



THE NAND & JEET KHEMKA FOUNDATION



SCHWAB FOUNDATION FOR **SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

THE VOICE OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

Social Entrepreneur of the Year India 2008



Social Entrepreneurs: Driving Inclusion in Emerging Markets

In collaboration with





Welcome to “Social Entrepreneurs: Driving Inclusion in Emerging Markets”—a celebration of social entrepreneurship in India.

The economic meltdown has shown that ‘business as usual’ will not be a viable model for economic, social, and environmental growth. Though many view the situation with gloom, it leaves plentiful opportunity—especially for social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurs have been working with sustainable models of improving the social fabric of society and improving the environment—many with profitable models.

We created the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship to provide a platform for these social innovators. Over the past eight years, through events like the Annual Meeting in Davos, we have connected social entrepreneurs with businesses and governments in mutually beneficial manners. We find businesses and governments are increasingly partnering with social entrepreneurs for pragmatic purposes. For businesses, social entrepreneurs offer a conduit to the Base of Pyramid—an untapped market of often marginalized consumers. Social entrepreneurs like Prema Gopalan are successfully working with major corporations to build these markets to the benefit of both community and company. Others, like Brij Kothari, have successfully worked with the government-owned television channel to improve country literacy via programming—which simultaneously has led to an increase in channel viewership. Most importantly, social entrepreneurs are relentless in their pursuit of their social goals of inclusion as demonstrated by Arbind Singh who has struggled in a politically and economically difficult geography to both empower the marginalized and create thriving businesses. We offer our hearty congratulations to the finalists and applaud their work.

We also want to extend our gratitude to the Nand & Jeet Khemka Foundation and the UNDP who have been longtime friends and partners in highlighting Indian social entrepreneurship. We would also like to thank the Hindustan Times for its wonderful coverage of social entrepreneurship.

Sincerely,

Hilde Schwab
Chairperson, Schwab Foundation for
Social Entrepreneurship

Klaus Schwab
Board Member, Schwab Foundation for
Social Entrepreneurship
Founder, World Economic Forum



In the third year of partnership between the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, UNDP and the Nand & Jeet Khemka Foundation, the 'Social Entrepreneur of the Year' Award has grown dramatically. This is indicative, in large measure, of the growth in the field of social entrepreneurship in India.

Social entrepreneurs are tenacious. They have demonstrated that ordinary individuals can be extraordinary in solving problems, creating wealth, and moving their communities up the development ladder. This Award is a testimony to the innovation and impact that is possible when inclusion, rights and enterprise form the bedrock of sustainable change.

The competition this year was formidable. From a pool of nearly 140 compelling applications, our three finalists—Arbind Singh, Brij Kothari and Prema Gopalan—emerged after four stages of rigorous assessment. They met the national jury—a panel of leaders from business, government, media and the citizen sectors.

Each of our three finalists have made significant breakthroughs. Brij Kothari has launched a literacy movement for India's 200 million neo-literates through the simple technique of Same Language Subtitling (SLS) on popular song-based programs aired by Doordarshan.

Arbind Singh and Prema Gopalan have put the poorest in charge of business. Arbind's organization, Nidan, has demonstrated that the most-excluded can be legitimate market players and run transparent, competitive, multi-crore businesses in the states of Bihar, Jaipur and Delhi. Swayam Shikshan Prayog, led by Prema, has connected women survivors of the Maharashtra and Gujarat earthquakes and the Asian Tsunami with large businesses such as BP, to bring unparalleled market insights and launch large rural retail businesses.

One reason why our finalists have achieved quantum leaps is because they operate through strategic partnerships and leverage the resourcefulness of all actors in their ecosystem (whether national media, private corporations or the state). Another is because they give voice to the most excluded sections, by building sustainable institutions of change. Finally, all three are individuals in a hurry to achieve large-scale change.

