



RENEWAL STRATEGY

2013 - 2016



LETTER FROM MATCH

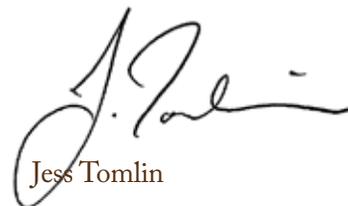
I am proud to share with you a strategy that will both renew and transform MATCH, build on our history and grow our deep network here in Canada and abroad. As an organization that has been fighting for women's rights and equality since 1976, which has worked all over the world with more than 500 women's organizations in the global South, this attempt to both renew and transform MATCH is not something we have taken lightly.

The solidarity and support shown to MATCH has been overwhelming at times. While this strategy was in the making, we called on many individuals to help us think through how MATCH needed to be different, what gaps it should fill and what role it can play in strengthening the women's movement in Canada and around the world. We asked whether an organization like MATCH was still relevant within today's context. The answer was a resounding YES.

This strategy is the result of these conversations. It is what has inspired our conviction around core organizational values and principles, and has helped shape our three strategic areas of focus. We think of the MATCH Renewal Strategy as a guiding document that has the blessing of thousands of cumulative years of experience, wisdom and imagination. It is clear that there is a space for MATCH to exist, whether in providing incubation funding opportunities for grassroots women's organizations in the South, convening women's rights advocates on important global issues or in creating connections and mutual learning opportunities across generations, here at home.

As many of you know, the last few years have been difficult for MATCH. The MATCH Board of Directors deserves special mention for the tireless work invested to keep the organization alive. In addition, with the critical support from WUSC, we have gained an important strategic partner.

With this strategy, MATCH now has the great task of rebuilding itself as an organization. If this renewal has taught us anything, the only way this can be done is through collaboration, learning and partnership. This is the core of our future success, and we look forward to working with you.



Jess Tomlin



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...these financially and socially challenging periods of history create unprecedented opportunities for communities and organizations to re-invigorate themselves by re-defining their priorities and partnerships and by extension, by reconsidering their purposes, processes, policies, practices and behaviour.¹

WHERE WE ARE COMING FROM

In 1976, when MATCH was formed, it was with the belief that women were instrumental to improving lives, moving out of poverty and challenging social, political and economic barriers. MATCH was formed on the foundation that an intentional effort to support and empower marginalized women in the global South would yield results for her and all those in her community, at the grassroots level and beyond. Its formation was driven from the notion that women's rights were human rights, and that equality for women around the world was an end unto itself. MATCH was formed with the recognition that Canadian women could make a distinct contribution to the global women's movement and work alongside their sisters throughout the world in the effort to achieve equality, justice and human rights. MATCH was formed with the intention to engage, educate and empower Canadians about issues affecting women in the South. MATCH is re-affirming our belief in all these foundations.

MATCH also believes that in order to best serve the global women's movement, we need to take stock of our current reality in Canada and globally and maneuver ourselves in new ways. This is the basis for MATCH's renewal. We have listened, reflected, asked questions and tested our ideas within the community of actors working to improve women's lives globally. This is the result of our conversations and reflections: a strategy for the renewal of MATCH International, 2013-2016.

We acknowledge that much has changed in the 36 years since MATCH was created, most notably, we celebrate that many of our colleagues in the international development community now place women at the centre of their program, advocacy and research efforts. MATCH also recognizes that Canadian funding for women's rights work, abroad and domestically, is shrinking. This reality is a difficult one, and we must seek creative, collaborative and non-traditional opportunities to 'grow the pot' of resources available for this important work.

