

How do we work?

Safai Sena works through grassroots meetings with members, through monthly meetings with leaders in different areas, and through wastepicker trainees and several teams. Some examples of these teams are: the editorial board of our newsletter, Safai Nama; the team that is learning to run our Facebook Page; and the finance committee. We also have parents' associations in some areas and organizing committees for special events. Safai Sena holds an annual meeting for all its members to discuss our work, challenges, future plans, finances and to get to know each other.



Join our efforts!

😊 Organize your colony to opt for doorstep collection of waste, and we will implement it for you. 😊 Your office, school or building can donate its waste to us. We will recycle it. 😊 Give us all your old items—from utensils to old chairs. We can use them. 😊 Talk to your neighbourhood wastepicker or kabariwala. Learn more about them, understand how hard they work. When you learn about us, we hope you will support us. 😊 Invite us to speak at your school, college, office, etc, so we can work with you to spread the message of recycling in a sustainable way.



Contact us

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Your Waste is Our Business



About Us

Safai Sena means *An Army of Cleaners*. We are a registered group of wastepickers, doorstep waste collectors, itinerant and other small buyers, small junk dealers, and other types of recyclers, based in various cities in North India. Safai Sena's vision is that adult waste handlers should be able to upgrade their work to green jobs, which means that apart from being good for the environment, our work should be safe, respected, recognized and clean. Our dream is also for our children to go to school instead of becoming wastepickers.



Why did we organize?

Wastepickers and kabaris are usually treated like criminals. Previously, there were also no policies or rules for us (now there are some, but the situation is still very far from ideal). Our job forces us to work under hazardous conditions, and we often suffer from diseases and poor health because of it. We want to be recognized, appreciated and work under safe conditions. For this, we must have a strong voice and be able to ask for our rights. This is why we have organized.



Why are wastepickers & Kabaris important?

Over 1% of the population in Indian cities comprises people like us who pick and recycle waste, especially paper, cardboard, some plastics, metals and glass. We help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, keep the cities clean and contribute towards conserving natural resources. We don't beg; we create our own jobs and simultaneously serve the city. Without wastepickers and recyclers, the municipality would have to spend more money to clear at least 20% extra waste. Most of the world's big cities are home to wastepickers. But 10% of all the world's wastepickers and kabaris live in India.

What do we do?

- 😊 **We organize ourselves**—wastepickers, itinerant buyers and small junk dealers—in various parts of North India.
- 😊 **Over 10,000 persons** are part of Safai Sena. For us, organizing means that we all begin to understand our value in the city, identify our key challenges and work towards safer, greener work as a group instead of as individuals.
- 😊 **We educate** other waste recyclers about the opportunities in clean recycling and green jobs.
- 😊 **We create improved livelihoods** for ourselves in partnerships with other organizations.
- 😊 **In three states in North India, we work with diverse stakeholders** to create livelihood opportunities.
- 😊 **We help train** our members around key issues that are important for us.
- 😊 **We advocate for inclusive and equitable policies** in the areas that impact us.
- 😊 **We support each other** to ensure our children are able to get an education instead of ending up picking waste.
- 😊 **We support the efforts, dreams and hopes** of informal-sector recyclers all over the world.