I thank you for joining us in congratulating the finalists of the 'Social Entrepreneur of the Year' Award, 2008. They embody the excellence in enterprise that is critically required in the current global climate of the meltdown in its capital markets.

On behalf of the Nand & Jeet Khemka Foundation, I express our heartfelt thanks to the pioneering work of Dr Klaus Schwab and Hilde Schwab and the entire team of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship. Finally, I acknowledge with deep appreciation the contributions of UNDP and our media partner the Hindustan Times. This program would not have had the success it merits, without their inputs.

Uday Khemka
Managing Trustee
The Nand & Jeet Khemka Foundation

Rajat Kumar Gupta



The Nand & Jeet Khemka Foundation, the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship and UNDP thank Rajat Gupta, businessman and philanthropist, for delivering the keynote speech at the 'Social Entrepreneur of the Year' 2008 celebrations.

Rajat Kumar Gupta is the Senior Partner Emeritus of McKinsey & Company. He joined the Firm's New York Office in 1973, assumed leadership of its Scandinavian Offices in 1981, and Chicago Office in 1989. Mr. Gupta served as the Managing Director Worldwide of McKinsey from 1994 to 2003.

In his 34 year career in consulting, Mr. Gupta has served many leading companies on a broad set of topics related to strategy, organization and operations. He has played a thought leadership role in organizational thinking throughout his career, and led the Organization Practice for the Firm.

Mr. Gupta is very active in many non-profit institutions focused on education, health and development. He served as the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Advisor on UN Reform, is an independent Director of Goldman Sachs, Procter & Gamble, AMR Corporation, Qatar Financial Centre, and is the Chairman of the Board of Genpact and New Silk Route Private Equity. He is also on the Board of Rockefeller Foundation and recently elected a Member of the Supervisory Board of Sberbank.

In addition, Mr. Gupta contributes to the work of a host of organizations. He is the Chairman of the Board of the Indian School of Business and is on the Board of Associates of the Harvard Business School. He is the Chairman of the Board of the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and Chairman of the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI). Mr. Gupta is Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and serves on the Foundation Board of the World Economic Forum.

Mr. Gupta holds a bachelor of technology degree in mechanical engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, and an MBA from Harvard Business School.

Social Entrepreneur Selection Criteria

The following criteria have been refined over five years of selecting the world's leading social entrepreneurs. The primary criteria include:

DIRECT POSITIVE SOCIAL IMPACT

The candidate has founded, developed and implemented the entrepreneurial initiative *directly*, together with poor or marginalised beneficiaries and stakeholders. Impact manifests itself in quantifiable results and testimonials and is well documented. Intermediary organisations or foundations that seek to create social value through provision of financial and technical support to community-based groups will not be considered.

INNOVATION

The candidate has brought about social change by transforming traditional practice through:

- an innovative product or service,
- the development of a different approach, or
- a more determined or rigorous application of known technologies, ideas and approaches.

What is characteristic of a social entrepreneur is coming up with a *pattern-changing idea and implementing it successfully*.

SUSTAINABILITY

The candidate has generated the social conditions and/or institutions needed to sustain the initiative and is dedicating all of his/her time to it.

If set up as a non-profit, the organisation is achieving some degree of financial self-sustainability through fees or revenues or is engaged in creating mutually beneficial partnerships with business and/or the public sector. Where possible, economic incentives are embraced. In any case, there is a clear difference from traditional charity and a move towards community-based empowerment and sustainability.

If set up as a for-profit, the orientation toward social and environmental value creation predominates, with financial return treated as a secondary means to an end, rather than an end in itself.

