

## **An Assessment of Access to Urban Land for Housing by Public Servants in Motta Town, Amhara, Ethiopia**

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### **ABSTRACT**

One of the key challenges in urban centers has been the lack of access to affordable land and housing. The study has been conducted on Motta town of East Gojjam zone Amhara Regional state of Ethiopia with overall objective of Assessing of Access by Public Servants to Urban Land for Housing in Motta Town. In order to achieve the objective 141 sample of public servants had been selected for survey questionnaire and 5 land management experts selected for structured interview. The study used both primary and secondary data and was analyzed through SPSS software and Microsoft office Excel. Finding of the study shows that most of the public servant of the town acquires land through paid initial lease cost with allotment. In addition, acquiring land the vast majority public servants faced a problem. As a result, Marriage, family size, income level and educational level have positive correlation with the efforts and gaining access to urban land for housing. The major factors responsible to access urban land are income, bureaucratic tendency of housing development and construction office, lack of transparency and accountability and asking high amount of compensation to expropriate farmers land. The proportion of demand and supply of urban land in Motta town is not proportional depending on land supply. The current urban land allocation through allotment makes it difficult to fulfill infrastructures services, because the places were far from the central town. It's a challenge to provide services in this area. The city administration and housing development and construction office of Motta town has made a substantial effort to ensure provision of urban land access for public servants.

### **Key words**

Public servant, acquire land, access land, housing land, serviced land

## INTRODUCTION

Land is the source of all material wealth; it provides us with all our needs to sustain on. It is also a major economic and social asset from which people and nations get significant profit. (Aubry and Rau, 1966). Whereas land administration is the way in which the rules of land tenure are applied and made operational. Land administration, whether formal or informal, comprises an extensive range of systems and processes to administer (FAO, 2002). In addition to that a recent document published by FAO defines land tenure as a “relationship” whether legally or customarily defined, among people, as individuals or groups, with respect to land (FAO, 2002).

In simple terms, land tenure systems determine who can use what resources for how long, and under what conditions. The rate of urbanization is directly related to the demand for houses. As the world is urbanizing; many cities are grappling with a population that is growing rapidly, thereby increasing demand for land and housing. It is expected that as a country becomes more urban, more houses were needed to accommodate the increasing population in urban centers. The United Nations states that every citizen of the world is entitled to be sheltered. Thus, more than one billion of the world's city residents live in inadequate housing, mostly in the sprawling slums and squatter settlements in developing countries (UNCHS, 2001). Domfeh (1992) notes, that it is also a means of facilitating family integration and cohesion, which is desired by all. Securing access to land for housing in urban areas of developing countries seems to be a very difficult task. This pressure on land and housing markets often is exacerbated by inappropriate or inadequate policies. Access to land for housing in Ethiopia can be a very annoying risk. The process of land acquisition is beset with a lot of problems and many prospective individual home owners have had to abandon the idea of owning a home altogether.

Urban centers housed a small proportion of the total population in Ethiopia; most of these places are characterized by acute shortage of housing and overcrowding. The problem might have aggravated by difficulties of individuals in securing access to urban land for housing. (Solomon, 1994)

The continuous growth and expansion of Ethiopian cities has increased the gap between the supply and demand of urban land and housing. Although the current housing policy of Ethiopia is also criticized for not favoring the low and middle income households, except the government led housing construction of condominium in the capital city and few regional centers. Because acquiring land housing through competitive based lease holding is unthinkable for the low and middle income households.

Thus, the major problem facing affordable housing for low and moderate income Ethiopians has been access to housing finance. Obviously, this implies that government employees who are categorized under the low and middle income are dominant victims of these problems. In today's urban settlements people finds the land arranged out in to small plots to be bought, rented or allotted by other personalities regardless of his capacity to pay or his location choice. Even if gains access to land, he no longer can build home with his own tools and talents. The decision how and where he can build his own home is made by others.

