



Summer Internship | Upasana

Aditi k



Auroville (City of Dawn) is an “experimental” township in Viluppuram district in the state of Tamil Nadu, India near Pondicherry in South India. It was founded in 1968 by Mirra Richard called “The Mother” and designed by architect Roger Anger. Auroville is meant to be a universal town where men and women of all countries are able to live in peace and progressive harmony, above all creeds, all politics and all nationalities. The purpose of Auroville is to realize human unity.

Auroville

Near Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu



Founded by Uma Prajapati, Upasana was born in 1997, originally with one table under a tree, as a garment design and manufacturing unit. Today it is a place where business, creativity, fashion, Indian culture, design, social responsibility and spiritual progress all come together for a creative synthesis.

Upasana Design Studio

Auroville, Tamil Nadu



Recognizing the extensive litter of plastic bags throughout India and the damage it was doing to our environment, the team at Upasana design studio set about creating a reusable cloth bag that could be conveniently packed and carried, eliminating the need to use plastic. Women from rural areas were then trained to create these unique bags, and now over 200 ladies produce the bags through a micro finance program. This project aims to tackle large issues with small steps and move towards greater environmental and social awareness.

Small Steps

A campaign to replace throw-away plastic bag culture

Website
Brochure
Label
Packaging

My role

Small Steps communication re-design



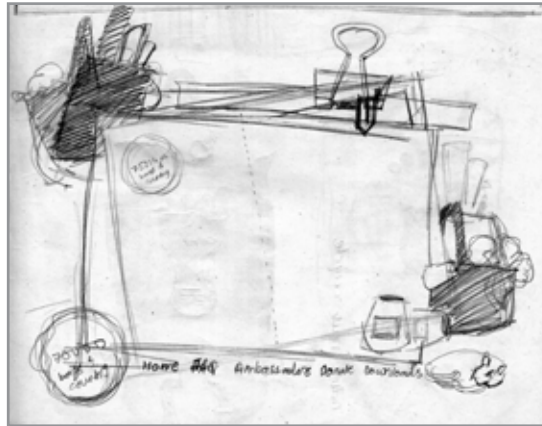
Project aims at spreading the message → than the product itself

- Educating people about environmental issues.
- At the same time giving them an option.

No structure
Multiplicity of messages
Information load- visual noise
Aesthetic point of view
Amount of paper used

Issues

concerning current Small Steps communication



Website

explorations and feedback



Feedback

Too playful, gives a very handmade paper products feel which Small Steps is not about. The proximity between logo and two trees makes it look like one unit

[The Campaign](#)

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[Order Bags](#)

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[Downloads](#)

[Small Steps](#)



