Gendered Outcome Mapping Framework

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Introduction

With a rising concern to encourage women participation in ICT4D initiatives, evaluation methodologies are sought, that highlight practitioners' focus on gender issues in project implementation. Majority of project development methodologies address gender only implicitly. This is because it is believed that women can automatically benefit from the development programs, assuming that both men and women have equality in access to opportunities and treatments provided through the program [1]. However in reality, gender analysis of communities reveal that ICT access present changes in power relations in class, race ethnicity, location, etc. propelling complex and hidden inequalities among the two gender that affect social change. In this context, a gender-related outcome mapping approach is important in sensitizing project planners to potential gender issues from the earliest stage of their work and at the same time be easy to use within the project timelines.

Gendered Outcome Mapping (OMg) presents a comprehensive methodology for infusing a gender focus within the project design, coupled with a utilization focused evaluation perspective to project evaluation. Gendered Outcome Mapping (OMg) is unique as it includes gender analysis at the outset of the project development hence integrates the gender perspective into all phases of project, including design, implementation and evaluation. OMg is organized into four phases, intentional design, M&E planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. The OMg framework through its Intentional Design phase assist the project planners to articulate how its outcomes in terms of changes in behavior of the people especially women will contribute to the large-scale development-related changes. The framework helps to create a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities that women are confronted with, to help develop strategies and interventions that can especially improve women participation and for their benefit.

Gendered Outcome Mapping OM^g (based on the *Outcome Mapping* approach [2]) advocates a utilization focused evaluation that has been developed by researchers working on PAN Localization project [3], funded by IDRC, Canada, an ICT4D initiative focusing on providing information access in ten Asian countries (Af, Bd, Bt, Kh, Np, Sl, La, Pk, In, Cn) by developing localized ICTs, training grass-root communities on the technology and developing locally relevant content based on the indigenous needs.

Implementation process

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Gendered Outcome Mapping **(**OM^g*)* framework is an analytical tool developed by PAN Localization Project to effectively plan, monitor, and evaluate development projects with a specific gender focus. The uniqueness of the framework is in its strength to demonstrate how the project's outputs and outcomes have contributed to the large-scale development-related changes that the project aims to encourage. Concurrently, the framework also assesses the responsiveness of projects towards gender issues.

OMg framework acquires motivation from the Outcome Mapping (OM) methodology developed by the International Development Research Center (IDRC), Canada. OM is a methodology for planning, monitoring and evaluating programmes and projects. This methodology has been used successfully in several development programs ranging from education and health to environment. Outcome Mapping is based on the concept that development is accomplished by promoting behavioral change among people and organizations. It challenges more traditional approaches to monitoring and evaluation by retreating from appraising projects on the basis of accomplishment of certain indicators and achieving only quantitative targets. This technique focuses on assessing a project's developmental impact toward changes in behaviour, relationships, activities and actions of people, groups, and organizations that project targets. OMg inherits these foci of the outcome mapping framework and targets learning more about behavior changes that the projects help contribute to the environment. OMg extends the OM framework by making the monitoring and evaluation more explicit for gender.

The gender focus entrenched within the OMg framework has acquired inspiration from the Gender Evaluation Methodology (GEM) for Internet and ICTs. GEM is a tool developed by the Association for Progressive Communications Women's Networking Support Programme (APC WNSP) for integrating gender analysis into evaluations of projects that use Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for social change.

The Gender Evaluation Methodology has been used by various ICT initiatives in different domains: e.g. community telecenter programs, education and training initiatives for women, employment projects, networking and community building projects and women's ICT media, information and advocacy projects.

Thus as a first step, the project team collaborated with Gender Evaluation Methods project to chalk out a methodology of integrating gender within the outcome mapping framework in order to serve the dual objectives of the project. Given the flexibility and generalizability of the OM approach, it was decided to follow OM as the base methodology and gender focus to be infused within the basis framework. The ideology of GEM is to integrate gender analysis into evaluations of initiatives by using ICTs for social change, is finest matched with our PAN project. Gendered Outcome Mapping (OMg) is principally an enhancement of the Outcome Mapping framework for planning, monitoring and evaluating development projects with an explicit focus on identification and addressing gender concerns in the project.

