



BUILDING THE FABRIC OF SOCIETY

**Aiding the underprivileged in Dhaka, Bangladesh by
reusing waste textiles in traditional textile crafts**

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INTRODUCTION

The textile and garment industry in Bangladesh has caused highly controversial headlines in recent news. Building fires and factory collapses, like the Rana Plaza collapse in April 2013 or the fire in a Dhaka factory in October 2013, have brought global attention to Bangladesh's working conditions; forcing large clothing retailers, NGOs and the Bangladeshi government to reform labor laws.

Bangladesh heavily depends on the exports of textiles and clothing, as it employs over 50% of the industrial workforce, has expected earnings of \$24 billion in exports for 2013 and accounts for 79% of the total export earnings of the country.

Although Bangladesh is one of the largest exporters of textiles among all Asian-Pacific countries, the wages of Bangladeshi garment workers are the lowest compared to most of its competitors including China, India, and Pakistan. Furthermore, the productivity of its labor force has decreased and has been stagnating in recent years. Struggling with an inadequate infrastructure as well as policy induced weaknesses, Bangladeshi exporters are likely to face difficulties competing in the short term, even if appropriate responses to the new policies can be quickly implemented.

Furthermore, the amount of textile waste has grown due to the lack of regulation in the garment industry. As a result, poverty-stricken families have resorted to rag-picking, searching intoxicated and hazardous landfills for discarded textile material, to sell their findings on ungoverned local markets and earn additional income.

In contrast, the traditional Bangladeshi cottage industry continues to produce beautiful textile crafts, created predominantly by local women in their homes, which have been an essential part of Bangladeshi culture for centuries. Although small-scale opportunities, like micro-loans funded by the Grameen Bank, have been offered to Bangladeshi weavers, little support has been issued to these highly-skilled women fabricating textile handcrafts. In addition, very few resources are available to offer these crafts on national or international markets, limiting the access of prospective buyers to these unique traditional crafts central to Bangladeshi culture.

WHITE PAPER PROJECT BACKGROUND

Aim

Our project aims to develop a non-profit organization, whose purpose is to support underprivileged women and children in Dhaka, Bangladesh, by reusing waste fabric to make traditional crafts. The waste textiles will be acquired by local rag-pickers or poor citizens, and through the donations of excess material from garment factories.

Our purpose is threefold: to provide a platform for recycling waste fabric, to empower the citizens of Dhaka through fair compensation, and to preserve traditional Bangladeshi textile crafts. The resulting products should be sold globally through our foundation to raise awareness about textile waste, fair compensation, and Bangladeshi culture.

Problem Description

Many textile and clothing factories only employ Bangladeshi craftswomen to work on commissions from big businesses. These factories do little to ensure livable wages and often do not provide a stable income to families in need. The majority of policy makers, like the IMF, regulate business and promote economic growth on a global or national level. These regulations mostly benefit the middle and upper classes of third world countries, though few initiatives are elicited to directly and immediately benefit the very poor.

In addition, the women fabricating textile goods have little opportunity to independently generate income from their skills. During the day, most women are tied to their role as homemakers and are required to watch the children and run the household, making them financially dependant on male family members. Therefore, the traditional skills and craft techniques of Bangladeshi women stand little chance of reaching a broader audience outside their local environment. The lack of income opportunities, combined with increasingly modern technology in the garment industry, has resulted in the decline of traditional crafting techniques. This poses a threat to the existence of traditional craft-making, as techniques are not being passed down to the next generation.

Moreover, an ungoverned recycling business is flourishing in Dhaka. Small local shops, called Banghari, purchase recyclable waste materials from street vendors and rag-pickers in order to resell them to either larger dealers on the Banghari market or to specialized Banghari shops. As a result, these shops and large material brokers collect generous profits from selling waste materials back to factories. However, the people at the beginning of this value chain, including the poor and underprivileged rag-pickers, benefit the least, earning less than one dollar per day. Most rag-pickers are children who are exposing themselves to toxins and hazardous waste material, while searching the landfills. Furthermore, most of the business conducted within the Bhangari system is not regulated by any organization in the Bangladeshi socio-economic sphere, hence little legal action can be taken against exploitation or fraudulent trade.



Rag-picker on Street

(<http://wearetheshet.wordpress.com/2011/11/30/rag-pickers-in-india/>)



Rag-picker in Landfill

(http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/04/22/earth-day-photos-observed_n_1444457.html#s893907)



Bangladeshi Textile Craft

(<http://www.craftrevival.org/craftSearch.asp?CountryCode=BANGLADESH>)



Bangladeshi Craftswomen

(<http://www.flickr.com/photos/arifbd111/3154246386/sizes/z/in/photostream/>)

STAKEHOLDERS

Free Trade USA

Mission: Fair Trade USA enables sustainable development and community empowerment by cultivating a more equitable global trade model that benefits farmers, workers, consumers, industry and the earth. They achieve their mission by certifying and promoting Fair Trade products, envisioning Fair Trade as a new global business model helping the industry to secure profitability and competitiveness while protecting the environment and ensuring a fair return to farmers and workers. They help industry to forge long-term partnerships throughout the supply chain so companies can both obtain the highest quality products and support disadvantaged producer communities.

Solution: They work on a variety of global initiatives, including several in Bangladesh, that seek to regulate the methods of production of different fibers in the textile industry while ensuring fair wages to workers in the garment industry. They give seed funding and provide workers and craftsmen/women in poor countries with tools to access global markets.

Shortcomings: They provide global market access to smaller craftsmen/women and others in the garment industry, but they do not have any initiatives aimed at using recycled or second-hand material in these industries. They focus on farmers and producers of organic and renewable material used in textiles, but show no support for those using recycled material in the garment industry.

IMF

Mission: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an organization of 188 countries, working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world.

Solution/Policies: The IMF ended textile quotas in 2005 to promote free trade in the textile industry. Bangladesh now faces significant pressure on its balance of payments, output, and employment since the quotas have been eliminated. They now have a less restricted, global marketplace to compete with.

Shortcomings: The IMF's focus is global. There is little attention given to recycled materials in specific cities like Dhaka. Most initiatives are aimed at the middle and upper classes to promote economic growth.

