

officials have acknowledged that NGOs do have specific strengths that are needed to implement successful drinking water initiatives and recognise that to co-opt NGOs would be unnecessary. The reason that these partnerships exist is to take advantage of the unique qualities of each actor and certain key senior officials within the GWSSB have understood this.

Although co-optation of NGOs in the drinking water sector in Gujarat is not a common phenomenon, other weaknesses do exist within NGO-state collaborations. One of the most obvious is that the personal attitudes of senior officials with the Water Board greatly affect how much of a role NGOs play in policy making. The current secretary of the GWSSB, being very open to NGOs, has developed a closer relationship with some of them. However, in the future, when other secretaries are hired no one can be sure of how their personal opinions will affect NGOs role in policymaking in the drinking water sector. Moreover, many senior government officials who are more technically aware do not understand the importance of women's participation to successful drinking water schemes.

Furthermore, the GWSSB was very particular about which NGOs they worked with and invested time and money in. Large, more well-known NGOs in the drinking water sector are the ones who receive more support from the GWSSB. The smaller, rural more local NGOs still do not get the opportunity to influence policy or express their views on alternative drinking water initiatives to the Water Board. The GWSSB should first begin to research the efficiency of these local NGOs and then proceed to open lines of communication with the ones that have made unique contributions to rural communities.

Currently, the impact of PRAVAH on alleviating drinking water problems in Gujarat has been minimal. Its impact on NGO-state relations however has been encouraging. PRAVAH has maintained a dialogue with the GWSSB and it has also begun to legitimize the issue of women's rights to drinking water. Bringing NGOs and the state together has slowly changed current policies by opening up the idea of alternative drinking water schemes. This has demonstrated the potential effectiveness of good governance between these two actors. In the next two years, if PRAVAH were to become more effective as a network, it could make an even stronger impact on levels of democratic governance between the state and NGOs as well as slowly bring rural women leaders within the policy-making arena.