



## GOODWEAVE STANDARDS COMMITTEE BIOGRAPHIES

### Manufacturers

**Lobsang Lama** is the Managing Director and Chairman of Gomang Carpet Manex and Himalayan Knots & Crafts, Nepal. Mr. Lama has over 20 years experience in the carpet industry, and has participated in National and International training and conferences including National Symposium on Labour Administration, Social Dialogue and Labour Inspection in Nepal, Training on Export Management, Quality Management in Trade in Industry: EU Market Norms and WTO Standard, represented Nepali Carpets in fairs in USA, Canada, Spain, France, Japan and UK. Mr. Lama is also the Executive Member of Bhaktapur Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Member of Bhaktapur Red Cross Society, and Executive Member of Central Carpet Industries Association. In addition to his work in the carpet industry, Mr. Lama has also directed a number of businesses in the tea and housing industries since 2006 and served as the Chairman of A.J. Wild Institute of Advance Studies in 2001. He has served on the Board of Directors of Nepal RugMark Foundation since 1996.

**Umesh Bhalla** is a partner of M/s B.B.N. Exports, having worked in the carpet industry of India and Nepal since 1975. He holds a B.sc from the Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar and has advanced training in Wool Mark from the International Wool Secretariat Mumbai in 1977. In addition to his work in the Carpet Export business, Mr. Bhalla deals in dyes, chemicals, dyeing, washing and yarn making machines and has provided services to many dyeing and spinning units in India and Nepal. He has traveled extensively to the US, UK, Germany, Canada, Russia, Brazil, South Africa and Nepal as part of his work in the promotion of Indian Carpets

### Importers/Retailers

**Caroline Kent** is operations manager for The Rug Company, a London-based company founded in 1997 with shops around the globe offering handmade, contemporary and traditional rugs and wall hangings. As well as an experienced in-house design team, The Rug Company is known not just for its experienced in-house design team, but also for working with some of the most distinguished and sought-after designers offering exceptional quality and materials. The Rug Company is a current GoodWeave licensee, importing certified rugs from Nepal and India, with retail operations in 10 countries worldwide including stores in London, New York and Los Angeles.

<http://www.therugcompany.info>

**Walter Chapin** is the President and Co-founder of Company C, Inc., an emerging home furnishings brand based in Concord, New Hampshire. Company C is a current GoodWeave licensee and Marketing Partner. Celebrating 15 years, the company is

known for its decorative area rugs as well as products such as pillows, bedding, throws and fabrics. Mr. Chapin's experience is in managing growth and leading the organization based on founding principles, with a focus on strategic planning and business development. He established the company's sourcing relationships, which are primarily based in India and China. He is on the board of directors of the Chamber of Commerce, and he is a member of the Vested For Growth CEO network. He holds an MBA from the UNH's Whittemore School of Business and Economics, and a BA in Economics from St. Michael's College. <http://www.companyc.com>

## **Independent Experts**

**Venkat Reddy** is the National Convenor of MV Foundation, India, which works towards the abolition of child labor in all its forms and the mainstreaming of formal schooling for all children. Over the past decade, the organization has built alliances with and provided technical capacity-building support to non-governmental organizations and governments in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Assam, as well as Nepal and Morocco. MV Foundation today works in more than 6,000 villages – including those in some of the most challenging areas in terms of HDI – and more than 300,000 children have been brought from work and enrolled into schools under Mr. Reddy's leadership. The Foundation has also initiated programs related to right to health and nutrition of children below 6 yrs of age, rights of adolescent girls and right to safe motherhood.

**Gerard J.B. Oonk** is director of the India Committee of The Netherlands (ICN), as well as spokesperson and lobbyist for the Dutch CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) Platform consisting of NGOs and trade unions. ICN is an independent human rights advocacy and campaigning organization in solidarity with the oppressed in India ([www.indianet.nl](http://www.indianet.nl)). During the past fifteen years Mr. Oonk has been closely involved in issues including child labor, education, labor rights and corporate social responsibility in sectors such as garments, carpets, sporting goods, cotton and mining. Much of the work on child labor was in close co-operation with the Global March Against Child Labour and its Indian affiliate SACCS/BBA. Presently ICN is partner in the international campaign 'Stop Child Labour – School is the Best Place to Work' ([www.stopchildlabour.eu](http://www.stopchildlabour.eu)). Mr. Oonk is responsible for policy proposals for the campaign, including on the relation between child labor and education and the (potential) role of development co-operation, trade relations and the corporate sector. As a lobbyist for the Dutch CSR Platform, Mr. Oonk also works on general CSR policy issues such as business and human rights, fair public procurement, reporting, corporate governance, direct foreign liability and CSR and the OECD Guidelines for (multinational) companies. Gerard Oonk is coordinator of the Dalit Network Netherlands (DNN), consisting of Cordaid, ICCO, PeopleOnAMission, Justitia et Pax, and ICN and co-chair of the International Dalit Solidarity Network ([www.idsn.org](http://www.idsn.org)) working against discrimination based on work and descent (with a focus on caste-based discrimination) of around 260 million people worldwide.

