



Seth with Anita, Gul and the farmers

# Eco-friendly entrepreneurs

**Seth Petchers, CEO of Shop for change talks about the fair trade concept and the journey so far**

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If you go through his resume, you may not realise the time Seth Petchers spends with farmers in India.

Seth has a wealth of international experience—having worked with Oxfam America and on a joint project with a non-profit organisation, Chocolate Matters, and the World Bank—but that doesn't say how passionate he is about the farmers in rural India.

In a quick conversation with the CEO of Shop for Change, Seth goes on to explain about the fair trade concept in India. "India in the past five or six years has seen a tremendous economic boom. We are no longer talking about the emerging middle class people, the middle class has already emerged, but not everyone is benefiting in the same way, this is where we come in, putting a win-win vision in

the product chain."

"I have come full circle. It all started in India and found my way through a rural village in Guj and decided to start this concept here. I went back to USA and got involved into fair trade and farmers. India's opportunity fell into my lap and I grabbed it."

In this fast-paced world we hear about farmer suicides but one can't do anything about this. However, Seth is here to make a difference and help people. He adds: "We give a few guidelines to the farmers that they have to meet. We are currently working with 7,000 farmers across five states and we place the logo on the products thereby letting the consumers know it's a certified product."

What about creating an awareness to maintain a responsible brand image? "The concept will be

driven by consumers, so it is important for us to be creative and meet the 'trend-conscious' consumers. And, we have tied up with socialites and celebrities like Shabana Azmi and Gul Panag who portray our consumer demographics precisely," says Seth. Apart from celebrities, they have opted to go the creative way to spread awareness. "We have made our presence felt over Facebook, Twitter and many blogs. Similarly, we did a Hindi rock concert at a shopping mall in Mumbai, so if people are interested they could go check out the products available in that shopping mall," adds Seth. He says that farmers have a tremendous scope to export their products within the country itself. "We are bringing in the concept of exporting domestically. Like working with cotton products and signed on designers like Anita Dongre and many other international players. So not only are you buying a branded product but also contributing to the environment."



Seth Petchers



Anita's cotton fashion show