

# I-Ta'am Platform – Connecting Food Makers, Consumers and Charity Organizations Seamlessly

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**Abstract:** The objective of this paper is to propose a platform that linking between food providers such as restaurants, chefs, food tracks, homemakers and customers individuals looking for nearby food. The I-Ta'am is a Consumer-to-Customer (C2C) business model which aims to provide a conceptual solution of purchasing and vending foods. Nine blocks of Business Model Canvas (BMC) framework, Literature Review, strategy canvas, value proposition design (VPD) and environmental map, e-commerce have been used as the methodologies for this paper.

**Keywords:** Advertising, facilities, e-commerce, online platform, budget meal, funding, BMC, VPD.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Food industry is one of the biggest industries all over the world. The expected revenue of it in Malaysia for year 2017 is US\$7,672m [1]. In addition to that, tech in food industry still growing which offers a chance to provide service that solves many of the problems that traditional food industry suffers with. The daily necessity of variety food is required to satisfy different segment of customers. Different restaurant sells different types of food. Some sells only western cuisine whereas some sells local foods. However, only few restaurants have 24 hours service. Another contemporary problem is the food price is relatively high in terms of delivering food. However, K. Ayupp and Rabaah Tudin (2013) stated that, in terms of the business environment, the Malaysian food industry is dominated by small and medium scale firms (Malaysian Investment Development Authority, 2012). The food business that connects the small food firms such as food trucks, homemakers and small restaurants can be a great success. Moreover, the Muslim food providers do not follow Islamic shariah rules that should be followed as a khalifatullah. According to Abdul Malik Mujahid (April 11, 2017), "Muslim consumers are often criticized for not doing enough to support Muslim businesses, whether it's paying the extra dollar (or two or three or four) to buy products, or to drive the extra mile (or two or three or four) to get to the store". Thus, there should be a permanent solution that can meet the customers need and company value proposition as well. I-Ta'am has a great potential to provide halal healthy foods to the consumers and create an opportunity to the homemakers to contribute to the society welfare.

## II. BACKGROUND

In this 21st century, the contribution of technology in the regular life is hard to deny. Everything is now technology oriented. To cope up with this progressive era, one needs to be multitasked in almost every spare of life. Additionally, the youngsters like to eat instant foods rather than cooking at home which indicates an unhealthy lifestyle. To maintain good immunity system, adolescents must eliminate unhealthy foods such as junk foods, unhygienic foods. There are some restaurants that deliver healthy and hygienic foods such as food panda, ubereats and so on. However, people with low income cannot afford the total cost of ordering food in a daily basis from Foodpanda as the price of food is relatively high

than the normal price. The I-Ta'am is a platform that tries to penetrate and disrupt the food industry by linking between food providers such as restaurants, chefs, food trucks and customers like individuals looking for nearby food or event owners (Iftar party, Wedding, Zakat donor). It assures to provide food in a budget price to follow the Islamic guidelines of consuming given by The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

### III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

There are countless restaurants that have delivery services, different cuisines, kid's meal and so on. But, based on the current scenario, it can be said that there are not many restaurants which give an opportunity to the homemakers to earn something and contribute to the society. In addition, restaurants which cannot meet their profit but providing healthy halal foods back out from their businesses. The I-Ta'am is generating a platform to have extra income. According to SWCorp Malaysia (15 June, 2017), a government agency dealing with solid waste, Malaysians generate about 38,000 tonnes of waste per day. Around 15,000 tonnes of this is food waste. The I-ta'am will be a permanent solution of food wasting as it is promising to help the needy people. Thus, I-Ta'am intended to offer a help for house wives and those how can cook at home, small restaurants and food trucks marketing their products and link them to direct customers. Besides that, it helps customers to get a variety of food options based on their location, food rates and price. The platform works as moderator between the different parties offering guidance and monitoring food quality and Halal food requirements.

### IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### McDonald's:

In 1940, MacDonal restaurant opened by brothers Richard and Maurice McDonald in San Bernardino, California. The present McDonald's corporation gets its establishment by the opening of an authorized restaurant by Ray Kroc, in Des Plaines, Illinois, on April 15, 1955. Now, McDonald's has grown from a family burger stand to a worldwide fast-food chain company, with more than 30,000 locations in 118 countries [6]. McDonalds becomes a role model for the beginners in the food providing services.

#### Strengths:

McDonald's is one of the distinguishable brands in the food industry. The corporation offers constancy in food, so that the taste is almost same even if it's in the miles away from California. Moreover it maintains cultural diversity in the foods based on the location of the restaurant, thereby adding to supplementary sales in each particular region. For example, in Malaysia all the McDonald outlets are halal but in the European countries they also serve pork in their items. It has many branches within a small range so that people do not need to spend more to order and get the food menus which make them the biggest fast food provider.

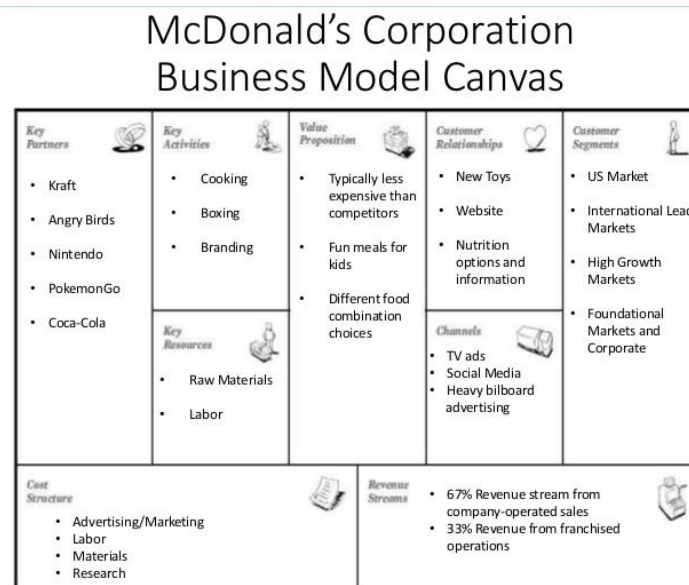


Figure 01: McDonald business model canvas

**Weakness:**

McDonald's has always tried to maintain the food quality. However, its standard menus are relatively unhealthy. The chain has been widely criticized for promoting unhealthy eating habits. As a result, many health conscious consumers don't even consider having a meal at McDonald's, despite its efforts to introduce healthier options. Most jobs at McDonald's are low skilled and low paying. As a result, there is a significant amount of employee turnover. Many employees don't take the job seriously, or only do it for short periods of time, and this leads to lower performance. Since there are so many turnovers, training costs are high, pressuring the company's bottom line.