**Lee Swepston** is an international labor standards expert with over three decades' experience, including most recently as the Senior Adviser on Human Rights of the

International Labour Office (ILO) in Geneva. After working for the International Commission of Jurists, he joined the ILO in 1973, in the International Labour Standards Department. He has served as Regional Adviser on International Labour Standards in English-speaking Africa and in the Caribbean, Chief of the Equality and Employment Branch, and Human Rights Coordinator of the ILO. Mr. Swepston represented ILO in relations with international organizations on human rights concerns, including before UN treaty bodies, served as Chief of delegation at the Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Council, and served as the Director-General's deputy representative on several international Committees on labor rights. Currently Mr. Swepston serves as a consultant to ILO on the development of a number of international instruments and country programs, as well as to the Government of Taiwan on international labor standards. He has also recently worked to develop guidance for the oil and gas industry on indigenous and tribal peoples and represented the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission on the review of Bangladesh before the United Nations Human Rights Council. Mr. Swepston has written numerous books and articles on human rights and ILO standards, child labor, freedom of association, discrimination, migrant workers and indigenous and tribal peoples.

**David Hircock** is the advisor on natural resources to the Estee Lauder Companies, Inc., which recently acquired Aveda, and is an expert on environmental issues related to supply chains. He has worked extensively internationally, including in Nepal, in areas of fair and equitable trade and conservation, specializing in supply chain of natural resources. Mr. Hircock is an Adjunct Professor of Socio-Ethnopharmacognosy at Drexel University's School of Public Health. He is also a member of the Public and Private Alliance for Certification and Sustainable Marketing of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP), a project in Nepal that has increased incomes and employment for Nepal's NTFP producers and promoted sustainable resource management. He is a member of an Advisory Panel of the Swiss Government to design a management tool for the Convention on Biological Biodiversity. He has worked with international scientific and agricultural research stations in the UK, India and South Africa. He works closely with several departments of the United Nations promoting entrepreneurship amongst indigenous and traditional peoples, linked to equitable business and cultural preservation. <http://www.centifolia-grasse.net/assets/files/DavidHircock.pdf> - <http://www.drexel.edu/CNHP/cit/faculty.asp>

### **Internal – RMI Members**

**Samantha Towle** joined GoodWeave as the Director of the UK office in 2006. She has been working in the field of CSR for over fifteen years in various roles including consultancy. She has undertaken work for a wide range of organizations, both corporate and non-profit. Her previous roles include: Director of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for First & 42nd, director of EQ Management, a group of four associates which she co founded in 1998, and International Head of Environmental Audit for The Body Shop International – working as part of Anita Roddick's award winning Ethical Audit team. Ms. Towle is a qualified lawyer and has an MSc in European Environmental Policy and Regulation.

**Ritu Tyagi** is the director of programmes for GoodWeave in India. Her primary responsibilities include building capacity for operations in India and establishing new initiatives for the benefit of children and families in carpet weaving areas. She has extensive experience working with various international garment and home furnishing brands in implementing their Codes of Conduct in order to improve social and environmental standards in their supply chain. Her familiarity with various international standards such as SA8000, OHSAS and ISO 14000 stems from auditing experience of more than 300 manufacturing setups in exporting countries including India, China, Bangladesh, Egypt, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Maldives, Mauritius and Sri Lanka.

**Rita Godfrey** is an independent consultant in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility with over 15 years experience, since 1999 working in the area of Social and Ethical Accounting, Auditing and Reporting. She has work for a wide range of organizations, both corporate and non-profit. Previously, Ms. Godfrey was Head of Supplier Ethical Audit for The Body Shop International, working within the Ethical Audit team. During this time she developed the global supplier ethical audit program and with the team developed the integrated environmental and social reporting techniques and company-wide internal management policies and systems. She also acted as a corporate advisor on the development of supplier evaluation and working conditions standards (SA8000) and Ethical Trading Initiative Best Practice, and now specializes in the development of sustainable supply chain management and Sustainability Report assurance. She is also an experienced auditor and an IRCA Certified Sustainability Assurance Practitioner and a practitioner member of Accountability (Institute of Social and Ethical Accounting, Auditing and Reporting). As a principal technical expert behind the GoodWeave Standard development work to date, Ms. Godfrey serves on the Committee as a non-voting member on behalf of the RMI standard setting system.