WTO

Mission: The World Trade Organization — the WTO — is the international organization whose primary purpose is to open trade for the benefit of all. The WTO's founding and guiding principles remain the pursuit of open borders, the guarantee of most-favored-nation principle and non-discriminatory treatment by and among members, and a commitment to transparency in the conduct of its activities. The opening of national markets to international trade, with justifiable exceptions or with adequate flexibilities, should encourage and contribute to sustainable development, raise people's welfare, reduce poverty, and foster peace and stability. At the same time, such market opening must be accompanied by sound domestic and international policies that contribute to economic growth and development according to each member's needs and aspirations.

Solution: Director-General Pascal Lamy, in a speech to the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh on 1 February 2013, said that “removing barriers to trade and cutting red tape in half, which is what a multilateral Trade Facilitation Agreement could deliver, could stimulate the US\$22 trillion world economy

by more than \$1 trillion.” He added that “this has real economic deliverables for a country such as Bangladesh that has the potential to exploit its comparative advantage in labor and in the garments industry.” The WTO also aims to provide additional training to government and NGO officials and has an agenda for Bangladesh that includes reducing or eliminating charges linked to importing/exporting, as well as reducing the documentation and formalities required for importing/exporting, and using international standards for textile and clothing manufacturing.

Shortcomings: Due to the political situation in Bangladesh and other factors including bribery and document forgeries from officials, there are several barriers that Bangladesh needs to overcome before certain policies can be effective. This organization also focuses on the larger picture and future outlook, but does little to encourage and promote small scale businesses and artisans/craftspeople in the textile and clothing industry.

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association

Mission: The fundamental objective of BGMEA is to establish a healthy business environment for a close and mutually beneficial relationship between the manufacturers, exporters and importers in the process of ensuring a steady growth in the foreign exchange earnings of the country. BGMEA issues UD to its exporters thereby monitors export as well. BGMEA plays a very strong role to lead the industry in concurrence with the government.

Solution: Bangladesh continues to face a number of major challenges, including widespread political and bureaucratic corruption, widespread poverty, and an increasing danger of hydrologic shocks brought on by ecological vulnerability due to climate change. This organization has joint ventures and programs that funds youth development, skill training programs, and other NGOs and government bodies to promote sustainable growth in their textile industry.

Shortcomings: Little involvement in recycling initiatives and little opportunity or subsidies for very poor workers who can not afford to leave their homes and families to pursue training sessions.

SEWA (Self-Employed Womens Association)

Mission: SEWA's main goals are to organize women workers for full employment. Full employment means employment whereby workers obtain work security, income security, food security and social security (at least health care, child care and shelter). SEWA organizes women to ensure that every family obtains full employment. By self-reliance they mean that women should be autonomous and self-reliant, individually and collectively, both economically and in terms of their decision-making ability.

Solution: SEWA supports workers to achieve their goals of full employment and self reliance through the strategy of struggle and development. The struggle is against the many constraints and limitations imposed on them by society and the economy, while development activities strengthen women's bargaining power and offer them new alternatives. Practically, the strategy is carried out through the joint action of union and cooperatives. Gandhian thinking is the guiding force for SEWA's poor, self-employed members to achieve social change. They follow the principles of satya (truth), ahimsa (non-violence), sarvadharm (integrating all faiths, all people) and khadi (propagation of local employment and self reliance).

SEWA is both an organization and a movement. The SEWA movement is enhanced by being a sangam or confluence of three movements : the labor movement, the cooperative movement and the women's movement. But it is also a movement of self-employed workers: their own, home-grown movement with women as the leaders. Through their own movement women become strong and visible. Their tremendous economic

and social contributions become recognized with globalization, liberalization and other economic changes, there are both new opportunities as well as threats to some traditional areas of employment.

Shortcoming: On their website, there is no mention of recycled material or whether workers have access to second-hand textiles or discarded items of big business to use in their craft.

Lallitara

Mission: Lallitara offers a fashion experience that combines style and substance. Its unique products are made from reclaimed saris sourced from India's sari collectors. Lallitara and its customers support the recycling tradition of rag-and-bone men and women by valuing the traditional Indian sari fabric.

Solution: On the front end, Lallitara buys the materials for triple the market value to offer recyclers a fair, livable wage. On the back end, Lallitara partners with local NGOs like SAATH.org and gives 10% of its profits to fund their ongoing work.

Shortcomings: Lallitara is a Boston based startup business working solitary with Indian sources. Although we can leverage their knowledge of waste fabric recycling, no information about the waste-recycling business or craftsmanship in Bangladesh can be provided.

Asian American Federation

Mission: The Asian American Federation's mission is to advance the civic voice and well-being of Asian Americans. They provide leadership and resources to address community needs and undertake research to increase the knowledge of and to shape policies affecting the Asian American community. They invest in the human capital and infrastructure of community nonprofits to enable sustained community empowerment.

Solution: They fund programs that address critical community needs through the Asian American Community Fund and promote philanthropy and voluntarism, connecting donors to specific causes or charities. They collaborate with member agencies, other nonprofits, donors, policy/program experts, government, and businesses. In addition, they initiate research and data analysis to assess community needs, to improve service delivery, and to make policy recommendations operating a Census Information Center (CIC) to facilitate community access to census data, to assist community members with the decennial Census or the American Community Survey, as well as to produce and disseminate demographic profiles of Asian Americans in the region.

Shortcomings: The Asian American Federation can provide information about the local Bangladeshi communities of NYC, Organizations in Bangladesh and access to some information regarding the needs of the people in Bangladesh. However, they only offer support for endeavors based in the U.S.; offering little opportunity to support the waste collectors or craftswomen in Bangladesh.

Echoing Green

Mission: The mission of Echoing Green is to drive transformative social change by identifying and funding some of the world's best emerging social entrepreneurs to launch new high-impact organizations. Through their fellowship program, they support a community of visionaries as they develop new solutions to society's toughest problems.

Solution: Since their founding in 1987, Echoing Green has provided nearly 600 emerging social entrepreneurs working in more than forty countries with \$31 million in start-up funding, customized support services, and access to their global network.

Shortcomings: Echoing Green is a potential investor for this project with means of providing guidance to structure and develop the project, information about launching an international project and access to existing business models to help in the realization. However, they have little experience in the Bangladeshi garment industry and can not provide any access to the Bangladeshi community or craftswomen.