**Opportunities:**

Upgraded Menu: New CEO Steve Easterbrook has big plans to turn the company around. Part of the plan is to offer premium products at some of its locations. The restaurant recently introduced artisan chicken and sirloin burgers to its menu in parts of the U.S. The company is also trying to strengthen its position in the high-margined caffeinated beverages industry, dominated by Starbucks (SBUX). McCafe has had some success by keeping prices competitive, and the company has been able to harness its vast store network, marketing muscle, and highly efficient supply chain. The *McCafe* menu also now includes fruit smoothies, an appeal to more health conscious consumers.

Expansion Plans: McDonald's is always on the lookout to expand its market share. While the markets in North America and Europe are fairly saturated, there are opportunities in more underdeveloped nations. The company also recently announced that it was going to rebrand 3,500 restaurants by the end of 2018, accelerating the pace of rebranding and increasing the global franchised percentage from the current 81% to 90%. This should allow for a more streamlined, lower cost, and more stable organization.

**Threats:**

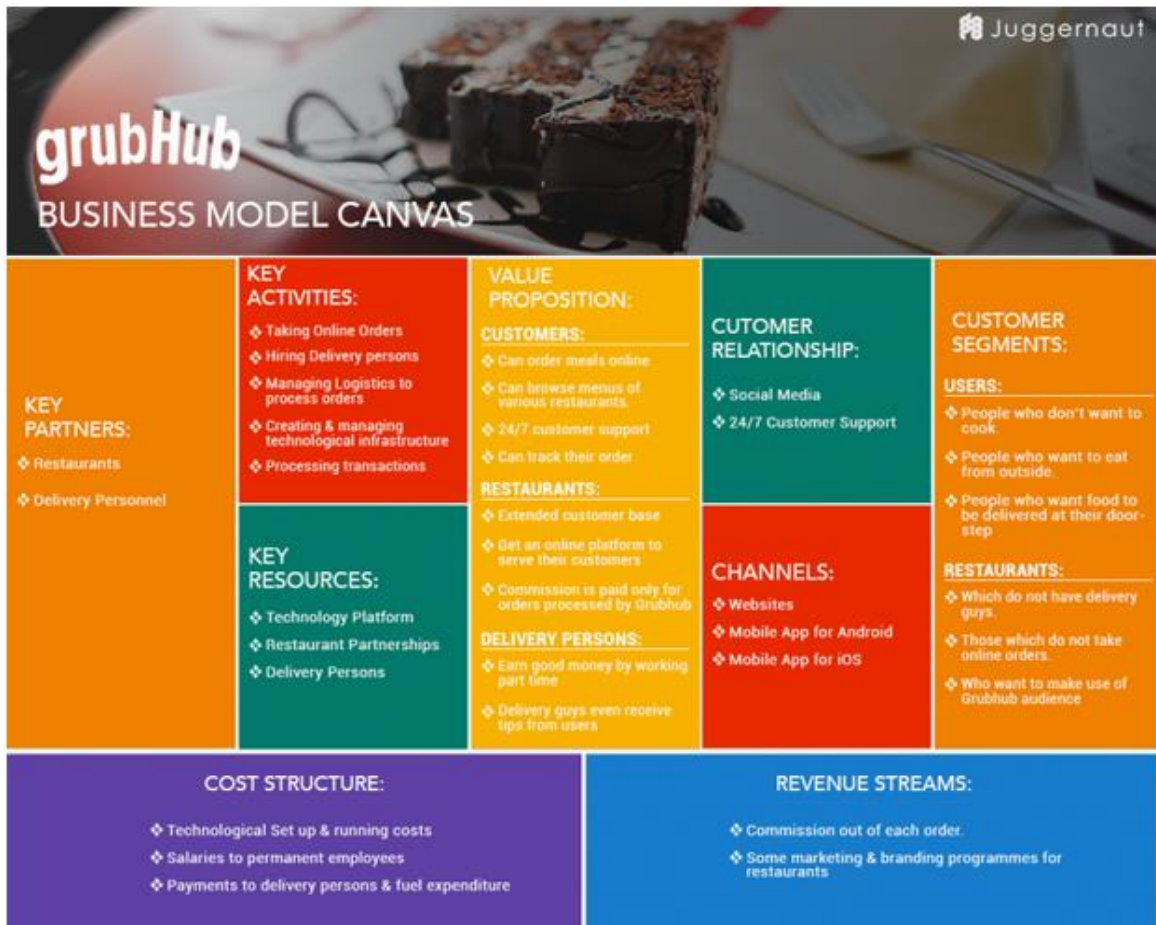
Competition: McDonald's faces significant competition from national, international, regional, and local retailers of food products. It competes on the basis of price, convenience, service, menu variety, and product quality. While it does a good job on most of these metrics, product quality is something that management is working on, given consumers' increasing preference for quality and natural products. In the hamburger fast food category, McDonald's primarily competes with Burger King and Wendy's (WEN). However, it still has the highest market share in the overall fast food market, with a 22% share, ahead of competitors Yum! Brands (YUM) and Subway.

More Health-Conscious Customers: Many consumers, both in the U.S. and abroad, are trying to eat a healthier diet. The rise in popularity of organic products, fresh fruit and vegetables, and goods with all-natural ingredients is somewhat of a concern for McDonald's. While the company has very strict quality controls for its food, customers aren't exactly going to McDonald's for free-range chicken and organic vegetables. The company is also facing concerns that younger, more health-conscious consumers, will hurt results in the long run unless a shift in strategy is made.

**GrubHub:**

GrubHub has achieved the ultimate goal of giving a service based platform. It was originated by two developers, Michael Evans & Matt Maloney, in 2004. The GrubHub headquarter is in Chicago, IL. According to statistics, GrubHub processes an average of 234,700 orders on a daily basis [4]. The Company connects more than 40,000 local restaurants with hungry diners in more than 1,000 cities across the United States [5]. GrubHub owns and manages 4 different brands in the same industry. They are – GrubHub, Seamless, MenuPages and AllMenus. GrubHub offers admirable value proposition for customers and restaurants. It helps customers by tracking the delivery after placing the order. It provides 24 hour services. Users can choose their meal set by the restaurants they like. GrubHub has its own delivery persons. It located in nearby places in the cities. It provides the restaurants software to manage deliveries. Being an on-demand food delivery company, GrubHub is based on less ownership model as it does not own any restaurant. Still, it serves thousands of food orders to customers on a daily basis. GrubHub makes it possible for a customer to order food online from their favorite restaurant and also delivers it at their doorstep. As a company, GrubHub charges a commission percentage out of each and every order delivered. GrubHub also has some sort of marketing and advertising plans for restaurants where they list that particular restaurant on the top for a limited time. Sometimes, the listing also depends on the commission structure such as to list a restaurant on the top. GrubHub has an option where users can rate a restaurant. The rating helps others know the overall quality of the restaurant. GrubHub went on to list almost every restaurant in the city on its platform giving immense options to users. GrubHub lists discount coupons for some restaurants depending on their partnerships. GrubHub

also tells the average price of food at each restaurant. It also lists the distance of restaurant from your location along with delivery fee (if any), minimum order and estimated wait time.



