

Jayaraman and Jaya's story

Husband and wife Jayaraman and Jaya not only work at the pottery but their five-year-old daughter, Jayasri, attends the pottery's school next door.



Although the tradition in India is for the wife to move in with the husband's family when they marry, Jayaraman moved to the area where his wife was living. He joined her in working at the pottery where he paints designs on pots.

"I was a farmer before I came here," Jayaraman said. "I have been working here for five years. I earned less salary for farming. Now I am earning 4,500 rupees a month and before I was getting 2,000.

"My father and mother live 50 kms from here and I give them some money. I am also saving for my children.

"I am paying half the admission fees for my daughter's school so I am putting the 500 rupees in a deposit account in her name at the bank."

Jaya, who works in the finishing and packaging department, has been working at the pottery since 1998. When Traidcraft visited, she was expecting her second child. Jaya took three months off when her daughter was born. She did not receive any pay during that time, but her job was kept open and she retained her seniority.

"I feel good working here," she said. "When I need some money I can get an advance payment. I got 10,000 rupees without interest for medical expenses when I had my baby."

About SIPA

SIPA was established in 1985 to facilitate economic empowerment and sustainable social development for marginalised people. Based in Chennai, it offers support and back-up services in marketing, training, capacity-building, information sharing, management support and consultancy and fair trade. Traidcraft buys products from several members of the association – the most regular being SIVAM pottery based in Pondicherry.

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