Additional consideration is given to:

REACH AND SCOPE

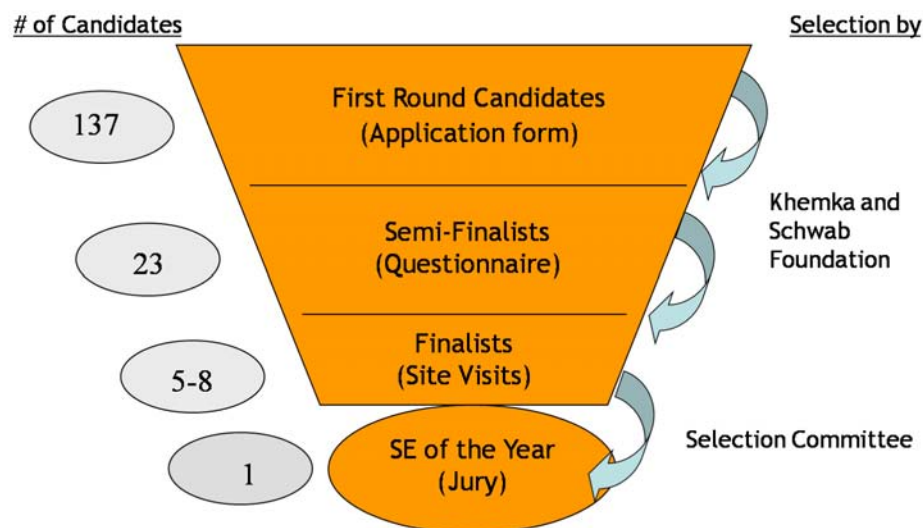
The social entrepreneur's initiative has spread beyond its initial context and has been adapted successfully to other settings in the country or internationally, either by the entrepreneur him or herself, or through others who have replicated or adapted elements of the initiative.

REPLICABILITY

The initiative can be adapted to other regions of the world to solve similar problems. It is scalable (can continue to grow and expand rapidly). The social entrepreneur is committed to openly sharing with others the tools, approaches and techniques that are critical to the adaptation of the initiative in different settings.

INDIA 'SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR' 2008 SELECTION PROCESS

The 'Social Entrepreneur of the Year' finalists underwent a rigorous selection process lasting almost five months and involving close to 140 qualified candidates.



SELECTION COMMITTEE FOR THE 'SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR' AWARD 2008

The partners would like to express their gratitude to the eminent jury: Atul Singh, President and CEO, Coca-Cola India; Bijay Panda, Member of Parliament from Orissa; Bindu Ananth, President, Institute for Financial Management and Research; Harish Hande, co-founder and Managing Director SELCO INDIA; Raju Narisetti, Managing Editor, *Mint*; Subroto Bagchi, co-founder and Gardener Mindtree Consulting.



“It pains me to see informal workers living in poverty despite long hours of hard labour which actually builds and sustains societies!”

Arbind Singh

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Arbind Singh

Nidan

THE ORGANIZATION

Founded by Arbind Singh in 1995, Nidan builds profitable businesses and ‘people’s organizations’ that are led by assetless, informal workers. A range of cooperatives, Self Help Groups (SHGs), trade unions, and individual and community businesses launched by Nidan have positioned unorganized workers as legitimate competitors in globalizing markets of India. Nidan works in Bihar, Jharkhand, Delhi and Rajasthan.

THE INNOVATION

According to the *Arjun Sengupta Committee Report* of 2006, there are over 340 million (or 92 percent of the country’s working population), in the unorganized sector in India. They contribute 60 percent to the national economic output. Yet, they constitute the poorest and most vulnerable segments of our population.

Nidan taps into the wealth of the poor—primarily their numerical strength—and then aggregates them into economies of scale. This process of ‘collectivizing’ generates social capital, representation and ‘voice’ for the unorganized poor, which they then leverage to launch their own businesses and shift policy to be recognized as wealth-creators.

Nidan’s innovation is based on the following tenets:

- The poorest can be competitive and ethical market players if provided with access to technologies, social security and financial services.
- The poor require infrastructures for aggregation and scale.
- Institutions run by the poor must quickly become financially sustainable.
- Businesses led by the poor must manage strong balance sheets while stopping corruption and civil rights violations.





