

Social Networking as an Economic Development Strategy in the US and India

A collaboration of IIT Institute of Design, IIT Mumbai and Honeywell Technology Solutions, Bangalore.

The proliferation and widespread use of social networks for personal, professional and business development have established social networking as an important business development strategy. This course focused on studying how small businesses in Pilsen, Little Village and Powai, India make use of social networking to inspire the design of products, services and systems facilitating economic development in these neighborhoods.

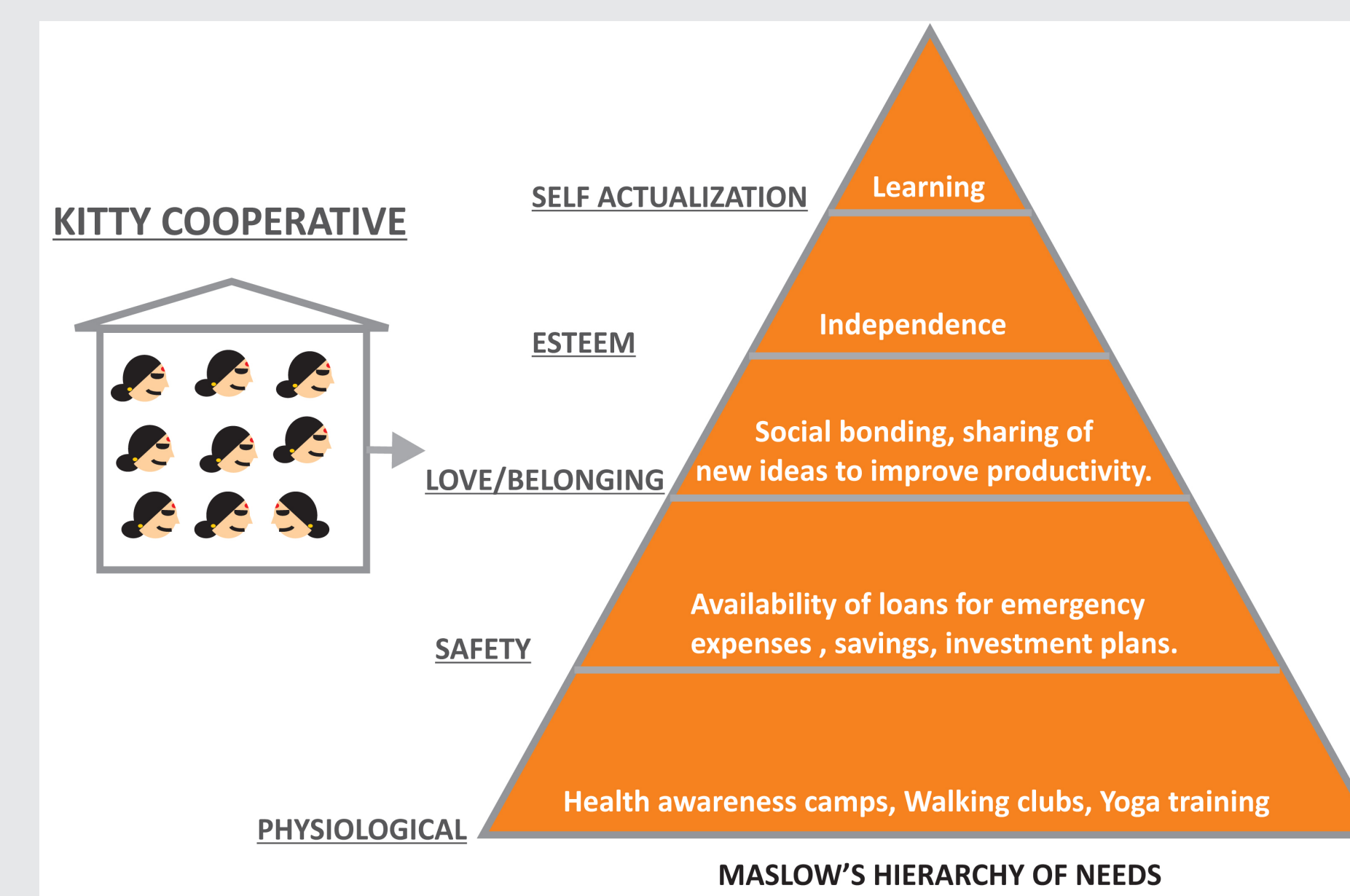
Kitty Co-operative

Kitty co-operative is aimed at stay at home women in slums of Powai, involved in assembling of raw material to make finished products.

These women currently work from home in the afternoon for minimum wages, they use their idle time to earn extra money by assembling raw material.

Kitty Co-operative is an autonomous association of women united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

Kitty co-operative provides a platform to connect socially and save for their future.



