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## Teen Eco Warrior's Fashion Venture

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**Seventeen-year-old Amara Jain's story of developing her own online fashion business with a sustainability mission is inspiring. Here's her entrepreneurial journey with massive takeaways. If she can, so can you...**

Amara Jain's passion for sustainable fashion didn't just remain a passing fancy. The class XII student at the Shri Ram School, Moulisari, Gurugram, converted her passion into something concrete by starting her own eco-conscious online fashion brand Clo\_ser (closerindia.com) during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2022.

### How her start up began

Clo\_ser is an initiative that focuses on sustainable fashion, utilising leftover scraps from the fashion industry that are upcycled to reduce land and sea-fill, while economically empowering young girls by upskilling them. My brand currently operates on the circular fashion approach where leftover fabrics from the fashion industry is upcycled and designed to create garments and home decor.

### The tough but promising beginning...

We started by identifying different types of available fabric, and how they could be used. I mapped trends, colours, designs and consumer preferences based on changing seasons and styles. Being a young individual, this opportunity allowed me to tap into my own and my peers' experiences as consumers and contribute to the design aesthetics from a set of fresh eyes and a new perspective.

### Teaming up with underprivileged women tailors!

The proceeds from the sale of my apparel and home decor items help in providing stitching and tailoring training to less privileged girls. The courses offered, besides tailoring, also teaches life skills and communication skills to the girls, to groom them for future employment. We intend to provide tailoring training to 200 more girls too.

### The NGO way — give back to the society

We collaborated with an NGO in Kashmir to provide sweatshirts from our winter collection to young students in peak winter. So, by reinvesting our earnings back into the project to upskill and economically empower the women in the community and through the donations to the NGO in Kashmir, we were able to impact the wider community. It feels good for sure.

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\* I convinced those entrepreneurs and businesspeople about the idea I had — to use all the unused fabric for upscaling outfits and sell in the market. I ended up negotiating a buy-in and collaborating with these individuals and kickstarted the implementation of my sustainability project.

Sustainable fashion is a way in which brands create clothes that reduces the impact on the environment and is mindful of the people who work to produce the garments. It is fashion that is ethically made and is eco-friendly.

Upcycling: The act of taking something no longer in use and giving it a second life and new function. In doing so, the finished product often becomes more practical, valuable and beautiful than what it previously was.

### Students, take note

Self-discipline is the main takeaway from Amara's success story. "Trying to strike a balance between academics and entrepreneurship is easier said than done, but if you are focused and disciplined, you can live your entrepreneurial dream every single day," she says.

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