Safai Mitra at work. She is a member of Swachhdhara a collective enterprise, promoted by Nidan, that is owned and controlled by the rag-pickers and sweepers themselves.

Image courtesy of Nidan

In 12 years, Nidan has launched and promoted 20 independent businesses and organizations that are governed and owned through shares by 60,000 urban and rural poor members. The enterprises include 4618 SHGS, 75 market committees¹, 19 co-operatives, two societies and one company—all envisioned and led by a complex of waste workers, rag pickers, vegetable vendors, construction labourers, domestic helpers, micro-farmers, street traders and other marginalized occupation groups.

Arbind's vision for change is grounded in the ethos of "letting a 1000 flowers bloom." Thus, all enterprises incubated by Nidan function through executive committees that are elected from their member-base. All strategic business decisions are made from the front lines by the shareholders. To illustrate, the Nidan Swachdhara Private Limited (NSPL) was set up as an urban waste management company with initial capitalization from 1606 rag pickers and waste workers who collectively decided to bid for business from the Patna Municipal Corporation. This Dalit-dominated business has gone on to win multi-crore contracts from the Patna and Jaipur Municipal Corporations. In 2008, NSPL recruited its first CEO from the business sector, as demanded by its shareholders.

¹Informal committees of traders and vendors that act as pressure groups. Five among them have been formalized into independent legal entities.

According to Arbind, the poor need multiple and synergistic services, to seed gains in a rapidly globalizing climate. Nidan thus offers access to technologies, business trainings, market information, bank linkages, credit and social security products to its members and their companies. Nidan's composite insurance product—the Ekatra Bima Yojana—offers life, health, asset and property insurance to more than 35,250 members (as of 2008). Nidan also partners with child rights groups to manage crèches and schools for children of women entrepreneurs.

One hundred percent of Nidan's partners and clients are self-employed in professions that have been severely criminalized by the state. Arbind believes that enterprises owned by the poor will move only if individuals break through mindsets of fear and arrest the corruption that corrodes their everyday lives. Thus, Nidan's service continuum expands to legal aid, advocacy initiatives, campaigns and on-going, one-on-one redressal of individual and group rights violations. In 1995 the Nidan-initiated National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI), a platform of 300,000 vendors across 20 states, successfully eliminated the hafta or contract system in Patna and ensured legal status and licenses to more than 2000 street vendors.



Women street vendors in Patna, Bihar.

Image courtesy Nidan.

The multiple services of Nidan interlock into a comprehensive web of securities. A vendor, for example, can be the member of her occupation-based co-operative, but can access trainings, bank linkages, insurance, loans, child care services and advocacy initiatives through Nidan's ongoing programs. She can be part of NASVI, and market her products through *Angana*, a retail brand launched by Nidan. In the event of a face-off with an exploitative client, she can access the criminal justice system through Nidan's legal aid services. In total, she can grow her income and sustain her business without interfacing with the exploitative regime that had determined her daily wage in the pre-1995 years of survival.

THE IMPACT

Once 'ultra poor', but now entrepreneurs, shareholders and advocacy champions, Nidan's members are reporting income growths of 100 percent and more. Two thousand children of Nidan members who could not access education, now go to 24 community schools launched by Nidan. Most significantly, Nidan is returning to Bihar a culture of accountability and honest enterprise. The NSPL contract was secured at competitive market rates in a clean, above-board manner—a fresh departure in Bihar's history of governance. This has soldered the confidence of the poorest in transparency and collective action.

Advocacy has seeded a new fearlessness. Through NASVI, *Section 34 of the Bihar Police Act*, which allowed for arbitrary arrests of vendors (ostensibly on grounds of removing obstruction), was eliminated. Today, 1891 street vendors in Patna carry formal identity cards. NASVI, has also lobbied for the passage of the first National Policy for Urban Vendors under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation. The policy is en route to becoming a law.

