Innovation for all: the 10th annual Villgro Unconvention features panels, pitches, and prizes for social entrepreneurs

Alignment of ecosystems is urgently needed to tackle India's massive economic and social problems, and encouraging signs are emerging as social enterprises rise to the occasion.

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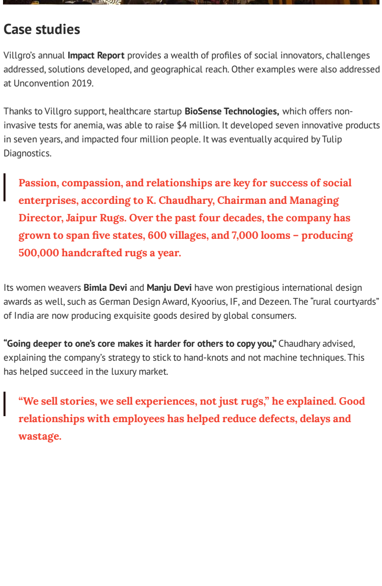

Case studies

Villgro's annual **Impact Report** provides a wealth of profiles of social innovators, challenges addressed, solutions developed, and geographical reach. Other examples were also addressed at Unconvention 2019.

Thanks to Villgro support, healthcare startup **BioSense Technologies,** which offers non-invasive tests for anemia, was able to raise $4 million. It developed seven innovative products in seven years, and impacted four million people. It was eventually acquired by Tulip Diagnostics.

> **Passion, compassion, and relationships are key for success of social enterprises, according to K. Chaudhary, Chairman and Managing Director, Jaipur Rugs. Over the past four decades, the company has grown to span five states, 600 villages, and 7,000 looms – producing 500,000 handcrafted rugs a year.**

Its women weavers **Bimla Devi** and **Manju Devi** have won prestigious international design awards as well, such as German Design Award, Kyoorius, IF, and Dezeen. The "rural courtyards" of India are now producing exquisite goods desired by global consumers.

"Going deeper to one's core makes it harder for others to copy you," Chaudhary advised, explaining the company's strategy to stick to hand-knots and not machine techniques. This has helped succeed in the luxury market.

> **"We sell stories, we sell experiences, not just rugs," he explained. Good relationships with employees has helped reduce defects, delays and wastage.**