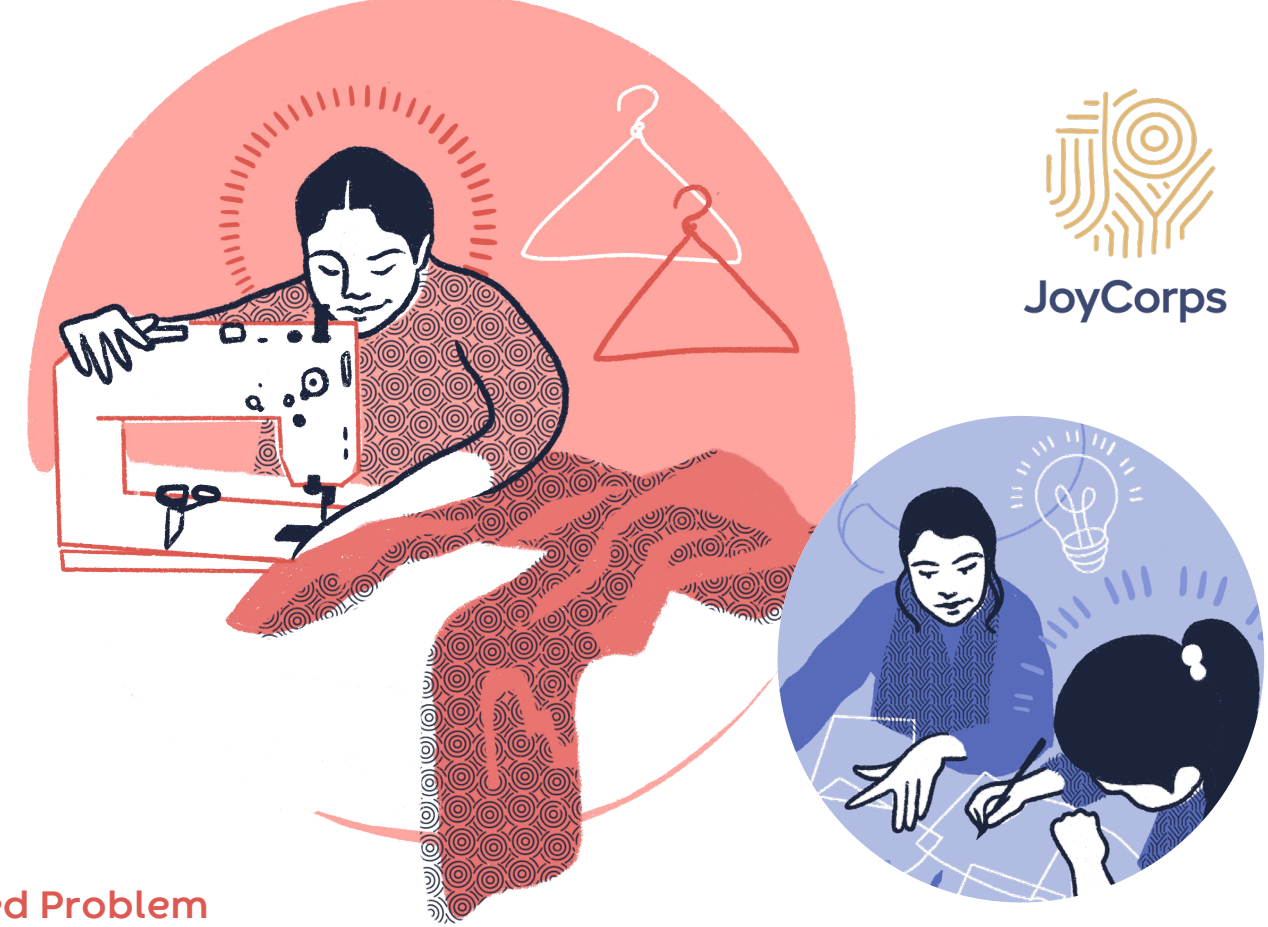
"It's dynamic"

Moving from a system of exploitation to a system of health



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Slavery, the act of being exploited by others for commercial or personal gain, has a long history. Human trafficking, often referred to as 'modern day slavery' is one of the most profit making crimes in the world today, a $150-$200 billion industry built off the exploitation of 27.6 million people*.

