

### Help to Protect Waste Pickers in Delhi and Encourage Recycling

New Delhi, India: The Advocacy Project is today asking friends to help one of our most innovative and inspiring partners, the Delhi-based [Chintan Environmental Research and Action Group](#).



Chintan is among ten organizations that have been shortlisted by Google for the [Global Impact Award](#), which will reward innovative ideas for using technology to clean up Indian cities.

Chintan has submitted a proposal to create an online clearing house and develop a mobile app to organize 1,600 wastepickers in Delhi and reduce waste in Delhi by 500

tonnes a day within 3 years.

**Please reward this excellent idea by casting an online vote today at [this web page](#). All votes must be submitted by Wednesday October 30.**

The award will help Chintan to streamline a program that is already renowned for its innovation and was [praised last year by former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton](#). Chintan seeks to reduce Delhi's enormous burden of waste - over 8,000 tonnes a day - and [fight global warming](#) by empowering the wastepickers who recycle up to a fifth of the city's trash (photos).

[Wastepickers](#) work in atrocious conditions. They are vulnerable to violence and extortion, and exposed to poisons and hazardous electronic waste (e-waste). Many are undocumented immigrants. The plight of





wastepicker children is particularly troubling.

In response, Chintan has organized a wastepicker association, known as [Safai Sena](#) ("army of cleaners") to lobby for better protection. Safai Sena sent a delegation to the 2009 Copenhagen on climate change to demand "climate justice."

Chintan has also introduced ID cards for wastepickers, and encouraged 20,000 households to provide legal contracts to their wastepickers, encourage composting, and segregate waste. Another initiative, *No Child in Trash*, has put 1,300 wastepicker children into school. Chintan has reached over 20,000 wastepickers in the last five years.

These and other programs are backed by passionate advocacy and imaginative campaigns. Chintan has helped to toughen government rules on the management of plastic and electronic waste. Last year, the group urged the Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to avoid plastic bags in distributing mosquito nets. It is currently bringing out a recipe book for food that is normally discarded, to discourage waste.

This work has been recognized in countless articles and awards. Last year, Chintan's founder, Bharati Chaturvedi, received the first Innovation Award for the Empowerment of Women & Girls from Hillary Clinton. [In her acceptance speech](#), Ms Chaturvedi warned that girls who work in waste "experience a new kind of untouchability, even though they are recycling trash in a country which is becoming more and more affluent."



The Advocacy Project has partnered with Chintan since 2008 and sent five Peace Fellows to the organization: [Mackenzie Berg](#), [Paul Colombini](#), [Jacqui Kotyk](#), [Ted Mathys](#), and [Clara Kollm](#). Clara helped former wastepicker children to produce tiles for an advocacy quilt (right), which was assembled in the US by Allison Wilbur in Rhode Island. The quilt was displayed for six months at Kean University and is available for display at schools.

- Vote [here](#) to support Chintan's Google Impact initiative
- Visit the [Chintan website](#)
- See the [Chintan Wastepickers Quilt](#) and meet the artists.