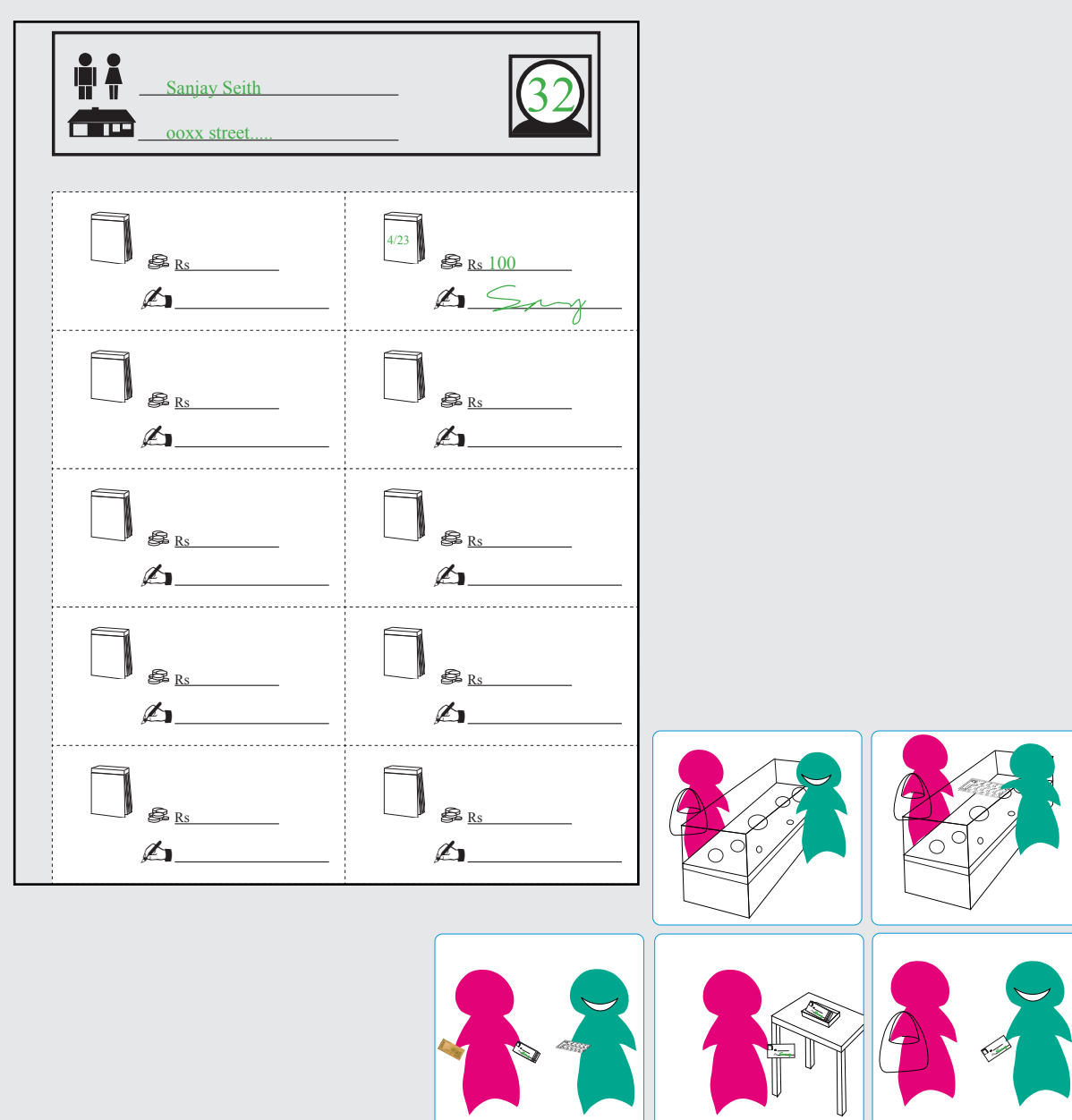
Credit Ledger

It is for both the shopkeeper and the credit buyer

It serves to keep unified records and also match records for both shopkeeper and credit buyer

It is a simpler accounting/record keeping system than the existing dual ledger system

The ledger provides a way for the customer to know exactly how much they owe to the shop at the end of each month and for the shopkeeper to have an integrated record of transactions.

