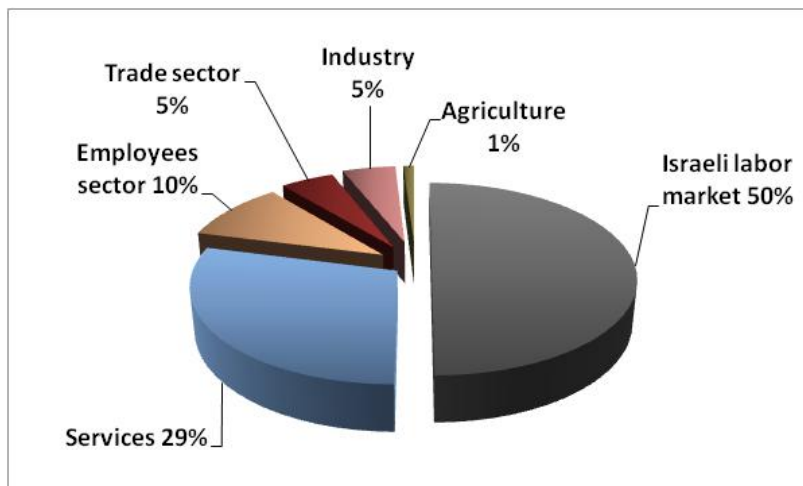
In terms of commercial and industrial productions in 'Isawiya town, there are 12 grocery stores, 4 butcheries, 4 vegetable and fruit stores, 9 different services stores and 7 different professional workshops (blacksmith, carpentry etc.) ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

The unemployment rate in 'Isawiya has reached around 20%, and it was found that the social groups most affected in the town as a result of Israeli restrictions and procedures are ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012):

1. Workers in the agriculture sector.
2. Workers in the trade sector.
3. Workers in the services sector.

Agricultural Sector

'Isawiya has a total area of around 9,418 dunums of which 390 are considered 'arable' land and 708 dunums are registered as 'residential' (See Table 2 and Map 2).

Table 2: Land use and land cover in 'Isawiya town in 2010 (area in dunum)

Total Area	Built up Area	Agricultural area (390)				Inland water	Forests	Open Spaces	Area of Industrial, Commercial & Transport Unit	Area of Settlements, Military Bases & Wall Zone
		Permanent Crops	Green-houses	Range-lands	Arable lands					
9,418	708	95	0	0	295	0	1	6,479	172	1,668

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2012.

Map 2: Land use/land cover in 'Isawiya town
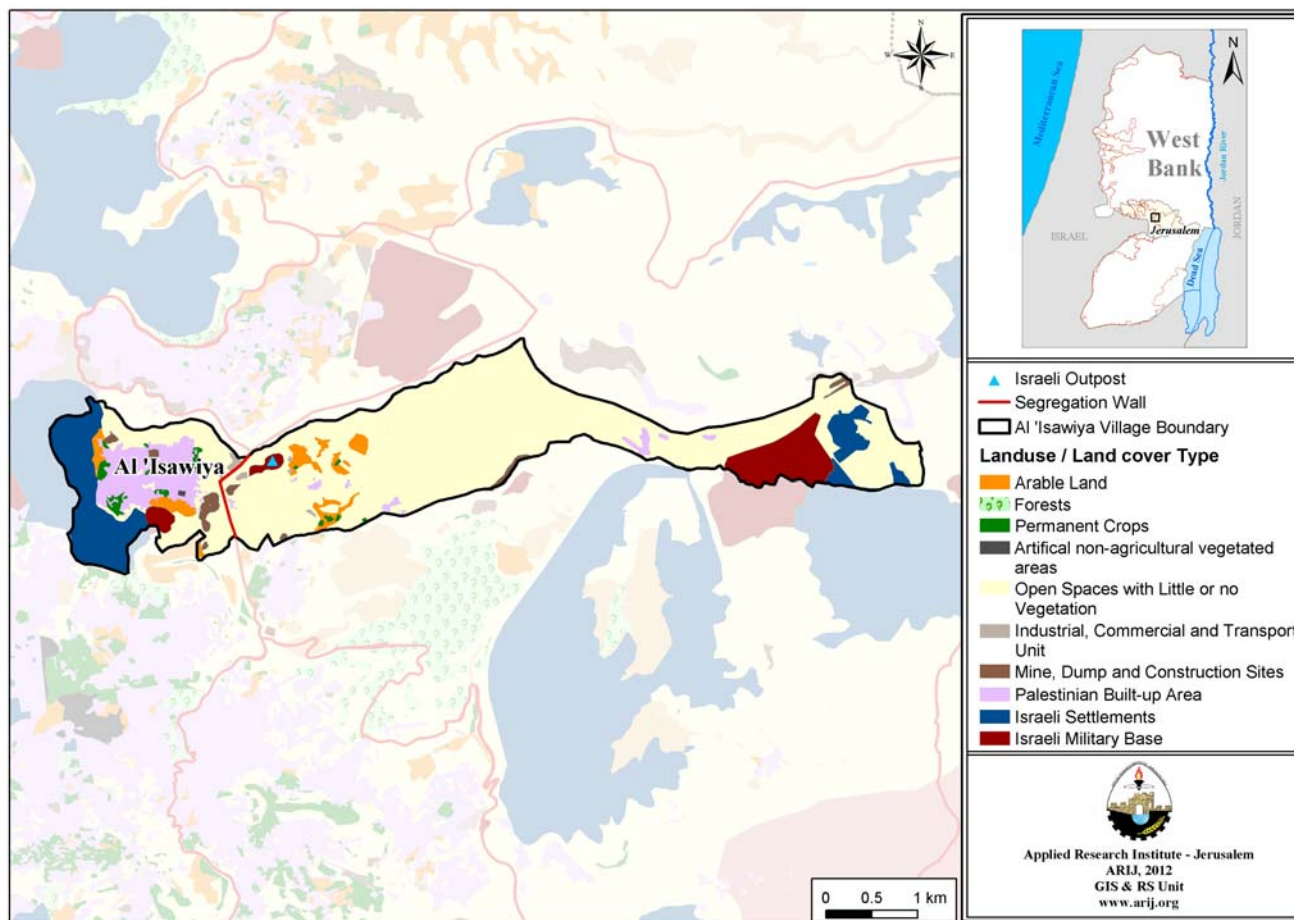
In terms of rain-fed and irrigated open cultivated vegetables in 'Isawiya, only fruity vegetables, mainly tomatoes and snake-cucumbers, are being cultivated; there are a total of 3 dunums of irrigated vegetables and 4 dunums of rain-fed vegetables in the town (Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Jerusalem, 2010). Table 3 shows the different types of fruit trees planted in the area. The town is known for the cultivation of olives; there are 155 dunums in the town cultivated with olive trees.

