



Shelter Associates Director, Pratima Joshi, Receives the Ashoka Social Entrepreneurs for the Public Fellowship Award - January 2007

2007. Shelter Associates Director, Pratima Joshi, was recently present at the Infosys campus in Bangalore to be honoured for her 2005 award as an Ashoka Indian Fellow. Joshi was among the 55 Asian fellows who were awarded. She was selected for her work as a social entrepreneur by the Ashoka Foundation that was started by William Drayton 25 years ago.

The Ashoka Social Entrepreneurs for the Public Award helps select social innovators to get started and succeed through their lifetimes to cause change in society. With its head office in Washington DC, the Foundation has selected 1,800 fellows from all over the world in the last 25 years. India has about 300 fellows in all. The foundation's theory is that modest investments in individuals yield extraordinary results in areas of social concern. The Ashoka Award's 25th Anniversary publication, "People and Solutions: Introducing Social Entrepreneurs and their Innovative Ideas" pays regard to Pratima in this way:

Pratima is working toward the recognition of slum dwellers as legitimate city residents with rights to basic public services. An architect, Pratima is using her expertise to encourage urban planners and officials to address the lack of attention paid to slums in city development plans. By mobilizing slum youth to collect data and GIS technology, Pratima is systematically generating and analyzing essential information on slum demographics. With GIS, Pratima has created a comprehensive data collection process, building a database of information on slum communities. Her database synthesizes information for each slum from socio-economic household census and settlement level surveys to settlement mapping. The data is collected, analyzed and presented using GIS software. This detailed information can then be used by local and state governments to replace assumptions about how to deal with slum dwellers with real figures and plans, and thus help them lobby the national government for corresponding fund allocations.

Through her work with Shelter Associates, Pratima is advocating for the poor and putting pressure on public officials, for example, to resettle communities in flood-prone areas to safer locations. She is also facilitating the effective use of data by local governments to negotiate budgets from the national government, coordinate city development plans, and design utilities that are truly beneficial to slum inhabitants. Underlying all these efforts is Pratima's use of concrete data to dissipate stereotypes about slum dwellers and spread awareness of them as

vibrant members of the city.

Please go [www.](#) for the full article about Pratima's award in "Moving the Backward Forward" from Pune Times/The Indian Express, Monday, January 29,