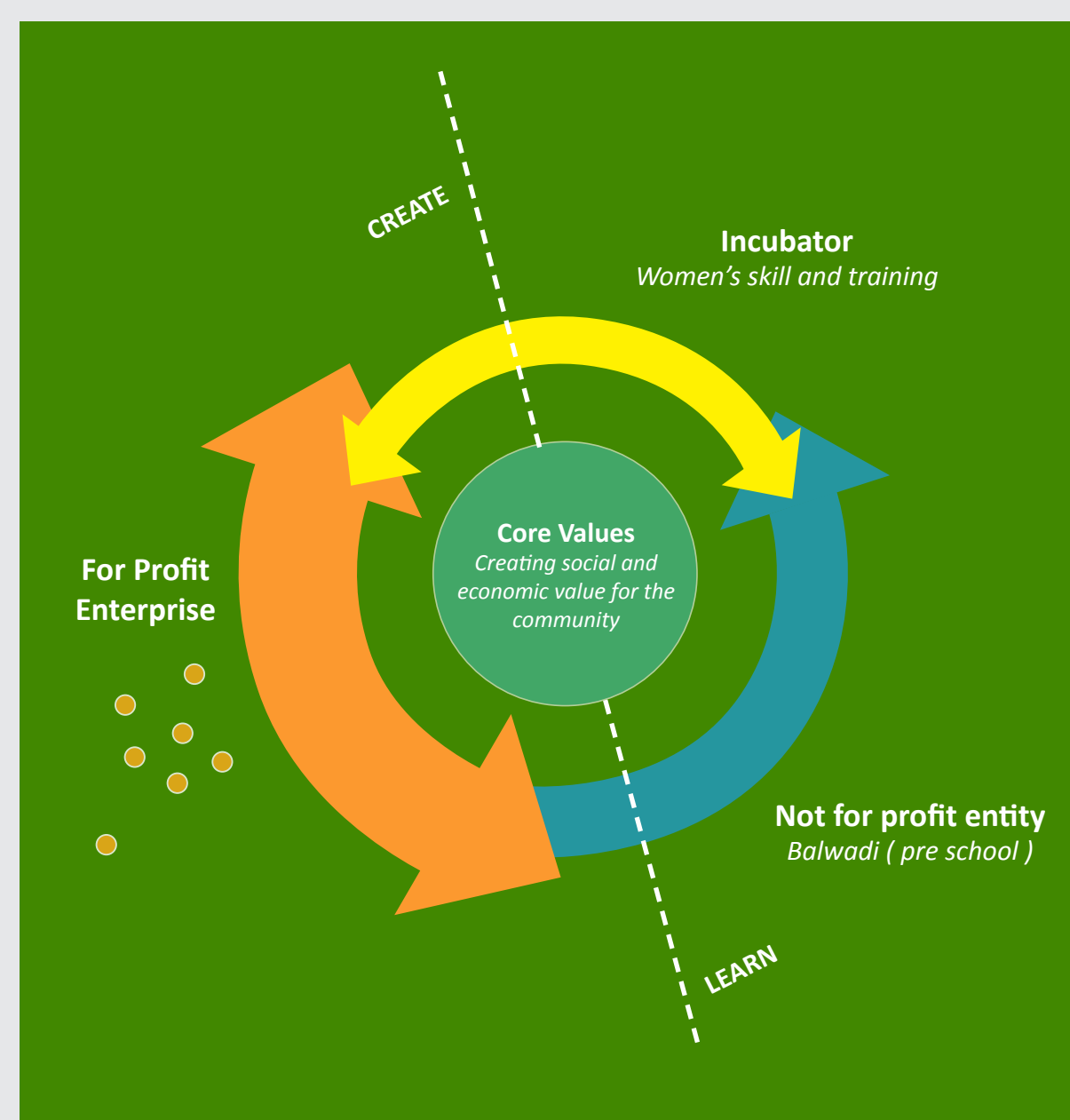


For profit - Not for profit hybrid

The current Balwadis (small preschools) in the Powai slums are implemented by NGO's with the help of corporate funding. In the same small cramped space, there also operates a tailoring and screen printing business. The business is stagnant and does not support individual growth, while the Balwadi lacks funds and resources.

We designed a business model that would be self sustaining and support manageable growth. This model is scalable and can be replicated to create networks that collaborate and help each other further.

The model consists of defined roles and relationships between a For Profit enterprise, a Not For Profit such as the preschool and an Incubator that supports both of these and makes learning and teaching an integral part of the process.

