



# LIVELIHOODS IN DHARAVI

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## About the Urban Project...

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## Institute of Design

Chicago, USA

an initiative to develop human-centered strategies and concepts for new products, services and businesses capable of generating sustainable economic improvement in urban slums.

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## IDC

IIT Mumbai

Research and observation from a design perspective revealed many activities of daily life and local business that could be improved by new products, services or systems.

Analysis of these businesses and related activities led to several design criteria that helped towards the solution concepts

## Objective

**Qualitative analysis of selected internal livelihoods to give a blue print for the developmental agencies of the urban slum.**

# Methodology

## Document-Observing daily life and various livelihood

To understand the scenario on a very general level, to get a hang of the kinds of livelihoods and all that goes into making of livelihood.

## Study-Documentation through video and still images

For the initial study of the livelihoods and the entire detailed process, to understand and make observations on initial stage.

## Learning-Conducting qualitative interviews

Qualitative interviews would help in understanding the lives of the residents. Such as day-to-day activities, cultural influences, the survival strategies, their viewpoint on self and economic progress and their contribution towards society. Their mental and emotional responses towards situation etc. In short, providing an insight to the inside story.

## Analyzing

.Critical and detailed analysis of the entire selected livelihood, to give a detailed

insight of the livelihoods and the issues involved, so as to conceptualize solutions to improve the conditions of the people.

## Conclusion

# Reasons for Migration

These livelihoods are of those people who are migrants coming from the rural areas, small cities etc. of India in search of work to earn their living.

Lots of factors cause people to migrate, roughly the reasons can be stated as:

Poverty,

Lack of job opportunities,

Natural disasters,

Lack of market to buy their products or craft products,

In search of jobs having more money,

In search of better future, etc.





# Livelihoods



# Livelihoods



## Internal:

livelihoods in which the residents earning livelihood by working for Dharavi

## External :

residents earning living by providing services for outside Dharavi.

# Macro-Micro Economics



# Macro-Micro Economics

Dharavi is an example of a livelihood surviving on its own without any help from outside, rather providing services to the outside people.

Thus the Dharavi plays an important role in shaping the economy of the city by providing services. In other words can be stated as influences on macro economy of the city.