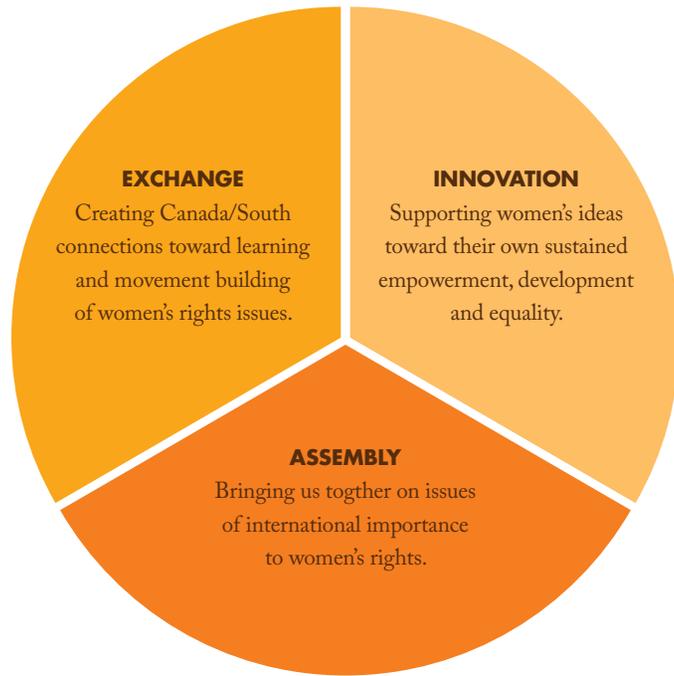
Ultimately, MATCH is moving forward in full acknowledgement of its roots, embracing our role in bringing women together in Canada and the global South, leveraging our partnerships and networks to assemble, innovate and exchange towards improving the lives of women around the world.



Over the next ten years, Canada's charities and nonprofits must harness their strengths, define their common agenda, enhance their partnerships, and become more innovative to maximize their contributions to citizens around the world.²

HOW WE ARE CHANGING

In 2013, MATCH International will turn its focus to three strategic areas:



ASSEMBLY: MATCH will work hand-in-hand with the women's rights and international development communities. We will bring the community together to track, respond, and influence policies and actors about issues that affect women's lives. MATCH will host important conversations, lend our support and contribute to a more formalized and unified response on rights issues affecting women in the global South.

INNOVATION: The MATCH Women's Fund for Social Innovation will be the only Canadian fund of its kind, with a mandate to focus specifically on issues facing women in the global South. MATCH will make funds and other resources available to women's organizations working in the global South to test ideas, explore context-specific programming and replication possibilities and generate evidence for more sustained and long term funding. Ultimately, MATCH will support its partners to try out their own solutions, and share these experiences both in success and failure. MATCH believes women's ideas about improving their lives, getting out of poverty and advancing their human rights are critical to any long-lasting solution that improves the conditions for women in the global South. For more details on the MATCH Women's Fund, please see pg. 12.

EXCHANGE: MATCH believes there is more to be done in generating awareness and building understanding about women's rights issues. We believe that in spite of a globalized world where information is more widely available, women's rights issues do not get the attention they need in order to truly mobilize change at all levels. We believe that we have much to learn from the champions of the women's movement which has historically been led by the South. By growing the base of Canadians 'in the know' we increase the momentum and support around women's rights issues. This further promotes a coming together, an interdependence, through mutual learning and support, collaboration and awareness-raising opportunities between our different communities, within Canada and in the global South.

Why the FOCUS needs to remain on WOMEN:³

- Of the more than 1.2 billion people who subsist on less than a dollar a day, 70% are women;
- An estimated 72% of the world's 33 million refugees are women and children;
- In developing countries, nearly 20% of girls who enrol in primary school do not complete their primary education;
- Among women aged between 15 and 44, acts of violence cause more death and disability than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents and war combined⁴;
- Women own 2% of the land in the developing world



MOVING FORWARD - VISION, MISSION, VALUES

VISION:

MATCH's vision is a global community where women have the resources and power to realize their rights and potential. Our vision is inspired by the force for change that occurs when women work together. It is a vision whereby Canadians actively work to advance women's rights in the global South and create lasting connections toward this end.

MISSION:

MATCH International is a Canadian international organization that places the issue of women's rights and empowerment as central to successful and sustained development in the global South. Through meaningful and strategic collaboration, learning and action, MATCH invests in women's innovations toward lasting improvements in the rights and equality of women globally.

VALUES:

FEMINISMS: We believe in the universality of women's human rights. We recognize that there are multiple feminisms and will foster opportunities for expressing those principles in our work.

COURAGE: We believe that trying new things, talking about and learning from failure, taking risks and standing up for our beliefs will help us grow, innovate and be transformational.

