

# Inayat Alaya

## Sculpted ground, sculpting lives

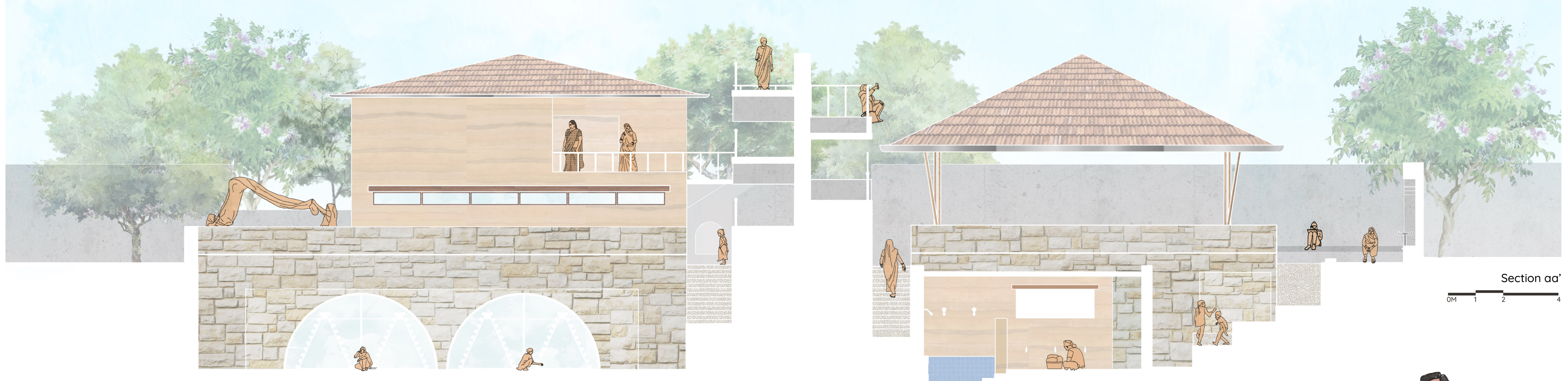
Asarwa Village, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

### ināyat

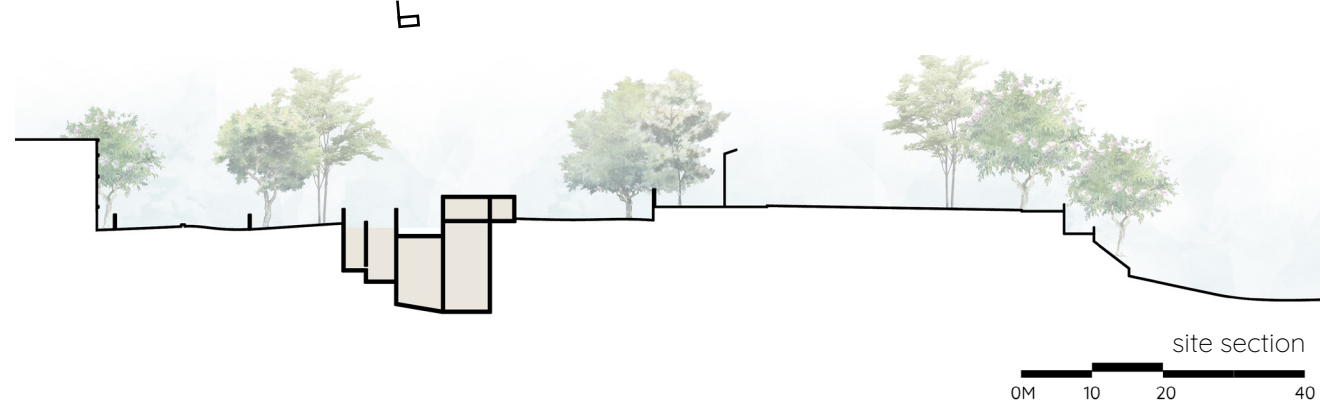
(n.) Favour, bounty; gift, present; countenance, aid, support:—‘ināyat rakhnā (-par), To show favour (to), to look with kindness (on):—‘ināyat karnā, to present, give, grant (to, -ko), to vouchsafe. (Urdu)