When we are faced with these overwhelming problems, ones that are as ancient as humanity itself, ones that have never been solved, but that also cannot be ignored - where do we begin?

A Wicked Problem

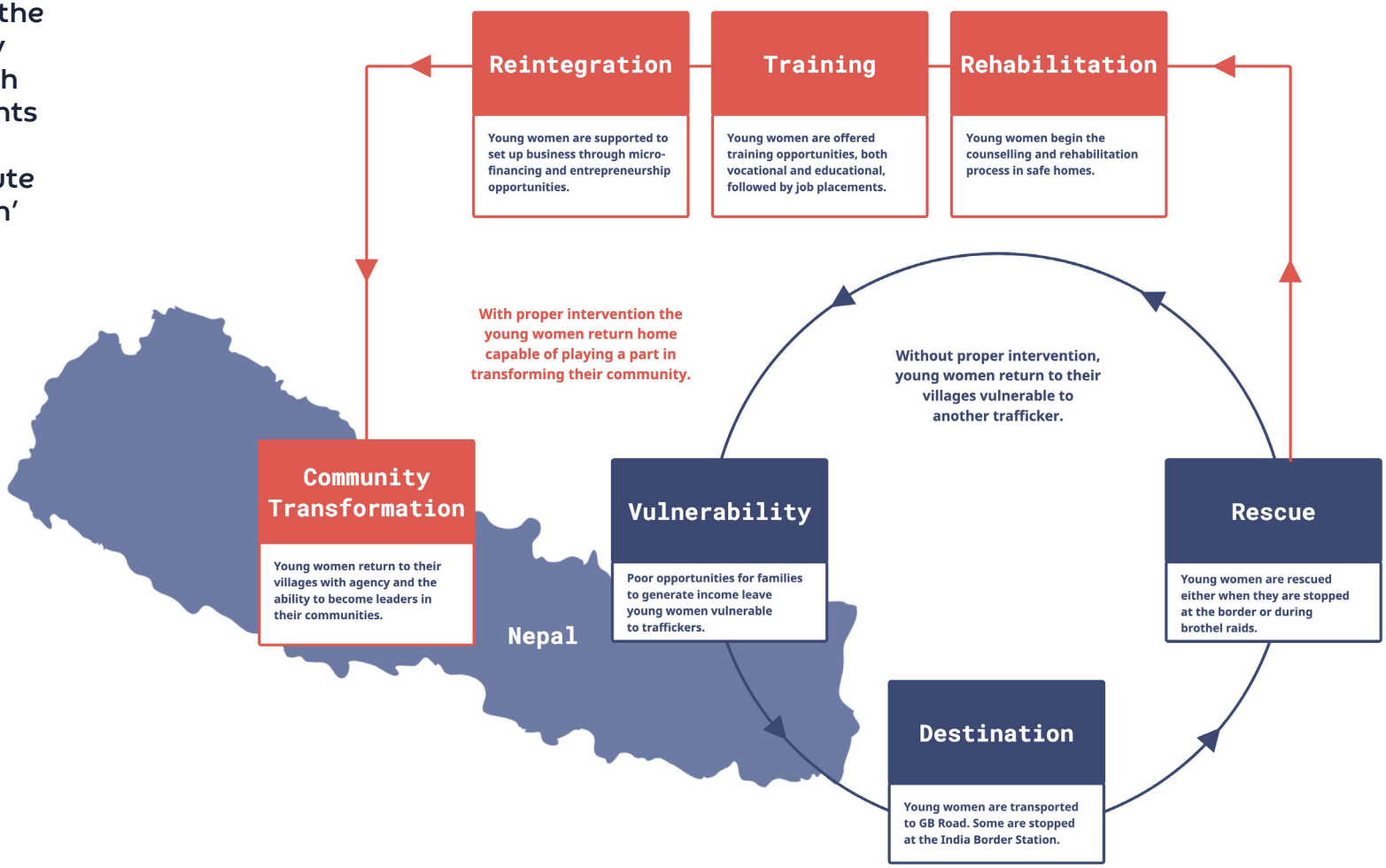
This was the question that we, JoyCorps Studio, wrestled with when we started working with two South Asian anti-trafficking organizations. Our expertise and experience lies in helping organizations and individuals think about their problems differently. We facilitate a process that encourages them to take a wide perspective, acknowledge the complexity and then design solutions from a place of fresh understanding, and most importantly co-design with those who will be most impacted by the solution.