THE ENTREPRENEUR

Arbind was born in Muzaffarpur and spent his early years in Katihar, a district in North-east Bihar, which is a hub of first generation migrants. As a child, Arbind was perplexed by the routine eviction of his neighborhood vendor friends. In the 1990s, armed with degrees in sociology and law from Delhi University, Arbind returned to Bihar. His work in the NGO Adithi was a turning point, where he was deeply inspired by its founder Viji Srinivasan. He started work with vendors under the aegis of Adithi, before registering Nidan as a separate entity in 1996.

Arbind's goal, with great urgency, is to ensure greater numbers and scale of businesses run by the poor. He lives in Patna with his wife and two children. Under Arbind's leadership, Nidan has received the first Bihar Innovation Forum Award from the state.



“SLS gently, almost surreptitiously, releases reading into people’s insatiable appetite for film songs, thus turning millions into lifelong readers!”

Brij Kothari

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Brij Kothari

PlanetRead and IIM Ahmedabad

THE ORGANIZATION

Using the simple tool of Same Language Subtitling (SLS) on popular song-based television programs, PlanetRead is sharpening the literacy skills of an estimated 200 million ‘literates’ or ‘neoliterates’ who have weak reading and comprehension skills, despite having attended at least primary school. By superimposing subtitles on visuals in the ‘same’ language as the audio, Brij ensures that reading becomes a byproduct of entertainment already consumed by the audience.

A joint venture of PlanetRead and IIM Ahmedabad, SLS has combined the tremendous reach of India’s national broadcasting agency, Doordarshan, with the enormous appeal of film songs, to give lifelong reading practice to early literate persons.

THE INNOVATION

According to the 2001 Census, 65.4 percent of India’s population over 7 years of age is literate as against 52.21 percent in 1991. However, there are no statistics available on the skill levels of the 560 million celebrated ‘literates’. Brij asks, “How many of the so called literates can read a newspaper, write a letter and fill out applications?” These, he argues, are important questions in a country where an ability to sign one’s name often gets equated with literacy.

PlanetRead believes that literacy skills have to be constantly reinforced if populations are to be prevented from regressing back into illiteracy. Drawing heavily from research carried out in the West on similar subtitling techniques—closed captioning and karaoke, the team has tracked eyeball movement to prove that reading of television subtitles is automatic and unavoidable.

The salient features of SLS are:

- The subtitles in the same language are in perfect synchronization with the audio track—one reads what one is hearing.

Brij Kothari interacting with viewers of Same Language Subtitling in Gulbai Tekra Slum, Ahmedabad.

Image courtesy of Jaydeep Bhatt

- SLS requires no behavioral change on part of the viewer—it slides onto the visual in a non-obtrusive manner at the bottom of the screen.
- Reading skills picked up in school or adult literacy classes are automatically practiced at home as song based programmes attract high viewership.
- Drawing on the learnings from karaoke and closed captioning, SLS also provides reading practice for the hearing impaired.

According to the SLS team, SLS literally ‘costs a song’. In India, because of the large number of viewers in most major languages, every 50 rupees spent on SLS, can deliver on average, 30 minutes reading practice to approximately 1,00,00 people, for one whole year. To ensure the success of SLS, Brij set himself two clear goals: back his conviction with research; and partner with government agencies to ensure large-scale reach of SLS.

A team of statisticians from IIM Ahmedabad has tracked the impact of SLS over nearly 10 years. The research includes a baseline study in 2002 by the SLS team. Nielsen’s ORG Centre for Social Research later carried out two independent impact studies in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Gujarat in 2003 and 2007. The Nielsen’s methodology followed a two-pronged approach:

- Self reporting—in the first instance, the team followed the census method of asking the head of the household to report the number of literates in the family.
- Reading method—the same respondents were asked to read a paragraph of grade 3 level.

The sample size was drawn from 3179 households, translating to 17,782 individuals age 7 years and above.



