

Tata Group-IIMC Pick Top Social Ventures

Our Bureau

Mumbai: SAANS from Bangalore, Godavari Women Weaver's Services Producer Company from Andhra Pradesh and Ultrasafe Ultrasound from Kolkata have emerged as the three most promising social ventures in the third edition of the Tata Social Enterprise Challenge 2014-15, a joint initiative of the Tata Group and Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (IIMC).

The challenge, which attracted 168 impact proposals in this edition, endeavours to find India's most promising early-stage social enterprises, and create an ecosystem for social entrepreneurship.

While the three toppers received a prize money of Rs 2 lakh, Rs 1.5 lakh and Rs. 1.25 lakh respectively, the second runner-up team, Ultrasafe Ultrasound, received on-the-spot seed funding Rs 5 lakh plus technical support by healthcare company Glocal Healthcare Systems during the finale.

Khalid Abdullah Quidwai, the winner of TSEC 2014-15 has developed SAANS, a low-cost, easy-to-use mechanical device to help keep newborns' lungs open during troubled breathing. Vijayan Switha Gandhi, founder of GWWSPC, the first runner up, has developed a business model to strengthen the weaver base.

For the first time, four region-

al seminars and an equal number of roundtables were held across the country, says Atul Agrawal, VP, corporate affairs, Tata Services. "In India, very little attention is paid to social enterprises. We are trying to create that awareness as well as build a repository of knowledge in this space," adds Ashok Banerjee, dean (new initiatives and external relations), IIM-C.

"TSEC has grown into a single platform to catalyse new



SAANS, Godavari Women Weaver's Services Producer Company and Ultrasafe Ultrasound were this year's picks

and promising sustainable ventures, build an enabling ecosystem for these ventures... create awareness of the social entrepreneurship field, and educate and mentor future champions of change," says NS Rajan, member — group executive council and chief group human resources officer, Tata Sons said.

TSEC 2014-15 kicked off in August and invited social entrepreneurs who either had an early stage venture (not older than three years) or a promising idea with a plan that could create sustainable social impact in India. Besides the top 3, 7 others made it to the top 10 finalists.