### āalaya

(n.) Abode, asylum, dwelling, house (Hindi)







## Site and Context

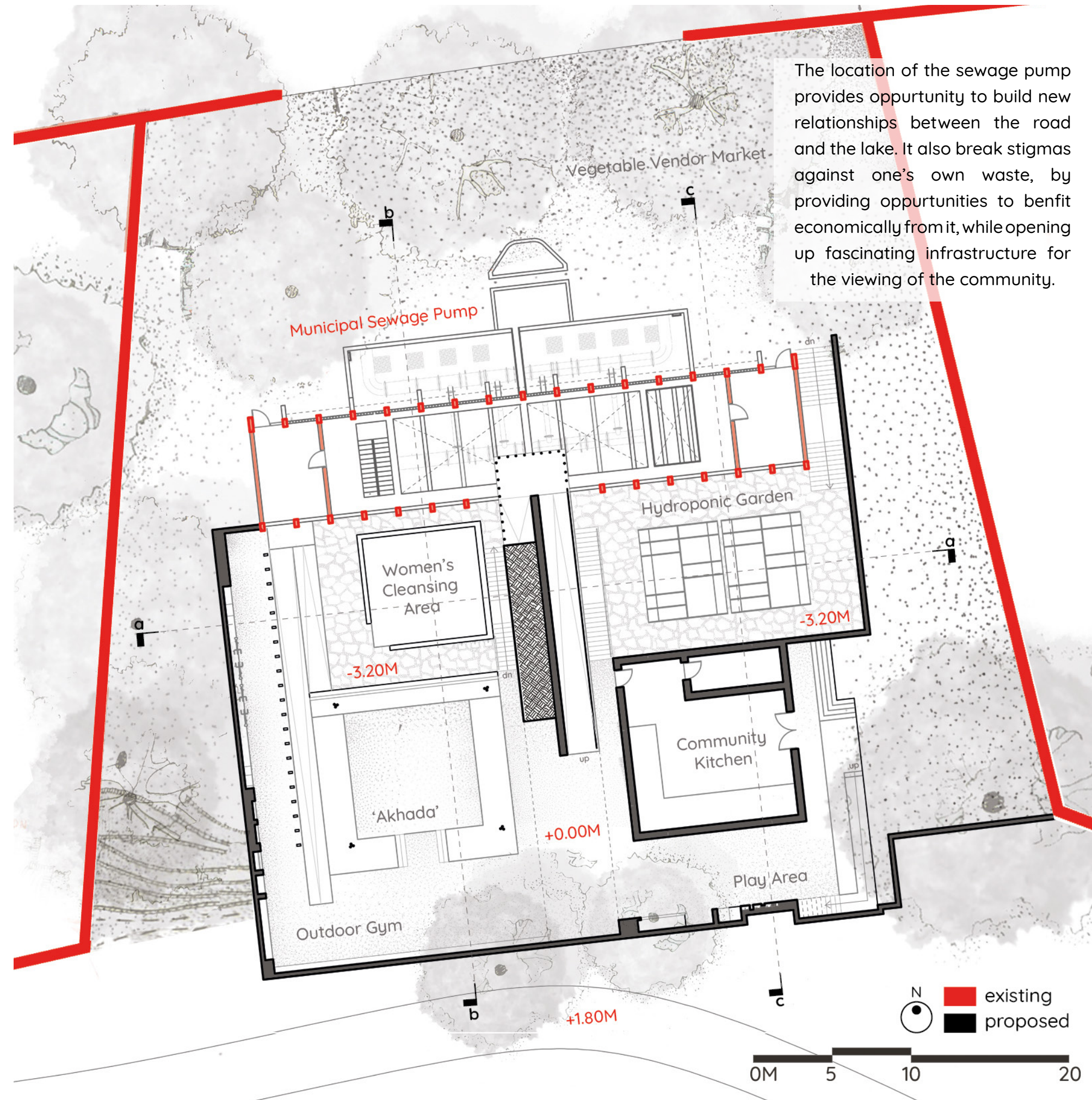
Asarwa village is a dense conglomerate of informal, low and medium income settlements around the newly 'redeveloped' Asarwa Lake in West Ahmedabad. The redevelopment project included building an expansive concrete water front around a community lake, whose entrance is now governed by municipal authorities, and thus, no longer belongs to the community.