Nielsen ORG gathered data from five villages in each of the five states. The team assessed the sample for various aspects of literacy—familiarity with alphabets, ability to read words, speed of reading, as well as indicating the movement of text in the right direction.

The data analysed by the SLS team yielded the following results:

- In the group, not exposed to SLS programs, only 25 percent school children could read a simple paragraph in Hindi after five years of schooling.
- This figure jumped to 56 percent, (reading the same paragraph), for respondents exposed to subtitling for 30 minutes a week on *Rangoli* a popular song-based programme on TV.
- Exposure to SLS led to higher rates of ability to write one’s name (82 percent vs. 55 percent), home address (56 percent vs. 34 percent) and familiarization with any five words (72 percent vs. 45 percent).

For SLS to reach the millions of early literates in India, PlanetRead has brought the Government, especially the Department of School Education and Literacy and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, on board as strategic partners. The partnerships have come after a long struggle. In 2002 Doordarshan agreed to subtitle popular song based programs. Today, superimposed

on *Rangoli* and *Chitrahaar*, SLS leverages four and a half hours of primetime viewing per week on Doordarshan—this does not include the repeat telecasts. In addition, regional stations of Doordarshan in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu include SLS on the local language film songs.

Brij is also the Founder of BookBox, a for-profit social enterprise that produces animated books with same language subtitling on compact discs and VCDs. Its core competence lies in creating and adapting culturally rooted, value-based stories in many languages, both international and national, through digital media. Based on the response to SLS, BookBox aims to provide reading practice to children aged 6 to 14 and familiarize a child aged 4 to 5 with basic print concepts—how print moves in a certain direction and the stringing of alphabets to form words.

THE IMPACT

India spends less than 4 percent of its GNP on education and is ranked an abysmal 147th out of 177 countries measured for literacy by UNESCO. In such a scenario, Brij's simple—yet highly leveraged—model of SLS, coupled with entertainment, provides very low cost reading practice to an estimated 200 million weak readers on a mass scale, thus arresting skill



erosion. The research carried out by PlanetRead shows that SLS is doubling the number of children who will become good readers after five years of primary schooling. Brij is now pushing for SLS to be accepted as national policy.

THE ENTREPRENEUR

Brij Kothari serves as an Adjunct Professor at IIM Ahmedabad (IIM A) and is the Founder of PlanetRead. A student of Shri Aurobindo Ashram in Puducherry, Brij has a Masters in Physics from IIT Kanpur. He studied Communications (Masters) from Cornell University and was awarded a doctorate in education from the same University. After completing his dissertation on the conservation of indigenous knowledge of medicinal plants, he returned to India and joined as faculty at IIM Ahmedabad.

In 1996 while watching a Spanish film with his friends, Brij hit upon the SLS idea. As a student of Spanish, Brij wished that there could be subtitles in Spanish so that he could read along. SLS on song-based programs became his passion—both personal and professional. SLS won the World Bank's Development Market Place Award in 2002 and the Tech Museum Award in Education in 2003.

Brij divides his time between PlanetRead India and PlanetRead USA. His wife, who is training to be a nurse, and three children live in the US.

Children from Khodi Village, Gujarat singing after writing down lyrics from TV.

Image courtesy of Brij Kothari



“We believe that rural grassroots women are the Change they want to see. As emerging leaders and entrepreneurial innovators, women are building social networks that strive to achieve the aspirations of their families and communities for a secure future.”

Prema Gopalan

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Prema Gopalan

Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP)

THE ORGANIZATION

Founded by Prema Gopalan in 1994, Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) is building networks of rural 'social businesses' that are co-created by private corporations and women survivors of disasters such as the 2004 Asian Tsunami and the Latur and Gujarat earthquakes (of 1993 and 2001 respectively). With the facilitation of SSP, networks of rural women entrepreneurs have launched retail businesses in renewable home energy products, home groceries and health funds in partnership with BP (previously known as British Petroleum), LIC and others.

