



**Mr. M. Bhupathy**  
**Professional Wood Carving Artisan and**  
**Managing Trustee - Shilpa Trust, Bangalore**

**I come from a family of professional wood carving artisans. I learnt this art basically from my father and thereafter under the guidance of learned scholar in the field. I observed the business practices of retail agents in the community, and decided he wanted to bypass these intermediaries and create an organization that would be of more benefit for artisans. To ensure the growth and sustenance of the art we formed an association in 1986 and it was registered as SHILPA TRUST in 1992. We were a member of the Federation of**

**South India Producers Association (SIPA), and under the guidance of Dr. Panchu, Founder President-FTF-I we were introduced to the Fair Trade organization. I was attracted by its policies and principles for the up gradation of artisans and its stakeholders Fair Trade Forum – India was formed for which I am one of the founder members. We are sincerely following its principles in better and spirit.**

**Shilpa Trust provides artisans with children's educational assistance, free health check-ups, social security insurance, a loan program, skill training and product development. Being an organization formed for the upliftment of artisans both men and women without any gender discrimination SHILPA is stressing for their betterment. After our association with SIPA, we learnt about Fair Trade Movement and its principles and policies we were very much impressed by its Ten Principles like, creating opportunities for economically disadvantaged Artisans, transparency and accountability, capacity – building, payment of fair price, Gender equity, ideal working conditions, right of the children's, protection of the environment, Trade relations and decided to adopt the same in our Organization as well and are practicing the same even to-day, this is how SHILPA become one of the Fair Trade Origin. We are the proud members of FTF-I, WFTO Asia and WFTO.**

Having been very much impressed by the objectives the Fair Trade movement; we decided to adopt those principles in our Organization as well as it very much serves the objectives with which SHILPA was formed. In SHILPA we have adopted them with slight adjustment taking into the local conditions, situation, education of the artisans the environment in which they were brought up etc. always keeping in mind the cultural heritage and their traditional practices, **As my personal contribution in SHILPA, we recognize the potential of the Artisans irrespective of their economical condition or educational qualification or from the environment one comes in and encourage them to put better output and guide him to improve his economical and social conditions and status.**

**My relationship with fellow Fair Traders is very cordial. We are eager to share our experiences, practical problems, and the solutions we could find which suited to our environment. We are equally eager to know others experiences which might be useful for us. In our effort in exchanging our experiences, we have come across many experts and men of better in the field like Dr. Panchu of SIPA, Late. S S Sharmaji, a Fair Trade Grassroots Soldier, Mr. Mallikarjuna, present President of FTF-I and others and have been benefited very much by their knowledge and efforts.**

**The future of Fair Trade in India is bright. But we must ensure that it is really transparent and not guided by any personal opinion or the proactive in any organizations, or policy or the particular opinion of any one individual, however strong he / she may be equal opportunity to be given to all. We must recognize the idea form of a person without weighing his local stand. And respect the idea of the person and not from the source it comes from, if these principles are put in practices, then Fair Trade Institutions will grow and the national network will be stronger.**