Land delivery system in Ethiopia has under gone different land tenure systems. This has largely been a reflection of the prevailing land policy and land holding tenure systems of the country under different governance regimes. Notable examples include the freehold land tenure system (pre 1975), public controlled permit system (1975-1992) and public lease hold system (1993 till date) (Abay, 2005). In 1994, new Ethiopian constitution was promulgated and constitution Article 40, sub section 3 retains land is the exclusively vested in the state and in the people. It further stipulates that land is a common property of nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia and shall not be subject to sale or other means of exchange. While every Ethiopian citizen has the right to own private property, article 40 sub section one of the constitution, does not provide for the private ownership of land (Abay, 2005).

### **Statement of the Problem**

In Ethiopia, in general and Amhara region in particular the practice indicated that land and housing regulations make housing unaffordable. Unrealistically high standards for sub division, project infrastructure, and construction make it impossible to build low-income housing legally. Furthermore, urban land supply has been limited by extensive public ownership of land and unclear land transfer procedures, unrealistic standards for land and infrastructure development, complex procedures of urban planning and unclear responsibilities among public agencies and Limited land supply will cause the prices to increase (Belalchew, 2010). Amhara Regional urban land policy by default exclude right of access to land for development of housing; because land is allocated through sale in which the low income group of the society cannot afford. Due to this problem a number of challenges have observed. For example, land supply constraints a rise in prices and demand for urban land, bureaucratic tendencies, weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, inadequate databank systems, shortage of financial resources, lack of participation by the poor, the poor's lack of ability to pay for the land, lack of transparency in service delivery, most land allocation procedure based on the attempting

system which favors the most rich, existing standards requirements are still too high for the chronically for low income group (Abuye, 2006).

Currently Motta town faces shortage of urban land for housing development. Where the consequences of the problem have manifested through different ways such as proliferation of informal settlement, an over increasing of houses rents, informal house developers, informal land market, land speculation which resulted to reduce the savings of public servants, would resulted negative impact on the environment.

In view of existing situation, access to urban land for housing in Motta town was assess by different variables, which affect access to urban land for housing with special emphasis on the case of public servants in the town. More over socio economic consequences of lack of access to urban land for public servants had also been examined.