Within OMg, adopting a gender analysis means integrating gender perspective in all phases of project development (design, implementation and evaluation). OMg requires that each stage of the project be seen through a gender lens, informed by gender analysis. The OMg

framework assists a project team not only to see how its outcomes have contributed to the large-scale development-related changes that the project aims to encourage, but also concurrently allows them to plan, monitor and eventually gauge the responsiveness of projects towards gender issues. This framework helps create a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities that development interventions present to women. Based on the Outcome Mapping methodology, OMg comprises of the following three phases, as illustrated in Figure 1.

1. Project Planning Phase

    a. Intentional Design

    b. Monitoring and Evaluation Planning

2. Monitoring Phase

3. Evaluation Phase
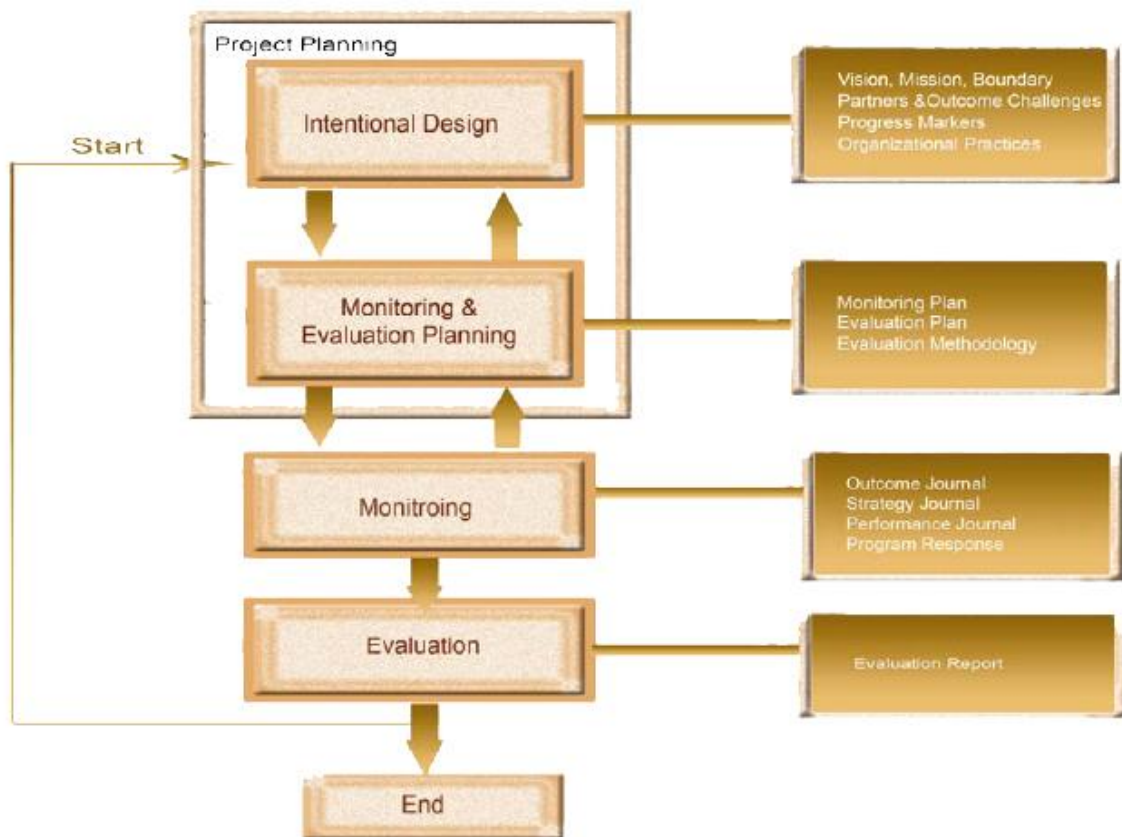
These stages are discussed in more detail below.

Figure 1: Three Stages of OM^g

1. Project Planning Phase

Within OMg framework it is intended that the project is completely planned during its project planning phases (Intentional Design and M&E planning). During these phases the project goals and objectives are determined, potential stakeholders are identified and project execution strategies are developed. Plans for monitoring the stakeholders' progress and overall evaluation of the project are also developed and finalized. OMg framework requires that each phase of the project be seen through a gender lens at the initial planning phase, to embed gender based thinking from the beginning of the project work.