**Figure 02: GrubHub business model canvas**

**Munchery:**

Munchery is a food delivery platform which delivers cooked food to the customers at doorstep in major cities of USA [6]. Munchery allows users order food which prepared by the professional chefs. Munchery’s business model has been recommended by many entrepreneurs as the platform lets anyone order a meal cooked by well-known chefs. Munchery keeps the food price almost same to get as much as customer they can serve. To expedite the progression, Munchery has kitchens at several geographic locations. It also creates job by hiring part time and full time chefs to cook their respective delicacies. The daily menu keeps on changing which makes users keep coming back to the platform. By applying the sharing economy concept to home-delivered, fresh meals, Munchery has made many delicious options possible for its customers.

Munchery was established on 1st April 2011 and has received a total funding of \$125 Millions in just 4 years of its existence. Here is a funding chart of Munchery along with some facts about the company. All data is as per August 2015.

Munchery increased their revenue many folds year upon year and has been able to attract some well-known chefs to prepare meals which hit new sales records. The more the sale for a chef’s meal, the more he earns. Munchery has facilities such as its deals are changing in a daily basis. It has segment for each customers. They also offer gluten free meals, special meal for kids and the meal set by their customers. The attracting feature of Munchery is the chefs have some signature dishes only available at their place. The value propositions of Munchery are they use own kitchen, have celebrity chefs, experienced resident chefs, part time workforce for deliveries and daily changing menu. It sets for three types of customers, users, chefs and delivery persons. According to researchers, Munchery earns around 15% to 20% from the cost of each meal [5]. If we get into calculations than the fact that Munchery serves over 5000 meals a day in a city will help you get some real numbers.



Figure 03: Munchery business model canvas

**Key problems and Solutions:**

Just like other delivery system, Munchery faces some challenges and problems in their business operations. The main problem faced by Munchery delivery platform is the location of their kitchen [5]. In order to serve every resident, Munchery wants their kitchen to be centrally located but the residents living nearby have criticized Munchery for environmental issues. Residents of the area complain about fish smell, waste material, parking problems and a lot of activity in the street. For a company which delivers meals cooked by professional chefs, it is very important for them to retain the best chefs. Munchery has solved this problem in an excellent way. Apart from good payments, Munchery gives recognition to chefs and the freedom to prepare their own meals. Meal delivery is a time specific thing and in order to make customers happy, it is essential to deliver food on the promised time. Instead of expanding to breakfast or lunch deliveries, Munchery has mastered on time deliveries for the dinner time. Meals are prepared by the evening and sent to various city areas for deliveries. Whenever a customer orders a Munchery meal, the nearest delivery guys gets a notification and delivers meal immediately. This has made Munchery deliver meals within 20 to 25 minutes.

**V. ENVIRONMENT MAP**

With the increase number of mobile devices and a people who get easy access to internet, people are open for technologies that solve some of the daily problem facing them. According to Frost and Sullivan (2015), "Malaysia to have 125 million connected devices in 2025 with over 58 million mobile subscribers. Ninety-five percent of all netizens, or internet users, will be active social network users, presenting a huge potential for digital marketing and ecommerce" (p.10). which lead to the increasing spending in food delivery industry. According to statista.com the revenue in the "Food Delivery" segment amounts to US\$287m in 2017 in Malaysia and it is expected to show an annual growth rate (CAGR 2017-2021) of 29.3 % resulting in a market volume of US\$803m in 2021.



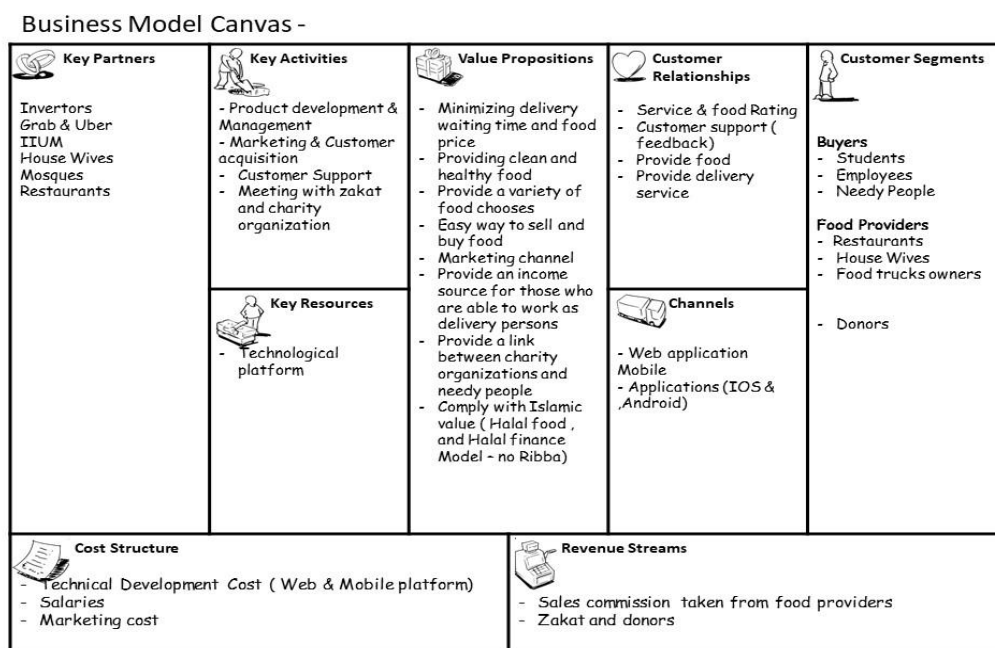
**Figure 04. Revenue in food delivery sector, the past and the expected**

Furthermore, the concept of Uberisation in services industry shows a great success by changing the mindset of customers and service provider revealing about many opportunities in the sector. Demand for fast casual dining, with fresher, healthier ingredients has proved particularly popular in recent years and pushed sales at US restaurants to overtake those at grocery stores during 2015. We therefore continue to expect restaurants to perform well, particularly those that can match themselves to shifting consumer mindsets over the long-term<sup>3</sup>.

