



Where there is a will, there is a way...

In Miraj, Sangali, Mangal Magdum lives with her family of 7, in utmost poverty. She works as a casual labourer and earns what little money she can from time to time. Mangal's family used to pay to use the CTB available outside the settlement. The cost to use the CTB was steep, Rs. 40 per month for the family and an additional cost of Rs. 3 per use per person for guests. At times when it was not possible to use the CTB, they defecated in the open.

Shelter Associate's intervention started in her settlement with an educating talk regarding sanitation and hygiene. Despite being uneducated, Mangal was a conscious lady. She recognised the importance of good sanitation practice. Mangal had a strong desire to build an individual toilet in her home but she was incapable of paying the contribution to Shelter due to her poverty. Her younger son was a habitual drinker and would spend a lot of money daily on alcohol. He selfishly refused to spend money on building an individual toilet.

Mangal with her older son outside their newly built toilet.



After much debate, he told her she could build a toilet but he would not spend money for it.

She quickly signed an agreement with us to build a toilet. She signed the document and hurriedly went away only to return after 10 minutes with the contribution money clutched in her hand. Such was her zeal that as soon as she signed the document, she went to keep her mangalsutra as mortgage with a neighbour to pay her share.

She told us that she planned on hiding this information from her egotistical son to avoid being beaten by him. She would tell him that her daughter in law lent her the money. Her older son, who is a mason by profession, helped her build her toilet. He lived with his family away from his mother.

And so, like that Mangal, an ordinary woman exhibited extraordinary courage and built an individual toilet for her family. Every day women in India wait for a little help that can enable to take courageous steps for bettering their lives and the lives around them.

Mangal's son helping her build a toilet.