A genuine sense of ownership of the project by all stakeholders including project team is considered as a crucial factor in OMg. All stakeholders must be involved in a participatory process from the initial stages of project planning. Time must be spent with stakeholders in order to build trust.

As described in the figure, the project planning phase is logically sub-divided into the following two phases: Intentional Design phase and Monitoring and Evaluation Phase.

Brief description of the project planning sub-phases is given below.

1.1. Intentional Design

Intentional Design phase initiates project planning. In this phase, the project team sets the project vision, mission, boundary partners, progress markers, strategy maps, and organizational practices.
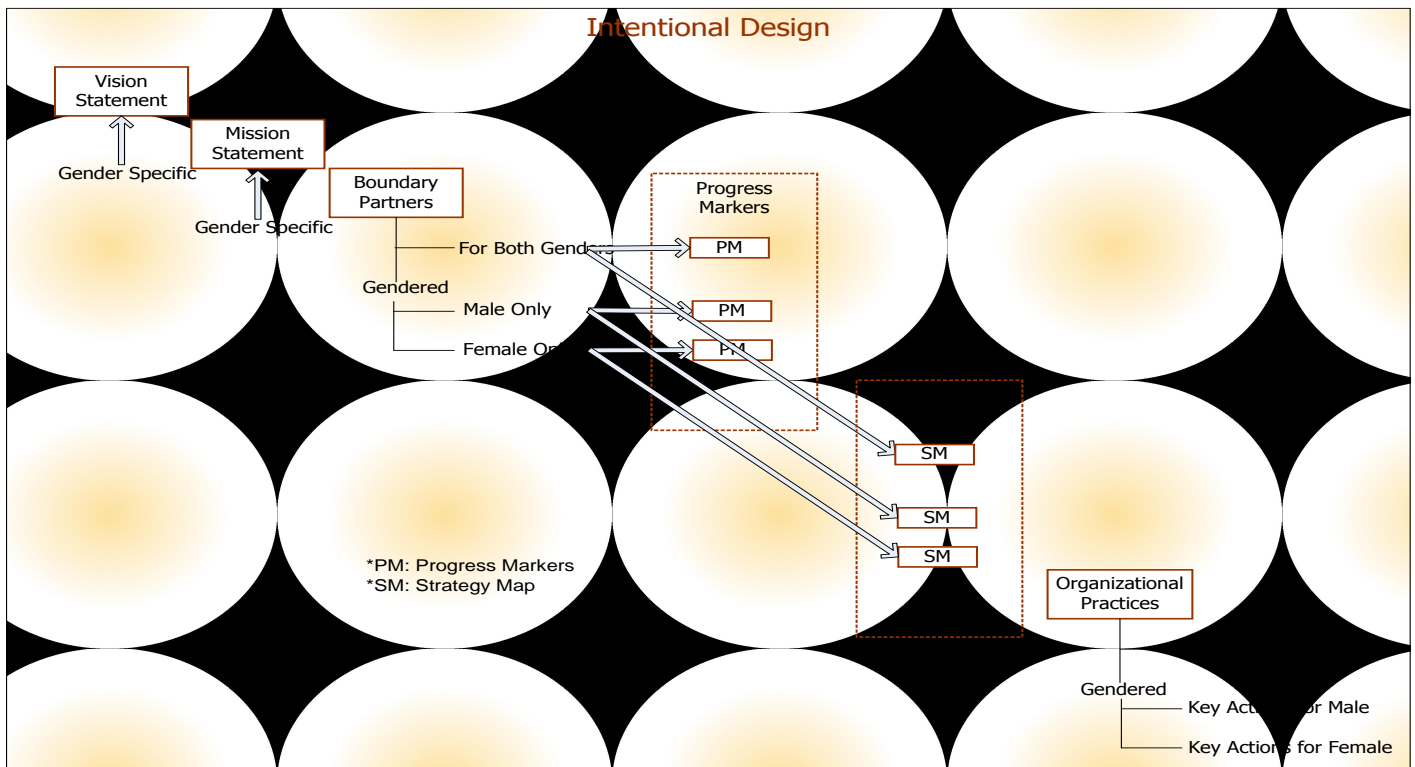

Figure 2: Intentional Design

Gendered Outcome Mapping emphasise that in order to make the project sensitive to gender concerns, such a gendered focus must be visible in the project's vision and mission statements. This is because, often project vision and mission statements are gender neutral, and it is assumed that development of women will occur automatically by providing equal treatment for both men and women within the project. However, OM^g requires project implementers to look at the vision separately from the perspective of each gender by knowing the skills and strengths of participants of both genders. Similarly the mission statement is also considered in a gender specific manner, driving planners to focus on gender explicitly, early in the project.