In the vicinity, the AMC also has large areas of land dedicated to civic functions (civic centre, labour institute and sewage pump), however all three are enclosed within tall walls, and thus become private oasis for the officials, caretakers and their associates, all men. There is also one women's toilet on site, compared to multiple urinals for men

## Gendered Nature of Spaces

Men can be seen sprawling all over the site including the roads, the AMC buildings and the park without any evident relationship to the spatial quality of the spaces. Women are only found on the open streets, performing domestic tasks or chaperoning children in the park. Their density is significantly higher near the children's school while warnings are issued by concerned passerbys, telling women not to enter the highly enclosed labour institute due to its degree of enclosure, and thus lack of safety.

Thus, two assertions are made:  
(1) The use of spaces is gendered in nature, i.e. women and men do not use spaces in the same way.  
(2) Women's use is closely linked to the spatial quality of each space, the purpose associated with the space.



The location of the sewage pump provides opportunity to build new relationships between the road and the lake. It also break stigmas against one's own waste, by providing opportunities to benefit economically from it, while opening up fascinating infrastructure for the viewing of the community.

## Health and Sanitation

- 'Akhada' : Traditional Wrestling
  - a. Sandpit
  - b. Outdoor Gym
- Community Bathroom
  - a. Bathing Area
  - b. Washing Area
  - c. Toilets (4)
- Yoga Room
- Reproductive Health Centre
  - a. Doctor's Office
  - b. Homeopathic Dispensary

## Sustainable Community

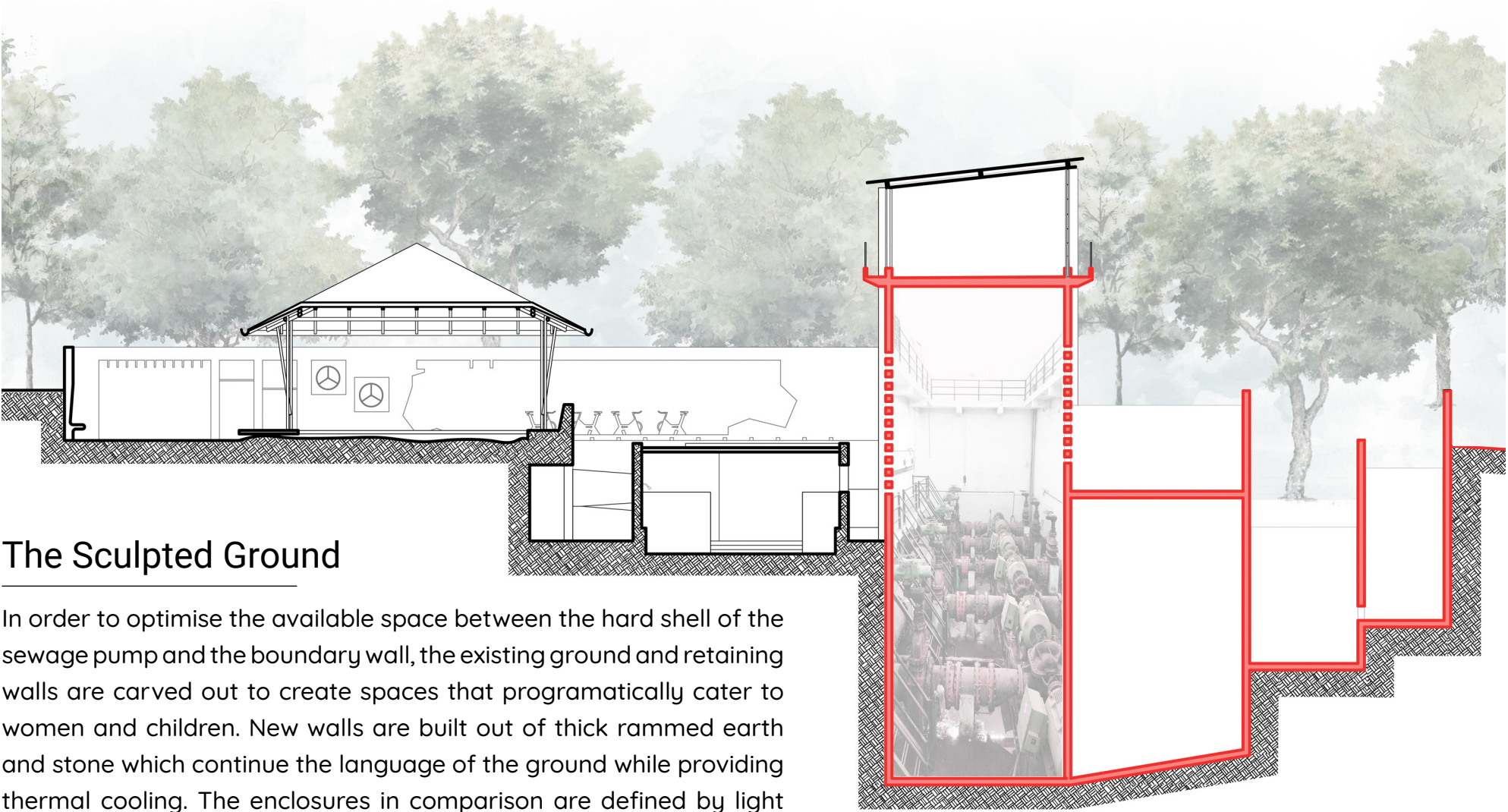
- Micro STP plant for:
  - a. Recycling water from sewage
  - b. Converting refuse into biogas for kitchen use
- Hydroponic Kitchen Farming
  - a. Consumption
  - b. Selling
- Rain Water Harvesting
- Solar Energy
  - a. Consumption
  - b. Selling