## Livelihoods





# Livelihoods



Machine embroidery

Scarf-tassle making

Hand-embroidery

Plastic-flower stringing

Peanut de-skinning

Leather-craft

Dhobi or laundry services

Zardozi

Idli making

Broom manufacture

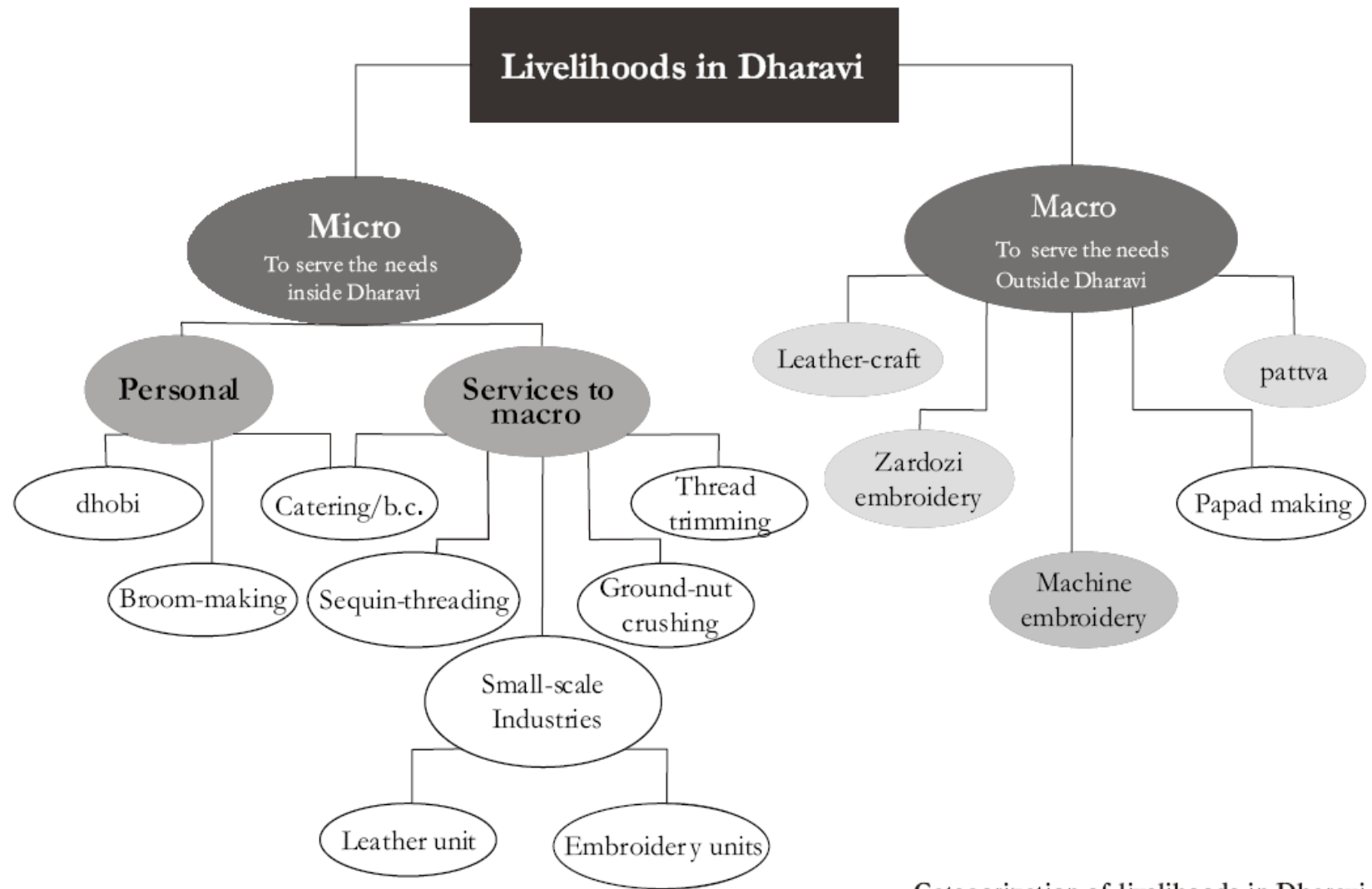
Sequin-stringing

Papad making

Pattva or tassle making

Mess services or BC

Cap embroidery



Categorization of livelihoods in Dharavi

# The **Macro**-entrepreneurs



# The **Macro**-entrepreneurs



Zardozi

# The **Macro**-entrepreneurs



Zardozi



Leather-crafts

# The **Macro**-entrepreneurs



Zardozi



**Machine-embroideries**



Leather-crafts

# The **Macro**-entrepreneurs



Zardozi



Machine-embroideries



Pattva/Tassel Makers



Leather-crafts



# Zardozi



# Zardozi

|         | Livelihoods                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Shelter                                                                                                                                                                                | Slum manufacture                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Technology                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Zardozi | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- migrants from U.P., Bihar,</li> <li>- the owners of the unit usually have had it as a traditional occupation</li> <li>-8-10 workers in each unit</li> <li>-Are paid Rs10/- per</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- area required for the execution of the task requires larger amount of space,</li> <li>-Usually the area of the workshop is 20x20ft</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-All the kaarigars work on a single piece together at the same time</li> <li>-They daily work for 8-16 hours per day</li> <li>-The master kaarigar embroiderers the prototype of a pattern and the other kaarigars execute the same.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the traditional method is used for the execution of this vocation</li> <li>-A huge cot-frame is used to stretch the piece of cloth and then , embroidery is done by hand</li> <li>-Certain intermediate stages of work are outsourced</li> </ul> |