The OM project planning templates have been modified so that the gender specification has been included in OM^g. The project planners are explicitly required to affirm which one of the three gender groups is applicable at different levels: (i) male, (ii) female, or (iii) both genders. The gender-explicit process starts with the definition of the boundary partner, the central focus for monitoring and observing changes in the behaviour.

Similarly, when defining the outcomes for these boundary partners, unique challenge may be developed for each of the three gender groups as shown in figure 2. If there is difference across gender in the way the program will progress for different genders, the program may develop separate (or additional) progress markers for male and female members, even of the same boundary partner.

When developing the strategy map, OM^g framework pays particular attention for developing specific strategies to address each gender. If an outcome challenge is for both genders, then in addition to developing generic strategies to involve both gender groups, the team may design additional specific strategies for male and/or female participants.

According to OM^g, the project team must also focus on how organizational practices will contribute effectively to incorporate gender concerns into the organizational practices. The framework helps a program identify the factors that create gender biases in an organization and thus works towards adoption of measures to eliminate them. Efforts must also be made to explore new partnerships and opportunities that could help program to fulfil its mission. Gender awareness is essential in such prospecting for new ideas and opportunities. Gender expert may be consulted in this process. When obtaining feedback on the program from people, woman informants must also be selected, in addition to male participants. The program also needs to sensitize higher management to gender issues. OM^g requires the program to review its product and services regularly with gender sensitivity. The program needs to improve over time to respond to needs of both men and women.

1.2.   M&E Planning Phase

Once there is a clear picture of Intentional design, a detailed monitoring and evaluation plan could be designed. It is an integral component of project planning phase.

A Monitoring Plan is developed to monitor the progress of boundary partners towards the achievement of outcomes; the program's strategies to support outcomes; and the organizational practices used. First, however, the team has to set monitoring priorities and determines the priority areas among the program framework defined through the intentional design phase, that will be further monitored and areas that will be evaluated in depth.

The team must be clear on the intended use of the monitoring information. The team must be clear also on who will use the findings and when they will use them. The Monitoring Plan also identifies how data will be collected, at what frequency, and by whom. This will enable program to feed the information produced by the monitoring into future activities.

Based on the monitoring priorities, data collection instruments are developed. An Outcome Journal is used to collect data on the boundary partners' achievement of progress markers. A Strategy Journal is used to collect data on the program's strategies in support of the boundary partner. A Performance Journal is used to collect data on the organizational practices being employed by the program.

The OMg framework follows the principles of a gender-based approach to evaluation and supports the application of gender analysis in monitoring and evaluation. A gender sensitive evaluation must use the experiences of women as the foundation of evaluation planning and analysis. Evaluation must consider whether the project has made a difference in the lives of women. Evaluation is viewed as an empowerment tool for all participants including women. Composition and expertise of the project team is seen through a gender lens which is truly possible if the team members involved in monitoring and evaluations have necessary gender analysis skills.

The OMg framework helps the program prepare a reliable and valid Evaluation Plan. The project evaluation plan is a description of the evaluation issues of prime importance to the program. A key element of a sound evaluation plan is careful selection of the evaluation issues to be addressed by the program. The clearer and more detailed these statements are, the more likely that the team will be able to provide reliable and valid answers to them.

The Evaluation Plan provides valuable information concerning evaluation issue. The frequency at which the evaluation will be conducted is also planned. The Evaluation Plan describes all the evaluation instruments and tools to be used in the evaluation. The plan costs out the finances for the evaluation. An adequate budget to conduct the evaluation is estimated. The evaluators are also identified.