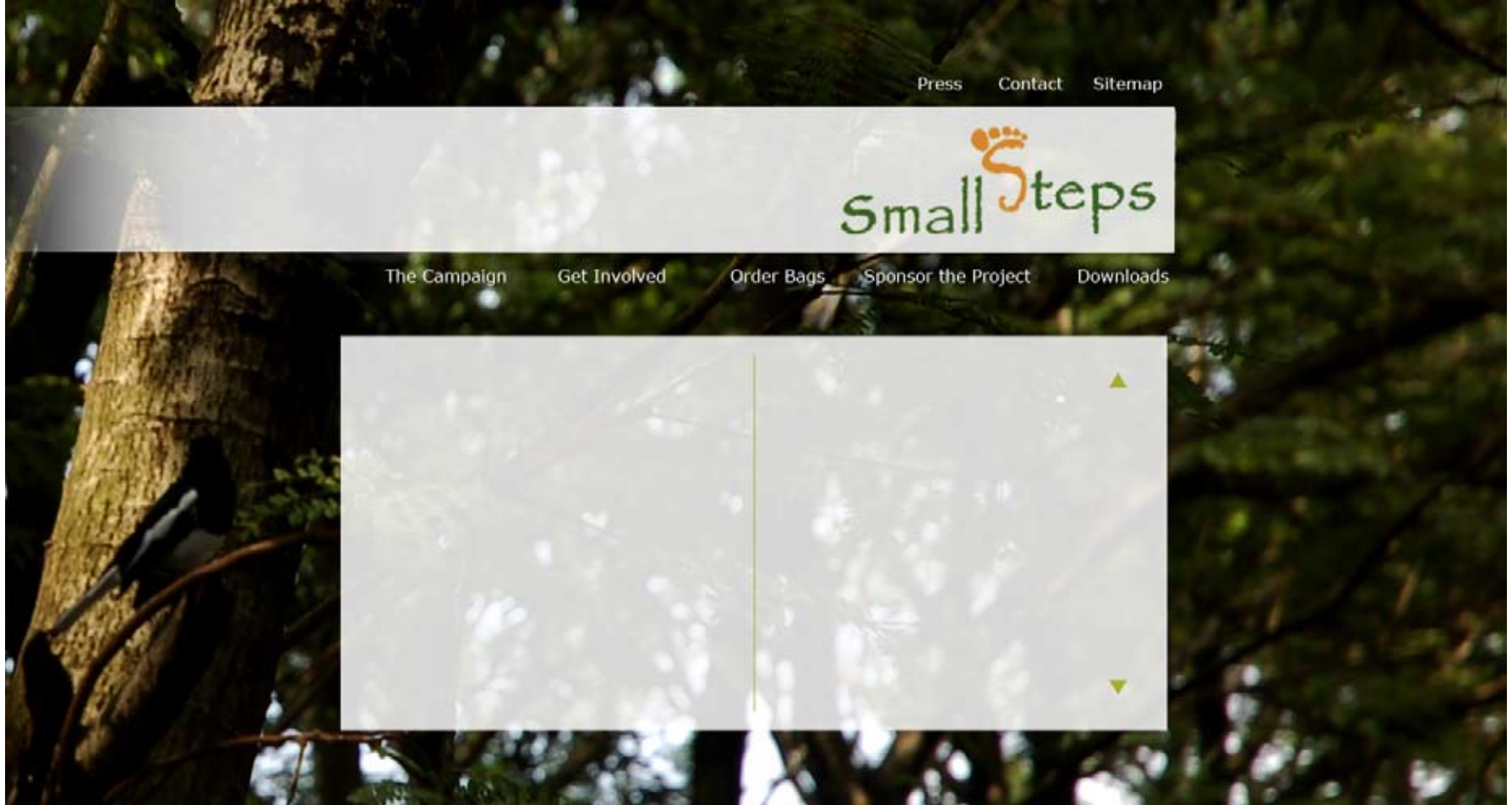
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Feedback

Very clean but barely has a campaign vibe to it



Feedback

We like the nature picture though it needs to be brighter but text is barely seen plus too boxy



[The Campaign](#) [Get Involved](#) [Order Bags](#) [Sponsor the project](#) [Press](#) [Downloads](#) [Contacts](#) [Sitemap](#)



You can take a small step to make a big change. Join the campaign to replace plastic bags and create livelihood for women in rural areas. Small Steps is more than a bag: it is a movement towards a better way of living. Following the creative philosophy of Upasana Design Studio, we work towards bringing design beyond the product and applying it to solve the various problems of everyday life. Recognizing the extensive littering of plastic bags throughout India and the damage it was doing to our environment, we set about creating a reusable cloth bag that could be conveniently packed and carried, eliminating the need to use plastic. Women from rural areas were then trained to create these unique bags, and now over 200 ladies produce the bags through a microfinance program. This project aims to tackle large issues with small steps and move towards greater environmental and social awareness.



Feedback

Aah now we are talking! Can you combine above's greenness with the structure of this one. Avoid so many product shots on landing page.



While I was presenting these concepts in one of the Friday Presentation meetings, the words “social campaign” struck me like an epiphany. All the while I knew in my head that this was to be a social campaign but the atmosphere surrounding this bag at Upasana kept me under the impression that it was one of the many accessory like things they sell. The whole essence of this project, Uma told me later is the idea of eliminating plastics and not essentially selling these bags. Its alright if people make their own bags out of T-shirts, pillow covers or whatever else. That’s when I realised the communication has to do more with awareness of the issue and getting people involved than it is with actual selling/ promoting/ pushing the bag. In the way of bag they are just providing options to people. I then studied the campaigns like Bell Bajao, Denim Day, Blank Noise etc.