Working in the disaster-affected areas of three Indian states, SSP has since 1998, launched 8,944 agri and non-farm businesses through savings and group credit products. Further, it has nurtured 1,820 women retail entrepreneurs with a total consumer base of 63,000 families and cumulative earnings of 2.3 crores. It has ensured more than 33 percent income growth per entrepreneur.

THE INNOVATION

SSP launches rural women entrepreneurs in disaster-prone areas. It then organizes them into social networks to spot and address gaps in Bottom of the Pyramid (BOP) markets. Thereafter, Prema and her team:

- Identify potential corporate partners.
- Deepen social channels to promote market growth.
- Facilitate local women to incubate business models with corporations.

Since 1998, SSP has launched and mentored 20 *Sakhi Federations* in Maharashtra—a dynamic umbrella-network of 5000 SHGs. Over time, these SHGs have created markets for social products essential for their communities. They have also coalesced into channels of trust and social capital.



Livelihood activities in Rapar, Gujarat; broom making by Self Help Group entrepreneurs.

Image courtesy of SSP

The social networks of the Sakhi Federations, powered by 60,000 women, offers multiple advantages to companies and rural entrepreneurs planning to launch a rural business. It provides the following:

- An efficient pipeline of first-generation entrepreneurs with experience in managing credit, savings and micro-businesses.
- Trust-based relationships among members that ensure loyalty, consumer awareness and first-hand market insights—urgent requirements for private corporations that wish to operate in underserved markets.
- A credit and social line between members that also serves as a natural supply chain with reduced cost of sales, promotion and retail—leading to savings for the consumer and increased profit for the venture.

SSP's Business Development Services (BDS) offers access to capital, market insights, linkages to government, incubation of legal entities and skill-building of micro-entrepreneurs to help both rural and urban companies succeed. It connects networks of women entrepreneurs, village institutions, and corporations to launch profitable enterprises that are governed by a triple bottom line:

- *Financial*—everyone in the value chain makes a profit.

- *Environmental*—all enterprises are rooted in the principles of clean, renewable energy.
- *Social*—all businesses fortify the development of village communities and ensure inclusion of debutant entrepreneurs in networks of financial and social capital.

All businesses promoted by SSP have demonstrated sustainability. They have also converged commercial success with social value creation. For example, the clean cooking stove enterprise launched in partnership with BP has generated a business turnover of INR 11 crores while reducing indoor air pollution in 51,000 rural homes and saving INR 7.7 million in household monthly incomes. Similarly, Access-Annapurna, a rural-to-rural home groceries business reaches 7,000 families month after month, with a combined sales turnover of INR 5 crores. Shopping through the Annapurna model has led to savings of up to INR 240 per month, or 6 percent of mean monthly income, per family.

How do business ventures between local women and global corporations succeed? An example: In 2005 SSP went into business with BP to co-develop and distribute the Indian Institute of Sciences patented Oorja stoves. These portable cooking appliances operate on bio-mass pellets that can be sourced from local farmers and burn bio-mass extremely efficiently, leading to smoke-free kitchens.

SSP established *Adharam Energy Private Limited (AEPL)*, a company to distribute BP's energy product and manage the network of village-level retail entrepreneurs/agents, called the *Jyotis*. AEPL is a joint business vehicle through which 800 Jyotis pooled their investments, licenses and risk to launch—for the first time—a joint operation with one another and with a corporation.

BP supplies the product while AEPL handles the distribution from the warehouse to 800 Jyotis. Each Jyoti interacts directly with 200 to 250 customers, delivering the appliances and bio-mass pellets to them. In addition, the Jyotis handle service complaints and keep daily sales records. A Jyoti invests INR 10,000 into the business and collects cash from customers on sales. She earns up to INR 2,000 a month on sales commission. Typically, a Jyoti would meet her customers thrice a month, totaling 1,000 interactions per month to educate, promote, motivate and demonstrate the benefits of clean fuel.

