



Simplifying the needs of our future generation

Shilpa Shinde, coming from a reasonably well-off family in Parabhani was married to a casual labourer residing along with his parents in Mahatma Phule Nagar slum in Pune. A thought of disappointment would often nudge Shilpa and she would blame her parents for getting her married to a casual labourer who was financially weak and couldn't afford to provide a two-time meal to his family. Even after such circumstances, Shilpa remained sincere and tried her level best to adjust to all kinds of inconveniences and shortages in life and managed the house through the meagre earnings of her husband.

Visiting the community toilet on a daily basis was the most awkward experience for Shilpa. The dream of having a toilet at home would always stay in her thoughts. When she expressed this wish to her husband, he brushed it aside as an unaffordable venture!

Within 2 months of her marriage she was pregnant with her first child. Walking to community toilet was an embarrassing experience for Shilpa during pregnancy and even after delivery. When Shilpa's child became two and a half years old, Shilpa was pregnant with her second child. She was in her ninth month. Taking care of her hygiene along with nurturing her child became very troublesome for Shilpa.

One fine day she came to know about commencement of Shelter Associates' One Home One Toilet project in their slum. She rushed to meet the team and pleaded for support to construct individual toilet at her home. But Alas! On visiting her house SA team found it too small to build a toilet inside. Shilpa suggested on building it in the tin shade outside the house which was her makeshift bathroom. SA was helpless as building a toilet outside the house was not allowed!

Hearing this, disappointed Shilpa almost burst into tears! She begged profusely in front of SA team for allowing her to build a toilet outside the house! Understanding her plight, senior officials of SA visited the site and approved the place of tin shade for building a toilet. SA promptly delivered the building material to Shilpa's house. Shilpa was overjoyed with the thought of getting a toilet of her own. Shilpa's husband who was a mason along with his parents started constructing the toilet earnestly withstanding the strong opposition from neighbours.

Another good incident that occurred was Shilpa's younger sister who happened to visit her after the completion of toilet was overwhelmed on finding a toilet at her sister's house! She spontaneous remarked, "Now I can visit Shilpa didi as often as I wish!" Having said so, she took admission in the nearby school and decided to pursue her further studies staying at her sister's house.

This decision has made way to a comfortable living for the forthcoming generation at the Shinde house. The joy and happiness which is visible on the faces of all the family members gave real contentment for Shelter Associates team for which they always strive.



Shilpa Shinde and her home toilet