Social Campaigns

Undertook a study of social campaigns their history, types, methods, approaches



Why reusable bags?

One reusable bag can replace hundreds of plastic bags. This would result in fewer plastic bags cluttering India's streets, clogging its gutters, poisoning its soil and injuring its animals. It is estimated that India alone generates 5000 tons of plastic waste everyday, much of which isn't recycled and easily makes it to a waste management area.

In addition to the obvious eyesore this litter creates, it has far-reaching implications. During heavy rains and monsoons, the build-up of plastic bags in gutters and sewage systems has intensified flooding in major Indian cities. In addition, the breakdown of polythene particles reduces the fertility of the soil. Animals become seriously ill after ingesting plastic in their search for food.

The first 'small step' is to eliminate the environmental hazard of plastic bags and carry a reusable cloth sac.

How are they made?

Every bag is produced by a rural woman who is microfinanced and trained to sustain an independent livelihood. After an initial one week training course, rural women receive a loan from the Small Steps program and are able to purchase sewing machines and begin producing bags.

In addition to learning a valuable craft, our three step training program intentionally focuses on building up the self-esteem of these women over a period of six months, with the eventual goal being to make them project and community leaders.

This second 'small step' creates jobs where there were none and creates a cycle of economic sustainability and women's empowerment.

What's new

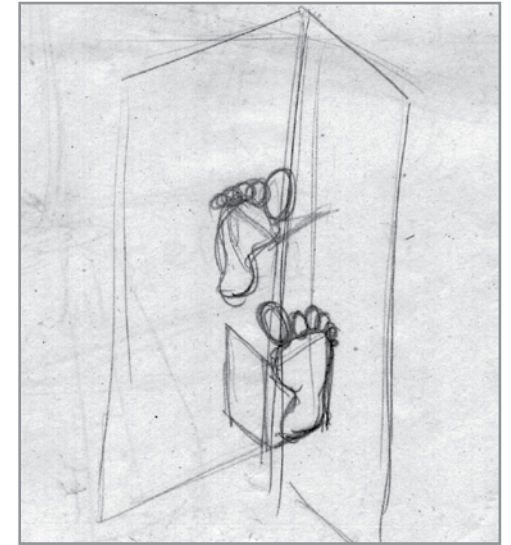
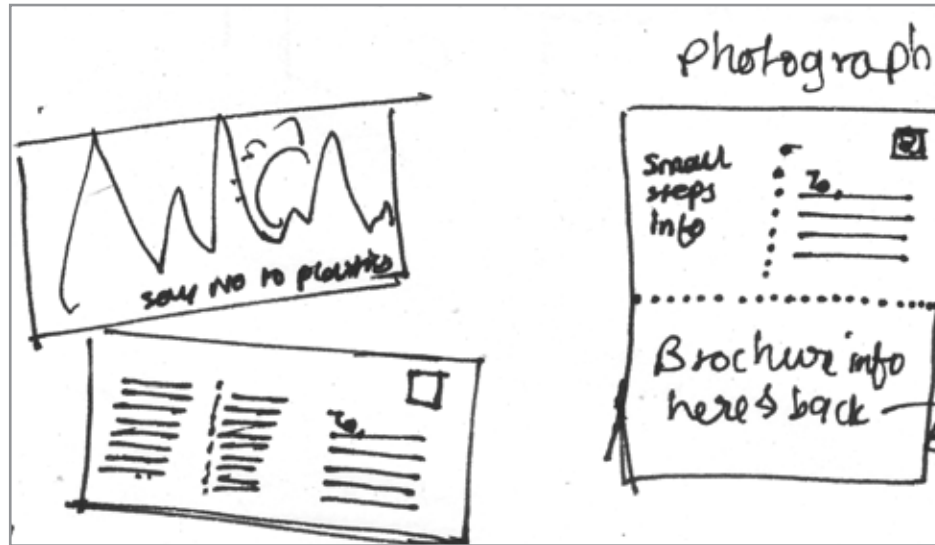


With Iree Iree Ravochandhar



At Tallapeta School

Website
Final look and feel



- Too much paper/ printing consumption
- Incorporate post-card idea
- Pick-worthy at POP

Brochure

Explorations and feedback



Feedback

Too playful!