The AEPL model has demonstrated the advantages of business co-creation for the BOP segment:

- Even as BP capitalized on the extensive infrastructure of SSP's social networks, SSP and rural women gained credibility as successful collaborators with a global firm.
- All partners brought unique balance sheet advantages to a new business. BP's deep pockets withstood the trials of a start-up, allowing SSP to quickly access assets, such as warehousing facilities that the business required.

THE IMPACT

Through extensive trainings in disaster response and business skills, SSP has created a base of 10,000 rural experts who can kick-start community re-building processes in the immediate wake of a calamity. After the Gujarat earthquake in 2001, Sakhi members from Latur and Osmanabad pooled

INR 100,000 and set off to Kutch and Jamnagar (among the worst affected sites). They organized women to steer the state's post-earthquake reconstruction programs. This marked the launch of SSP in Gujarat. Post-Asian Tsunami, SSP and members from the Sakhi Federations stepped into Tamil Nadu. Today, 500 women run a community health watch network that has impacted 13,000 households in 41 villages. More than 300,000 families have been directly served by SSP's combined enterprises since 1998. Among them, 40 percent are from the Nomadic Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Advocacy and enterprise have also spurred rural women members of SSP to win community contracts from district governments and serve as local planners and managers of village water and sanitation infrastructures.

THE ENTREPRENEUR

Born in Pune, Prema schooled all over India. Her master's degree in social work, and a pre-doctoral study on women in the informal sector left her restless and wanting to engage with low-income families. In 1984 she founded SPARC (Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centers) with her co-travelers, all of whom were development professionals. In 1989 she branched out on her own and set up SSP.

Prema is a steering committee member of GROOTS International and Huairou Commission—a network of autonomous grassroots women's organisations across 40 countries. She facilitates Disaster Watch—a Global Working Group of the Huairou Commission. Most recently, the Chinese government invited Prema to be a special advisor to their post-earthquake reconstruction work. She lives in Mumbai with her husband, who also works in the citizen sector. Under Prema's leadership, SSP won the Changemakers Award in 2008.



A Self Help Group member selling saris as part of her livelihood activities in Osmanabad, Maharashtra.
Image courtesy of SSP

The Partners



THE NAND & JEET KHEMKA FOUNDATION

The Nand & Jeet Khemka Foundation's mission is to build innovative cross-sectoral collaborations and development infrastructure within India and internationally through strategic philanthropy. Our approach is one that is long-term, strategic and leveraged.

We believe change can only be effected through multi-stakeholder collaboration both within India and internationally. Therefore, we are deeply committed to partnership and collaborative approaches. Our key areas of focus include: Social Entrepreneurship, Climate Change, Leadership and Ethics, Civic Engagement, and Media and Awareness.



SCHWAB FOUNDATION FOR **SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP**
THE VOICE OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship was started by Klaus Schwab, Founder of the World Economic Forum, and his wife, Hilde. Since its inception in 2000, the Foundation has been searching for the world's leading social entrepreneurs, who implement innovative and pragmatic solutions to social problems by tackling the root causes and creating social transformation. The current network of the Foundation spans 150 social entrepreneurs and their organizations from more than 40 countries.

Selected social entrepreneurs of the Schwab Foundation network participate in World Economic Forum events, thus providing unique opportunities for them to connect with business, political and media leaders. In one year alone, the Schwab social entrepreneurs raised close to US\$ 80 million as a direct result of the contacts and opportunities offered by the Foundation.

Collaborators



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the United Nations global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life.

In India UNDP focuses on improving the lives of the poorest and marginalized. UNDP helps the government and civil society to overcome development challenges and works towards accelerating progress of human development and to meet the globally agreed Millennium Development Goals.

Strengthening inclusion of disadvantaged groups such as women, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and minorities and supporting strategies and initiatives to address economic and political barriers is a UN system-wide priority that UNDP supports through its current programmes.

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