Grameen Bank

Mission: The Grameen Bank believes that credit is a cost effective weapon to fight poverty, serving as a catalyst in the development of poor socio-economic conditions. They offer a credit line for their business to the poor, who have been kept outside the banking sphere since traditional banks are unwilling to service customers with a high risk of default.

Solution: The Grameen Bank provides non-collateral loans to the extreme poor in rural Bangladesh. Professor Muhammad Yunus, the founder of the Grameen Bank, reasoned that if financial resources can be made available to the poor people on terms and conditions that are appropriate and reasonable, “these millions of small people with their millions of small pursuits can add up to create the biggest development wonder.” As of October 2011, it has 8.349 million borrowers, 97 percent of whom are women.

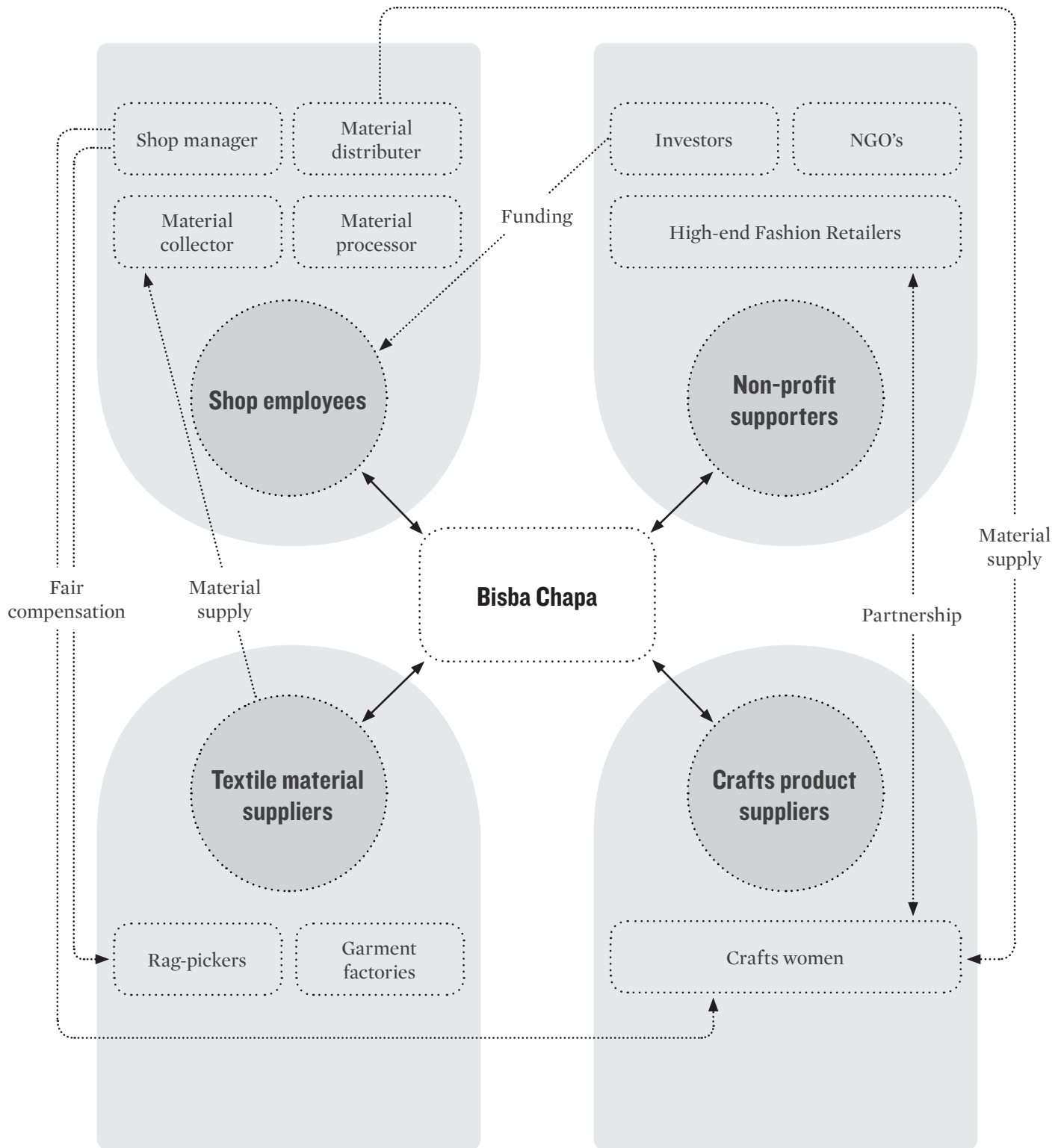
Shortcomings: The Grameen bank focuses on rural areas and issues in Bangladesh, showing little support for the problems of waste and waste collection in Dhaka as well as local Bangladeshi crafts traditions.

LIST OF STAKEHOLDER IN RANK OF IMPORTANCE TO THE NGO

- **Non-Profit Supporters:** Sewa/NGOs, Grameen Bank, Echoing Green, High-end fashion sponsors
- **End product suppliers:** Craft women
- **Raw Material Suppliers:** Rag-pickers (90%), garment factories (10%)
- **Shop Employees:** Underprivileged in Dhaka

GRAPHIC MAP OF STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders Interaction and Interconnection



