



# An Independent Toilet: An Asset to be thankful for!

Hasinabi Shaikh hails from Borale, Mangalvedha at Solapur. She moved to Vidyanagar in Pimpri Chinchwad and has been living there for many decades. Hasinabai's husband passed away many years back and she was the sole bread earner of the family. With tremendous efforts and hard work she raised her 4 children. Now at the age of 70, her son and one daughter are married and living their own lives. However all these years, their financial condition being poor and her health deteriorating, her other 2 daughters remained unmarried. They work at different places to earn money for the family. In recent years one of her daughters, Tairabai started suffering from spinal cord problems and she had to leave work. All the financial responsibility fell on Khairunisa, her other daughter. She works tirelessly all day long and they barely manage to fulfil their basic requirements.

Adding complication to the already difficult condition is another burden: Sanitation woes. The women in the house do not have a toilet and they have to walk very far to the community toilet. It also costs them Rs. 2 per visit. Hasinabai with her age and health related issues finds it very tough to make such long walks only to visit the unhygienic, unclean toilets. One day she twisted her ankle on her way to the toilet. After the accident she now needs the assistance of her daughter to walk to the toilet. The long walks, unhealthy conditions and safety concerns at the community toilet, and the inconvenience faced by their ageing mother, made them feel the need of having their own toilet. They knew their health and hygiene would be affected someday due to the prevalent conditions. Realizing that the problems might get worse in the future the daughters decided that they must invest in a personal toilet but getting financial help was the worry.

They then heard about the initiative undertaken by Shelter Associates who would provide them with free material for toilet construction and they soon would have a toilet for themselves. They took a small loan to facilitate the construction.

The toilet cost them Rs.10,000 but they do not think this as a burden on their financial condition, nor do they feel stressed about their expenditure. They think that it is a timely and prudent investment. Teary eyed, Hasinabi thanked *Shelter Associates* for their assistance and *Shelter Associates* said: *"Over time we will repay our loans, but today we have a toilet for which we are extremely grateful. We no longer have to go to the unclean community toilets and risk our safety and hygiene."*



*One Home, One toilet;  
Toilet as a means to a dignified life*

