



Press Release

Prema Gopalan of Swayam Shikshan Prayog is Social Entrepreneur of the Year - India Award 2018 Winner

Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog presents the Social Entrepreneur of the Year- India Award 2018

New Delhi, India, 11 October 2018 – [The Schwab Foundation](#) for Social Entrepreneurship, the sister organisation of the [World Economic Forum](#) and the Jubilant Bhartia Foundation of Jubilant Bhartia Group today announced **Prema Gopalan of Swayam Shikshan Prayog** as the winner of the **Social Entrepreneur of the Year India 2018 Award**. The Award was presented by **Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, National Institution for Transforming India, NITI Aayog, Government of India** in the presence of over 150 participants in New Delhi.

The SEOY India Award 2018 winner, is revitalizing rural economies by putting women in charge. Working in areas affected by global climate change, it has unleashed women farmers, entrepreneurs and grassroots business leaders who are solving the problems of their communities through small businesses. Prema Gopalan and her team have built vibrant eco-systems to enable 145,000 women to succeed in remote and ailing markets. The SSP model comprises four ventures: a federated network of 5000 SHGs; a resilience fund for women-led businesses; a rural school of entrepreneurship and leadership for women; and a market aggregator that provides warehousing, branding, marketing and distribution services to last-mile business women. In addition, it has catalyzed the government, investors, financial institutions and Indian and global corporations to partner directly with grassroots women business leaders.

The SEOY India Award promotes social entrepreneurs in India by recognising organisations that work to promote inclusive growth and contribute to bring change in the society through their entrepreneurial vision. The winner of SEOY India Award participates in the annual and regional meetings of the World Economic Forum (WEF). These meetings offer unprecedented opportunities to engage with global decision makers from the public, corporate, media, academic, and civil society sectors. The winner will be invited to join the



Schwab Foundation's global community of over 300 social innovators. The finalists are evaluated on key parameters of Innovation, Sustainability, Scalability, Reach and Direct Social Impact.

Applauding the work of the two finalists of this year SEOY India award, **Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, National Institution for Transforming India, NITI Aayog, Government of India** said, "India is at the forefront of social entrepreneurship and the Social Entrepreneur of India Award, in my view, is the platform where real transformation is taking place. Social Entrepreneurs are the people who are doing well by doing good and are creating long-term value with their work. Social Entrepreneurs are devoted to serving the underserved and I feel privileged to be here at the award ceremony."

Congratulating the winner, **Dr. Rajiv Kumar said**, "I congratulate Ms. Prema Gopalan of Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) for winning this prestigious award and hope that she will continue the good work in creating value by building resilient communities."

"The World Economic Forum has long championed gender equality on the global agenda," **said Hilde Schwab, Chairperson and Co-Founder of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship**. "The 2018 winner, Prema Gopalan of Swayam Shikshan Prayog, has demonstrated that investing in rural women is a good investment. Female entrepreneurs are critical actors to help bring about the transformation that India seeks!" **added Ms. Schwab**.

Congratulating the winner, Shyam S Bhartia, Chairman & Founder Jubilant Bhartia Group and Founder Director of Jubilant Bhartia Foundation, said, "We are entering 10th year of partnership with Schwab Foundation. In the last 9 years, we received more than 1400 applications for this award. The response is indeed overwhelming and the quality of the applications very competitive. We are glad to see how SEOY India Award is able to identify and bring to the forefront the enterprises who are achieving social impact at a larger scale. We hope that this year's SEOY India Award winner will serve as an inspiration to future generations of social innovators."



This year, the SEOY India Award received over 100 applications of exceptional quality which were evaluated on key parameters of innovation, sustainability, scalability, reach and direct social impact. An independent panel of distinguished jury selected the winner. This year's jury members included **Ms Hilde Schwab**, Co-founder & Chairperson, Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship; **Ms Shobhana Bhartia**, Chairperson & Editorial Director, HT Media Ltd; **Mr Amitabh Kant**, CEO, NITI Aayog, Government of India; **Mr Sunil Kant Munjal**, Chairman, Hero Enterprise; **Ms. Urvashi Sahni**, Study Hall Educational Foundation, Winner SEOY 2017; **Mr Srivatsan Rajan**, Chairman, Bain & Company, India; **Ms Chetna Sinha**, Founder, Mannadeshi Group of Ventures, Winner SEOY 2013 and **Mr Paul Basil**, Founder & CEO, Villgro Innovation Foundation.

About the winner

PREMA GOPALAN
SWAYAM SHIKSHAN PRAYOG (SSP)
Pune, Maharashtra

The SEOY India Award 2018 winner, Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP), is revitalizing rural economies by putting women in charge. Working in areas affected by global climate change, it has unleashed women farmers, entrepreneurs and grassroots business leaders who are solving the problems of their communities through small businesses.

Prema Gopalan and her team have built vibrant eco-systems to enable 145,000 women to succeed in remote and ailing markets. The SSP model comprises four ventures: a federated network of 5000 SHGs; a resilience fund for women-led businesses; a rural school of entrepreneurship and leadership for women; and a market aggregator that provides warehousing, branding, marketing and distribution services to last-mile business women. In addition, it has catalyzed the government, investors, financial institutions and Indian and global corporations to partner directly with grassroots women business leaders.

Over two decades, this has had a domino effect in 2000 climate-threatened villages across 6 states of India. 97,874 women in drought and flood-affected villages have set up enterprises in clean energy, sanitation, basic health services, nutrition and safe agriculture. They have transitioned from self-employment to diversify their ventures, aggregate into value chains and mentor thousands of others to get on the path of entrepreneurship. 46,750 women have claimed their identities as farmers. A majority have land deeds in their name. 900 women are recognized locally as climate resilience leaders and 500 are playing a role in local



governance. Family incomes have increased by 45%- 55%. 30,000 acres of arid land have been converted for organic farming and cultivation of food crops.

SSP's grassroots women entrepreneurs are taking their communities forward as part of their business success. As SSP partners with the government to scale its model, it is demonstrating that investing in rural women entrepreneurs can be a solid strategy for transforming India.

Note to the Editors:

[Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship](#) was co-founded by Professor Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, and his wife Hilde. For twenty years, the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship has supported the world's leading social entrepreneurs in their efforts to create a more just, equitable, and sustainable world. The Schwab Foundation provides unparalleled platforms at the regional and global level to highlight and advance leading models of sustainable social innovation. Learn about us at www.schwabfound.org and follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/schwabfound>

[Jubilant Bhartia Foundation](#) (JBF), established in 2007, is the not-for-profit organization of the Jubilant Bhartia Group. It focuses on conceptualizing and implementing the Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives (CSR) for the Group. The Jubilant Bhartia Foundation's activities include various community development work, healthcare programs, cultural and sports events, environmental preservation initiative, vocational training, women empowerment, educational activities and promotion of Social Entrepreneurship. www.jubilantbhartiafoundation.com

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