## VI. FOUR LENSES OF INNOVATION

- Challenging Orthodoxies— gives overview for future works. How to get more customers? How to compete with other companies? How to campaign?
- Harnessing Trends— Internet Of Things, UberEats. I-Ta'am provides budget meal that attracts more consumers. To compete with other food providers it will introduce new features. It also helps people to do less waste on foods. Some people are wasting food while other side is starving. Our app will help the poor by providing food for them.
- Leveraging Resources—I-Ta'am will continue their business by opening new branches in the city. After three years we want to open our branches all over the universities as well as the cities in Kuala Lumpur.
- Understanding Needs— it opens huge part time and full time job opportunities for individuals. By doing the survey and feedback we will know the customer needs.

## VII. BUSINESS MODEL CANVAS SUGGESTIONS



**Figure 05: Business model canvas1**

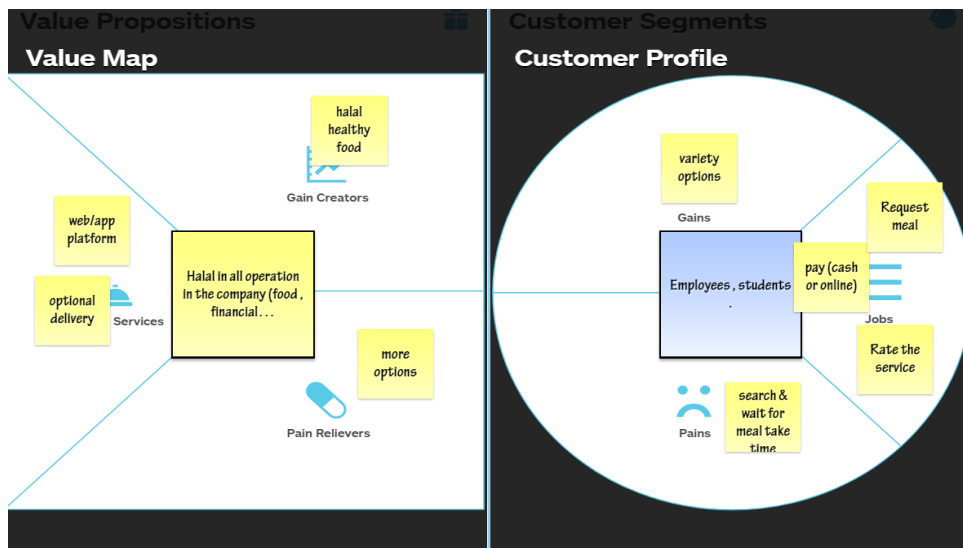