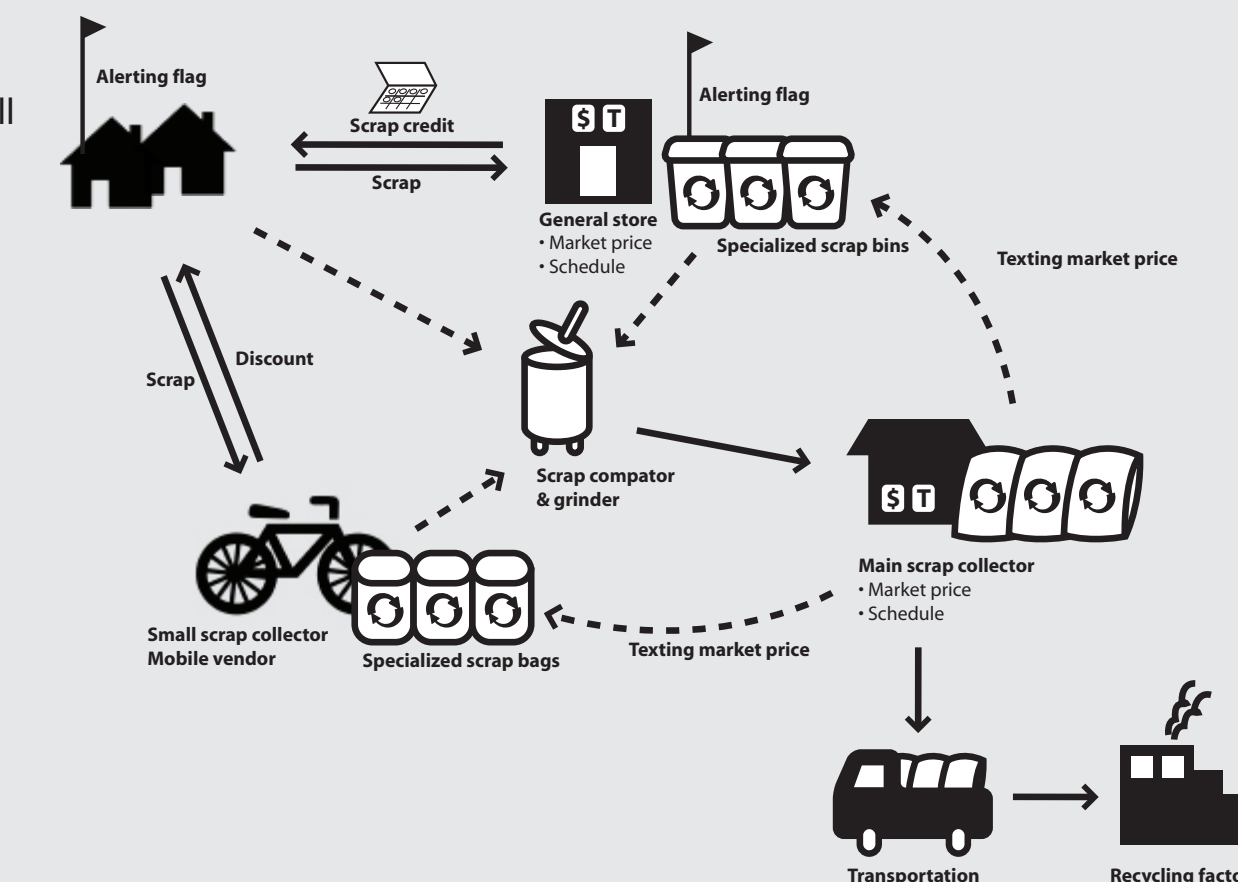


Scrap Collection System

Our solutions cater to the people of Powai, Mumbai to help them manage their recyclables better. The main people involved in the system are: the main scrap collector, small business owners, Powai residents, mobile vendors. The solution aims to nullify the inefficiencies and improve the on the existing recycling system namely collecting, segregating and recycling of plastic, metals, paper and other recyclable materials

We hope to achieve this through a systemic solution which aims to:

- Provide incentives to customers to collect and segregate scrap
- Inform and acclimate people when to prepare for trash pick up
- Make the market price and value of scrap more transparent
- Involve the mobile vendors in the recycling system
- Improve the equipment and communication of scrap collection