### **Objectives of the Study**

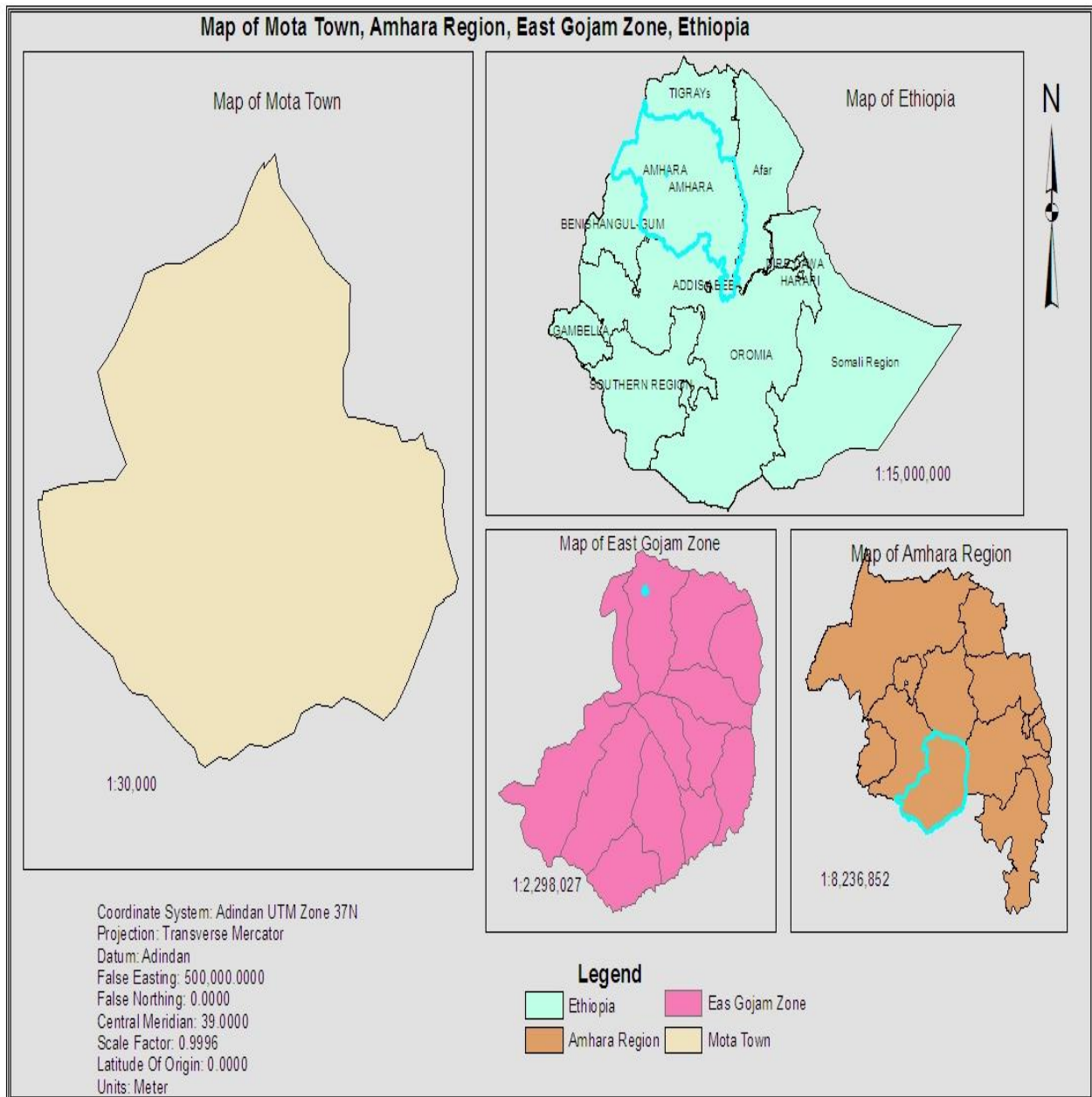
The General objective of this study is to assess the factors that hinder public servants from accessing urban land for housing and its consequences on their socio economic condition, the following specific objectives to achieve the desired goals of this study.

- To assess the factors responsible for in access to urban land for housing to public servants in Motta town.
- To explore the demand and supply situation of urban land for housing to public servants.
- To examine the major socio-economic consequences of lack of access to land for housing.
- To suggest measures to improve access to urban land for public servants in Motta town.

### **Description of the Study Area**

The study is conducted in Motta town. It is the second largest town of East Gojjam zone next to Debre Markos that is found in Amhara region of Ethiopia and established around 17 century during the period of Ate susnyos. Its astronomical location is 11° 04' N Latitude & 37° 52' East Longitude. It is found at a distance of 370kms from Addis Ababa, 120kms from Bahir Dar (the regional capital) and 196 kms from Debre Markos (the zonal capital). Geographically the town is bounded by the adjoining rural villages namely Meklit laymariyam in the north, Yereze Atetanate in the south, Beru Georges in the west and Hebere Selam in the east. The town is divided in to four urban Kebele's and it is the centre of two governmental administration office such as Motta town administration office and Hulete Eiju Enesse woreda administration offices. The area coverage of the town is 776.3 hectare. The total

population of Motta town is 38,200 (MTFEDO, 2015). Twon has Woina Dega agro climatic zone with an average monthly minimum and maximum temperature of 9.70c and 22.10c respectively with moderate climatic conditions and receives moderate rain fall throughout the year. The social groups that live in the town came from the same societies and all can speak their own native Amharic common language.



