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Eight million metric tonnes of flowers are scattered in India's temples and mosques every year. Yet what begins as celebration ends up as something more toxic. Much of it is subsequently dumped in the Ganges, polluting it for the millions that rely on it for food, water, agriculture and bathing.

Flower-cycling for dignified livelihoods

Ankit Agarwal set up Helpusgreen in 2015 to find profitable uses for this flower waste, turning it into organic fertiliser and incense sticks. And to do it, Helpusgreen works with manual scavenger women, considered 'untouchables', providing dignified and healthy work to help lift them out of poverty.

A blossoming future

To date, Helpusgreen has collected 635,000kg of flowers from temples and mosques, diverting 6,350kg of chemicals from ending up in the river. They are working with 257 manual scavenger families, giving them 15 times their previous income, helping to send their children to school and build a brighter future.
And this all translates to a successful bottom line, with revenue of over US$70,000 last year and a 17% profit margin. They are currently preparing for a first investment round. Strong media coverage is opening up new relationships and raising the profile of temple waste across the region.

Helpusgreen currently works in four cities in Uttar Pradesh, with plans to expand to Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. New products are in the works (including a biodegradable Styrofoam alternative), six patents are in the pipeline and they are in talks with the government of India to scale up across the country.

Find out more about HelpUsGreen > https://www.helpusgreen.com/ [1]

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