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP: We believe that working in collaboration and partnership with a range of actors provides us the opportunity to produce truly dynamic results. By consolidating our talents, skills and resources, we will broaden the reach of our work and deepen the impact.

INNOVATION: We believe that women's ideas need to be nurtured, tested and supported as they are foundational to the meaningful improvement of women's rights, access and equality in the global South.

“Harnessing the power of innovation to transform the lives of women in the developing world is an idea whose time has come.”⁵

EXCELLENCE: We will always strive for quality, respect and excellence in our work – with the people and organizations we work with, the initiatives we undertake and the results we demonstrate.

WHY WAS CHANGE NECESSARY?

During this renewal exercise, we asked ourselves many times whether MATCH was still relevant within the feminist and the international development community. We didn't just ask ourselves, we asked others. A lot of others. On countless occasions, we were encouraged by our partners, peers, donors and supporters to continue our work in promoting and investing in women's rights and equality in the global South, most specifically at the grassroots level. We listened to ideas about how MATCH could place itself in order to be of utmost value to the movement in Canada and abroad, and looked at where these two intersect. We explored various models, from consulting groups, to foundations to NGOs.

Ultimately, we are changing because everything around us has changed. The drivers below illustrate contextual, programmatic and trend changes within the sector. We have explored these 'drivers of change' to understand how best to situate ourselves, what to keep doing and where we need to be different.

DRIVERS OF CHANGE:

International Development now meaningfully includes women

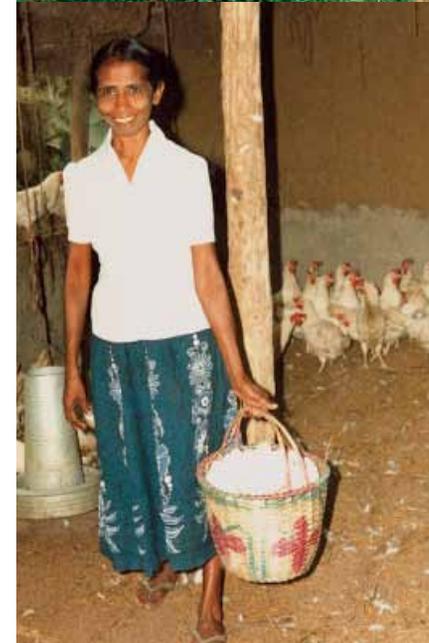
Here is the good news: MATCH can no longer say it is the only Canadian international development organization that exclusively works with women and girls in the global South. We can no longer say that we are the only ones who believe that women and girls are critical to sustained and effective development. Many organizations

are now in tune with this, and have been for many years, because it is sound development practice. Women are worth the investment, and most international organizations working on the ground are only too aware how critical the participation and inclusion of women is toward eliminating poverty, injustice and inequality in the global South.

Feminism has an expanded network

MATCH believes that any sustained development intervention that works for the equal and meaningful participation of women needs to include men. Men can be advocates, policy-makers, feminists. MATCH will be intentional in working with men toward improving women's lives in the South.

Many young people don't identify with feminist language, and we at MATCH believe we need to hear that and acknowledge that language can be divisive. We believe more work can be done to ensure MATCH situates itself within a multi-generational perspective. Ultimately, MATCH exists to create meaningful connections between those wanting a more equal world for women in the global South, and young women and men are essential to this effort. MATCH will intentionally seek out young women and men to ensure their perspectives are captured and ideas are integrated. We will meaningfully include them in all three areas of work - assembly, innovation and exchange.



Funding challenges to the MATCH model

In 2010, MATCH lost funding from its most significant financial partner, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). This had an extreme impact on our operations, including having to let go of MATCH staff. Losing institutional funding from CIDA was a great opportunity for MATCH, one that allowed us to test our strength, tenacity and perseverance. It forced us to face the reality of how things have changed, remind ourselves of what makes MATCH special, feel people's connection to the work of MATCH, assess the gaps in the Canadian and global women's rights movement and engage in candid and open conversations with our friends, stakeholders and partners. We have learned that we need to hone our focus, be more specific about what we raise funds for and provide support to others in order to ensure that there is a 'coming together' on deeply important issues.