An Evaluation Plan is developed with a detailed description of the evaluation methodology. Terminologies used in evaluation are defined. The parties responsible for various aspects of data collection, analysis, and reporting are clarified. The utilization of the evaluation information is as important as the systematic collection and analysis of reliable data. Relevant primary and secondary users for evaluation results are identified. These users are involved in the planning and conduct of the evaluation. This section asks the team to identify the parties (individuals, organizations) that will use the evaluation findings. The team is encouraged to think about how the evaluation findings will be used. The team must be as

specific as possible about who will use the findings and when they will use them. This will enable program to feed the information produced by the evaluation into decision making process.

2. Monitoring Phase

The progress of boundary partners towards the achievement of outcomes, the program's strategies and the organizational practices are monitored through Outcome Journal, Strategy Journal and Performance Journal respectively. OMg helps the program design these data collection instruments, but their usefulness will depend on the commitment of the team to collect data regularly and reflect on their work honestly.

These journals are used to record periodic changes to the program specifically focusing on the project progress in terms of the achievement of the Outcome Challenge, the Strategies employed or the effectiveness of the Organizational Practices in place.

The over-all program's response to the project strategies and planned implementation is recorded on Program Response template.

3. Evaluation Phase

OM^g does not prescribe a specific way to evaluate the project. However it provides planning tools and all the necessary data to aid the evaluator in concluding and learning about the project team's performance. Thus based on the data gathered through the journals and the evaluation methodology described by the team, evaluator can judge the performance of the project and its teams in achieving its objectives as set out in the outcome challenge statements and the project mission. An evaluation report must be developed at the end of the evaluation phase which would synthesize the findings and the evaluator's interpretation of the project success/failure to meet its objectives.

Gendered OMg Tool

Data collected using paper and pencil is prone to transcription errors, loss, and damage and takes time to enter into file databases, another process prone to human error. This paperwork problem presented a tremendous problem to management. This challenge was grown day by day and became even more important and the volume of paperwork was continually growing. This resulted into the consumption of more resources and time for sharing of learning and knowledge because key stakeholders were geographically apart. For retrieval of particular information we have to search into bundle of files. Therefore there was a great need to develop an application that provide an automated implementation of OMg to provide the donors or funding agencies an interactive way to monitor and evaluate the research and development of projects.

In CRULP-NU, www.crulp.org we developed web application, ww.genderedom.net that caters all points of Gendered Outcome. OM^g tool provides an online platform/workplace for planning, monitoring and evaluation of programs and projects. The tool helps out the

implementing organization and funding agency by online Project Development, Remote Monitoring, and online Project Reporting.

The tool enables the users to share the experiences and project document with other project members, and OMg users. Authentication and authorization is embedded into the tool, to ensure the security and leverage level of users.

The OMg tool facilitates the users to make sure whether the gender-sensitive Issues are the part of project vision/mission statement.

Figure 3: Mission Statement

The tool solicits the project planner to explicitly affirm which one of the three gender groups is applicable for boundary partner: (i) male, (ii) female, or (iii) both genders. The gender-explicit process starts with the definition of the boundary partner, the central focus for monitoring and observing changes in the behaviour. As an example, instead of identifying "Student" (gender: *both genders*) as a boundary partner for a training program, "Male Students" (gender: *male*) and "Female Students" (gender: *female*) may be chosen as different boundary partners.

Figure 4: Gender Specification in Boundary Partners

Similarly gender inclusion is present in progress markers and strategy map for each boundary partner, shown in figure 5 & 6 respectively.