LOGIC MODEL GRAPH

| RESOURCES | ACTIVITIES | OUTPUTS | OUTCOMES | IMPACTS |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non Profit Supporters/ Investors Sewa, Grameen Bank, Echoing Green High-end fashion retailers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Micro-funding for local collection facility is established Funding for our NGO's online distribution platform is established Partnerships can be formed between our NGO and high-end fashion retailers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient funding for setting up and running local facility is acquired An online distribution platform is established, selling Bangladeshi crafts to global markets Sustainable partnerships between NGO users and Fashion industry are formed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non profit/social investors gain by publicizing the project's success NGOs aiming to alleviate extreme poverty, could reduce the amount of public resources to foster this cause Fashion businesses gain ideas for new product and improve their reputation and social standing Issues of poverty, and rag-pickers are discussed globally | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National and international economic activities increase Extreme poverty is reduced The lifespan of the extreme poor increased Greater national happiness and pride in cultural heritage increase Traditional crafts are preserved Less waste material is kept in landfills There is an improvement in the beauty and cleanliness of the environment |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> End-product suppliers Underprivileged female members of community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A micro funding system offering fabric & materials to women producing crafts can be established New products can be sold through the NGO's platform (using label or certification, example of Rhagna, tell her story, show her picture) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New products of greater value are created New in-home micro businesses are formed by underprivileged women Bangladeshi crafts are sold globally | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women in the underprivileged community are less dependant on the income of male family members National & global awareness of the value of traditional Bangladeshi crafts increase Increasing interest in reusing/finding new purposes for waste and excess materials | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raw Material Suppliers Rag-pickers and underprivileged Dhaka citizens (90%) Textile factories and mills (10%) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Underprivileged/rag-pickers are educated about fair compensation and other opportunities for bringing in collected waste materials Factories and mills are motivated to donate their excess materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is increased civil participation Rag-pickers increase their income by receiving fair compensation Factories improve their reputation by demonstrating social responsibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less waste in landfills Suffering of the poor is reduced Banghari shopkeepers/brokers are forced to pay sustainable wages Factories gain new customers and revenue increases for acting socially responsible Dhaka's factories and community will be perceived as more socially responsible leading to a potential increase in foreign investment | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shopkeepers (Underprivileged Dhaka citizens) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste/excess fabric collection facility in Dhaka is set up Reliable employees from underprivileged communities are recruited and trained The necessary means of producing traditional crafts is provided The means of processing waste fabrics to be reused (washing/ ironing) is established Craftswomen gain access to reusable fabric | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste fabric is collected by the local facility Fabric is processed and given to craftswomen | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The self-esteem of the poor is raised through economic independent resulting from sustainable income Compensation of workers in Banghari system increases | |

LOGIC MODEL - NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND VALUE ADDED

Non Profit Supporters

NGOs (Sewa), Non-profit Investors (Grameen Bank/Echoing Green), high-end fashion retailers

If micro-funding, for example by the Grameen Bank, is provided to the underprivileged entrepreneurs in Dhaka, then our local collection facility can be set up and we can start collecting, processing and distributing waste textiles to produce traditional Bangladeshi crafts products.

If Non-Profit Investors, like Echoing Green, offer funding for our NGO's online distribution platform, then the online distribution platform can be established, which will start selling Bangladeshi crafts products to the global markets. Furthermore, if high fashion brands are introduced to our NGO as well as to the unique crafts of Bangladesh, then sustainable partnerships can be formed.

If these activities can be accomplished, then the non-profit/social investors gain by publicizing the success of this project and other NGOs with the aim of alleviating extreme poverty, would not need to allocate as many public resources to this cause. In addition, the high fashion businesses gain ideas for new product and improve their reputation and social standing, promoting a global discussion about the issues of poverty, rag-pickers, and labor compensation in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

If this is successfully achieved, then it may lead to the following long-term benefits: An increase in national and international economic activities, a reduction of extreme poverty in Bangladesh resulting in an increase in the lifespan of the extreme poor, greater national happiness, less waste material in waste-yards, and an improvement in environmental beauty and cleanliness.

Therefore, the value added for the Non Profit Supporters and Investors would be:

- An increase in reputation for social responsibility
- Less funding required for poor citizens of Bangladesh
- New product ideas in the high end fashion industry through Bangladeshi crafts

End-Product Suppliers

If we offer a micro funding system by providing fabric and materials to women producing crafts, then these women are enabled to form new, in home micro businesses to support themselves.

If these micro businesses are established new products of greater value will be created to be sold through our NGO's platform promoted by labels or certifications.

If this occurs, the pride of the female members of the underprivileged community will rise for being less dependent on the income of the male members of their family and by selling traditional Bangladeshi crafts on a global scale. This will result in an increasing interest of finding new purposes for waste and excess materials to be used in local crafts and national as well as global awareness of the value of traditional Bangladeshi crafts will be established.

If this can be successfully accomplished, extreme poverty can be reduced, national as well as international economic activities will increase, greater national happiness and pride in cultural heritage will be established and traditional crafting skills will be preserved for future generations.

Therefore, the value added for the End-Product Suppliers would be:

- An increase in independence by establishing their own in home micro businesses
- The preservation of traditional Bangladeshi crafting skills
- An increase in pride for being self sufficient

Raw Material Suppliers

Rag-pickers and underprivileged Dhaka citizens (90%) and textile factories and mills (10%)

If we educate our main group of suppliers, the underprivileged and rag-pickers of Dhaka, about our fair compensation for providing their collected waste materials to our local collection facility, then civil participation will increase. This will result in an increase of the daily income of the suppliers by receiving a fair price for their collected materials. If we additionally motivate textile factories and mills to donate parts of their excess materials, then these factories will improve their reputation for demonstrating social responsibility. If this is perceived by the international garment industry, those factories will attract new customers and increase their revenue for acting socially responsible.

If these actions are achieved, then our NGO will grow along with the participation of its stakeholders, less waste will unnecessarily decay in landfills and the Banghari shopkeepers/brokers will be forced to pay equally fair wages to rag-pickers.

If this is successfully implemented, then the personal pride of all suppliers will rise for being socially responsible as well as earning more revenue and the overall suffering of the underprivileged will be reduced. In addition, Dhaka's factories as well as its community will be perceived as more socially responsible leading to a potential increase in foreign investment.

Therefore, the value added for the Raw Material Suppliers will be:

- A direct increase in personal revenue
- An increase in pride and reputation for being more successful, sustainable and socially responsible

Shop Employees

Members of the underprivileged Dhaka community

If we succeed in recruiting reliable employees from within the underprivileged Dhaka community, then the local collection facility can be put into place. In addition, if we train these employees to process waste fabrics to be reused, then the necessary materials to produce traditional crafts can be provided to the craftswomen.

If the local shop is successfully established and run by the local underprivileged members of the Dhaka community, these shopkeepers will gain by receiving a fair compensation for their work. Subsequently, the self-esteem of these newly established entrepreneurs is raised through economic independence resulting from sustainable income, while the compensation of all workers in the Banghari system is forced to increase.