Feedback

We like it. Should go with website & our previous post card theme. Plus some tweaks



Campaign

You can take a small step to make a big change. This campaign to replace plastic bags and card booklets for women in rural areas. Small steps is more than a bag it is a movement towards a better way of living, following the creative philosophy of Upstream Design Studio, we work towards bringing design beyond the product and applying it to solve the various problems of everyday life. Incorporating the extensive knowledge of plastic bags throughout India and the change it was doing to our environment, we set about creating a reusable - both together could be conveniently packed

and carried, eliminating the need to use plastic. Women from rural areas were then trained to create these unique bags and now over 200 ladies produce the bags through a microfinance program. This project aims to tackle large issues with small steps and move towards greater environmental and social awareness.

“Take a small step to make a big change”



Brochure

Brochure with postcard. One half to be retained, other can be mailed



Should give an immediate idea that its a bag
Not a cell phone pouch
Is as long as a brochure.
People throw it away w/o reading
Dangles from the bag hook.
Requires another brown strip to go around it
in order to secure it- paper wastage.
Eventually gets crumpled at packing stage
only no matter precautions taken.

Label

Issues and requirements



Feedback

The second one seems doable but can it carry all the essential information



Feedback

Stickers give crisp information. Same could be printed onto pouches. Eliminates brownstrip and cloth tag. Circular shape overrides Small Steps symbol.



Feedback

First one doable, second one though provides great cushioning will mean too much cost and last one is too glossy