Figure 06: VPC1 for employees and students

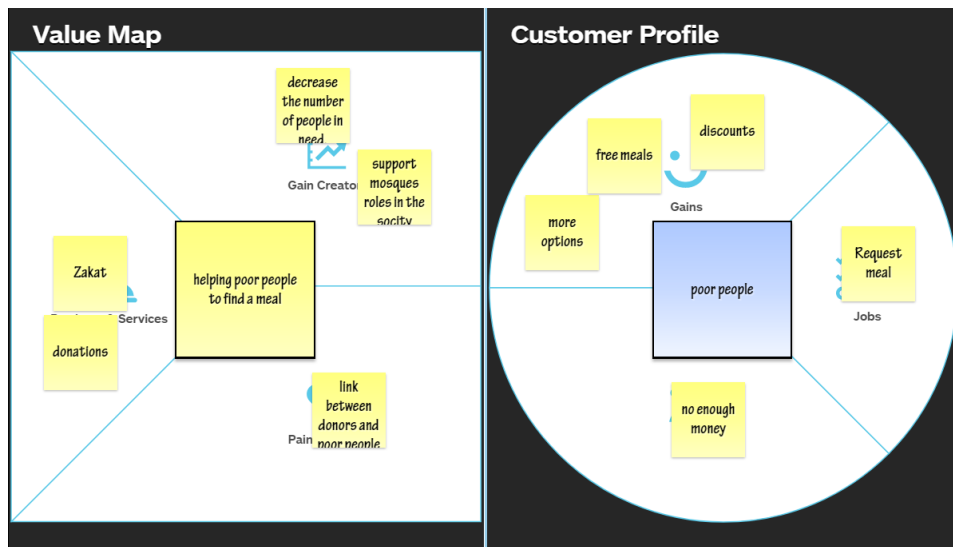


Figure 07: VPC1 for poor people

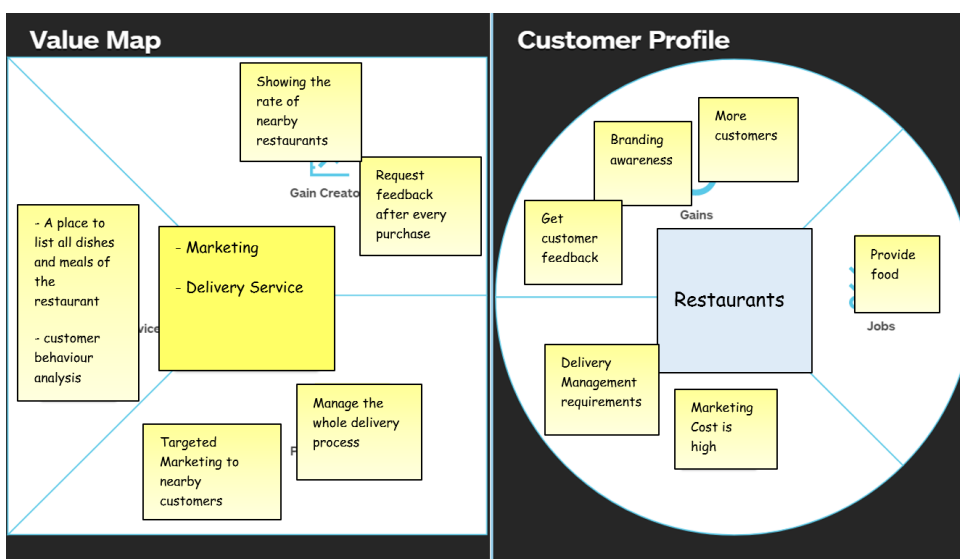


Figure 08: VPC1 for the restaurants

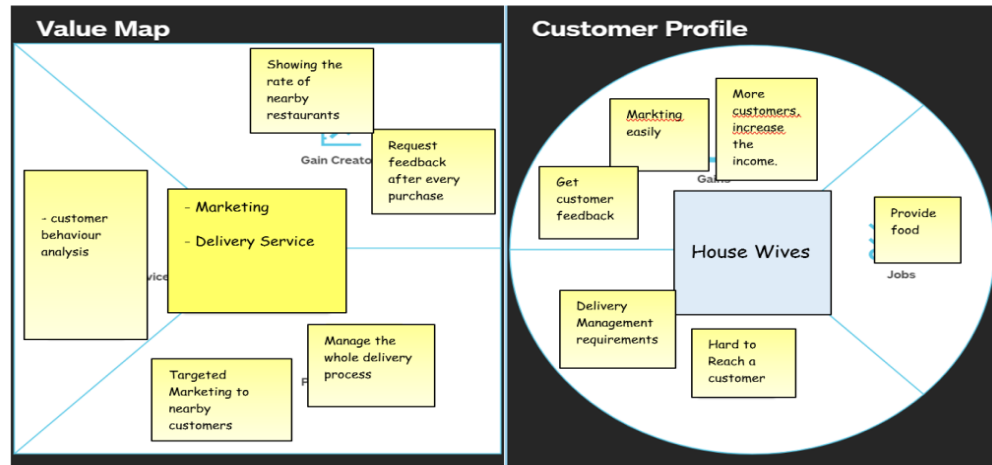


Figure 09: VPC1 for housewives

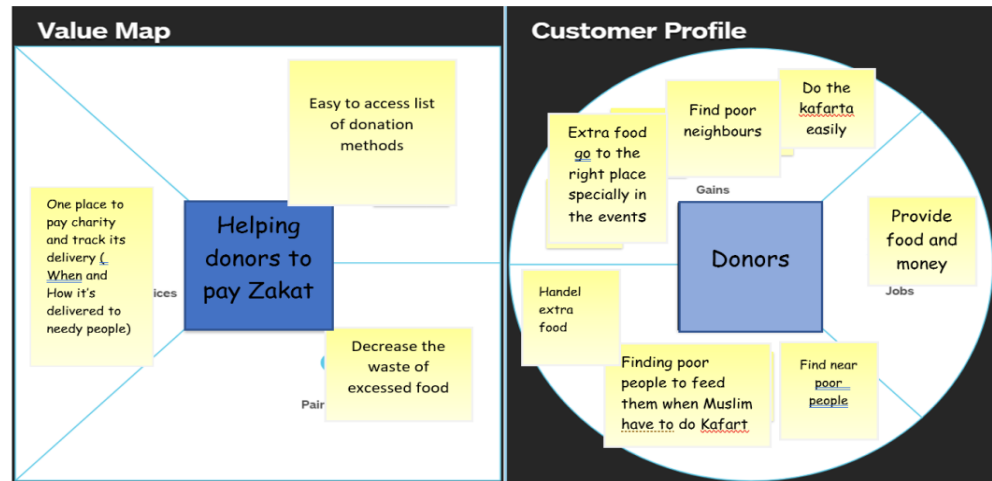


Figure 10: VPC1 for donors

Business model canvas: I-Ta'am

Key partners	Key activities	Value preposition	Customer relationship	Customer segments
IIUM IIUM mosque Restaurant owners Grab	Hiring delivery person Customer support Transaction	Minimize searching time and waiting time Help poor people Different cuisine Budget meal	Rating Feedback	Students Local International Restaurant owners Donors
	<b>Key resources</b> Technology Food providers	Healthy and halal food	<b>Channels</b> Mosques Donors Web application	
<b>Cost Structure</b> Salaries to the permanent employees Payment to delivery people		<b>Revenue stream</b> Donors Zakat fund Commission from each delivery		

