

# Case Study:

## Kaila Rani - Transforming Lives through Sustainable Waste Management

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### ***Background***

*What do Laila, Baani & Rani have in common? Every day they set out in the morning to start their work, carrying a sack on their back to collect recyclables from the roadside and dumpsters to make a living. Sorting through the trash, they often found discarded treasures and recyclables that they sold to local scrap dealers to earn their livelihood. This is the story of thousands of informal waste workers who scavenge through the waste mounds everyday with a hope of a better life for themselves and their families. Only a few rise above anonymity.*

*Kaila Rani, a 45-year-old native of Rozka Meo village, has always been known for her hard work and dedication. However, her life was filled with struggles. As an informal waste worker with an alcoholic husband, Kaila Rani faced many challenges in providing basics for her family. She got a new lease of life when she got an opportunity to be a sanitation worker in one of the municipalities in Ludhiana. But that didn't last very long, as due to family reasons, she had to quit her job to return to her husband's native village of Rozka Meo, in Haryana.*





*Pic: Source: Saahas (Kaila Rani; during D2D collection in Rozka Meo)*

### **Turning Point**

*In Rozka Meo, due to lack of any organized waste collection system, Kaila Rani was unable to find a suitable job that matched her only skill set - waste collection. Due to this, she faced financial hardships.*

*In the midst of these struggles, Saahas, an NGO working in the field of solid waste management since over two decades, initiated its solid waste management project called “Unnati” in Rozka Meo, funded by Roop VK Jain Foundation. Kaila Rani, who was still looking for a job and was familiar with this work, easily got selected. This opportunity marked a significant turning point in her life.*

### **Training and Support**

*In her previous role, she was used to collecting mixed waste that was unhygienic and exposed her to various occupational hazards and injuries. But after getting onboarded with Saahas, she was provided with comprehensive training on waste segregation and scientific disposal with a focus on resource recovery, which broadened her understanding of the sector. She also received a complete PPE kit, uniform, and shoes, ensuring her safety and comfort while working. The continuous capacity-building sessions further empowered her to perform her duties efficiently and effectively.*

### **Impact**

*This support transformed Kaila Rani's life, offering her dignified livelihood. With the stability of a regular job along with training and support, she has a new-found commitment and pride towards her work. Kaila Rani has learnt how to maintain waste data records and sort waste*

*into various categories. Truly imbibing the concept of circularity, she has also started advocating the use of sustainable products like cloth bags and cloth pads instead of single use disposables.*

*Thus, this new role has not only provided her with a steady income but also a sense of empowerment. She can now support her family's daily needs and save for the future, ensuring financial stability.*

### ***Testimonial***

*"I am Kaila Rani, and my life has changed significantly since I joined Saahas. The training and support I received have not only given me a stable income but also restored my self-respect and confidence. I am proud to be part of this initiative, contributing to the cleanliness and sustainability of our village. Thank you, Saahas, for transforming my life and the lives of many others in our community."*

### ***Conclusion***

*Kaila Rani's journey from a struggling informal waste worker to a skilled and dedicated waste management professional is a testament to the impact of Saahas' initiatives. By providing training, resources, and continuous support, Saahas has empowered individuals like Kaila Rani to lead dignified lives and contribute positively to their communities. Kaila Rani's story is an inspiring example of how targeted interventions in solid waste management can create lasting change in the lives of individuals and communities.*

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