

Millennium Alliance announces Round 3 Awards INR 26 crores for 33 social enterprises

14th April 2016, New Delhi: Millennium Alliance, a multilateral consortium led by India recognized and awarded 33 Indian social enterprises selected through a rigorous year long process to identify technologies and innovations that impact bottom of the pyramid population in India and could also be successfully deployed in other developing countries in Africa and South East Asia.

Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) jointly with the Technology Development Board (Department of Science and Technology, Government of India); United States Agency for International Development (USAID), UK's Department for International Development (DFID); ICCO Cooperation; ICICI Foundation for Inclusive Growth; Wadhvani Initiative for Sustainable Health (WISH) and the World Bank organized the Millennium Alliance Awards Ceremony for Round 3 on 14 April 2016 at the Federation House in Delhi. The 33 selected enterprises will benefit from multilateral grants totaling Rupees 26 crores.

A national platform to identify, test, award and scale innovations which bring improvements at the Bottom of the Pyramid (BOP), Millennium Alliance takes an innovation-driven and impact-focused approach to development. The Alliance provides financial as well as capacity building support to Indian entrepreneurs working at the grassroots level.

The 33 enterprises were awarded under the focus sectors of basic education, affordable healthcare, agriculture/food security, clean energy/climate change and water & sanitation. The projects will be implemented in several Indian states including Bihar, Odisha, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. From the awarded enterprises, six (6) enterprises are especially picked under South-South category to take these proven innovative solutions from India to other parts of the developing world. These projects will be implemented in Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, Bangladesh and Nepal.

The Millennium Alliance has so far received and evaluated over 3000 applications as a result of over 100 pan India roadshows conducted to extensively engage with the social enterprise sector in Tier I, II and III cities.

Welcoming the guests, **Dr. A. Didar Singh, Secretary General, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)** said "Millennium Alliance is a unique partnership to provide financial as well as non-financial support to innovation driven social enterprises to help them test and scale their innovative models in India and other developing countries. Such models should be scaled in national interest and also be replicated in other developing countries through knowledge sharing".

*In a message shared by **Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Hon'ble Union Minister for Science & Technology & Earth Sciences**, he stated "MA identifies and scales frugal and targeted interventions for Bottom of the Pyramid or poor. I am very happy that the steps followed through the various stages in the Millennium Alliance rounds fall in line with our Honourable Prime Minister's programs like Start Up, Stand Up, Make in India, Swachh Bharat, Swasth Bharat, Digital India and financial inclusion."*

*Sharing his vision, **H.E. Shri Richard R. Verma, United States Ambassador to India** said "The Millennium Alliance is a testament to the power of the U.S.- India strategic relationship, and the vast opportunities that can be harnessed when governments, citizens, and enterprises come together to solve the most pressing development challenges of our time, both locally and globally."*

*Speaking on Department of Science and Technology's partnership in the MA, **Dr. Bindu Dey, Secretary, Technology Development Board** stated "Millennium Alliance is an incredible model for amalgamation of technology with social entrepreneurship".*

***Ms. Bhavna Bhatia, South Asia Regional Program Coordinator, Leadership, Learning & Innovation, World Bank Group** also shared that "The Millennium Alliance program is a unique platform to crowd-source and catalyze innovations and grow social entrepreneurs to deepen impact for the poor and underserved. As knowledge partners to this program, the World Bank is bringing its global experience of crowdsourcing innovative ideas for development challenges, piloting, and helping them to scale-up. This includes sharing innovative business models for last-mile and more cost effective delivery of services such as health, education and water - with other Indian states as well as with other developing countries. MA can help to surface ideas and solutions to some of the toughest challenges and priority programs of the government today".*

*Speaking on the occasion, **Mr. Soumitro Ghosh, CEO, WISH Foundation** said "India despite being the hotbed of innovations, has so far very few scale-ups. WISH Foundation in partnership with Millennium Alliance is committed to address this gap and help accelerate hundreds and thousands of scale ups in healthcare".*

For further details, please visit: www.millenniumalliance.in

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