# Leather-crafts



# Leather-crafts

|                | Livelihoods                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Shelter                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Slum manufacture                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Technology                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Leather crafts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- migrants from Tamil Nadu, U.P., Bihar.</li> <li>-An investment of Rs 20,000/- required to kick start such a workshop</li> <li>-Daily wage of Rs 20-50</li> <li>-Monthly income of an average kaarigar is Rs 2000/- to Rs 3000/-</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- if an illegal unit, the workshop is then usually on the loft with a trapdoor, an almost zero ventilation.</li> <li>- approximately work in an area of 12x12 ft.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- age of the workers is 17 years onwards</li> <li>-Material and the order is secured through the middle-men</li> <li>-Daily work for 12 hours</li> <li>-Each worker is able to produce approximately 6 pieces, on an average, daily</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mainly use sewing machines that run manually and not electrically</li> <li>-The tools used are basic and mechanical</li> </ul> |





# Machine-embroideries



# Machine-embroideries

|                           | Livelihoods                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Shelter                                                                                          | Slum manufacture                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Technology                                                             |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Machine-embroiders</b> | <p>-both; first and second generation involved in the occupation</p> <p>-education: basic primary education(i.e. up to std 5th)</p> <p>-Joined the trade as a trainee and later graduated to becoming an expert (within 6-8 months)</p> <p>-although, the kaarigars are paid on daily-basis; the client is charged according to the hours work gone into the process</p> | <p>- usually worked on the ground-floor</p> <p>- a very small area required to work</p> <p>-</p> | <p>-salary- trainee- Rs 50/- per week</p> <p>-salary- kaarigars-Rs 3000/- per month</p> <p>-salary- owner- Rs 7500/- per month</p> <p>-a small group(5-6 people) work as one unit</p> <p>-The work is fetched by the middleman or the dalal</p> <p>-working hours; normally 12 hours</p> <p>-each kaarigars dreams to own his own unit</p> | <p>- electrical</p> <p>Sewing-machines are used for the embroidery</p> |



# Pattva/Tassel Makers



# Pattva/Tassel Makers

|               | Livelihoods                                                                                                                                          | Shelter                                                                                                                                                     | Slum manufacture                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Technology                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Pattva</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Migrants mainly, from north India</li> <li>- traditional occupation</li> <li>-Work for upholstery</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a traditional occupation; hence, done at the place of residence, as the whole family participates in it</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the pattvas have their own network, as to outsource the big orders</li> <li>-They work both through agents and independently too</li> <li>-Use their own designs and material</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- traditional crude tools used</li> <li>-Mostly, the task is carried out by hand</li> <li>-Some tools have been invented by themselves as in to increase the production</li> </ul> |





# Observations & Analysis

As all the occupations documented were craft- related;  
there were many identical points which have been found.



# Livelihoods

The common factor which bound the four occupations was the fact that they **all were craft related**.

These livelihoods actually catered to the **needs of the external markets** (i.e. outside Dharavi) both, local and the export market.

The livelihoods were very much of **a traditional practice**, which both traditional craftsmen and the other migrants, had adapted to.

The number of **members in each unit does not exceed ten**. If it did, they split to form an independent unit.

Each one of them had a **common dream**; to have a **unit of their own**



# Shelter

A lot of the 'single' migrants, are sharing rooms with other bachelors at Rupees five hundred a month, unless if they have a family or spouse.

The workplace is away from their place of residence i.e. they do not work where they stay.

If the workspace was same as they stay, they would separate them, by the vertical growth of the shelter i.e. add on a 'loft' to the house, and twin that into the workspace area, as, to escape legal hassles and hence cover then completely

The rooms where these people worked or resided, on an average, would not exceed the area of 10ft x 10ft.

Almost all rooms or 'houses' or 'units' where the subjects were residing or working had been taken on rent.

The approximate rent of each room was Rs1000 -1200 per month

The cost of each room if bought would be approximately 2 - 3 lacs, although the structures built are illegal





# Slum Manufacture



Although being manufactured in the slums, the produce from these units are of **extremely high quality** and mainly **for the exports**.

The **technology** being implied is **largely traditional** hence, low cost, reliable and time tested and mastered.

The manufacture **process** mainly runs on the **man- power** and not the machines.