**Figure:1 Map of the Study Area**

**Source: Google Earth, 2016**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this study both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were employed. The study involves both statistical and narrative techniques of description. Statistical aspects which focused upon the data with numeric nature are selected to address the research objective that aimed to assess the existing condition and narrative type provides a more explanatory power to it. The data gathering tools like questionnaire, interview and field observation were used. The study also used both probability and non-probability sampling to list public servants. Simple random sampling technique to select sample of 146 respondents randomly from the total survey population, non-probability sampling method is used to conduct in-depth interview with 5 purposely selected from housing development and construction office experts, signify the roles of concerned governmental organizations in promoting urban land to public servants towards own shelter. In order to get the required information from the target population of the town, sample respondents were selected.

The data collected from different sources had been processed, analyzed and interpreted by relevant statistical tools. Accordingly, respondents had been categorized, percentages were used to analyze the demographic characteristics of the sample population such as sex, educational qualification and work experiences and frequency count is employed to analyze various characteristics of sample population and to describe similarities and differences between the respondents.

On the other hand, data collection through interview was presented and analyzed qualitatively by directly reflecting and narrating the interviewee's word. Data obtained from documents of municipality and other sources had been analyze by quoting and reflecting on issues of access to urban land for housing. All types of computations for the analysis of data were done by using SPSS and Microsoft office excel.

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **Results and Discussions**

#### **Socio - Economic Characteristics of Respondents**

The socio-economic characteristic of respondents was analyzed with the following general questions in respect of sex, age, marital status, educational level, years of work experience, family size, monthly income, and distance of residence from work place.

**Table: 1 Socio - Economic Characteristics of Respondents**

| <b>Sex</b>                | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Male                      | 94               | 66.7%          |
| Female                    | 47               | 33.3%          |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>141</b>       | <b>100.0%</b>  |
| <b>Age</b>                | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
| 20-30                     | 52               | 36.9%          |
| 31-40                     | 72               | 51.1%          |
| 41-49                     | 11               | 7.8%           |
| 50 and above              | 6                | 4.3%           |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>141</b>       | <b>100%</b>    |
| <b>Marital status</b>     | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
| Single                    | 29               | 20.6%          |
| Married                   | 100              | 70.9%          |
| Divorced                  | 9                | 6.4%           |
| Separated                 | 3                | 2.1%           |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>141</b>       | <b>100%</b>    |
| <b>Educational level</b>  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
| Diploma                   | 33               | 23.4%          |
| Degree                    | 100              | 70.9%          |
| Above Bachelor degree     | 8                | 5.7%           |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>141</b>       | <b>100%</b>    |
| <b>Year of Experience</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
| 1-8                       | 58               | 41.1%          |
| 9-16                      | 59               | 41.8%          |
| 17-25                     | 21               | 14.9%          |
| Above 26                  | 3                | 2.1%           |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>141</b>       | <b>100%</b>    |
| <b>No of Family size</b>  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
| 1-2                       | 82               | 58.2%          |
| 3-4                       | 54               | 38.3%          |
| 5-6                       | 3                | 2.1%           |
| 7-8                       | 2                | 1.4%           |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>141</b>       | <b>100.%</b>   |

Source:own survey data, 2017

As indicated in the above table 66.7% of the respondents are male and the remaining 33.3% were female. Acquiring urban land for housing development in Motta town is highly dominated by male public servant in comparison of the female public servants.

The age structure of respondent lies within the range of 31-40 years is 51.1%. 36.9% of respondents found at the age interval of 20-30,8% of respondents found at 41-49 and the remaining 4.3 %

respondents were above 50 ages. From the data the highest proportion of respondents found between 31- 40 age groups. This age group is highly demanding for accessing urban land for housing development in the town.

The marital status of respondent about 20.6% was single, 70.9% were married, 6.4% were divorced and 2.1% were lives to different place separately. The majority respondents are married, from this most public servants in the study area were the owner of household and administer their family and obtain housing land to construct their own residential house.