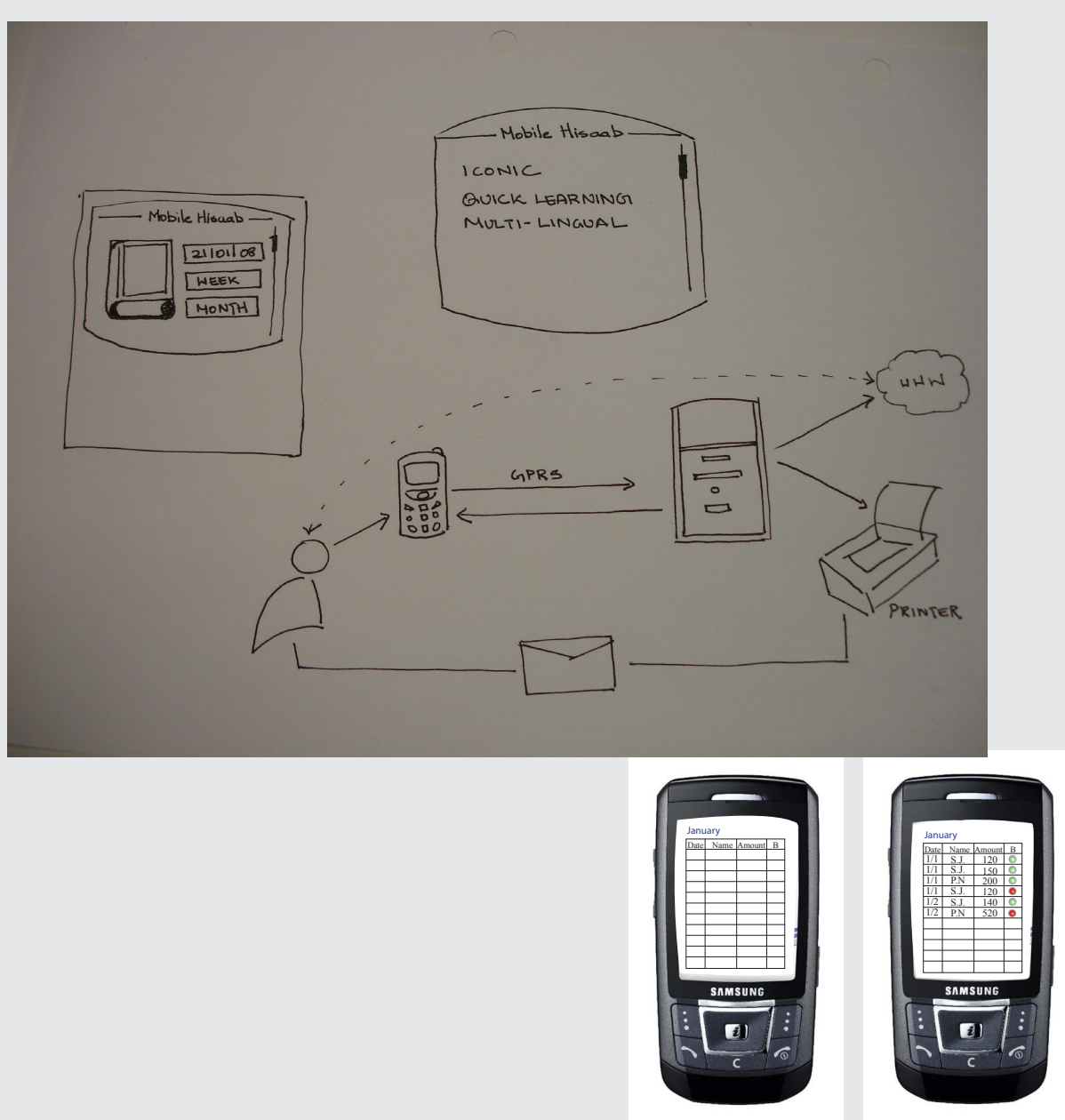
Mobile Phone Accounting

This concept is for use by the shop keeper to keep all his accounts virtually using a mobile phone application.

It serves to keep unified and digital copies of his accounting records and eliminates the need for extensive paper based accounts

It is a digital accounting/record keeping system than the existing written system.

The mobile application provides a way for the store owner to have his records available to him at all times and also reduces the paper work of his existing system.



Collaboration and growth

Our business model for the Balwadi consists of different steps of learning, teaching and creating each member has to go through. Once a member reaches a certain level of expertise they can become independent. This means they can choose to be a part of any division in the unit/ they can continue to use the channel and work from home/ they can take their share and split with others to form a new unit based on their area of expertise.

Having satellite workers helps the Balwadi as the space is limited. It is also convenient for the workers themselves. This method also supports growth and collaboration.

A behavioral prototype was created to test if this type of collaboration would be possible in the Powai slums.



Scrap Collection Tools

These tools serve the general public and the small and main scrap collectors in the Powai slum of Mumbai

These tools deliver incentives for scrap collection and help individuals and small scrap collectors add value to their scrap

These tools are: 1) Plastic Scrap Grinder, 2) Can Compactor, 3) Segregated Collection Bins, and 4) Scrap Credit Coupons

Residents and small scrap collectors use the Plastic Scrap Grinder and Can Compactor to increase the amount of scrap that can be stored in Segregated Collection Bins, which in turn increases the amount of segregated scrap delivered to main scrap collectors. Customers are motivated to deliver scrap to the general store through a system of Scrap Credit Coupons.