Table 3: Total area of fruit and olive trees in 'Isawiya town (dunum)

Fruit trees	Rainfed	Irrigated
Olives	155	0
Citrus	0	0
Stone-fruits	2	0
Pome fruits	0	0
Nuts	0	0
Other fruits	3	0
Total Area	**160**	**0**

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Jerusalem, 2010

In terms of field crops and forage in 'Isawiya, cereals, particularly barley, are the most cultivated covering an area of about 20 dunums (Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Jerusalem, 2010).

The difference between the two sets of results obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture and by ARIJ's GIS Unit in sizes of agricultural areas is explained by the fact that the Ministry of Agriculture and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2010) conducted a survey which used a definition of agricultural areas based on land ownership. Therefore, the areas included in the survey were those of actual holdings of agricultural areas instead of seasonal ones. The survey did not consider fragmented and small seasonal cultivated areas in residential and agricultural areas. ARIJ's survey, however, indicated the existence of a high proportion of small and fragmented holdings (home gardens) throughout the occupied Palestinian territories, thus accounting for the larger area of agricultural holdings calculated by ARIJ.

ARIJ's field survey also shows that 1% of the residents in 'Isawiya rear and keep domestic animals such as sheep ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

There are no agricultural roads in the town ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

Agriculture is one of the sectors most affected by the Israeli occupation. All agricultural lands have been confiscated, and therefore the commercial agricultural sector has ceased to exist on all but a small number of lands.

Institutions and Services

'Isawiya town has very few governmental institutions, including a post office. There are a few local institutions and associations that provide services to various sectors of society. These include ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012):

- **'Isawiya Development & Reconstruction Society:** Founded in 2007 and subordinated by 'Isawiya Development Committee, the Society provides information on the locality and services to citizens, such as legal advice to protect Jerusalem identity papers. It also provides documents and news on field events and developments, mainly on those concerning settlers' attacks within the town.
- **'Isawiya Youth:** A sports center founded in 1965.