Education level indicates from the total number of respondents 23.4% are diploma level, 70.9% degree and the remaining 5.7% above bachelor degree and get good amount of money compared to other respondents. Survey shows that most of the respondents are degree level education, implies that a large number of respondents are educated.

Work experience play a significant role in achieving the desired goal 58 (41%) of the respondents had 1-8 year of experience, other 59 (41.8%) had 9-16 years' experience. On the other hand, 21 (14.9%) was 17-25 year of experience. The remaining 3 (2.1%) respondents found above 26 year of experience.

The family size of the total respondents 82 (58.2) had 1-2 family members, while 54 (38.3%) had 3-4 in the family, 3 (2.1%) had 5-6 family member and the remaining 2 (1.4%) had 2 family members in their residential house. The family size is highly linked with monthly saving. This implies that the respondents with large family sizes spend much amount of money to fulfill their family basic needs. So it has difficult to obtain land by paying lease and compensation cost.

The survey shows that who earned monthly income between 2501-4000 and above 4001 by individual influences his/her living condition and this circumstance is expected to influence public servants in access to housing land, the higher income public servants to get housing land and construct their own dwellings in urban area. There is a direct relation between high monthly income and gaining housing land in urban area Therefore, one of the major problems in access to housing land to be financial constraint or inadequate income level.

**Land Obtain Means and Problems:** Urban land obtains in different ways for the purpose of constructing their houses in urban areas. In Motta town most of the public servants obtain land and built their dwellings by using opportunities like allotment, inheritance, gift and purchasing land from individual urban land owners in the town. The survey data shows that 82 (58.2%) respondents acquired land by allotment, 45(31.9%) by purchasing to urban land owners the other 9(6.45%)



inherited from their family and the remaining 5(3.5%) acquire through gift from somebody else. The size of land used to construct residential houses in the study area is 200 square meters, because most of the respondents obtain land through allotment from Motta town housing development and construction office. The other two categories of 300 and 250 square meters housing land acquired through purchasing and inheritance from someone else. The remaining less than 150 square meter is access by gift and build their houses. Therefore, the vast majority public servants acquired land for housing development through allotment in the study area.

### **Problems Faced in Acquiring Urban Land for Housing**

Most of the time in urban centers there are many challenges faced during access serviced land for the purpose constructing residential house. 86(61.0) respondents faced problem in acquiring urban land for housing development. However the remaining 55(39.0%) respondents not faced any problem in acquiring urban land in the town. The respondents mention some problem faced during accessing land are financial constraint or shortage of capital, inadequate skilled manpower, the presence of highly corrupt managers, complex procedures to transfer ownership right of land, extended bureaucratic procedures and being ask high amount of lease and compensation cost were the major shortcomings.

*In depth, interview conducted with housing development and construction vice manager ensured that the main problems in urban land provision were site selection, lack of skilled manpower, shortage of inadequate serviced land, the imbalance of supply and demand of urban land, to take extended time in land provision were the major problem for public servants in the town.*

### **The Infrastructure Service and Social Facility Provisions**

Local authorities are often under pressure to supply infrastructure to all newly developing area, yet meeting all demands at the same time may impossible, necessitating an incremental approach (UNCHS, 2001).