We also know that MATCH's former model is not sustainable without institutional funding, and have made the decision to alter our model. This ensures that we are being effective about how we manage our resources, investments and contributions globally and within Canada. Moving forward, we will be strategic in deploying our limited resources and work in creative and new ways. It is important to note that MATCH remains in a critical financial situation. This model will form the basis of our immediate and longer term fundraising and resource mobilization efforts.

Expressed need for coming together

This renewal exercise afforded us the opportunity to ask a lot of questions about how MATCH could support the global women's rights movement. We were told on several occasions that one of the most significant challenges was the lack of space for women's organizations to confront some of the most pressing women's rights issues. In resource constrained environments, civil society consultation is often one of the first things to go. However, within the context of the women's movement, there are strong forces encouraging a 'coming together'; MATCH will assemble important conversations to influence critical issues that affect women's lives, drawing on the inter-connectedness, mutuality and interdependence of women's rights defenders across the spectrum.



No evidence? No funding.

We were also told that many organizations struggle with establishing the case for the projects they know have merit and are worthy of being tested. The increasing donor demand for evidence-based programming, while important, does not always allow innovative ideas to be tested, in order to truly understand the possibilities for new programs, approaches and ideas. This new trend can be exclusionary to smaller scale, community-based grassroots organizations, and in particular small scale women's rights organizations like the ones MATCH has traditionally worked with over the years. These organizations often do not have the resources, both financial and human, to establish strong evidence basis for their work. We believe MATCH can play a role in filling this gap, by providing incubation funding for women's organizations to try ideas, test theories, share their successes AND failures, and ultimately, establish evidence for good programming to be sustained in more far-reaching ways.

Desire for MATCH to exist

Perhaps the most moving aspect of the MATCH renewal process has been the overwhelming response from MATCH supporters, stakeholders and colleagues in support of keeping the organization alive. There is a strong expressed desire for MATCH to continue to play a role within the Canadian international development community and the global women's movement. Some expressions of support for MATCH from our Southern partners are shared here:

"The relationship with MATCH has been critical to us, one that allowed us to gain understanding of similarities and difference amongst women and across boundaries."

~ S Corner Clinic and Development Organization,
Kingston, Jamaica

"The support we received from MATCH helped jumpstart our organization."

~ Mamatoto Resource and Birth Centre,
Trinidad and Tobago

"Through MATCH support Saathi has formed community groups in different parts of the country which are still functioning and dedicated towards elimination of Gender Based Violence in their respective communities. The support received from MATCH was landmark for Saathi (enabling us to) reach the grassroots level in Nepal."

~ Saathi, Lalitpur,
Nepal



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WHERE WE INTEND TO GO

MATCH WOMEN'S FUND FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

The MATCH Women's Fund for Social Innovation is an opportunity for women to test, try, succeed, fail and share ideas toward improving their lives within their own communities. MATCH will invest small funds in big ideas and catalyze change towards a more equitable world.

The fund will provide an opportunity for women's organizations to explore how their ideas can be brought to scale within specific local and regional contexts. In the future, it is hoped that a second stage of MATCH's Women's Fund for Social Innovation will test the resilience and durability of certain stellar, innovative ideas, and fund a further scale of the idea.

We take our definition from Phills, Deiglmeier and Miller (2008) who define social innovation as "a novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient and sustainable or just than existing solutions and for which the value accrues primarily to society as a whole rather than private individuals."⁶

"We need sponsors of a new kind, more straightforward people, maybe also individuals and families; sponsors interested in social innovation and who are prepared to gamble on the positive contribution of meaningful, essential grassroots work."⁷

MATCH's Women's Fund for Social Innovation will maintain preference for supporting small to medium sized women's organizations that work at the community and grassroots level. The organizations will work in the global South and we will endeavour to support and connect with the women who are hardest to reach. Innovation fund partners will incorporate vital themes within their initiatives including:

- Leveraging broad and cross-sectoral partnerships,
- Ensuring women's input and ownership in design and idea generation,
- Supporting the development of gender equality champions and leaders, including men and young people,
- Current, in context and contribute toward movement building,
- Building on momentum and movements to highlight key issues and, most importantly,
- Strategies for and meaningful targeting of the poorest and most marginalized female populations in the global South.