Figure 11: Business model canvas option 2



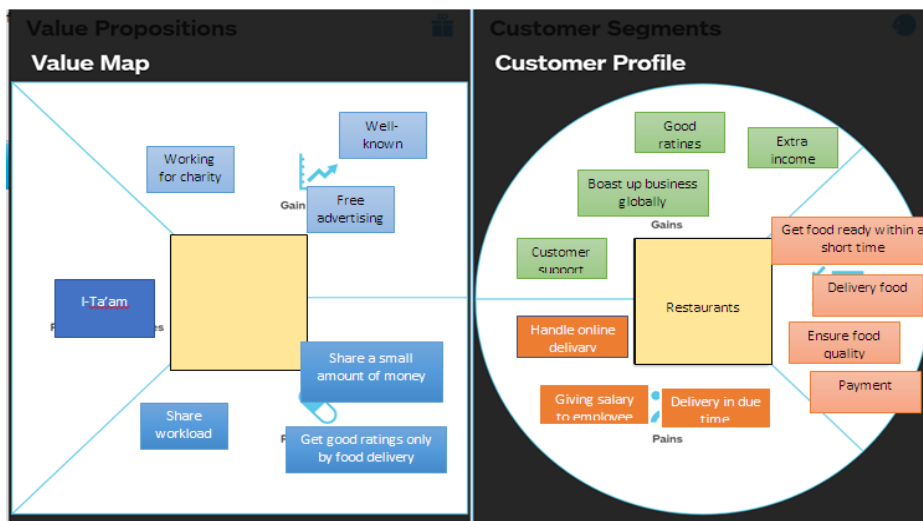


Figure 12: VPC2 for restaurants

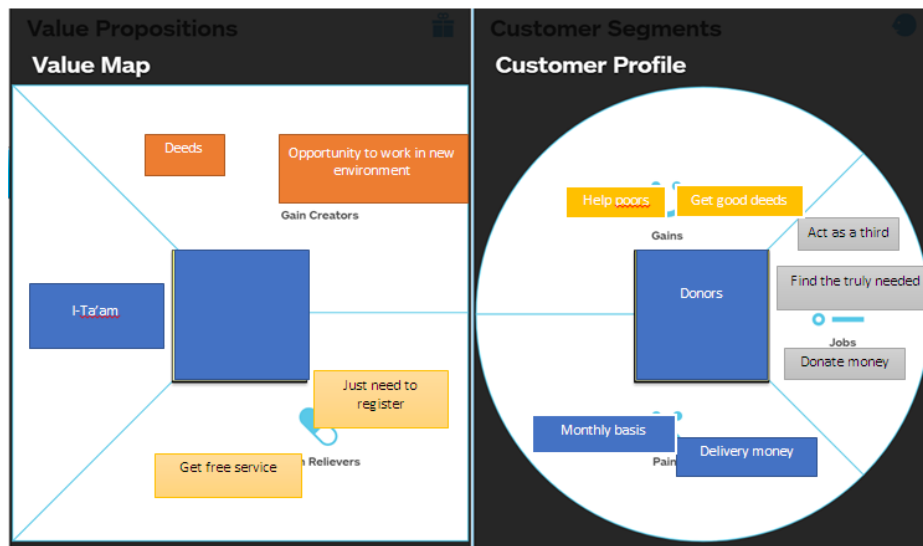


Figure 13: VPC2 for donors

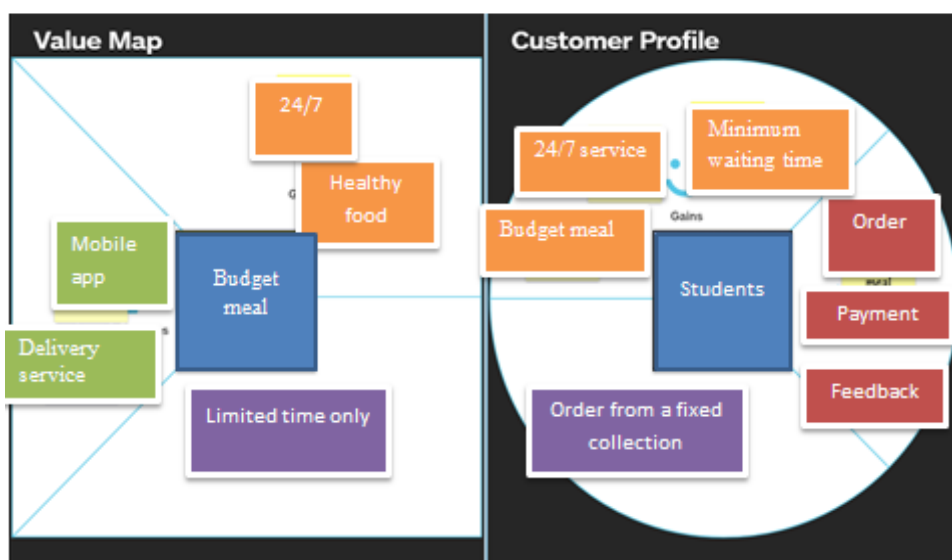


Figure 14: VPC2 for students

## VII. INITIAL BUSINESS MODEL CANVAS

### A. Customer Segment:

As in Figure, I-Ta'am lists Mosque as one of the targeted user in Customer Segment's block.

### B. Value Proposition:

Enrich the mosque as one-stop centre for people especially Muslims to organize any event such as solemnization, wedding, product launch, exhibition and many more.

### C. Channels:

According to Ismahani, Emilia, Afifah, Abdul rahman ahmad dahlan (2017), mosque is able to communicate and interact with other customer segments to promote their services and facilities through I-Ta'am [10].

### D. Customer Relationship:

Customer relationship is basically describing the value that a company offers to maintain the relationship between the company and other customer segments. Any offers or promotion from Mosque will be advertised directly through I-Ta'am website and social media. Plus, other customer segments can view the review, rating and feedback about the services and facilities from the previous customers.

### E. Key Resources:

Key resources describe the assets needed by company to assure the business model works properly. Those resources are a good technological platform, high quality of vendor and event planner as well as trusted and professional network-of-mosque.

### F. Key Activities:

Key activities are also one of the vital blocks for a company run successfully. As for I-Ta'am, it includes building vendor's network and managing customers, marketing and customer's acquisition.

### Initial business model canvas

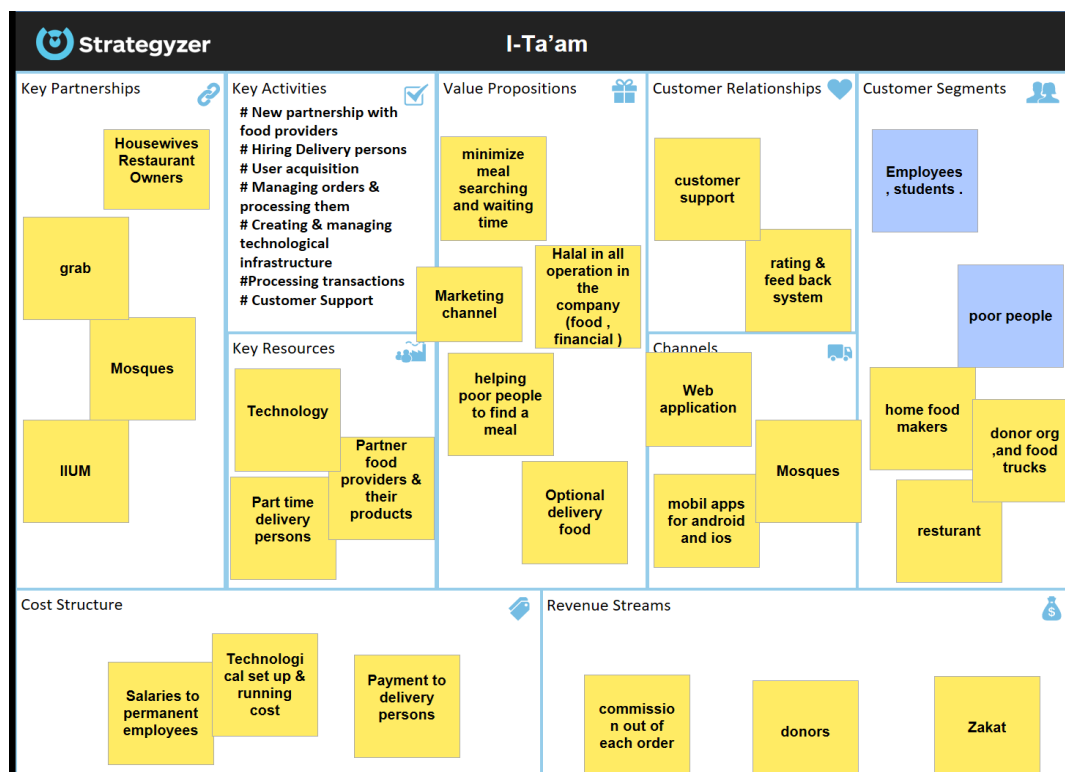


Figure 15: initial business model canvas

**G. Key Partners:**

Key partners describe the network of suppliers and partners that a company associate with to make the business works. Thus, the key partners of I-Ta'am are event planners, vendors, mosque, payment processor, hosting company.

**H. Cost Structure:**

Cost structure explains the cost that must be spent by the company in order to maintain the business. For I-Ta'am, the cost comes from technological setup, running cost and marketing expenditure.

**I. Revenue Stream:**

Revenue stream explains the revenue will be generated. Basically, revenue will be generated by charging 15% commission from each vendors and event planner for every booking made by the customers.

