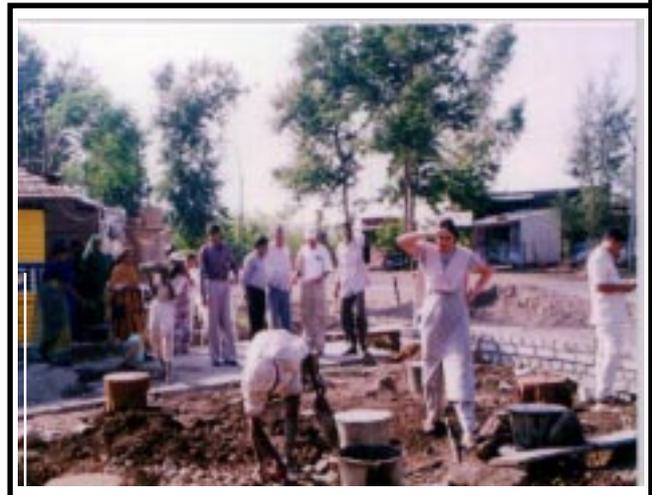# CONSTRUCTION BEGINS AT SANGLIWADI

There has been tremendous enthusiasm in Sangalwadi ever since the Bhumi-Pujan ceremony. A few visits to **Shiv Sadan's** workshop were organised to help them understand the nature of construction which was a little unusual- prefab elements all assembled on site using cranes. They saw panels of solid concrete beams cured in large tanks- a sight which they were not familiar with. But they understood that this was going to be very strong and good quality work- all in RCC.

As the soil was black cotton it was imperative to drive piles for a stable foundation. The photo shows a retaining wall which was constructed to contain the filling for plinth construction. This was constructed using labour from the community as most of them are bigaris i.e. construction labourers.

Discussion on site regarding height of the retaining wall

This photograph shows the piles at various stages. Some were cast just that morning. As the construction activity had started at peak of summer there were water problems. The intermittent supply from the neighbouring taps was not adequate. So the **SMKMC** had arranged to send tankers every two days and the water was stored in large bins. However the blazing sun ensured that the water evaporated fast, leaving the fresh concrete dry and white. When Shelter visited the site it was decided that all the piles would be covered with wet gunny sacks and this would retard rapid evaporation. The women enthusiastically brought out their sacks and buckets of water and soon we had all pile foundation covered with soaking sacks!

Inspecting the freshly cast pile foundations

These are long thick concrete beams which are literally being assembled by a crane on site. For the people it was high technology in their settlement which till then even lacked electricity. They have extended full cooperation to Shiv Sadan and this has led to a very conducive relationship between all the actors.

Plinth beams being assembled on site