



Together we CAN!

Rima Bharadwaj has been a resident of Bhimnagar in Panvel for the last 12 years. She is 29 years old and stays with her family. She lost her husband about 4 years ago and since then she has had to take care of her family which includes her 4 children; of which 2 are sons and 2 are daughters. They are all under 15 years of age and only 1 daughter out of them goes to school and is studying in her 1st grade while the rest have opted out of school in their primary and now do not go to school.

Owing to her financial status, she cannot afford to get her children educated and unfortunately she is the only earning member in the family. She sells flowers and earns around Rs. 4000 - Rs. 5000 on a monthly basis. The house that she lives in is only 10' by 15' in size. It is a house constructed with the help of temporary construction materials, having a partial tin and partial tarpaulin roof. The flooring is also uneven. Such is the state of her house and their living conditions.

However surprising it may sound, the reality is that there has been no toilet facility in the settlement or even in its vicinity. The people would resort to defecating in the forest areas around the settlement. There is one 'Sulabh Shouchalaya' but that is located far away and cannot be accessed on a daily basis. Very recently, they all came up with a temporary common toilet facility. Rima and her kids have had to undergo so many challenges around addressing this basic need.

In order to avoid going out in the night to defecate in the open, she and her kids would skip meals and even in the mornings they would be apprehensive. Rima would need to accompany her kids everytime they would want to defecate. This was proving to be very unhygienic, unsafe and inconvenient for Rima and her kids. Her only wish was to have access to a proper community toilet block if not a household toilet. Due to her financial crunch, she was sure she would never afford to construct a household toilet, but as luck may have it, Shelter Associates came to her rescue. She started saving Rs 10-12 everyday towards getting this toilet constructed under SA's OHOT initiative and now as her toilet almost stands ready, she looks forward to putting it to use!



Above: Rima in her house
Below: Rima's household toilet

SAFETY



DIGNITY



EMPOWERMENT



SANITATION