**INITIAL VALUE PROPOSITION DIAGRAM**

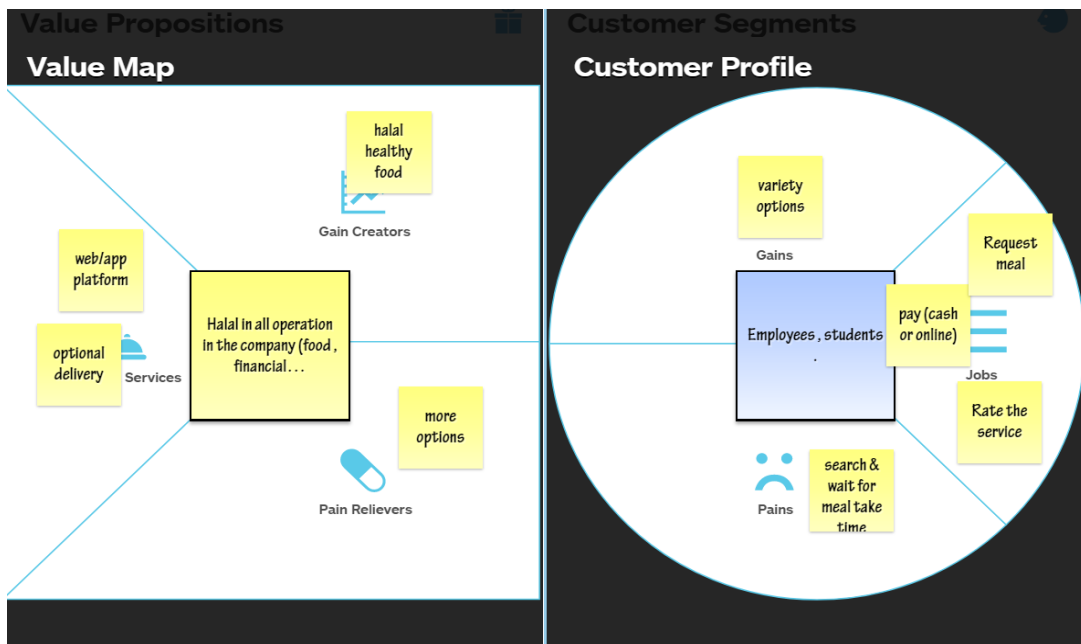


Figure 16 : initial value proposition canvas for students, employees

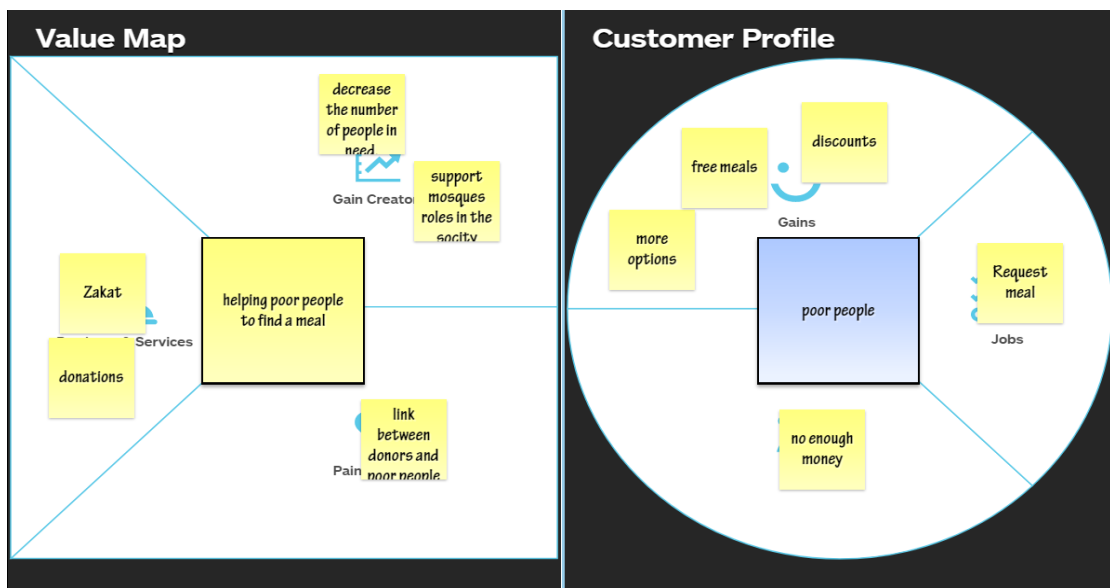


Figure 17: initial value proposition for poor people

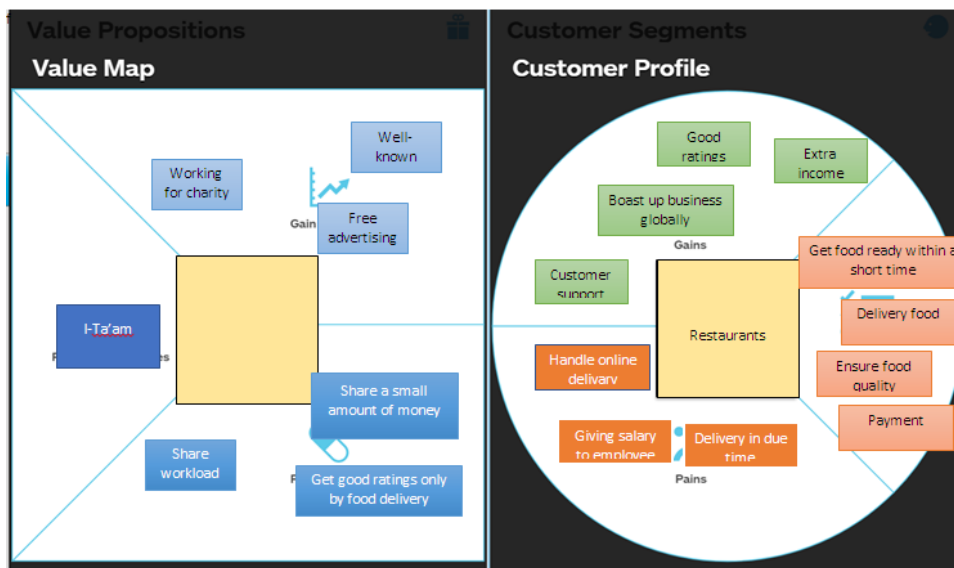


Figure 18: initial value proposition diagram for restaurants

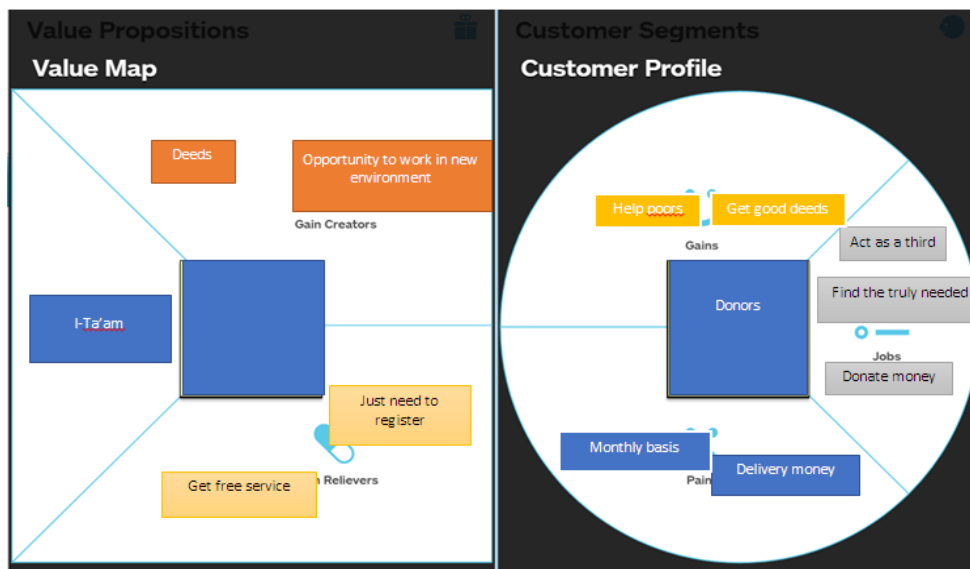


Figure 19: initial value proposition for donors

## VIII. VALIDATING I-TAAM'S HYPOTHESIS BY TESTING THE MVP ON IIUM ENVIRONMENT

Building a minimal viable product (MVP) and getting the feedback from users is one of the most effective ways to validate product hypothesis. The idea is to build the project having its main features that helps users interact with it and measure to which degree it helps them solving their problem or providing their needs.

### Platform End Users:

- Food provider (Mahallah Restaurants & home cooks near IIUM)
- Student who request to buy food
- Students who ready to deliver food
- Charity Organizations/Society/individuals who want to pay for needy student's meal

### Testing Scenarios:

- 1- Food Buyer:

- Student in Mahallah Roqaiyah request a meal from the list. Based on the distance between the student location & restaurant which provide the meal the delivery fees are calculated. The total amount includes meal price, delivery cost and optional tips which will be divided in half between the delivery person and charity credit in the platform.
- Student confirms the request; a broadcast notification will be send to all students who are registered as delivery person.
- The delivery person (Student) accept the request. A QR code appears in his mobile.
- The delivery person goes to collect the food from restaurant showing the QR code which will be scanned by partner restaurant having the request details.

## 2- Needy Student:

Student request a meal indicating that he cannot pay.

- A declaration form appears requesting his confirmation on that he is in need.
