

Draft Project Proposal 9/21/2014

What is it about?

We are developing a business plan application that microfinance workers for NGO's can use with their clients in the field to assess their current income level, business operations, and help them generate a business plan with recommendations to expand their business to raise their level of income. This is based on a business plan prototype Jackie Wolf worked on this summer with the NGO Fundacion Paraguaya in Asuncion, Paraguay. It will help assess the business and educate individuals about changes they can make to increase their income.

Who are the user groups?

The two user groups are microfinance assessors and their clients who are low-income entrepreneurs living below the poverty line.

Why is it important?

It is estimated that over 1 billion people worldwide currently live in extreme poverty. Most of the research on poverty indicates that charity does not solve issues of poverty. This application serves to assess current levels of income among those living in poverty, and more importantly, help individuals develop the skills to overcome their poverty by expanding on their current business practices.

What are the competitors?

There are no direct competitors because of the unique setting it will function in the comprehensive services it provides. There are, however, competing strategies for the individual features of our app. Competing business planning apps, which require low-income clients to have internet access, include [Enloop](#) and, [StratPad](#). These emphasize accounting and formal reports, and are self-directed. The [Small Business Coach & Plan](#) app aggregates articles on entrepreneurship and claims to offer live business advice. Competing tools for measuring poverty and reporting field data include the [Progressing out of Poverty Index](#), which utilizes surveys to measure clients' progress in overcoming poverty, and [TaroWorks](#), a mobile technology suite for managing field officers and the data they collect.

Why is your idea better?

Our goal is to facilitate the relationship between microfinance officers and entrepreneurs in impoverished areas. As it exists, microfinance officers come into the homes of these entrepreneurs, ask them a series of questions, and note their responses on paper that they take away. Nothing is left with the entrepreneurs and they have no sense of ownership over the information they provide. Our application breaks down a basic business plan into very simple and straightforward series of questions, simplifying a complicated process. We turn the process into a collaborative one, with both groups filling in various aspects of the business plan so the entrepreneur feels more ownership over the information he/she is conveying to the officer. Finally, our app helps to facilitate ongoing conversations between the two groups and provides concrete suggestions on how entrepreneurs can improve their business.

Screen Pictures/Sketches

<div><div>Business Plan</div><div>New Plan</div><div>Continuing Plan</div></div>	<div><div>Business Plan</div><div>Basic Information</div><div>Name</div><div>Client#</div><div>City</div><div>MetroUrbanRural</div><div>←→</div></div>	<div><div>Business Plan (navigation)</div><div>Basic Information</div><div>Poverty Indicator</div><div>Business Information</div><div>Competitor</div><div>Summary</div><div>Action Plan</div></div>																																
<div><div>Poverty Line Chart Page</div><div>You</div></div>	<div><div>Business Info</div><div>Where is your business?</div><div>At home</div><div>Neighborhood</div><div>Store</div><div>Travelling cart</div></div>	<div><div>Business Info</div><div>Who do you sell to?</div><div>Friends</div><div>Neighborhood</div><div>Family</div><div>Everyone</div></div>																																
<div><div>Business Info</div><div>When are you open?</div><table><thead><tr><th></th><th>Mon</th><th>Tue</th><th>Wed</th><th>Thur</th><th>Fri</th><th>Sat</th><th>Sun</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><th>Evening</th><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><th>Afternoon</th><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><th>Morning</th><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></tbody></table><div><></div></div>		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Evening								Afternoon								Morning								<div><div>Your Business</div><div>Graphic</div></div>	<div><div>Business Plan</div><div>Your Action Plan</div><div>1</div><div>2</div><div>3</div></div>
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun																											
Evening																																		
Afternoon																																		
Morning																																		