## Economic Welfare

- Community Kitchen
  - a. Cooking
  - b. Serving
  - c. Maintaining Kitchen Garden
  - d. Vegetable Market for produce
- Day Care and Creche
  - a. Playing Area
  - b. Eating Area



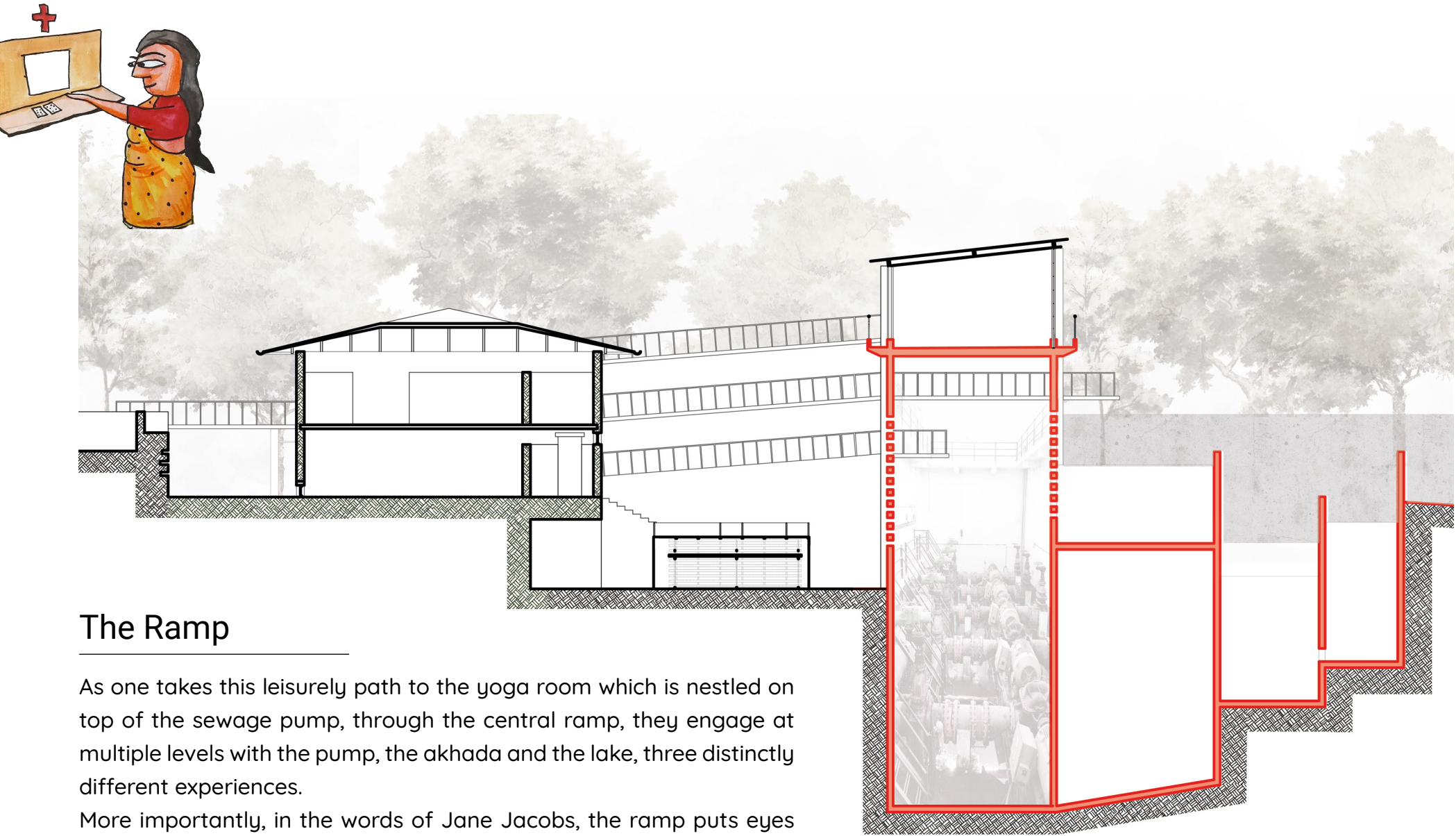




The Sculpted Ground

In order to optimise the available space between the hard shell of the sewage pump and the boundary wall, the existing ground and retaining walls are carved out to create spaces that programatically cater to women and children. New walls are built out of thick rammed earth and stone which continue the language of the ground while providing thermal cooling. The enclosures in comparison are defined by light bamboo and steel roofs which enable ventilation while providing shade. Exterior walls are built of concrete to minimise maintenance. Nippon Paint WeatherBond Advance is used to protect the walls from weather damage, and reduce their temperature.

Section bb'



The Ramp