These livelihoods, **operate with** the help of the middlemen or '**dalals**'

If the **demand** of a product **increases** more than the capacity of the manufacturing unit; **it is taken up** by the other units, either by paying a commission to the mother unit (i.e. where the product had been produced), or through the dalals or by plain duplication.

The kaarigars **initially join a unit as a trainee** on a small stipend, later they save money and invest towards starting their own manufacturing unit'.

# Economics



All the observed industries **work on hard cash**.

As almost all of these manufacturing units are illegal structures; they do not take loans or **make the investments in the banks**. They feel more comfortable with the local money-lenders.

The migrant who join these units are largely poor villagers with very little money and unskilled craftsmen. They **join these units as trainees** with a small stipend of Rs 50-100/- a week (including food)

After 9-8 months they **graduate to become experts** or kaarigars earning a salary of Rs 3000 Rs 5000 pm

The rent paid for the workspace is approx Rs 1000 1200/- pm, while the cost of the place if bought would be 3-4 lacs. Hence these units **prefer paying the rent, than to buying the illegal structures**.

A large amount of the money is **spent on health and food**, the rest is saved and sent to villages.

# Critical Analysis

Based on the various observations of the various livelihoods, and considering the mentioned parameters. This qualitative analysis was carried out in the following areas

# Critical Analysis

Economic structure

Migration pattern

Level of technology

# Economic structure

In the economic structure of Dharavi these macro- industries are extremely important as they **get the necessary revenue from outside Dharavi**

The entire craft industry being illegal the actual **turnover** cannot be exactly pinpointed but would be **2000-5000 crores per annum**

Although the income being decent and close proximity of the workplace to the residence the standard of living of the people could be bought up, but due to unavailability of the basic amenities, the cost of living is extremely high, hence **the standard of living very low**

Hence, due to which the extremely poor people, who come as migrants to Dharavi, even after obtaining a decent monthly salary are unable to get out of the vicious circle of poverty due to **the high cost of basic amenities** like water, food grains etc.

This solely due to scarcity of the basic amenities. And surprisingly this scarcity is not due to the **poverty** but **due to lack of network or infrastructure** for, fulfilling the demand. Hence, one could conclude that poverty exists in Dharavi due to lack of basic amenities.

Hence the dream of Dharavi not as slum, can be only made into reality by giving it an infrastructure and not a step motherly treatment when compared to the city.

# Migration

The observation and references indicate that the basic cause for people to **migrate** from the rural areas to Dharavi is the **financial needs**.

Also, the **village economy is able to sustain only a certain amount of population**. Even if the population in the village increases the number of livelihoods remain the same, creating a surplus of manpower and thus, inequality. In villages, people have large families.

The **migrants to Dharavi belong to small towns and villages**, largely from the states Uttaranchal, Jharkand, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Orrisa, Karnataka and also, from Raigad district.

The migrants are young boys of 15-21 years of age, or young married couples.