**Table:2 Response towards infrastructure and social facilities**

| Items                             | Responses    | Frequency  | Percentage  |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Size of Lots                      | Satisfied    | 40         | 28.4        |
|                                   | dissatisfied | 82         | 58.2        |
|                                   | Indifferent  | 19         | 13.5        |
|                                   | <b>Total</b> | <b>141</b> | <b>100%</b> |
| Nearness to place of work         | Satisfied    | 75         | 53.2        |
|                                   | dissatisfied | 56         | 39.7        |
|                                   | Indifferent  | 10         | 7.1         |
|                                   | <b>Total</b> | <b>141</b> | <b>100%</b> |
| Nearness to the market place      | Satisfied    | 54         | 38.3        |
|                                   | dissatisfied | 74         | 52.5        |
|                                   | Indifferent  | 13         | 9.2         |
|                                   | <b>Total</b> | <b>141</b> | <b>100%</b> |
| Nearness to social facility       | Satisfied    | 53         | 37.6        |
|                                   | dissatisfied | 82         | 58.2        |
|                                   | Indifferent  | 6          | 4.3         |
|                                   | <b>Total</b> | <b>141</b> | <b>100%</b> |
| Nearness to the main road         | Satisfied    | 49         | 34.8        |
|                                   | dissatisfied | 88         | 62.4        |
|                                   | Indifferent  | 4          | 2.8         |
|                                   | <b>Total</b> | <b>141</b> | <b>100%</b> |
| Nearness to electric supply       | Satisfied    | 28         | 19.9        |
|                                   | dissatisfied | 108        | 76.6        |
|                                   | Indifferent  | 5          | 3.5         |
|                                   | <b>Total</b> | <b>141</b> | <b>100%</b> |
| Nearness to major water pipe line | Satisfied    | 19         | 13.5        |
|                                   | dissatisfied | 115        | 81.6        |
|                                   | Indifferent  | 7          | 5.0         |
|                                   | <b>Total</b> | <b>141</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Source: Field survey, 2017**

The above table discusses the various dimension of infrastructure availability in the study area, from lots size to nearness to work place, main road, electric supply and water pipeline etc. Vast majority of the respondents were not satisfied with the provision of infrastructure in their locality.

*The interview conducted with deputy manager of housing development and construction office, in the town the current urban land allocation through allotment makes difficult to fulfill the infrastructures services, because the place was far from the central town and it is becoming impossible to fulfill services with in short period of time due to shortage of finance. The deputy manager accepted that the people and residents have to walk long distance to access services.*



**Figure: 2 New Residential Site landscape, 2017**

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion based on the major findings of this research and the recommendations have been put forward to improve access to urban land by public servants for housing development.

The study brings out the following conclusions that can throw light on the existing situation of access to land for housing by public servants in Motta town.

According to the survey through questionnaire and deputy manager of housing development and construction office most of public servants acquire housing land by allotment through cooperative and the public servant paid the initial lease price. Marriage, family size, income level and educational level have positive correlation with the efforts and gaining access to urban land for housing. The inadequacies of infrastructures and social services in the new residential sites and urban land aspirants for housing development have expectation of infrastructure facilities will be available in the near future. The major factors responsible for inaccess urban land for the public servants were income, bureaucratic tendency of housing development and construction office, lack of transparency and accountability and asking high amount of compensation to expropriate farmers. The proportion of demand and supply of urban land in Motta town is not proportional to demand.

It can be concluded that the city administration, housing development and construction office of Motta town has made a substantial effort to ensure provision of access to urban land through organized cooperatively for public servants.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and discussion of the study, the following suggestions are recommended with the hope that it may help to improve access to urban land by public servants for housing development in Motta town.

Make strong partnership with private institution to provide land with minimal lease price and arranging mechanisms to get credit that can be returned in long period of time.

Develop and implement land information and land registration system and practice effective land management systems.

Adopt land readjustment system in the town and providing proper and quick services to the needy public servants by housing development and construction office with integrating city administration of the town and a number of interventions are required to fulfill infrastructure service and social facilities to new residential sites

To improve access to urban land for housing development in Motta town public servants should better to organize through housing association and self help groups. Because it enables them to deal in order to secure urban land and act as guarantee to access loan from micro financial institution and the housing development construction office and the town administration should be take full account of the need for economic development, social development and adequate urban land for all public servants

The housing development and construction office of Motta town and town administrator should be made an effort to provide infrastructure and social facilities to the new residential sites. As long as inhabitants in this area could have easy access to place of activities and services therefore, public servants who want to construct houses would be attracted to acquire land there. The housing development and construction office and town administration should embrace public servants in the programs of condominium housing development and arrange housing allowances in order to improve housing problems of the public servant.

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