As one takes this leisurely path to the yoga room which is nestled on top of the sewage pump, through the central ramp, they engage at multiple levels with the pump, the akhada and the lake, three distinctly different experiences. More importantly, in the words of Jane Jacobs, the ramp puts eyes on the street. Studies show that woman harassment cases are equally likely to occur during the afternoon as the night, as there are less people about. As the ramp is constantly active, the North side of the lake, which is currently dark, unused and unkempt, begins to feel safer.

Section cc'



Outdoor Gym

SDG 3: GOOD HEALTH AND WELL BEING



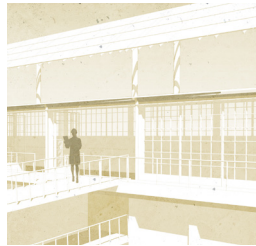
Women's Health Clinic

SDG 3: GOOD HEALTH AND WELL BEING



Access to Clean Water

SDG 6: CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



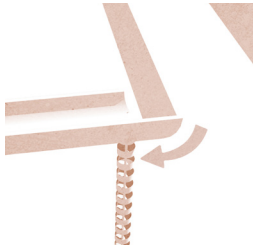
Solar Energy

SDG 7: AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



Micro-STP for Biogas

SDG 7: AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



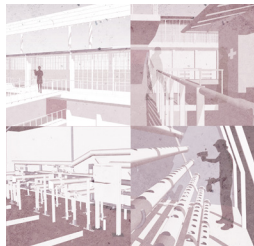
Water Harvesting System

SDG 9: INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Creche and Day Care