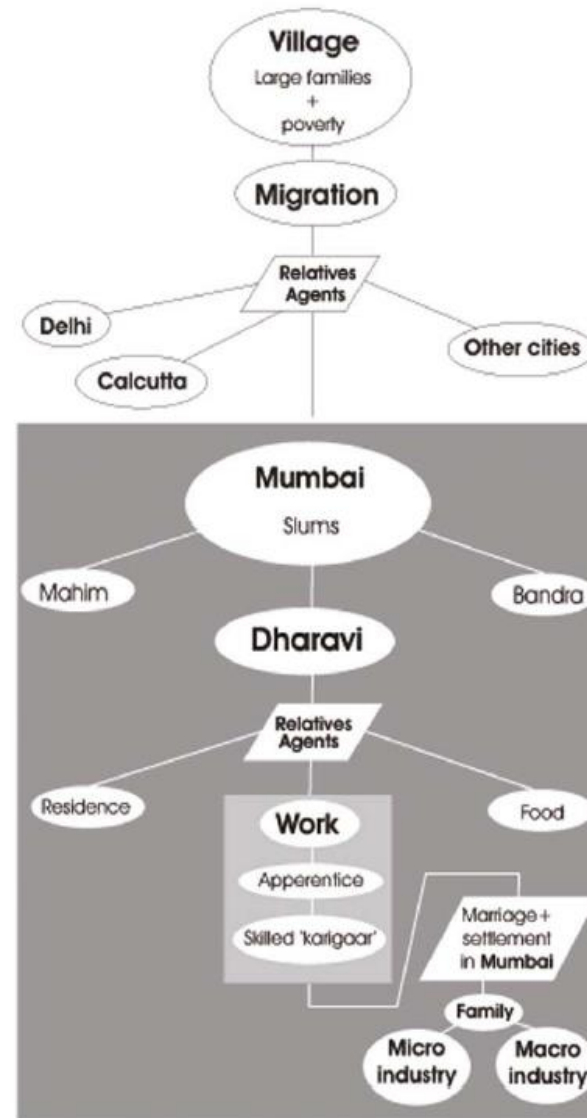
The migrant is considered as **unskilled labourer** and taken in the industry as a trainee and taken in by the industry as a trainee, and not as an expert. It would take him atleast **4 -6 months to graduate from trainee to kaarigars**

Almost all of the migrants live in sub -human living conditions, but **no one** of them **intends to return to their villages**.

There is a **considerable amount of 'step migration'**, which occurs. In other words a young boy migrates to the city for employment, after a couple of years, he returns; only to marry and get his newly



# Migration



# Level of Technology

The technology used by the people in the observed macro-industries was, **traditional hence, more manual**; but time-tested and reliable.

At some places, these units had **invented** their own **basic machinery**, using scrap material, which completely addressed their needs.

While at other units, machines had not been invented, but they had their own needs, which are being **fulfilled by certain micro industries** of Dharavi.

Most of the machinery used, require **manpower to operate**.

But on the personal lifestyle standards 8 out 10 people in Dharavi owned television, while 6 out 10 owned mixer/grinder.

Although 2 out 10 owned a land-line telephone connection, 9 out 10 owned a mobile phone.

The technologies in these cases have been the ones, which have the ability to survive largely with manpower. As all the **units are illegal**.

# Design intervention

As a designer, one does see the need of intervention of design not only in the tools used as for manufacturing, but also for better communication, and networking.

## Future Possibilities

Based on the analysis, and studying the scenarios; the following workable solutions in the studied environment could be incorporated

## Return to the Grass-roots

Based on the insight that crafts men are migrating cause of lack of market in the rural market.

They either are called here by agents or they come as they know someone in the city.

They are not willing to go back as the conditions are the same as they had left.

### Solution:

The migration be reversed.

If the industry which is equally dependent on these crafts men for work and money flow, then instead of crafts men leaving their entire setup and lifestyle, the agents who are here also acting as mediators between the big companies and these crafts-men, actually take orders to their place, that is in villages.

In this case the migration and the problems it causes to the migrants and the city crowding can be reduced drastically.

This would work towards producing much more effective work as the crafts-men will be in their original set-up.

It would also solve the overcrowding of the cities.

Agents work will also become much more proper, as in he will become an important person and his role can be checked by some authorities person who takes care that he keeps safe the rights of both the parties.

## Service centers

It will act as a information place where both the parties who want job and who want job to be done can register, and thus meet.

It will exactly act as how marriage bureauxes act, they cat as the junction point for two needful parties who want to meet

.  
This will be a service centre where people coming from outside Dharavi in search of job can register.

It will keep track of all the possible information about the skills that person has, or area he wants to work in.

It will also keep record of the experience or level of skill a person has in a particular area.

This will also keep record of what is the money expected to be paid for the services provided, or money to be paid for wanting a job to be done

.  
This might safe guard the rights of both the parties.



*Dharavi is no place for the squeamish.  
But neither is it a place for the lazy, the apathetic,  
the moaners.  
In more ways than one, this throbbing heart of  
Bombay is India.  
Also in more ways than one,  
it forces you to see what India could be,  
And what's holding it back.*





Thank You