

First Indian woman to win WISE prize



She won for mobilizing 1.4 mn out of school girls in villages to get back to education. HT

Safeena Hussain, founder of 'Educate Girls,' has become the first Indian woman to bag the WISE prize worth \$5 lakh for mobilizing 1.4 million out of school girls in Indian villages to get back to mainstream education.

The prize, awarded by the Qatar

Foundation at the 11th Edition of the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) Summit earlier this week in Doha, is one of the most prestigious awards in education.

"Sixteen years back, when 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' was unheard of, I had decided to set up Educate Girls, an NGO to bring out of school girls back to mainstream education. Even in the 21st century, there are villages in India where goats are considered assets but girls are considered liability," Safeena told PTI in an interview.

"From poverty to patriarchy, there are endless reasons to keep girls out of school or forcing them to drop out without completing their education," Safeena said. Daughter of noted character actor Yusuf Husain, who recently died, and wife to filmmaker Hansal Mehta, Safeena travels to villages extensively where her "team *Balika*", operating along with field agents, knocks on each door to check if a girl is out of school.

PTI