SDG 8: DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



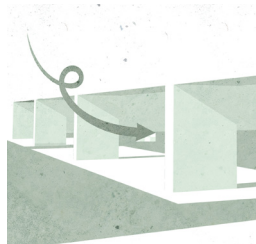
Job Opportunities

SDG 8: DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



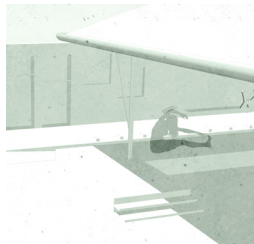
Hydroponic Gardening

SDG 9: INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Passive Cooling

SDG 13: CLIMATE ACTION



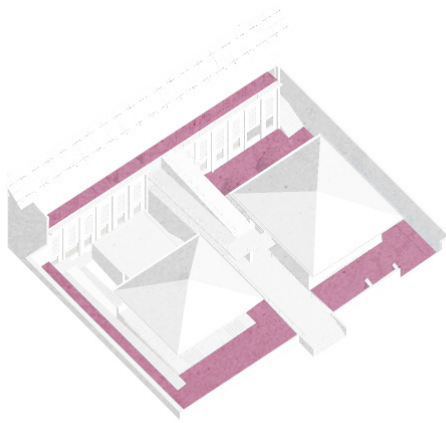
Natural Shading

SDG 13: CLIMATE ACTION



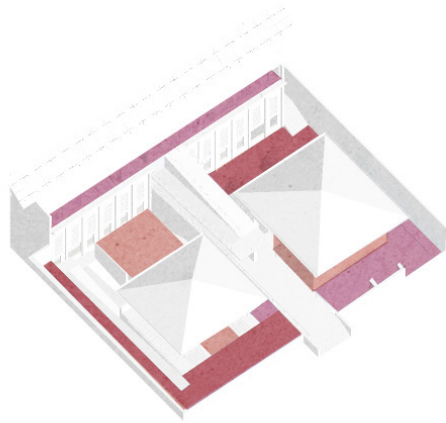
Renewable Building Material

SDG 9: INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



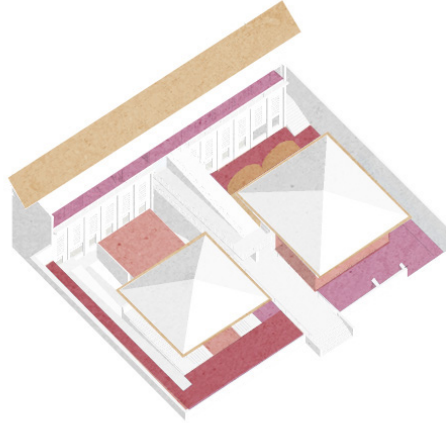
An empathetic program is implemented on existing municipal land, to provide inclusive public amenities to women, children, elderly and other marginalised users to increase equity

SDG 10: REDUCED IN-EQUALITY



The design to aid women's access to an aesthetic public space for leisure and recreation in addition to providing economic, sanitary and medical assistance empowers women to live better lives.

