



Shelter
associates

A toilet is more important than gold and jewelry

In the settlement of Prem Nagar, Shelter Associates is providing material to more than 100 households to build individual toilets inside their homes. Mrs. Ratnamala Bansode explains why she thinks that a toilet is more important than gold and jewelry.

The 50 year old Mrs. Ratnamala Bansode and her husband have recently moved back to Prem Nagar to the 175 square foot house they own, following a 4 year stay in their son's flat in Pune.

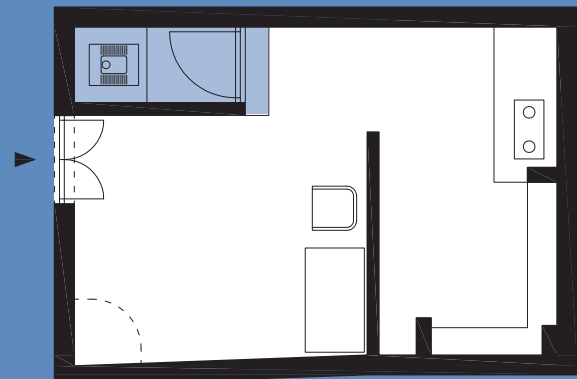
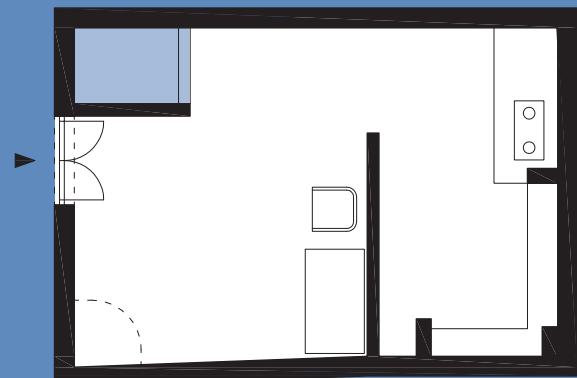
Before moving out of Prem Nagar, Mrs. Bansode was forced to resort to open defecation, due to unhygienic states of the Community Toilet Blocks in her neighborhood. She stated that she felt very unsafe going in the open and she used to eat less in the evening in order to avoid having to leave her house at night to defecate. When she came back to the settlement, she immediately took the opportunity Shelter Associates offered to build an individual toilet inside her house.

With Shelter Associates' scheme, material needed to construct an individual toilet is delivered to each household for free; however, it is each household's responsibility to ensure the toilet is constructed within a short period of time. In order to pay for the masonry work, which cost her Rs. 4,420 in total, Mrs. Bansode had to sell a necklace for Rs. 6,000. In her eyes, indeed, a toilet is more important than gold and jewelry. She also reported that her neighbors helped her financially by feeding her for three days.

If she had the money to make other changes and improvements to her home, she would renovate the roof. The metal sheet roof has holes, which becomes a big problem during the rainy season.



Mrs. Bansode's new toilet and bathroom (above). The plans below show her house before and after Shelter Associates' intervention and the location of the bathroom and combined bathroom/ toilet.



0 5 ft

SANITATION



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