

Rajiv Khandelwal and Krishnavtar Sharma Awarded Social Entrepreneur of the Year 2010 for India

14 November 2010

The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, in partnership with the Jubilant Bhartia Foundation, has announced that Rajiv Khandelwal and Krishnavtar Sharma, co-founders of Aajeevika Bureau, are the winners of the India Social Entrepreneur of the Year.

Kapil Sibal, Minister of Human Resource Development, Science and Technology of India, handed the award to the winners in New Delhi. Aajeevika Bureau has introduced a unique photo identification card for inter-state migrants, allowing them to access banking, mobile telephone and other government services and citizenship entitlements. In addition, the organization offers skills training, job placement, legal aid and counselling (more details can be found in the profile below).

More than 100 applicants entered the sixth competition for the “India Social Entrepreneur of the Year” selection process. After several stages of rigorous assessment, four finalists were chosen. An independent panel of pre-eminent judges met on 12 November to select the winners from among the finalists. The judges this year included: Shobhana Bhartia, Chairperson of the Hindustan Times; Y. C. Deveshwar, Chairman of ITC Ltd; Rohini Nilekani, Chairperson of Arghyam Foundation; Sudha Pillai, Member Secretary of the Planning Commission; and Hilde Schwab, Co-Founder and Chairperson of the Schwab Foundation.

The award has been given annually in the country since 2005 to individuals who have founded organizations or companies with targeted social missions benefiting underserved communities. The winners enter the global network of 200 leading social entrepreneurs of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, a sister organization of the World Economic Forum.

Winner Profile: Rajiv Khandelwal and Krishnavtar Sharma, Aajeevika Bureau, Udaipur

Co-founded by Rajiv Khandelwal and Krishnavtar Sharma in 2004, Aajeevika Bureau is headquartered in Udaipur, with offices in Ahmadabad, Jaipur and seven blocks of southern Rajasthan, where, every year, an estimated 800,000 rural workers migrate seasonally to Gujarat and Karnataka. All of Aajeevika Bureau’s clients are unskilled and semi-skilled men and women with annual family incomes of less than INR 36,000. They are typically unviable for self-help group or microfinance loans due to their migratory status and lack of assets.

Aajeevika Bureau offers rural seasonal migrants photo identity and financial services, skills training, and partnerships with local governments and businesses, mostly at their destination points in urban markets.

Over five years, more than 50,000 ultra-poor seasonal migrants have directly accessed the Bureau’s services, registering 50-80% growth in their incomes as well as increased citizenship entitlements. Additionally, Aajeevika’s model has been replicated by more than 30 civil society organizations in Bihar, Orissa, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

The other Social Entrepreneur of the Year Finalists are:

Santosh Kumar Choubey, AISECT. The AISECT network has over 8,000 education centres across 27 states in India. The organization focuses on IT skills training in rural areas. It has a student base of

about 1 million to date, resulting in 6,000 self-employed people.

Anant Kumar, Lifespring Hospitals Pvt. Ltd. LifeSpring has nine hospitals in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Its mission is to enable low-income women to access high-quality maternal healthcare in India. It has delivered more than 7,000 healthy babies, and doctors have treated over 100,000 outpatient cases.

Ashwin Naik, Vaatsalya Healthcare Solutions Pvt. Ltd. Vaatsalya provides affordable and quality healthcare to more than 300,000 customers annually from middle- and low-income families. The focus is on primary and secondary healthcare services (internal medicine, maternal health, pediatrics and general surgery) in large towns and peri-urban areas through 10 hospitals, as of today.

The World Economic Forum is an independent international organization committed to improving the state of the world by engaging leaders in partnerships to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

Incorporated as a foundation in 1971 and headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, the World Economic Forum is impartial and not-for-profit; it is tied to no political, partisan or national interests (<http://www.weforum.org>).



World Economic Forum, 91-93 route de la Capite, CH-1223 Cologny/Geneva
Tel. +41 (0)22 869 1212, Fax +41 (0)22 786 2744, <http://www.weforum.org>