



Seeing a bigger picture!



Champa Dharma Bansode, aged 62 years, a victim of HIV for almost 30 years now thanks Shelter Associates whole heartedly for their One Home One Toilet Scheme. She instantly agreed when approached by Shelter Associates to build a toilet in her house, something that was very different and an alien concept among the slum dwellers, which only one roomed and did not have enough space for free mobility. Being widowed, having lost her son and getting her daughter married off, she fights her terminal disease alone. She sustains on a monthly earning of Rs.1000 as a domestic help, majority part of which is spent behind her treatment. Despite her monetary hardships she agreed upon building a toilet in her one-roomed house. She sold off her jewellery and with some aid received from Shelter Associates managed to pay the labor charges for the construction of the toilet. “Shelter Associates has helped me overcome the hardships I used to face of travelling to the far off community toilets. The smell was so unbearable that I could not even use them sometimes. The medicines often made me so weak that there were instances where I have fallen down unconscious on the ground on my way to the community toilets and there was no one to pick me up or even give me water. But I thank Shelter Associates. They have made my life easier, with providing me financial aid and support. Now whenever I want to use the toilet all I have to do is get up and walk just a few feet and I am there. I do not worry about the toilet being unhygienic or even having to stand in long queues or worry walking long distances.”



Champa Bansode

Some of the dwellers said that they had received funds from the PCMC to build a toilet at their house. While they received the first installment, half of the promised amount, it was of no use as they never received the second installment. Even if the toilets were built it did not have tiles or doors or was not even connected to the drainage lines. Leaving them with no option but to head towards the railway tracks in the morning. This is the most common situation of most residents of Anand Nagar Slum.

The community toilets built by PCMC remains blocked and often during monsoons one can see the sewage flowing outside and flooding nearby areas, rendering them useless.

ANANDNAGAR, one of the largest slums within PCMC. A slum spread over an area of about 56,831 sq mt. Carrying a population of about 10,080 people living in a total of 2017 houses. But as per data collected in 2016 only 37 houses have their own toilets. What do the other 1980 households do? Well, they either engage in open defecation, or use the unhygienic community toilets or shared toilets.



Open Defecation spots near railway lines

Here is where Shelter Associates steps into picture. A civil society organization aimed at improving the living conditions of the urban poor, conducted a survey of Anand Nagar and decided that the model of Swachh Bharat needed to be tweaked to achieve the target of making the slum open defecation free and to promote the concept of One Home One Toilet.

The headstrong aim of Shelter Associates has brought about change among most dwellers of Anand Nagar slum. Completing about 200 agreements, construction of toilets in 5 households, ongoing construction of 25 toilets and 20 households who have been given the materials to start their construction work, Shelter Associates have started speeding towards changing the mindset of the slum dwellers and the scenario of the slum.

However getting the residents to opt for the OHOT model was not an easy task, most complained about the lack of space in their houses, monetary difficulties, most could not even imagine having a toilet in the house in the place where they cook, eat and take rest, some feared that the drains would choke causing a mess during monsoons.



Condition of CTB in Anand nagar

But Shelter Associates made sure that the residents saw a bigger picture. Most agreed. The distance between their house's and the community toilets, the dilapidated and unhygienic conditions, safety issues and ease of using toilet facilities played an upper hand and some households quickly agreed.



Children helping Champa to carry the distributed materials to her home

Shivam, a 10 year old said that, "I no longer have to go to my chacha's place to use his toilet. Now I have my own."

Just like Shivam and Champa many more residents of Anand Nagar slum are opting for building a toilet in their houses which reduce their hardships and build towards a healthy and an economical future for them.



Champa's completed toilet