If this can be accomplished, then national and international economic activities increase, extreme poverty is reduced and the lifespan of the extreme poor increases.

Therefore, the value added to the Shop Employees will be:

- An increase in individual and communal wealth through economic self-sufficiency
- Long-term social and economic benefits for Bangladeshi citizens through fair wages

APPROACHING INVESTORS (SELECTION COMMITTEE)

Fund Raising Activities

The waste textile collection facility in Dhaka, Bangladesh, run by local underprivileged entrepreneurs, will approach the Grameen Bank for funding:

The Grameen Bank was originally founded in Bangladesh. It aims to alleviate poverty, with a special focus on preserving traditional crafts, by supporting impoverished female entrepreneurs. Our project would symbolically add onto these aims, encourage more engagement of the already established local members of the community and increase global awareness surrounding these issues. Therefore, by partnering with our facility, the Grameen Bank would further develop its lasting impact in its country of origin.

The Grameen Bank can introduce our project to their affiliates within the local community of Dhaka, leveraging contacts from their weavers as well as agriculture programs. Furthermore, it can provide information and support in the U.S. with access to U.S. based Bangladeshi communities and offices in New York and Washington to initiate a collaboration with their partners in Dhaka.

The overall U.S. based organization running the project and the organization's managerial structure as well as providing the means of selling the crafts products will approach Echoing Green for funding:

Echoing Green supports young, socially responsible entrepreneurs, equipping them with skills, resources and guidance to solve the world's pressing social problems and creating a better world. By investing in our organization, Echoing Green would increase their philanthropic impact and continue generating positive change. Our organization would provide them with the opportunity of directly supporting people instead of businesses and would do so on a sustainable, long-term basis.

Echoing Green is affiliated with multiple projects with similar purposes all over the world and has already established many fellows in the Asia-Pacific region. As Echoing Green is based in NYC, it would provide our organization with the opportunity of direct and personal access to its special advisors from public and private companies in addition to non-profit partners; for example Goldman Sachs, New World Capital Group, and venture philanthropy partners.

Transition to Oversight Committee

Once the shop has been established for the collection of textiles from rag-pickers and the distribution of textiles to craftswomen, we and our investors supervisory bodies will gradually transition from our role in daily operations to our role as an oversight committee. We will ensure that the Bangladeshi locals who are hired and placed in charge of the shop's daily operations are trustworthy and have a thorough understanding of our mission, policies, and payment procedures. We will also instill a payment plan to pay off our initial loan from the Grameen Bank, as paying off the loan in a timely and efficient manner may lead to a good credit score and more potential opportunities for funding. The micro-loans are an essential aspect for starting our income-generating operations and we will therefore ensure that every penny of the loan is allocated towards leasing a building for our shop and paying our shopkeepers appropriate wages, before generating sustainable earnings through the sale of our crafts.

Once the initial shop is in place and the local shopkeepers we hired are capable of managing the daily operations independently, we can begin a program whereby some workers shadow us and other NGO members, to learn necessary skills about managing the NGO on a global scale. This includes selling crafts via the online platform as well as to global retailers and promoting international interest in our organization. In doing so, we will give our shopkeepers more responsibility and develop a local Bangladeshi workforce that is

more specialized in various skill sets that will benefit our organization and the community in the long run. If some workers are in need of additional training in technology or basic accounting in order to better perform their job, we will either teach them during this transition period or give them access to training programs free of charge.

Furthermore, by leveraging the knowledge and support of the network of Echoing Green Fellows, partners, and friends we can work towards engaging others fellows in the Asia-Pacific area to help implement further change. A health insurance stipend, leadership development as well as networking gatherings, access to technical support and pro bono partnerships will help grow our organization. In addition, we hope that an Echoing Green portfolio manager will help invest our profits for the future needs of the organization. Once we have established global partners and a long-term management plan, we can write up an agenda with short- and long-term goals and pass it along to others who are involved in the daily management and oversight of our organization. This will enable us to take a back seat and focus our attention on new social endeavors.

Lastly, we will work with an accountant and pay close attention to ensure that the micro-funds and payments to the rag-pickers and store operations are being correctly distributed. Furthermore, we will work with a trustworthy auditor who can ensure that safety standards are met and our organization acts according to our mission and core values, while all those involved are treated politely and respectfully. We will ask for quarterly reports by the auditor to ensure all operations are functioning properly without being constantly involved in the organization.

Once all this is achieved, our leadership would no longer be required full-time and most of the organization will function without our constant supervision or interference of the investors supervisory body.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summary

As people of the underprivileged Bangladeshi community in Dhaka we are concerned about our hardships, especially those of our children living on the street, as well as the lack of opportunity to preserve our traditions. However we are inspired by our legacy of traditional artisan craftsmanship, for instance our tradition of weaving, blanket, and pottery making, which motivates us to push forward despite our current circumstances. We aspire to continue despite the stress of feeding and clothing our families.

This project will enable us to build on our crafting skills in new and meaningful ways by distributing the resulting products on a global scale. We will finally be able to increase our standard of living and preserve the tradition of producing our local crafts. We look forward to our roles as leaders and managers of local shops, collecting and distributing waste materials, and providing fair payment to waste collectors and our craftswomen. We will have the chance to implement this endeavor by producing new crafts products, which add value to recycled materials and subsequently preserve our traditions for future generations.

Our Unfulfilled Needs and Concerns

Many textile and clothing factories only employ our craft workers to work on the commissions of big businesses. These factories do little to provide additional income to those of us in need.

The majority of policy makers, like the IMF, regulate business and promote economic growth on a global or national level. These regulations often benefit the middle and upper class members of the Bangladeshi community, but few initiatives directly and immediately benefit us underprivileged.

In addition, our women performing textile crafts have little opportunity to independently generate income from their skills. As they feel the need to stay home to watch the children and run our households, they depend largely on the male members of the family to provide income. Their skills and techniques in crafts therefore stand little chance of reaching a larger market outside our local environment.

On the other hand, an ungoverned business of waste recycling is flourishing in Dhaka. A system has established itself in which small local shops, we call Banghari, buy recyclable waste materials from our street vendor and rag-pickers and resell them to either larger dealers on the Banghari market or to specialized Banghari shops. As a result, these shops as well as the large material brokers make good profit out of selling waste products back to factories.