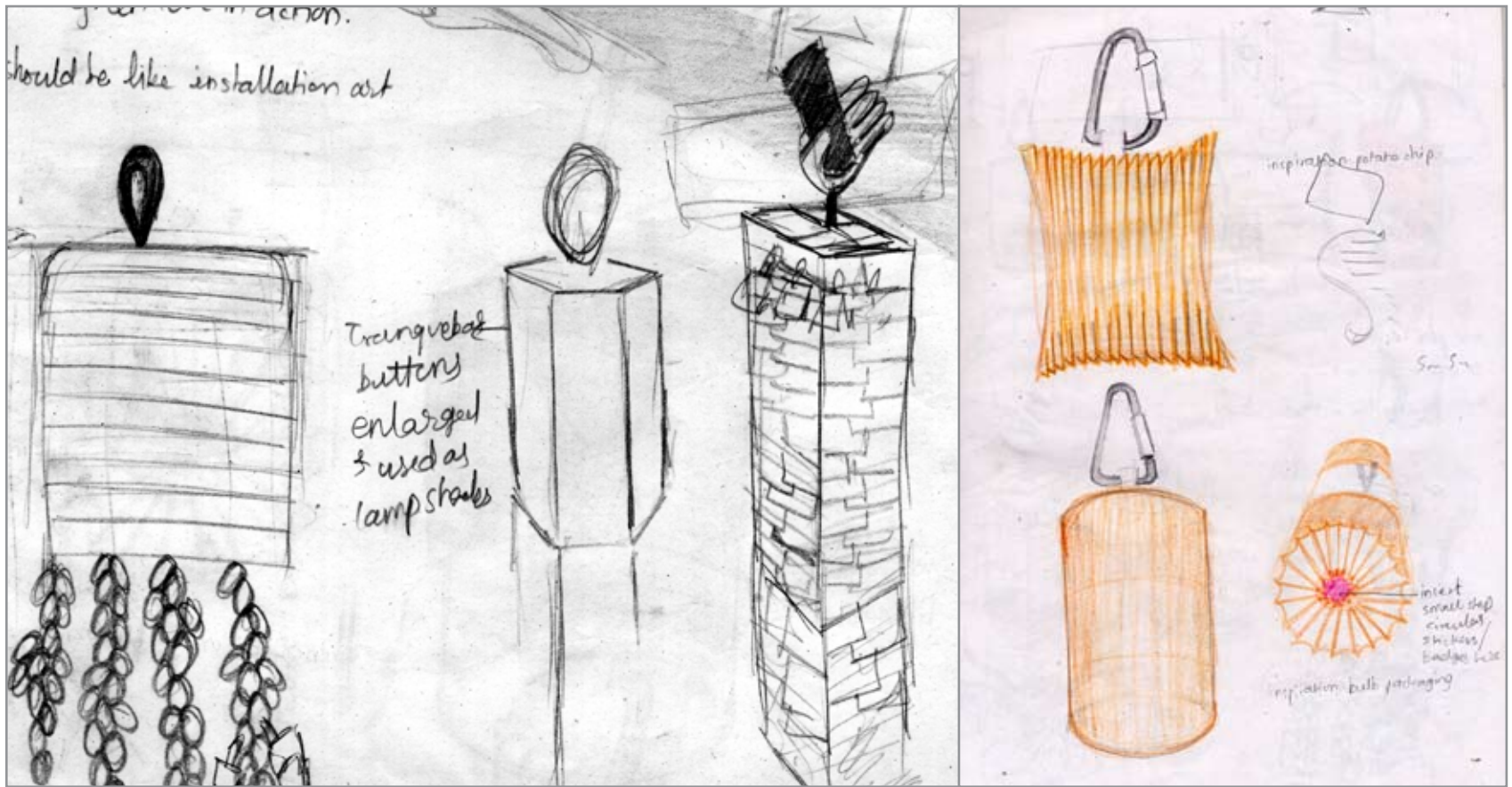
Label

Green for gift economy bags and red for bags on sale

Bulk packaging required
So that each bag need not be counted
Such that packing-packaging-display are in sync
Minimize display effort for retail people
Bags to be shipped overseas w/o crumpling
Cost effective and customizable