- A meal is requested and a QR code appears in his mobile, so he can go and collect the meal from restaurant.

## IX. ENHANCED BUSINESS MODEL CANVAS

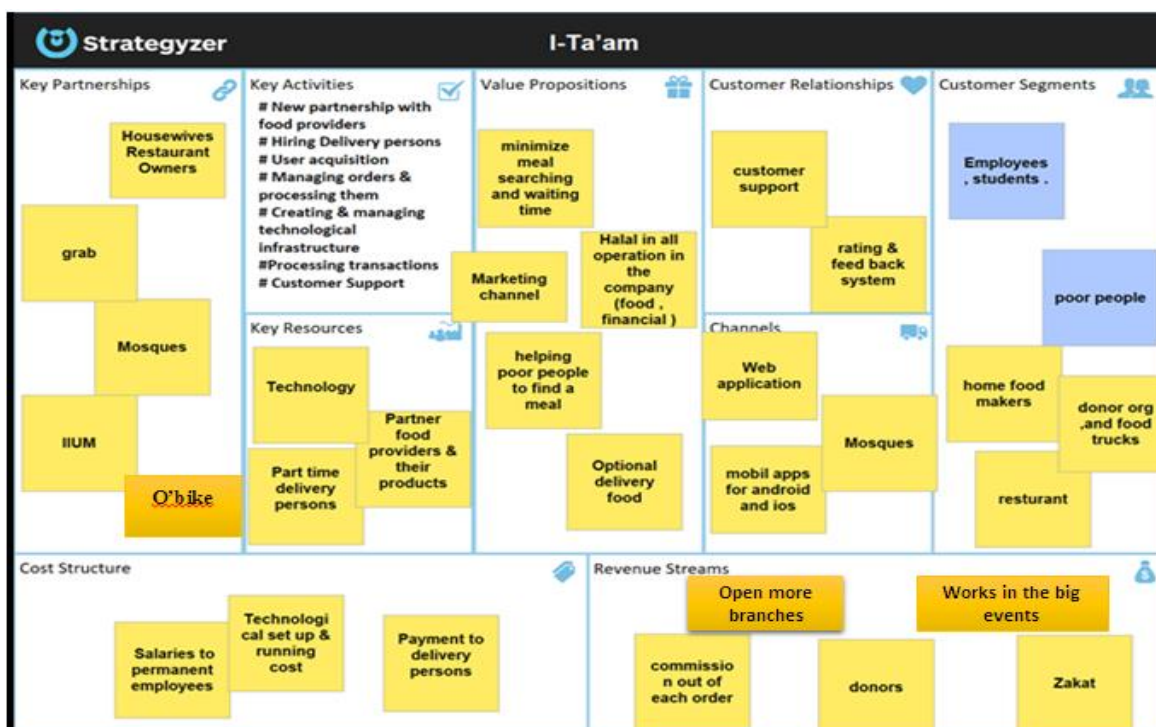


Figure 20: enhanced business model canvas

- Customer Segment:** As in Figure, the customer segment remained same as it consists of all types of customers.
- Value Proposition:** we are planning to upgrade our value propositions for I-Ta'am.
- Channels:** Channels are same like initial BMC.
- Customer Relationship:** Customer relationship maintenance will be basically done by the social media, website and mobile apps.
- Key Resources:** Our key resources are our web and mobile applications developer, our Administrators and the Advisors..
- Key Activities:** Key activities are also one of the vital block for a company run successfully. I-Ta'am will develop web and mobile application for the core business activities. Marketing will also be necessary in mass and in targeted enterprise sectors.

**G. Key Partners:** we include O- bike services so that the delivery will be within less time.

**H. Cost Structure** Cost structure explains the cost that must be spent by the company in order to maintain the business.

**I. Revenue stream:** We will generate revenue from ordering fees from the customers; take a percentage from the restaurants as monthly basis , open more branches and works in the big events .

## X. CONCLUSION & FUTURE WORKS

In conclusion, this conceptual solution brings new opportunities to serve the ummah. It creates job sectors for any age group. I-Ta'am assures to provide halal food door to door. It includes all restaurants in one roof that makes it easier to follow Islamic consumer guidelines. I-Ta'am has many value propositions for consumers such as budget meal, less waiting time, halal food, hygiene food, part time work and so on. As a beginning, I-Ta'am is opening few branches in certain areas. However, I-Ta'am will widen its business areas and operated by both locals and internationals.

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