However, our people nourishing this value chain, the poor and underprivileged rag-pickers, benefit the least from these profits, earning less than one dollar per day. We are especially concerned about our children, exposing themselves to toxins and other health hazards, while skimming the waste in landfills. Furthermore, most of the business conducted within this Bhangari system is not registered with any regulatory body or trade organization, hence little legal action can be taken against exploitation or fraudulent trade.

Our Design Approach to Address These Problems

We hope to solve these issues by establishing local shops and employing four to five of our community members to collect and process waste textiles so that they may be reused in craft production. These shops should be integrated into the Bhangari Market system. As we provide fair compensation, we hope to force all of the Bhangari businesses to pay fair wages in the long run. In addition, the online platform set up by the projects NGO will enable us to sell our local Bangladeshi crafts to the global market, raise awareness around issues regarding poverty and unfair compensation and the uniqueness of our local crafts.

Our Role In Creating, Implementing and Evaluating The Project

The members of our community will be in charge of all central operations in Dhaka. Our waste collectors will provide our local facility with fabrics gathered from various locations within the city, for which they will receive a fair compensation.

Our community members in charge of setting up and running the collection facility will assemble the materials provided by the waste collectors, evaluate their input and pay a fair compensation accordingly. Our employees at the facility will process the textiles to be repurposed, be paid a fair salary for their work, and will give the fabrics to our craft workers.

Our craftswomen will create traditional craft products within the convenient environment of their homes, while being able to run their households and take care of the children. The women in turn will be paid a reasonable price for their products which will enable them to contribute independently to the family income.

This will increase our personal pride by establishing a fair and sustainable business as well as achieving a stable income for multiple community members while also preserving our expertise in crafts making within our Bangladeshi community for future generations. As the organization will distribute our locally crafted products to the global market, the global community will learn to appreciate our local traditional craftsmanship and gain awareness of the issues of poverty in Bangladesh.

Our Existing Assets

We believe this project will be successful for several reasons. Firstly, a large community of underprivileged and waste collectors are willing to provide our local facility with waste textiles. These community members already have experience in finding and identifying textiles that can be reused in other garments or textile crafts. Furthermore, the established Banghari system of gathering, processing, and reselling waste materials and products is thriving, which demonstrates that a market for discarded textiles and textile goods exists within the local community. Lastly, our community already has the skill set and interest in continuing the long-standing tradition of textile handicrafts. Since we identify strongly with these cultural crafts, we are proud of our heritage and traditional crafts, which guarantees support from all citizens of Bangladesh.

Our Financial Contribution Through Co-Designing and Co-Creation

All operational structures are designed around us, the members of the local underprivileged Dhaka community, from the very beginning. In doing so, it can be assured that we understand, benefit from, and contribute to all aspects of the project from its launch.

Once the local facility and the online distribution of craft products is established so that it may run independently by our employees, our first goal will be to pay back any outstanding debts to investors and loans essential to establishing our operation. After accomplishing this, we will be able to support ourselves and all community members involved in our endeavors with fair compensation.

As the waste textile materials will be supplied by the rag-pickers, we will have established a sustainable supply chain by fairly compensating our employees for their work. In addition, by offering the discarded textiles for free to craftswomen and paying a fair price for their products, the craftswomen will be more inclined to provide us with a greater number and variety of crafts to be sold globally through our online distribution platform. In doing so, we will have created a sustainable business cycle, benefiting all members of our organization.

Once our organization begins generating a profit, we can expand it throughout Bangladesh, so that more underprivileged communities can benefit. This expansion will allow us to increase our global reach by selling crafts through global retailers and generating international interest in our organization. In doing so, we will give

our shopkeepers more responsibility and develop a local Bangladeshi workforce that is more skilled and specialized, benefiting our organization and its communities in the long run. In addition, we hope that an Echoing Green portfolio manager will help invest our profits for the future needs of the organization.

PROJECT EVALUATION

Indicators and Measurements of Success

Short term measurements (first 6-12 months):

- Continuous increase in number of underprivileged and rag-pickers supplying our local organization with reusable fabric.
- Sufficient quantity of fabric acquired for producing crafts products.
- Significant increase in number of craft products is received by our NGO to be sold.
- Increase in interest from locals to participate in all operations of our business.
- Increase in usage of online platform selling Bangladeshi crafts products.

Mid-term measurements (years 1-3):

- Organization functions mostly independent from the investors supervisory bodies
- Decrease of underprivileged in Dhaka who cannot afford basic food and shelter
- Less recyclable textile waste in landfills
- Increasing interest of international buyers in the Bangladeshi textile industry
- Sufficient revenues are produced by online sales to sustain the local facility as well as the online distribution platform

Long-term measurements (years 5-10):

- Noticeable decrease of poverty in Dhaka and surrounding areas
- Increase in the lifespan of the extreme poor
- Increasing interest in traditional textile crafts from the younger generations
- Significant increase in Bangladesh's GDP from textile crafts
- Increase in national happiness
- Global awareness of Bangladeshi textile crafts
- Increase in total household income produced by women
- Profits generated by online platform can be reinvested into expanding the projects reach

Benchmarking Our Input to Output Ratio

In recent years, the price of Bangladeshi goods and its currency, the Bangladeshi taka, has undergone inflation. This is predominantly, due to an increase in trade by a high volume of international corporations entering Bangladesh seeking cheaper labor costs. In contrast, the wages of workers in the garment factories have decreased, resulting in protests by skilled Bangladeshi textile workers. These employees, who currently earn the equivalent of approximately \$36 USD per month are asking for about \$100 USD in compensation per month. In comparison, the annual per capita income of Dhaka is estimated at \$1,350 USD, with 34% of households living below the poverty line, including a large part of the population coming from rural areas in search of employment, with most surviving on less than \$5 a day.