We call this methodology a mix of design thinking and systems practice. You see, without realizing it, typically our brains and bodies have become accustomed to applying quick fix, linear solutions to what are actually deeply complex, dynamic and contextual problems - we call these 'wicked problems'...and human trafficking is 100% wicked.

** United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Standard Operating Procedures: To Counter Cross Border Trafficking in Persons: India-Nepal, September 2017*

The Trafficking Cycle

This cycle articulates how the two anti-trafficking organisations, at the start of the design process defined the cycle of vulnerability (the blue loop) caused by trafficking. The red pathway depicts how the organisations saw their theory of change prior to working with JC studio. One of the key insights as we journeyed with the two organisations was how the route to 'Community Transformation' became more expansive than they initially defined.



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So...where do we begin?

The process starts from a place of expansive discovery, our aim is to acknowledge and embrace the complexity of the system in order to transition the system to one of health.

The discovery process for this project started with the two anti-trafficking organizations mapping the journey of a young woman who they may typically engage with.

The journey map started with the reasons why she would leave her family to migrate abroad, which is almost always for economic purposes. The map illustrated how she traveled through the trafficking cycle; the places she went, the people she met, the feelings she may have felt. Woven within the map were the efforts of both organizations; how they rescue, rehabilitate and work to prevent this cycle happening again. This process allowed the organizations to step back and take a third person view of the problem.

The map also highlighted the perceived immediate problem; If a young woman, after a period of rehabilitation doesn't have clear pathways to reintegrate back into community life, she is highly vulnerable to being re-trafficked and the cycle begins again.



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A North Star

From this place of greater understanding we were able to help the organizations define the problem and develop a design question - a north star of sorts, that would guide the trajectory of the project.

The outcome of the 9 month consultation was a rigorous systems map depicting the problems of the current system alongside both organizations efforts to transition towards a healthier one. The map contained both primary and secondary data collected through interviews with both organizations, additional stakeholders and experts in the field, alongside desk research that helped to define the context.