(Derived from the International Centre for Research on Women's core levers' for women's innovation to catalyze women's empowerment and gender equality.)⁸

In progressive perspectives of the Northern NGO, effective strategies involve partnership models (with southern NGOs as executors, and northern NGOs as facilitators); advocacy, public engagement and communications activities; and programs enabling deep, critical cross-cultural relationships.¹¹

According to Imagine Canada, social innovation is of increasing importance to ensure that new products, services, systems and behaviours meet social needs.⁹ They argue that charities and nonprofits in particular can play a leadership role in championing social innovations, mobilizing knowledge, facilitating inter-sector discussion and ‘on the ground experimentation’ in order that social innovation can flourish and take root’.¹⁰

In both design and development, MATCH will consult and build the fund to ensure it is flexible, in context and meets needs identified by the women themselves. We will also open ourselves to opportunities for strategic collaboration, exchange and alliance building with other Women’s Funds globally to ensure we are wisely growing the pot for women’s rights work around the world. We look forward to launching the MATCH Women’s Fund for Social Innovation in 2013.

ASSEMBLY

One of the issues that stood out during the conversations that contributed to this renewal strategy was the need for women’s and international development organizations to come together on issues of key importance. Many organizations indicated that there is a lack of common space and coordinated dialogue within Canada on global women’s rights issues. In an effort to be responsive to the needs identified by other organizations working with women in the global South, MATCH will be intentional about creating inclusive opportunities for Canadian women’s organizations to assemble on issues that affect women globally.

What might this look like?

- There is currently a proposal within the United Nations to host a 5TH Conference on Women, or as some are calling it, the Beijing +20. If this global conference is held, key UN women’s rights declarations including CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Violence against Women) and the Beijing Platform for Action may be re-opened and important text modified. In this case, MATCH would work with its Canadian civil society, feminist legal and academic partners to generate a shared recommendation for the Canadian Government to consider at the negotiation table.

Ultimately, we come from the perspective that MATCH can play a role in strengthening, supporting and creating collaborative opportunities for the existing work that is being done in Canada to promote and address women’s rights issues in the global South. Our aim within this strategic area of ‘Assembly’ will be to fill some of the gaps identified by our colleagues and create spaces for conversation and coming together on issues of true importance to improving women’s rights and equality.

EXCHANGE

A recent survey by the Canadian Council for International Cooperation revealed that Canadians viewed women’s rights as the 9TH most important issue in the developing world, behind the economy, conflict, the environment and other pressing issues.¹² To us, this demonstrates that much exchange, conversation and engagement needs to happen in Canada about how

foundational and inter-linked women's rights are to any sustainable development effort. The benefit of having been around for 36 years is that MATCH has cultivated a depth of experience and broad network of women's organizations working around the world. We will tap into these relationships, explore common causes and create opportunities for mutual learning. We will also work with new ones through MATCH's Women's Fund for Social Innovation Fund. We will further collaborate with other Canadian organizations that can complement the debate and narrative on specific issues facing women in the global South.

What does this look like? MATCH will work in partnership with community groups, international organizations, students, community mobilizers and academia, to bring the conversation close to home. Possible themes that have been identified and which may be explored during this strategic renewal cycle include:

- **EXCHANGE** between young feminists and women's rights activists, in Canada and the global South;
- **EXCHANGE** on new ways of feminist organizing—leveraging collaboration and partnership for improved innovation, impact and results.



“Working collaboratively with other women’s organizations enhances the impact of the advocacy effort and the potential for positive change. It does so not only because more people and resources are involved, but because strategies, projects and policies involved may cut across professions, disciplines and nations in scope and impact.”¹⁶

“Unsettling times also encourage citizens and communities to reach out to one another across social, cultural, geographic and other divides to lend a helping hand, support common causes and unite voices in new and compelling ways.”¹³

THE KIND OF ORGANIZATION IT IS IMPORTANT FOR MATCH TO BE

A renewal exercise such as the one MATCH has undergone has allowed us to understand more deeply the principles which define MATCH. In moving forward, all we do will embrace the following foundational working principles:

NON-COMPETITION

It is an unfortunate reality within the international development sector in Canada that funds for women’s programming, unless within very specific thematic areas such as maternal and child health, are increasingly hard to secure. Organizations like MATCH push out project proposals, business cases and concept notes at amazing speeds in order to ensure their own survival. MATCH does not want to make it harder for the many great organizations working to improve the lives of women and girls, by competing against them within an already constrained and small resource pool. To the best extent possible, MATCH will look to generate funds from its loyal supporters, work with partners and engage with foundations and non-typical funding channels in order to drum up support for our work.