Given these statistics, we believe that the requested wage of \$100 USD per month by skilled textile employees is highly reasonable. Therefore, this should represent the minimum compensation given to our employees working as shopkeepers. The rag-pickers who are given less than \$1 per day for their efforts by Banghari merchants will be compensated for the number of square meters of reusable textile fabric they bring to the shop. The approximate wholesale amount of new Bangladeshi cotton, denim, and knit fabric sold on the international wholesale site "alibaba.com" is on average \$0.70 to \$5 USD per square meter depending on the quality and processing of the fabric. Given this information, we will compensate each

rag-picker with \$1 USD per square meter of reusable fabric brought to our shop, with a maximum of \$3 USD per day. We believe this compensation is much more appropriate than what they currently receive working within the Bhangari system earning less than \$1 USD per day.

Lastly, the profits acquired through the sale of Bangladeshi crafts through the website will be shared equally between the craft woman who created the item and our organization. Considering all variables, the expertise of the craftswoman, the time dedicated to manufacture each craft, and the amount of material needed for each item, we will develop a pricing formula that accounts for the basic production costs and adjust the sales price to account for a profit margin of approximately 50% that will be given to our organization.

All the above standards will be regularly adjusted as the project progresses. Similarly to the benchmarking measures the Fair Trade Certified Apparel & Linens Pilot report published by Fair Trade USA, the working standards will be in compliance with local wage laws and other worker protection. In addition, we will adjust wages paid by our organization in comparison to living wages as determined by a market basket formula using local food cost, government minimum wage, Asia Floor Wage benchmarks, and other appropriate tools such as the Fair Wage Guide.

To gain strategic advantage and to increase the rate of organizational learning, we will be as transparent as possible with our finances, manufacturing of crafts, and sustainable endeavors in Dhaka. We will continue to develop programs in which our staff can learn new skills to benefit our organization as well as the lives of those involved. Our vision and core values will be well defined and comprehensible for everyone so that we can work in unison towards the same goals.

Benchmarking Criteria for Evaluating Our Future Successes

In order to benchmark and evaluate our organization and its outcome after it has been launched, we established sets of evaluation questions. These tools can also be applied to compare the organization's success to other NGOs or projects.

Theory and Design:

- Is there a clearly articulated written project plan?
- Have policy objectives and constraints been analyzed?
- Are feedback loops from online users and employees incorporated?
- Have the users/employees expectations/needs been met?
- Have the local market conditions been evaluated and taken into consideration?
- How flexible is the project design - can it be easily changed during the implementation period?

Project Management:

- Are all responsibilities well defined?
- Has the staff being trained to meet qualifications?
- Are the responsibilities assigned based on experience/reliability/rank?
- Are work performance measures in place to provide fair compensation?

Reporting and Tracking:

- Are the project requirements well defined and being tracked?
- Have the success measures been well defined?
- Does the evaluation system fulfill the needs of the evaluators?
- Are the evaluation reports regularly produced and checked?

Quality Control and Verification:

- Are the products being inspected to meet customer requirements?
- Are the inspection guidelines straight forward and easy to follow?
- Is the quality control based/modified according to customer/employee feedback?
- Do the quality inspectors share their input/knowledge with the crafts workers?

Participation Process:

- Are the customers provided with prompt feedback opportunities?
- Is the website easy to understand and are customers provided with easy transaction measures?

Marketing and Outreach:

- Is the branding strategy implemented into all aspects of the organization and products?
- Have retailers/supporters been provided with sufficient information material?
- Are educational workshops been offered to learn about the project?
- Are the projects benefits communicated in a comprehensible way?

Evaluation:

- Is the implementation team fully engaged in the evaluation process, and is it committed to consider all recommendations?
- Is the project's workplace culture supportive of the evaluation process and findings?
- Are measures in place to conduct a process evaluation in the first year to provide early feedback on areas of improvement?
- Are measures in place to conduct an impact evaluation later in the program implementation period?
- Are the projects reviews and assessments done and communicated comprehensively?

HEADLINE IDEAS FOR THE LAUNCH DAY OF THE PROJECT**Local Dhaka News:**

Bisba Chapa stirs up Bhangari business - fair wages for rag-pickers and crafts women are forcing other waste recyclers to keep up.

Global News:

Crafting Independence - Bisba Chapa is making an imprint on the global market through traditional Bangladeshi crafts.

THE RFP

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Projects Objectives

In Bangladesh, the garment industry accounts for 79% of the country's total export earnings and employs over 50% of its industrial workforce. This has allowed Bangladesh to evolve as one of the largest exporters of textiles among all Asian-Pacific countries. However, in addition to devastating labor conditions, the wages of Bangladeshi garment workers, currently at approximately \$36 a month, are the lowest compared to its competitors. Although many existing NGOs currently work towards regulating these labor and wage issues within the Bangladeshi garment industry, few initiatives directly and immediately benefit the underprivileged.

Furthermore, the amount of textile waste produced by the fabric factories is growing due to the lack of regulations. As a result, poverty-stricken families and especially their children, have resorted to rag-picking, searching intoxicated and hazardous landfills for discarded textile material, to sell their findings on the ungoverned waste recycling market in Dhaka. A system called Bhangari has established itself, incorporating small local shops, which buy recyclable waste materials from these rag-pickers and resell them to either larger dealers or to specialized shops. These shops as well as the material brokers make good profit out of selling these waste products back to factories.

However, the underprivileged rag-pickers benefit little from these profits, earning less than \$1 per day. In addition, most of the business conducted within this Bhangari system is not registered with any regulatory body or trade organization, hence little legal action can be taken against this exploitation.

In contrast, the traditional Bangladeshi cottage industry continues to produce beautiful textile crafts, which has been an essential part of their culture for centuries. However, the crafts women performing these textile arts have little opportunity to independently generate income using their skills. As they stay home to watch the children and run their households, they largely depend on the male members of the family to provide income.

Although small-scale opportunities, like micro-loans funded by the Grameen Bank, have been offered to female Bangladeshi weavers, little support has been issued to these highly-skilled women fabricating textile handcrafts. In addition, very few resources are available to offer these crafts on national or international markets. Therefore, their skills and techniques stand little chance of reaching a larger market outside their local environment, causing an increasing lack of interest in pursuing and preserving these skills for future generations.

The Projects Vision and Goals

The project aim is to develop a non-profit organization, with the main goals of supporting the underprivileged community in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

It should contribute to the reduction of waste fabric, empower the citizens of Dhaka through job opportunities and fair compensation, preserve traditional Bangladeshi textile crafts and raise global awareness to poverty, textile waste, and labor conditions in Bangladesh by celebrating its cultural crafts heritage.