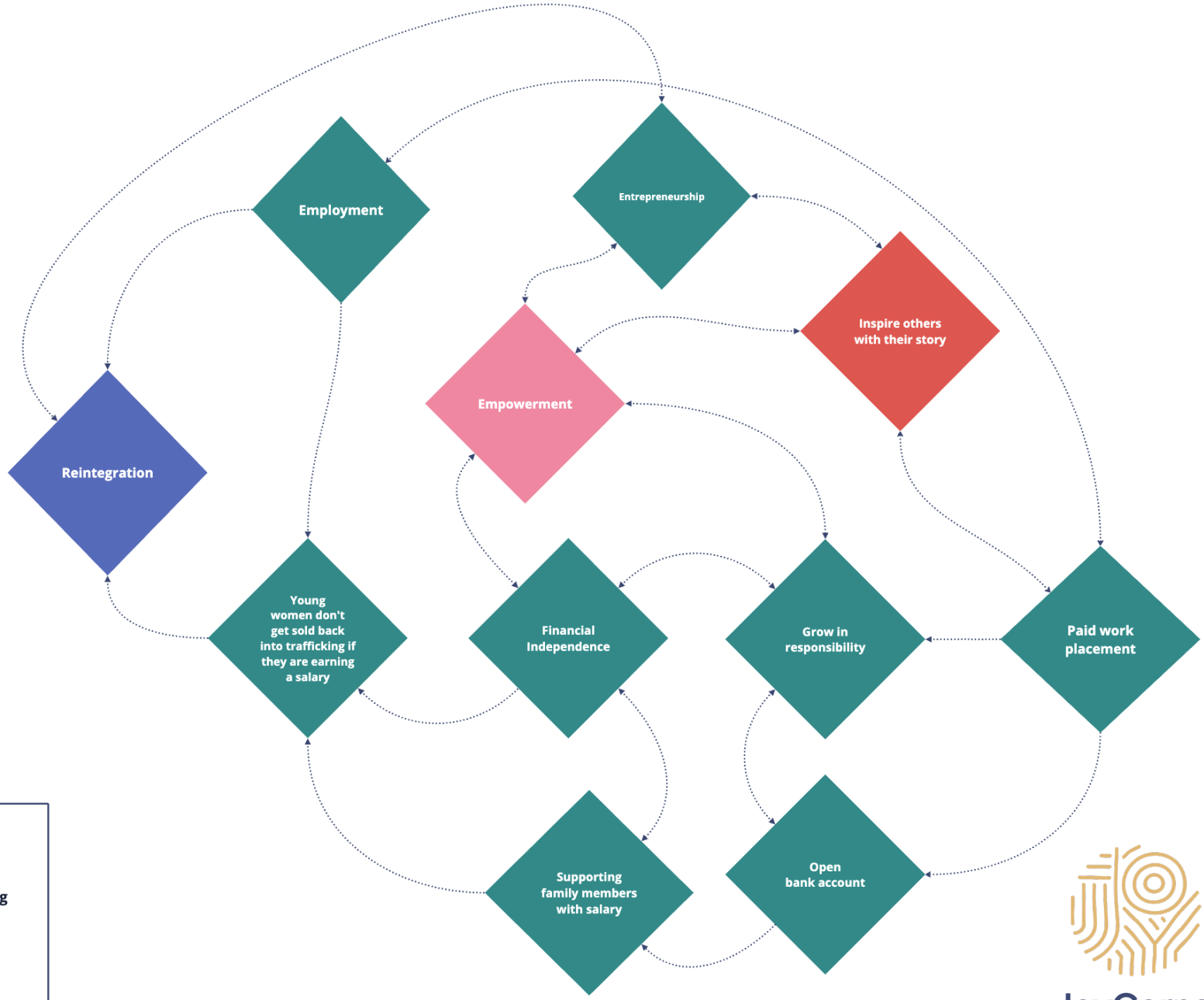
As if you were in a hot air balloon looking down at earth from above, a systems map gives a different perspective. From above you can see patterns present themselves in a more defined way. You begin to see loops and behaviors that you may otherwise have missed. This is what we experienced... an emergence of potential leverage points that sparked ideas for prototypes.

Pattern Making

Extracted from a systems map built of over 170 elements, with each element supported by data gathered from interviews and research, four primary patterns were identified.

One of the patterns is this one pictured here, it maps the role that work placements could play as a clear stepping stone towards entrepreneurship whilst also providing the young women with essential life skills along the way.

Out of the process of pattern-making we were able to develop prototypes centered around the need for the young women to discover their strengths, gain experience, grow in responsibility and develop the ability to dream of an alternative future.



Legend

- Opposite
- Opportunities
- Education
- Health / Wellbeing
- Cultural / Social
- Economic

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Entrepreneurship + Employment

Reintegration was the perceived problem - but as we studied the emerging patterns, the roles that entrepreneurship and employment play in the reintegration process became highly prominent.

For both organizations the ultimate north star was community transformation with entrepreneurship seen as a route towards that goal. The hope was that vocational training in a skill such as tailoring or hairdressing would lead to many of the young women starting and sustaining their businesses. However, it became evident that bridging the gap between rehabilitation and reintegration through entrepreneurship proved to be a significant challenge.

Programme Design

Not everyone is an entrepreneur, but the research showed that a village only needs 1 or 2 young women with a dream and desire to bring community transformation.

On this premise JC studio designed a reintegration program with the 2 organizations that stretches across a 5 year period integrating elements such as discipleship, counseling, business skills and vocational training. The most important thing is that by design it's dynamic, a series of interlinking clusters that provide pathways for the women to flourish in their own unique way.

Join the journey

The beauty (and frustration!) of this process is that it's never ending... we've been able to make exciting progress and design some bold solutions but we need your input! Our global community is so valuable in taking this work forward. You, who have been in the thick of it, on the ground day in day out - you, who have seen solutions succeed and fail, we would love and be grateful for your input.

We've compiled a full-length report of this process and we would love to share it with you.

To learn more about the work of JoyCorps or to chat with one of our team:

Visit our website joycorps.org

Get in contact with our project designer - josie@joycorps.org

Please email us on the above address to request a copy of the full length report.

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