Figure 5: Progress Markers

Figure 6: Strategy Map

According to OM^g, the project team must also focus on how organizational practices will contribute effectively to incorporate gender concerns into the organizational practices. OMg tool helps to define Organizational practices in a gender specific way, as shown in Figure 7.
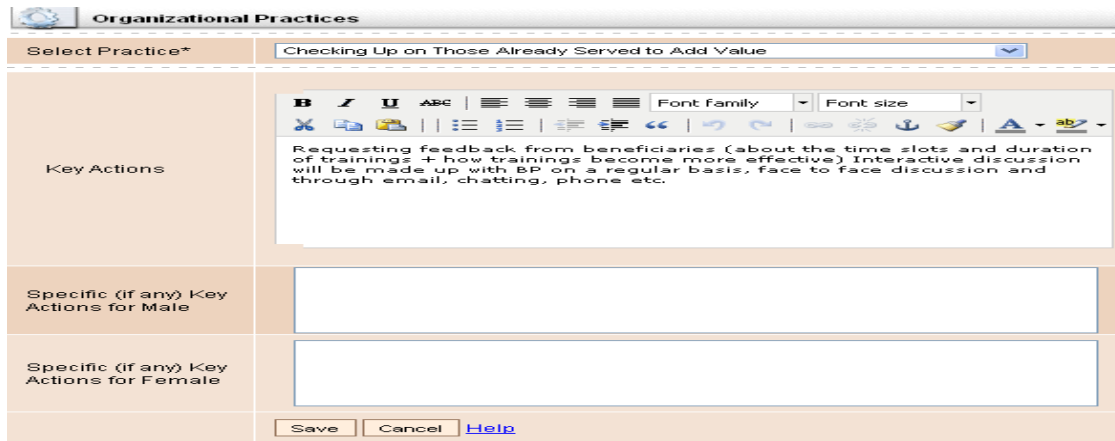
Figure 7: Organizational Practices

OMg tool helps out the automatic project report generation with one click. List of project reports is depicted in figure 8.
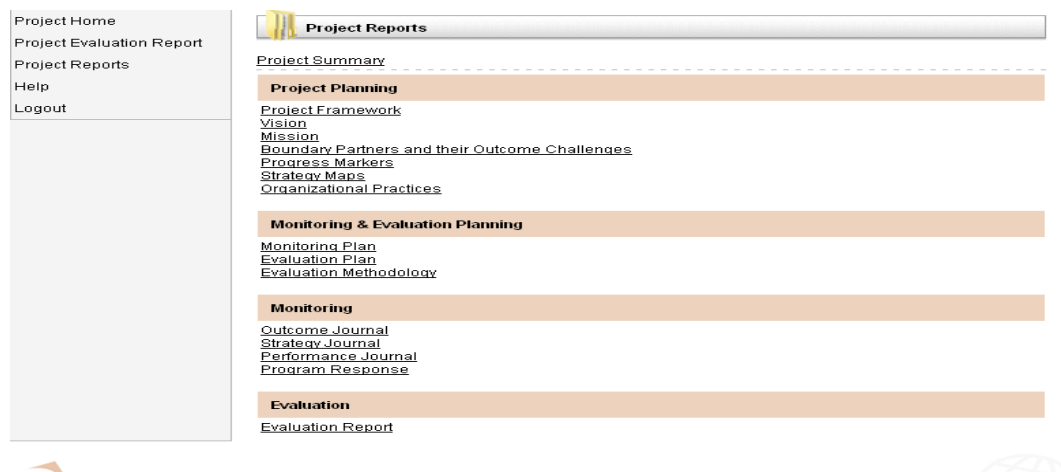

Figure 8: Project Reports

To ease the users, help manual is integrated in tool. User can get the information about each action by clicking the help link present on each page and left side navigation. The help manual provide the information about OMg framework and tool as well.

For further information about the tool, a demo application is also available online at http://demo.genderedom.net/Login.php , user can navigate/use the tool by one step sign up. Tool is also available in downloadable form at sourceforge, accessible at http://sourceforge.net/projects/crulpomg/

Challenges

Although the use of OM helped to create a reliable project planning process but there was certain factors that place obstacles in use of OM; especially the environment, time, and resources capacities.

One of the overruling challenges was the difficulty of accepting M & E. In Pakistan the organizations pay less attention to M & E and most of time they use traditional methods like case studies, discussions, and survey forms. Very few organization use Logical Framework Approach for their projects. One can observe that people and thus organizations face difficulty accepting change and taking on challenges.   To overcome this problem by highlighting the benefits of proper planning, M & E, we have arranged workshop and invited different organizations to participate. These workshops help out the organizations to build trust on M & E.

Another major challenge of OM application was the lack of knowledge about the methodology at different levels and little interest in learning about it. OM was new in the Pakistan and very few organizations were familiar with the methodology. This problem was overcome through the workshops and training sessions.

References

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[2] S. Earl, F. Carden and T. Smutylo, "Outcome Mapping: Building Learning and Reflection into Development Programs, IDRC, 2001
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