The Projects Implementation Strategy

In order to create a sustainable organization, the implementation strategy is divided into three main parts.

First, a local collection facility, employing four to five members of the underprivileged community, will be established in Dhaka, to collect and process waste textiles so that they may be reused in craft produc-

tion. In addition, the facility should be integrated into the Bhangari Market system. As the facility's employees will be paid fair wages, all of the Bhangari businesses will be forced to pay fair compensation in the long run. Waste collectors and rag-pickers will gather textile materials from various waste locations within the city and provide them to the local facility. All these material suppliers will receive a fair price for the fabric they bring in. In addition, the organization hopes to encourage donations of excess textile materials from local factories by pointing out the benefits of contributing to social responsibility.

Second, Bangladeshi craftswomen will be offered the processed waste materials for free by the local collection facility to create traditional craft products. This way they are provided with the opportunity to set up micro businesses within the convenient environment their homes, being able to run their households and take care of the children at the same time. The women in turn will be paid an adequate price for their products enabling them to contribute independently to the family income and allowing them to preserve their skills by passing them on to the next generation.

Third, an online platform will sell these local Bangladeshi crafts to the global market, accumulating sufficient profit to sustain and expand the organization. In addition, it will focus on raising awareness around the issues of poverty, labor conditions and textile waste in Bangladesh by celebrating the uniqueness of its local crafts.

MISSION STATEMENT AND CORE VALUES

Mission Statement

Our mission is to alleviate poverty by empowering the local underprivileged community and celebrating traditional textile crafts in Bangladesh. Our ultimate goal is to provide a cleaner, culturally rich, and prosperous social environment to future generations in Bangladesh.

Core values

- Unity and Happiness
- Responsibility and Respect
- Fairness and Honesty
- Creativity and Individuality

PROJECT BRIEF

Develop a coherent marketing strategy for the project, including:

- Brand name
- Logo
- Color/logo/type guidelines
- Marketing and branding guidelines

Following the branding guidelines, develop a design for an online platform including:

- An e-commerce platform, selling and purchasing the crafts products
- Information about the mission, core values, and future of the project
- Blogs and social media platforms, like facebook and twitter, to increase the reach, create awareness and generate interest

Following the branding guidelines develop designs supporting the product distribution, including:

- Product labels/tags, identifying the maker of the craft and educating the potential buyer about the story behind that product
- A sustainable packaging solution
- Project Information material

Following the branding guidelines develop the design for a cover sheet including:

- On organizational letterhead
- All relevant contact information for the organization
- The name and information of the contact person
- A brief, concise summary of the project

USER GROUP

- Age range: 18-65 years
- Female
- Middle and upper class
- Working professionals earning above average income
- Environmentally aware and socially responsible
- Interested in cultures and traditions of other, especially Asian-Pacific countries
- Interested in fashion and home decor
- Value individuality
- Live in first world countries within North America and Europe
- Use internet for communicating and shopping online

DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

The design should incorporate and represent:

- Traditional Bangladeshi culture
- Designs and patterns used in crafts making
- The quality of “made by hand”
- Uniqueness and individuality
- Being beneficial for poor Dhaka citizens
- Eco friendliness and recycling
- The message of the project

TIMELINE

Phase I: Discovery, requirements, planning & research

Phase II: Design and development of branding strategy

Phase II: Design, development, and deployment of required products

Phase III: Implementation: Hosting & launching site, printing of tags and information material, ...

Phase VI: Tracking to ensure the site and the distributed products have maximum impact

- Web traffic analysis - pageview evaluation
- Technical analysis of browsers and platforms
- Evaluation of visitor/user trends

STAFF REQUIREMENTS

- Small design firm of 1-10 people with horizontal hierarchy and customer friendly communication methods
- Experience in designing for non-profits
- Experience in implementing cultural influences into designs for western markets
- Experience in branding strategy, print, and web design to ensure all items are in line with the design strategy
- Willing to accept less pay for the creative challenge and/or tax deduction for working for non-profit

MEASURES OF BRAND STRATEGY'S SUCCESS

Suitability:

The proposed solutions meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.

Appropriately:

The technical and aesthetic solutions meet the requirements as outlined by the proposal and references.

User Experience Capabilities:

Site is artistic and innovative, with user friendly interfaces that engage communities and viewers.

Pricing Structure:

The price is in line with our budget.

Timeframe:

The designs were produced within the given time frame.

Presentation:

The information is organized in a clearly and logically manner.

PROTOTYPING

Template for product tag

MEET THE ARTIST

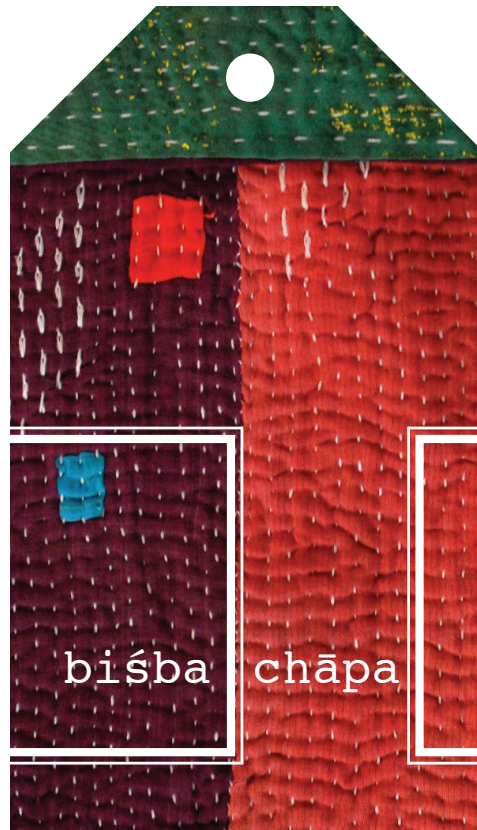


NAME Firstname Lastname

CRAFT Textile Weaver

DESCRIPTION Tem ium ad que
vene porrovide vene. Tem
ium ad que vene porro-
vide vene porrovide.

Front



Back

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