Ultimately MATCH wants to play a role, in Canada and the world, in supporting, nurturing and enabling many actors to continue in their great work toward improving the lives of women and girls in the global South. Thus, we see our role to help ‘grow the pot’, creating more opportunities for funding outside of existing and traditional mechanisms. One way we do this is by instilling a guiding principle

within our organization that promotes partnership and collaboration, and explicitly requires us to assess the extent to which each funding opportunity puts us in competition with our counterparts and colleagues.

PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

“Where charities and nonprofits have, in general terms, been less inclined to partner in transformational as opposed to transactional ways, however, is among themselves.”¹⁴

We cannot afford, nor do we want to work in isolation. Partnering affords us the opportunity to make gains and enhance our impact by accessing different types of expertise, generating momentum and influence around specific issues, and in promoting shared ownership and accountability amongst key development actors. Learning from the MATCH renewal and self-evaluation process, MATCH will move from its former model of small scale project investments towards a more strategic, shared and supportive way of working amongst a range of stakeholders.¹⁵ MATCH commits to working in partnership and collaboration in all aspects of its work and within all three strategic focus areas- assembly, innovation and exchange. This includes working with a broad range of stakeholders, including other Women’s Funds and grant-makers in addition to our les traditional allies. It is our hope that an intentional effort to work in partnership and collaboration, to build and strengthen the community, will contribute to a more robust and interdependent women’s movement here in Canada and globally.

SMALL IN SIZE

We're small and we're staying that way.

Staying small allows us to keep in line with what kind of an organization we want to be. It allows us to be more focused regionally and thematically, and maintain a sophisticated level of cultural, contextual and political understanding. It also allows us to be versatile, move quickly, and take an appropriate level of risk. Most importantly, however, remaining small allows MATCH to mitigate the disparity of power that inherently exists between northern and southern international development relationships by 'offering a more equitable balance between practitioners in southern and northern contexts.'¹⁷

FEMINISMS

We at MATCH share a broad feminist perspective, one that acknowledges that barriers continue to exist for women in relation to power, access, rights and wealth. What does this mean in terms of how MATCH works? MATCH will work in feminist collaboration, embracing an egalitarian approach that enables and empowers not only the women we work with overseas, but also within our own structure. MATCH will emphasize feminist principles in its organizational practice, these principles are:¹⁸

- non-hierarchy
- collectivity
- participation
- diversity
- transformational
- inclusion



HOW WE INTEND TO BE ACCOUNTABLE TO YOU

Ultimately, we as an organization will be accountable to our donors, supporters, and partners in how we align our actions to our mission statement, organizational values and progress against our three strategic focus areas - assembly, innovation and exchange.

Our Board of Directors will meet regularly to assess progress against and alignment to the organizational workplan, defining values and leadership priorities. The Board will also reflect more broadly on MATCH's strategic contribution within the feminist and international development communities, regularly assessing the extent of MATCH's network, ability to bring meaning and support to the work of others, and its engagement and contribution in collaborations and partnerships.

In addition to a governing Board of Directors, a Women's Social Innovation Fund committee will be established to oversee the fund. This committee will make recommendations based on consensus, and ultimately report grant recommendations to the MATCH Board of Directors for approval. Members of the committee will represent Canadian and southern women's rights organizations, relevant academic faculties including women's studies departments and international development programs, relevant advocacy organizations, private sector, philanthropic and/or donor representatives. The committee will be intentional about the inclusion of multiple perspectives, particularly in relation to ensuring a range of multigenerational and global feminist representation.

As a Canadian charity, it is important for MATCH to keep its support base informed, engaged and connected. It will be an organizational priority to spend some time learning about the best ways to connect with and grow our base. We have been overwhelmed by the amount of goodwill and support shown to MATCH by loyal and committed donors and partners over the last several years. MATCH will invest in strengthening our ability to communicate with this group, and commit to sharing candidly our progress as we take undertake our evolution.

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