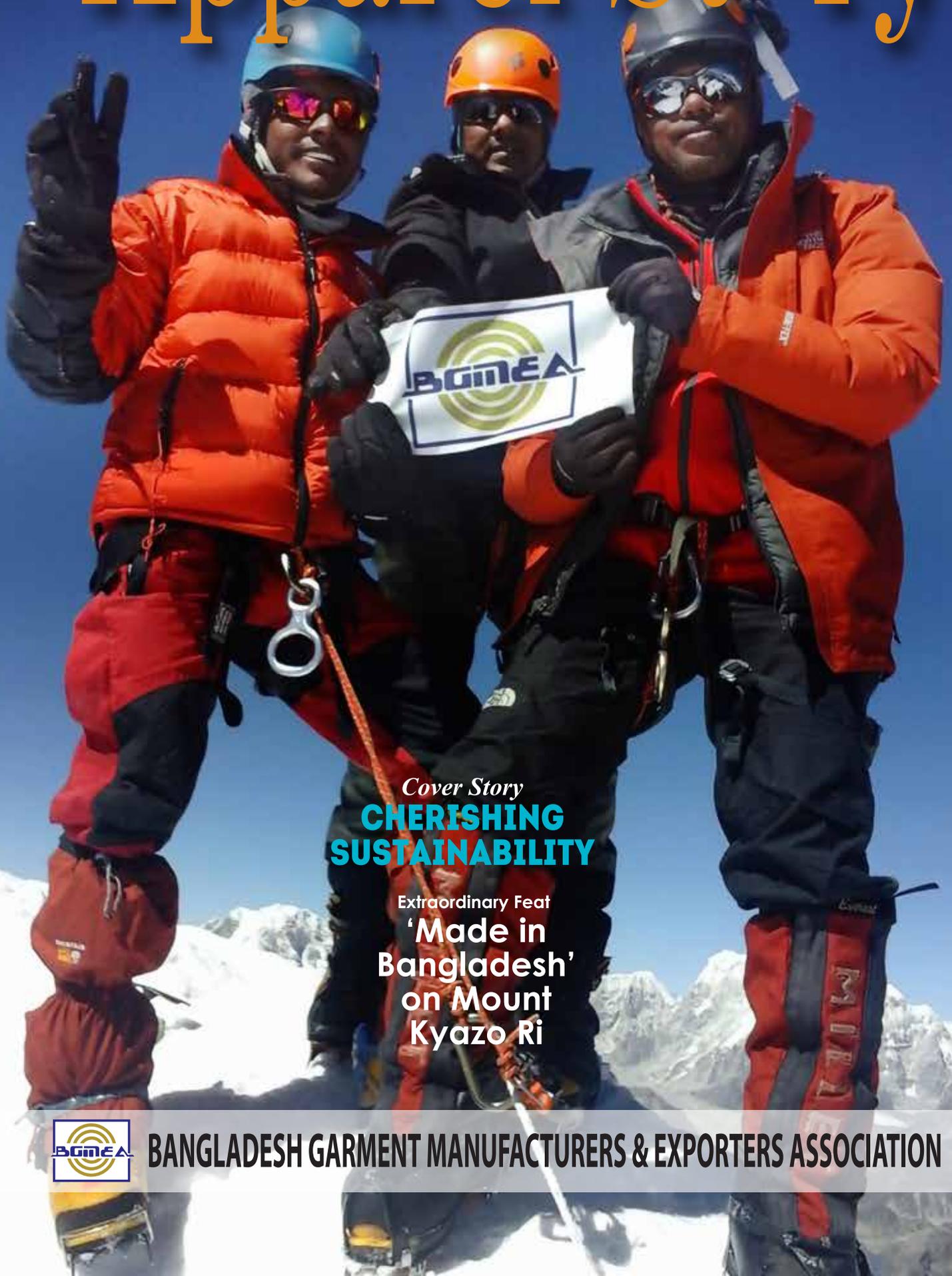


The Apparel Story

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BANGLADESH GARMENT MANUFACTURERS & EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION



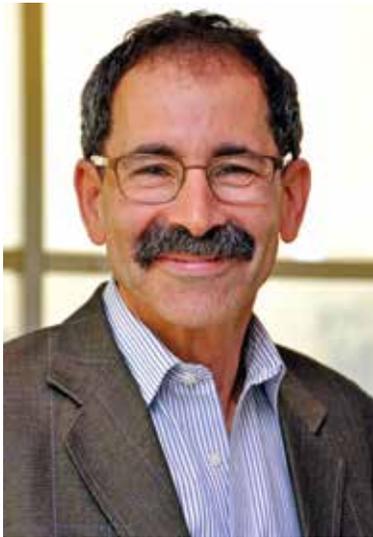
Better Buying to Promote Improved Purchasing Practices

By Tamanna Mahin

Better Buying is a dialogue and rating platform that is being created to highlight areas for improved purchasing practices. The is a platform that will come as an answer to the queries about the buying behavior of the buyers, what practices are appreciated and which areas have room for improvement. By publicly listing and highlighting best performers, the forum will spark a “race to the top,” unleashing business innovation for sustainable solutions.

The project is being conducted by Marsha Dickson, Ph.D. and Doug Cahn with technical support from the Fair Factories Clearinghouse. Marsha Dickson is Irma Ayers Professor of Human Services in the Department of Fashion and Apparel Studies at the University of Delaware and Doug Cahn is a seasoned professional in the field of labor and compliance in global supply chains. Many buyers are looking for ways to improve performance on workplace codes of conduct in their supply chains but lack the specific knowledge about

how their own practices can affect compliance. The online rating and dialogue platform will provide buyers with insight into discrete practices that can be targeted for improvement. From the platform buyers will be benefited by being able to share information publicly about the policies and procedures they have adopted to improve buying practices and posting specific actions taken in response to online ratings. Additionally, buyers will be benefited from being able to view their own ratings compared to the ratings of other buyers. Chat rooms



Doug Cahn



A manufacturer will go on the webpage www.betterbuying.org and register. Then they will state that, for instance, last year they worked with brand x and they will answer a set number of questions about the purchasing practices, relationship and how the work actually played out.

and training tools are other possible benefits for the participation.

Suppliers who have had positive experiences with buyer practices may wish to encourage and promote those practices through the Better Buying platform. They may wish to point out areas of needed improvement, in a safe space where their anonymity will be protected. A public rating and dialogue forum focused on purchasing practices will level the playing field for companies that have already made changes in their purchasing practices by providing an incentive for others to do so.

Better Buying will specifically shed light on purchasing practices so that they can be improved and factories better equipped to provide safe and fair conditions for workers. A manufacturer will go on the webpage www.betterbuying.org/ and register. Then they will state that, for instance, last year they worked with brand x and they will answer a set number of questions about the purchasing practices, relationship and how the work actually played out. The suppliers will be able to rate their buyers purchasing practices in the seven areas appended below:

- ◆ Planning and forecasting
- ◆ Design and development
- ◆ Cost and cost negotiation
- ◆ Sourcing and order placement
- ◆ Production management
- ◆ Payment and terms
- ◆ Management of purchasing practices

Additionally, suppliers will rate the quality of the relationship they have with their buyers.

Better Buying hopes to create a competition to do better because they intend to highlight the negatives.



Marsha Dickson

The intention here is not focused on shaming but the purpose is to provide a concrete way for buyers to know when they are not comparing well and to see what better looks like. “If there is no tangible way to measure what the better behavior looks like then you do not know where you are on the process of being”, said Marsha Dickson and Doug Cahn. Better Buying is testing the feasibility of the web based platform. For the pilot, which is the feasibility study that goes through in 2016, Better Buying is focusing on Bangladesh, China, Hong Kong and Cambodia. After which if everything looks good then Better Buying will look at expanding to a global platform. As for buyers they are now looking into European and USA buyers but eventually they plan to spread out globally. A wide range of apparel industry suppliers, buyers, and other stakeholders in Asia, North America and Europe are being directly consulted for their input into the key components of the dialogue and rating system.