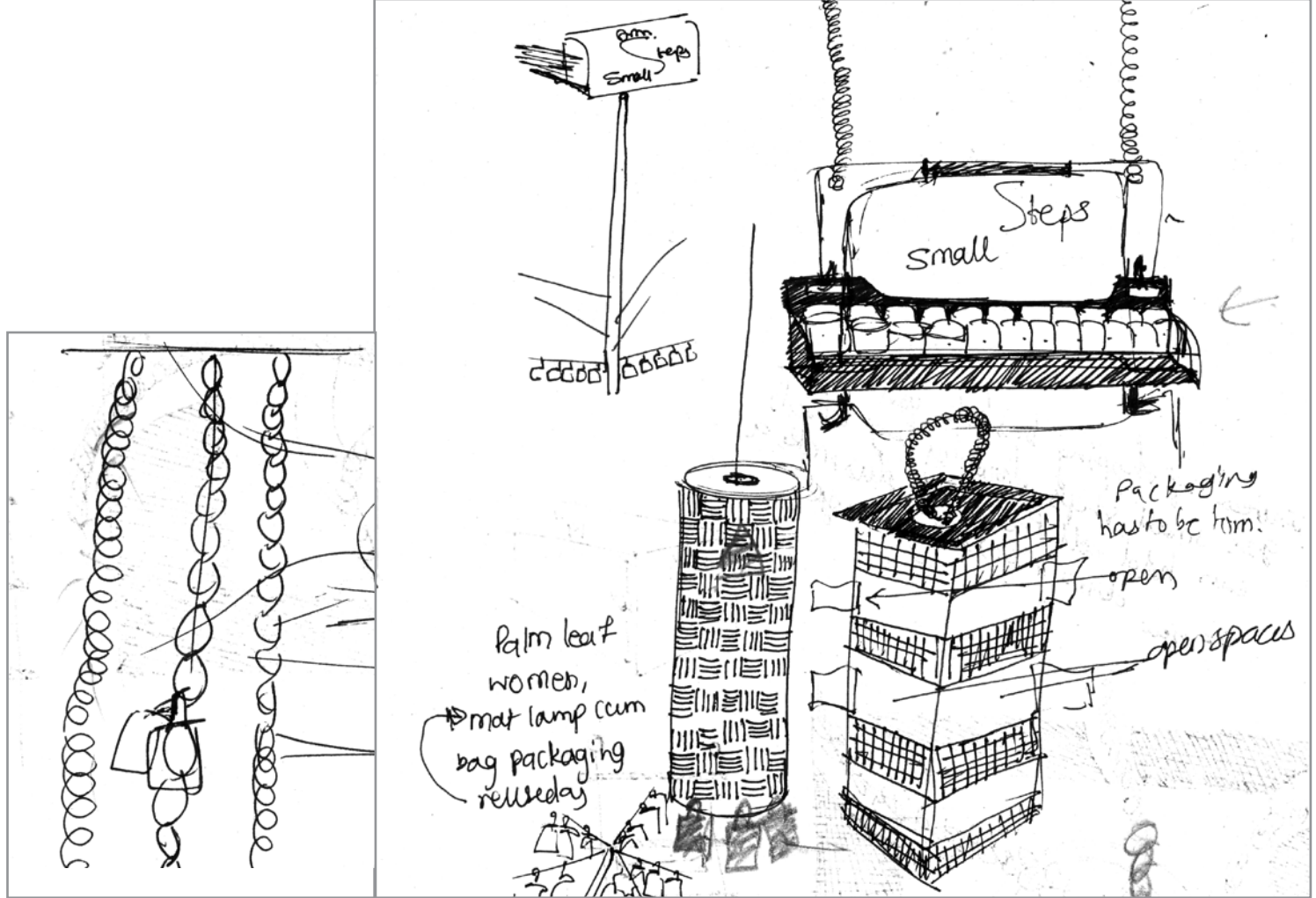
Packaging–display for bulk

Requirements



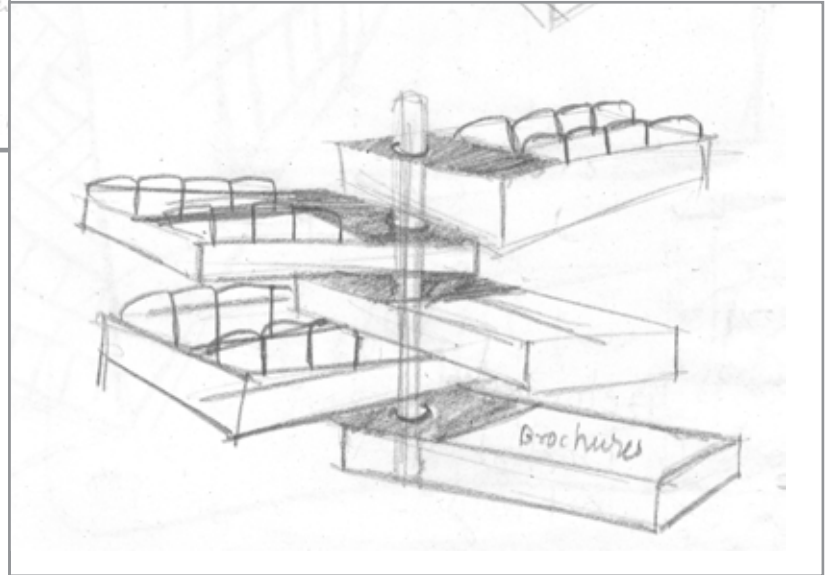