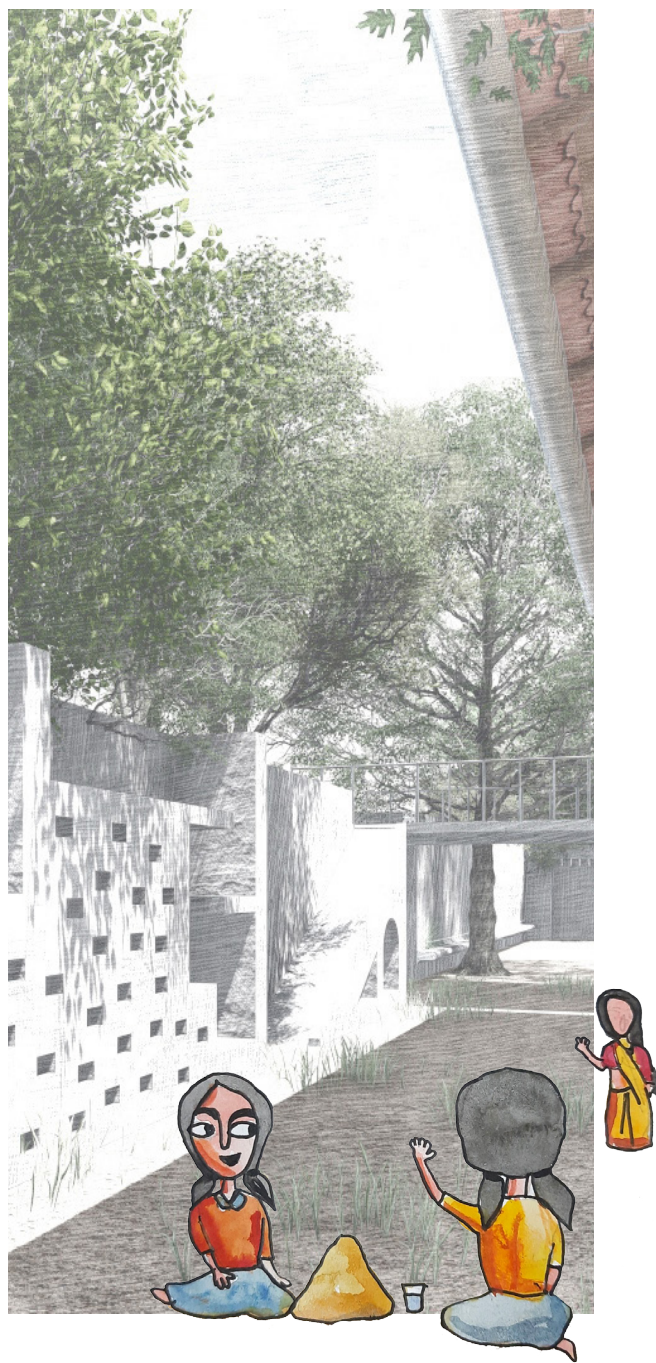
SDG 5: GENDER EQUALITY



A prototype for the city which uses clean, sustainable and feasible technologies to support and empower its most marginalised members through sensitive design builds healthier, equitable cities.

SDG 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES





### Playing

Kabbadi is an extreme combat sport played across India in 'akhadas'. These akhadas are dedicated sand pits where traditionally men train in the early morning hours and for the rest of the day, can be found loitering in the space, oiling themselves, flexing, stretching etc. An akhada dedicated for women allows women, wrestlers or otherwise to use the space for their own versions of 'play.'

