

FEATURE



## 2 minute phone call with...

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### ...Anita Williams and Rashmi Gogna

Anita Williams, I-India Representative, Rashmi Gogna, Founder of Pure Earth



Anita Williams and Rashmi Gogna joined hands in a fundraising effort for the Jhag Children's Village. Presenting fashion with a passion, Pure Good showcased chic ensembles by Pure Earth and donated 100% of proceeds to I-India. Pure Good will fund the building of a school, two vocational centres, medical clinic, shelter homes, cricket pitch, and vegetable gardens. *Lifestyle* supports the I-India initiative and discusses the inspiration behind Pure Good, fashion for a cause, and how you can give back to society.

***What was the intention behind Pure Good?***

**Anita:** It was fashion for a cause; a night to celebrate the beauty of Pure Earth's handmade fashion with I-India's work with street children in Jaipur.

**Rashmi:** Pure Earth believes in giving back to the society and that was the idea behind Pure Good. I take a lot of design inspiration from Jaipur and on my last visit, I was taken aback by the sheer number of beggars. I wanted to reach out and I-India, through Anita Williams, provided the perfect platform.

***How can fashion increase social consciousness?***

**Rashmi:** Fashion is an integral part of society. What can be better than to build charity into our lifestyle through fashion? The Pure Good holiday collection is fun, fashionable and comes with a high feel-good factor built into it.

***What was the inspiration behind the new children's range at Pure Good?***

**Rashmi:** We were supporting a charity for children so I felt it would be great to do it through a children's line with 100% proceeds going to I-India.

***Why is I-India so close to your heart?***

**Anita:** After completing my nursing training, I left for Calcutta with a backpack full of medical supplies to aid the poorest of the poor. The simplest things made a difference. For example, shoes protected the injured foot of a rickshaw puller and allowed him to continue working and feed his family. Six months later, illness forced my return to Australia. I was haunted by the calls of street children but could not help them and did not want to give money to promote begging.

Years later, I found out my cousin spent months teaching jewellery making so street children in Jaipur could earn and learn a skill for life. 'Ladli' means 'Loving Girl' and is one of many I-India projects, helping over 3000 street children daily. I-India gives children education, vocational skill training, meals, and accommodation, providing respite from exploitative street life.

***Tell us more about Jhag, the inspiration behind Pure Good.***

**Anita:** Fundraising is geared to build a village in Jhag - one of the poorest regions in India. Children care for siblings whilst parents work and education is an unattainable luxury. The \$10,000 raised from Pure Good will pay for a tractor and within two years, Jhag Children's Village will be built. I urge people to visit Jaipur and see I-India for themselves. Imagine what a difference we can make if more people take ownership of this vision. Street children have fallen through society's cracks and I-India is the ladder to help them climb back up.

***How does it feel to give underprivileged children a new lease on life?***

**Anita:** It is a privilege for me to be part of their lives. As soon as I walked into Ladli, I knew my life would never be the same again. Seeing children sitting together in happy banter making jewellery was in stark contrast to begging on the street. I knew this was an opportunity to be part of something so important and beautiful; it was a gift, a calling realised.

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