



Rina Dhaka becomes first Indian designer to endorse Shop for Change Fair Trade

Mumbai, October 23, 2009: Popular Indian designer, Rina Dhaka has partnered with Shop for Change Fair Trade, marking a revolution for the Indian fashion industry. Rina Dhaka will introduce her debut design made from Shop for Change certified cotton at this week's Wills Lifestyle Fashion Week. Shop for Change Fair Trade, an NGO which was created to build on successful international models of fair trade certification, was established by Traidcraft Exchange (UK) and International Resources for Fairer Trade (India).

Currently, Indian cotton farmers struggle to earn a decent living because of uncertain and unstable markets, poor productivity, and the inability add value to their crop. Shop for Change is a fair trade certification system that aims to meet the unique challenges faced by Indian farmers and artisans. While Shop for Change is part of the international fair trade movement, it understands the specific needs of Indian producers, consumers, and fair trade businesses, aiming to build a model for domestic fair trade that can be emulated in other developing countries. The Shop for Change Fair Trade label on a cotton product assures consumers that cotton farmers receive a premium to improve their production and that eco-friendly growing practices are followed.

Seth Petchers, CEO, Shop for Change Fair Trade said, "Building the domestic fair trade market in India promises to be a fruitful endeavor, but one that requires collaboration. In partnership with others, and with the necessary support over the coming years, we hope to play a key role in shaping a strong fair trade movement in India. We are excited to have Rina Dhaka on board, and look forward to further support from the Indian fashion industry to create a fair trade market in India."

Rina Dhaka has previously won the best designer award in Miami Fashion Week 2004 and is known as a designer for women who think. Her famous clientele consist of Naomi Campbell, Martha Marzotto, Uma Thurman, Tara Palmer Tomkinson and Vittorio Radice.

Rina Dhaka has designed a garment using Shop for Change certified cotton from Chetna Organic Agriculture Producer Company, which will be showcased amongst her collection. This first step of support towards a fairer system for India's cotton farmers is of significant importance. While khadi was a symbol of the country in the 40's and 50's, the fashion industry has largely moved away from its

connection to Indian cotton. Shop for Change aims to recreate a culture of connection and support for Indian cotton and cotton farmers with the support of the Indian fashion industry.

The concept of Fair Trade has struck a chord with Rina Dhaka, as her father was a traditional farmer who grew cotton and wheat. Speaking on her association with Shop for Change, **Rina Dhaka** said, “Growing up, I remember a lot of unhappiness among farmers who sold to middlemen and didn't get the full value of their crop that was due to them. This disillusionment drove most farmers out of business. Knowing this reality, I am pleased to see something being done to address these issues and give farmers a chance to make a decent living. By supporting Shop for Change, I am trying to do my small bit.”

Shop for Change realizes the huge potential to spread awareness of fair trade products to the growing consumer market in India, through an Indian-grown certification body. Shop for Change has received initial financial backing from the European Union and the Dutch foundations ICCO and Hivos.

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