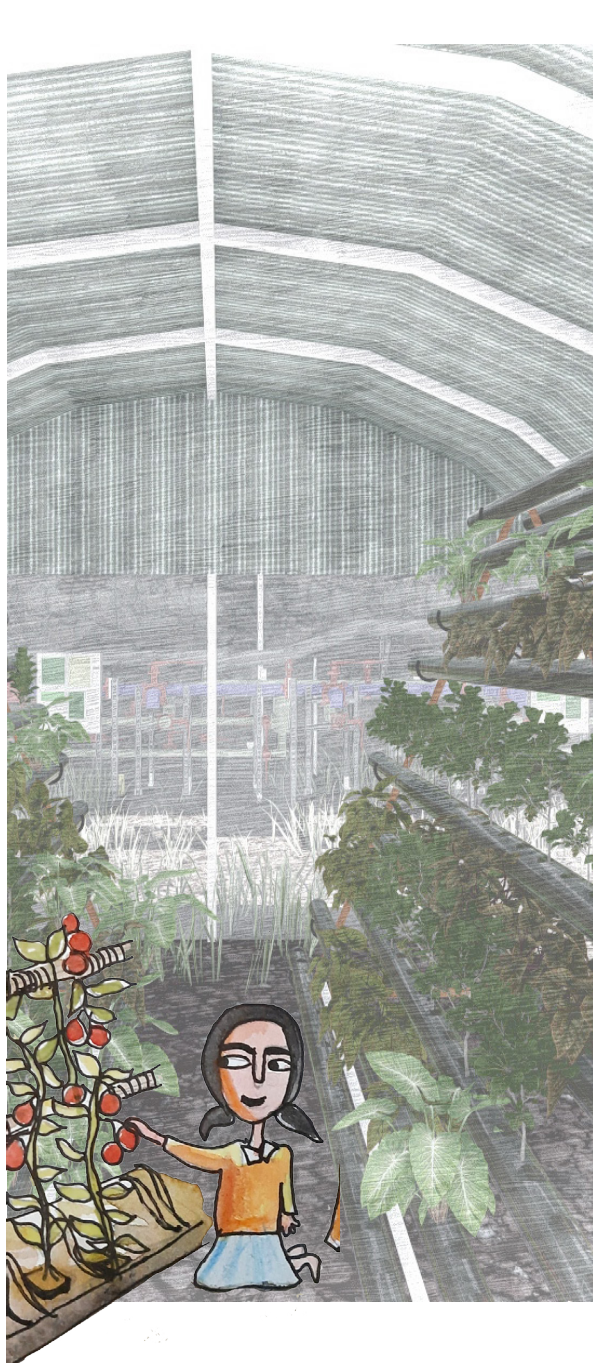
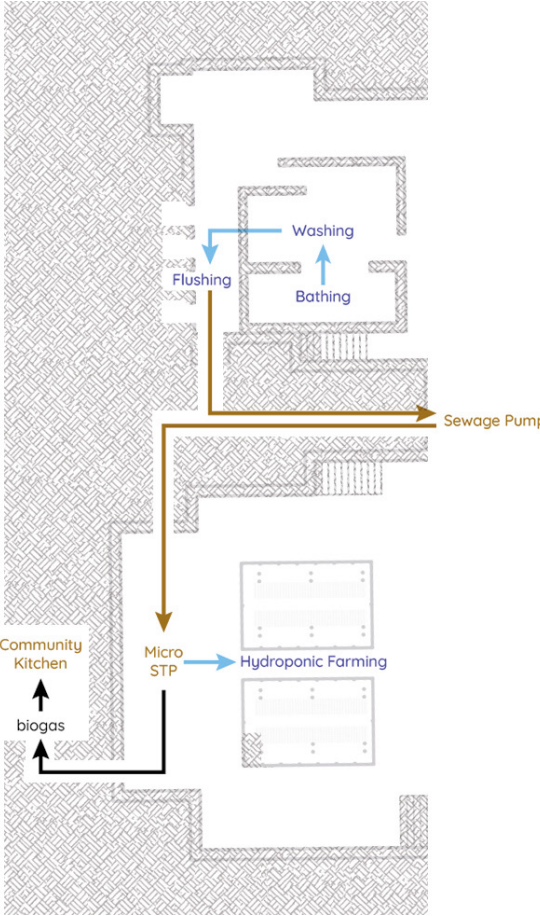
Additionally, the sandpit outside the working hours of the akhada, is used as a play area for children without extra infrastructure required for the same.

Having a readily available day care for children allows the women in the vicinity to seek employment, recreation etc. outside as well.

### Cleansing

The bathroom is a crucial aspect of the project as it provides access to the women to clean water to bathe, wash clothes and maintain hygiene in an area where women from over 250 households share a single toilet while men have multiple urinals and toilets at their disposal.

Additionally, the act of going to the bathroom in the morning is more a social act than a sanitary one and the bathroom attempts to accomodate the ability for women to engage with each other while performing their routines.



### Elevating

The ramp connects the ground to the health clinic at the first level, the yoga room and seminar rooms at the top of the sewage pump. With each ascent, the users rise higher above the din of the city enjoying panoramic views of the lake and park towards a quiet space of solitude and mindfulness.

The seminar room is used by the women for awareness workshops which teach them about their health, wellness, economic opportunities and even legal options. Vocational and skill training workshops may also be conducted periodically.

Thus, in addition to raising them 8000mm above sea level, the room works on truly 'elevating' the bodies, minds and lives of its users.

### Growing

The ability to grow one's own food and have the amenities to consume it is a truly empowering experience for women, many of who suffer from malnutrition and lose children to it as well.

Much like the garden, the project as a whole, uses the most feasible technological and architectural solutions to 'grow' empowered women who may experience their city equally.