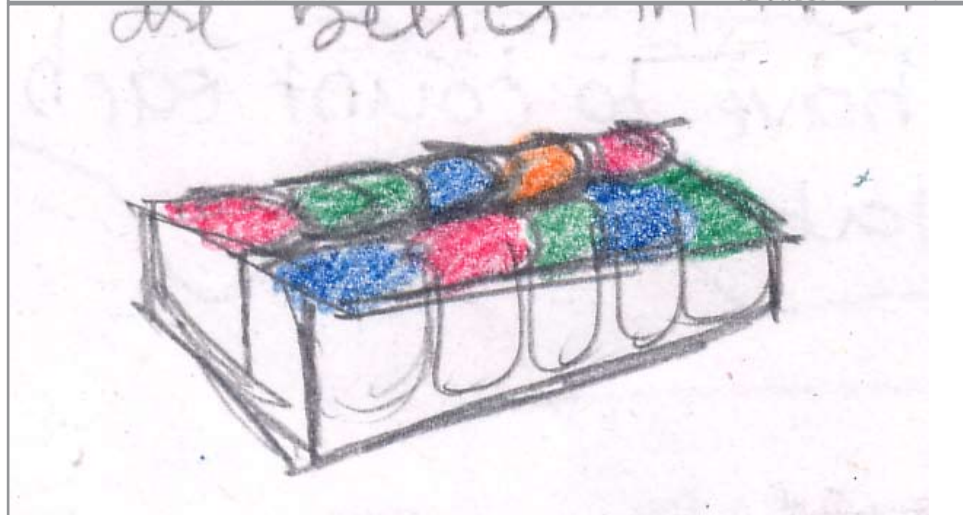
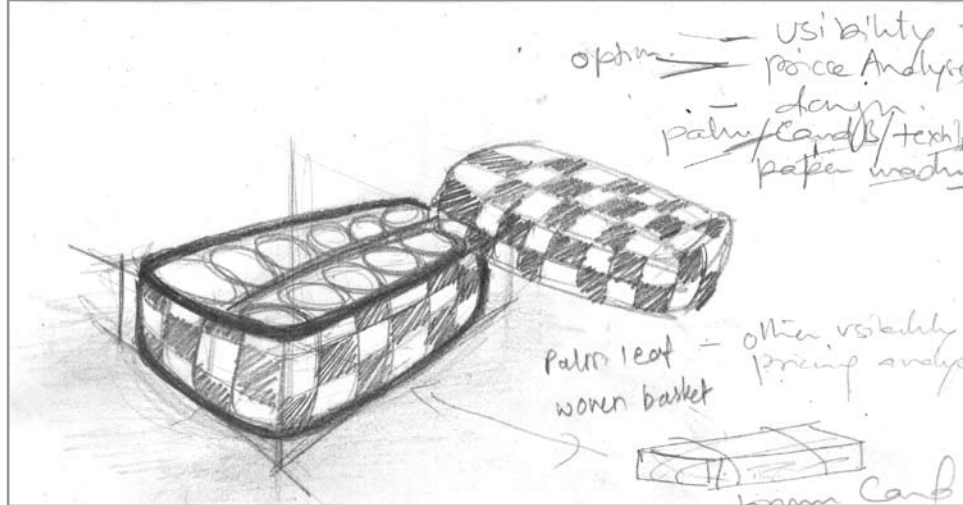
Packaging-display for bulk