Infrastructure and Natural Resources

Electricity and Telecommunication Services

'Isawiya has been connected to a public electricity network since 1969; served by Jerusalem Electricity Company, which is the main source of electricity in the town. It is noted that approximately 95% of the housing units in the town being connected to this network ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

Furthermore, 'Isawiya is connected to a telecommunication network and approximately 100% of the housing units within the town boundaries are connected to phone lines ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

Transportation Services

There are 12 public taxis in addition to 8 buses working on 'Isawiya-Jerusalem line that are considered to be the main means of transportation in 'Isawiya town ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012)

Water Resources

'Isawiya is provided with water by Jihon, an Israeli company, through the public water network established in 1965 and approximately 100% of the housing units are connected to this network ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012). Each cubic meter of water from the network costs from 7 to 15 NIS ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

Sanitation

'Isawiya has a 14 km public sewerage network, established in 1990; about 95% of the town's housing units use the sewage network as a major means for wastewater disposal ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012). The population are charged for 1200 NIS/ year per housing unit for the service of collection and disposal of wastewater ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

Solid Waste Management

Jerusalem Municipality is the official body responsible for managing the collection and disposal of solid waste generated by the citizens and establishments in the town ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

Most of the population in 'Isawiya benefits from the solid waste services, whereby waste is collected from households, institutions, shops, and public squares in plastic bags and then transferred to containers distributed throughout the town. Jerusalem Municipality collects the solid waste from containers and then transports it using a waste vehicle to El 'Eizariya dumping site, where it is usually buried and sometimes burnt ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in 'Isawiya is 1.05kg. Thus the estimated amount of solid waste produced per day from 'Isawiya residents is nearly 14 tons, or 5,089 tons per year (ARIJ-WERU, 2012).

The town residents suffer from the poor collection and disposal services of solid waste; it is common for waste to accumulate in the streets for several days ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

Development Plans and Projects

Implemented Projects

'Isawiya Development Committee has implemented several development projects in 'Isawiya during the past five years (See Table 4).

Table 4: Implemented development plans and projects in 'Isawiya during the last five years

Name of the Project	Type	Year	Donor
Construction of a post office division	Public Services	2010	Jerusalem Municipality
Construction of 2 retaining walls (40 and 12 meters long)	Infrastructure	2010-2011	Jerusalem Municipality
Beautifying the eastern entrance (Al Khan al Ahmar)	Infrastructure	2011	Jerusalem Municipality
Construction of a retaining wall in the eastern region	Infrastructure	2010	Jerusalem Municipality
Construction of iron barriers in 3 roads (Al Kharrubah, the Stadium & the Schools)	Infrastructure	2010	Jerusalem Municipality
Establishment of bumps on roads	Infrastructure	2010	Jerusalem Municipality

Source: 'Isawiya Development Committee, 2012

Proposed Projects

'Isawiya Development Committee, in cooperation with the civil society organizations in the town and the town residents, hopes to implement several projects in the coming years. The project ideas were developed during the PRA workshop conducted by ARIJ staff in the town. The projects are as follows, in order of priority from the perspectives of the participants in the workshop:

1. Constructing three high schools, providing facilities for both boys and girls.
2. Expanding the existing elementary schools.
3. Providing water for agricultural purposes through the rehabilitation of old Roman cisterns.
4. Distribution of beehives and layer chickens.
5. Providing vocational and industrial training courses in the town.

Town Development Priorities and Needs

'Isawiya suffers from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 5 shows the development priorities and needs in the town according to the Development Committee's feedback ('Isawiya Development Committee, 2012).

Table 5: Development priorities and needs in 'Isawiya

No.	Sector	Strongly Needed	Needed	Not a Priority	Notes
	Infrastructural Needs				
1	Opening and Pavement of Roads	*			4km�
2	Rehabilitation of Old Water Networks			*	
3	Extending the Water Network to Cover New Built up Areas			*	
4	Construction of New Water Networks			*	
5	Rehabilitation/ Construction of New Wells or Springs			*	
6	Construction of Water Reservoirs		*		prohibited
7	Construction of a Sewage Disposal Network			*	
8	Construction of a New Electricity Network			*	
9	Providing Containers for Solid Waste Collection	*			20 containers
10	Providing Vehicles for Collecting Solid Waste	*			1 vehicle
11	Providing a Sanitary Landfill	*			1 landfill
	Health Needs				
1	Building of New Clinics or Health Care Centres			*	
2	Rehabilitation of Old Clinics or Health Care Centres			*	
3	Purchasing of Medical Equipment and Tools			*	
	Educational Needs				
1	Building of New Schools	*			all levels
2	Rehabilitation of Old Schools	*			all levels
3	Purchasing of New Equipment for Schools	*			computer devices & laboratories equipments
	Agriculture Needs				
1	Rehabilitation of Agricultural Lands	*			1800 dunums
2	Building Rainwater Harvesting Cisterns	*			3 cisterns
3	Construction of Barracks for Livestock			*	
4	Veterinary Services			*	
5	Seeds and Hay for Animals			*	
6	Construction of New Greenhouses			*	
7	Rehabilitation of Greenhouses			*	
8	Field Crops Seeds			*	
9	Plants and Agricultural Supplies			*	

✕4km are sub roads.
Source: 'Isawiya Development Committee, 2012

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