

Dhruti was born and raised in Gujarat, India, a state on the western coast of India where the Bhungroo Irrigation technology project is located. Dhruti describes her moral foundation to be influenced by both religion and ethics. Her father, a retired English professor at a university in Gujarat, was a firm believer in Gandhi's ideas, and this has influenced Dhruti in similar ways. She was born into a religious family that practices Hinduism, and thus has a strong faith-based foundation. However, in middle school, her foundation began to change when she took a mandatory class in ethics. This changed her way of thinking about religion and morals and as a result, Dhruti now describes herself to be more of a spiritual person than religious.

At the time Dhruti was graduating from high school, she was certain she wanted to go into engineering, and therefore chose environmental engineering. She earned her Bachelor of Engineering in environmental engineering from Rutgers University, and went on to earn her Master of Science in environmental engineering. Since 1995, Dhruti has been working in the United States, mainly in the pharmaceutical and environmental engineering industry. She is a health, safety, and environmental professional working in the private sector. Her field encompasses risk management, health and safety, and her most current role as a global operations support for health safety, environment, and security. Dhruti feels satisfaction and gratification from her job by working in the health and safety field because it has a tangible impact on the quality of life, its employees, and for the people in general.

Dhruti was a translator for Professor Christoff and Jamie Sommer when they traveled to Gujarat to interview the local women for their research project. She was very interested in the project, and is also friends with Trupti Jain, the founder and director of Naireeta Services. Dhruti thought that it would be a great opportunity to help Trupti and Professor Christoff, and also happened to be planning to travel back to India anyway. Thus, Dhruti describes the decision to interpret for Professor Christoff and Jamie as a “no brainer to help them out.”

Dhruti learned a lot from her experience as a translator and speaking to the people in the local villages. The first thing she took from the experience of translating is that there are a lot of people who are trying to do a lot more good for the world by helping other people outside of their circle of friends and family. There are people who are trying to make a difference by enabling others to make their lives a little better than what it is. Second, she learned a lot from Peggy and Jamie about being flexible and patient. The project also gave her the opportunity to learn and understand the means to help others out.

When she came back to the United States, the experience in India definitely made a difference in her choices related to sustainability, as it made her aware of supporting the sustainable option when she could. Even though she is not very vocal within her friends and family about the issues of sustainability and the challenges that it would bring, she has noticed that she is more assertive than before she joined

Professor Christoff's project. Now, if she sees an opportunity where she can plug in the importance of sustainability and some efforts that can be taken, she will do that.

Although Dhruti cannot say how it impacted the local people because she has not gone back to Gujarat since the project, for her, it was clearly a very touching and emotional experience. She had never known poverty firsthand, and she had never seen poverty so close-up. Dhruti describes how she was aware of poverty, but the project had brought it very close to her, and it still bothers her to this day.