Explorations



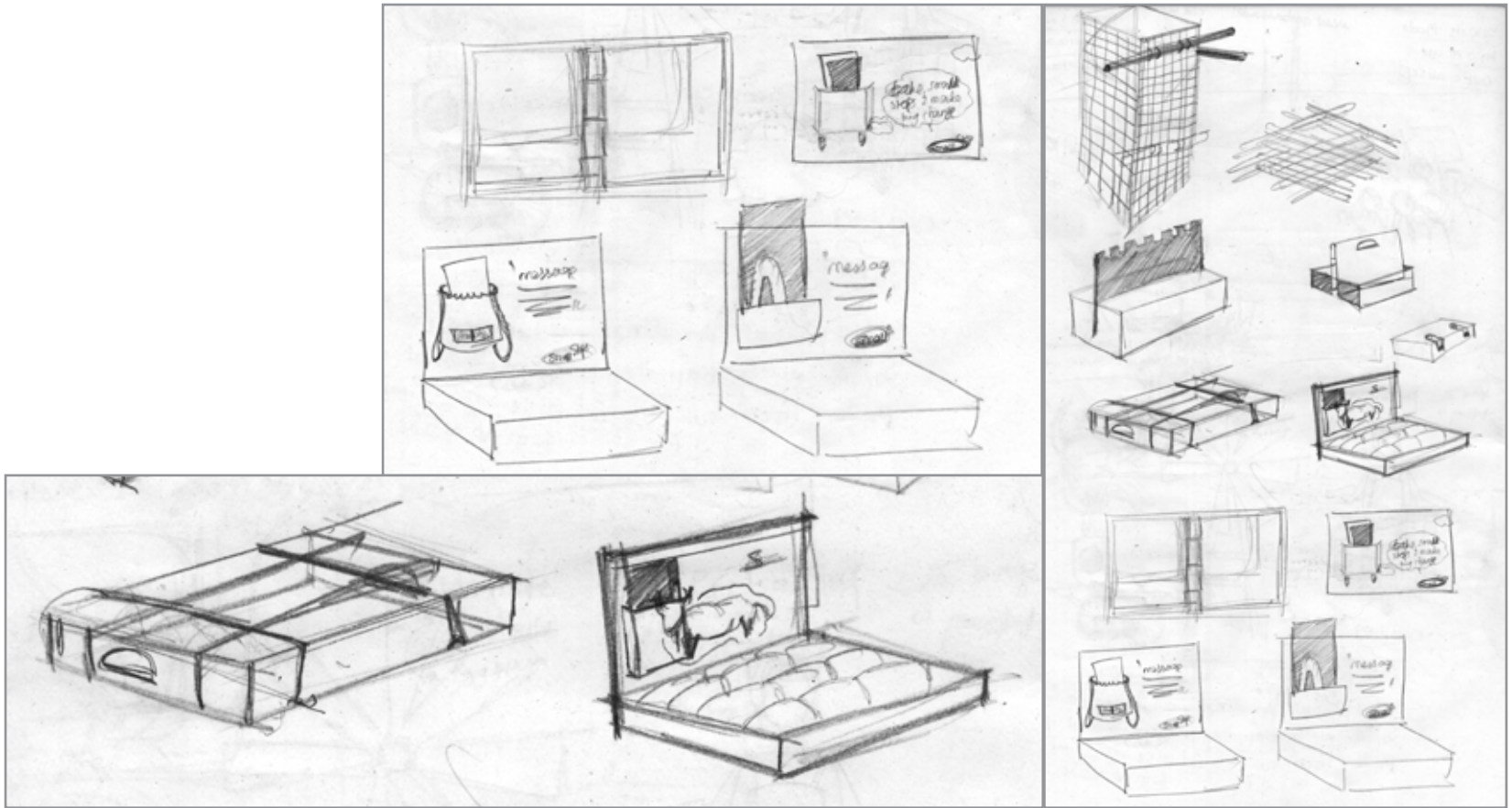
Packaging-display for bulk

Explorations



Packaging-display for bulk

Explorations



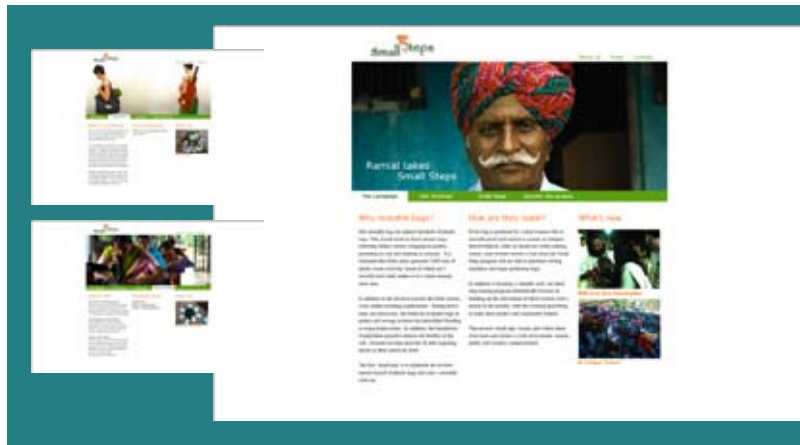
Packaging-display for bulk

Explorations



Packaging-display for bulk

Final look and feel



Deliverables

Good intentions \neq social enterprise
Infinite energy, patience & courage
What is “self-organising”
Crisis-management
Wisdom of the collective
Turning constraint into opportunity
Importance of Knowing languages
Reality check: My skills!

Upasana lessons

Simple Life Mandate: Consume least amount of resources. Try to go off internet for a while, no constant searching information, references on net. No finding easy way out. Plant more trees. Tune into self. Do what it take to remove self-doubt. Cultivate the good self. Be open to people & cultures around. Information is good but not be all and end all of life. Do not be ashamed of one's own quirks. Nourish your people self. Do what self wants. Dip your guard every now and then. Cut own hair. Make own clothes. Do good unto people at every chance. That is the ultimate high. Move around on a cycle. Care for nature around you.

Auroville lessons

IDC

Uma Prajapati, Upasana Team

Raghu Kolli

Kamlesh, Roshan, Bakshi

Bicycling environment gang

Friends at Auroville

aai-baba

Thanks