



What are LSOs?

LSOs or Local Support Organisations are central to the 'Social Mobilisation' approach of the Rural Support Programmes (RSPs). In a bid to reduce poverty and empower marginalised people (especially women), the RSPs under SUCCESS, mobilise rural women into a three-tiered structure, which consists of Community Organisations (COs) - neighbourhood level community groups, Village Organisations (VOs) - village level federations of COs, and LSOs - union council level federations of VOs. LSOs are able to carry out community-led development at a much greater level due to the advantage they gain from numbers. As the tertiary tier, LSOs are also uniquely able to develop linkages with government and non-government organisations, donor agencies and the private sector.

LSO Initiatives

LSO SOONHAN, KAMBER SHAHDADKOT

<p>District</p>  <p>Kamber Shahdadkot</p>	<p>Union Council</p>  <p>Seelra</p>	<p>Date of Formation</p>  <p>Dec 12 2012</p>	<p>Total Households in Union Council</p>  <p>5,133</p>	<p>Organised Households</p>  <p>3,044</p>
<p>Coverage</p>  <p>59%</p>	<p>Number of Community Organisations (COs)</p>  <p>138 <small>(all women's)</small></p>	<p>Number of Village Organisations (VOs)</p>  <p>14 <small>(all women's)</small></p>	<p>Number of General Body Members</p>  <p>28 <small>(all women)</small></p>	<p>Number of Executive Committee Members</p>  <p>5 <small>(all women)</small></p>

(LSO Profile as of December 12, 2019)

LSO Soonhan, from District Kamber Shahdadkot was formed in December 2019 by 3,044 member households organised in 138 COs and 14 VO. Women leaders of LSO Soonhan are planning and executing development activities both on self-help basis as well as in collaboration with government agencies. EU-funded SUCCESS programme is empowering rural women in Sindh through realising the power they gain from collective action. The organised women now are gaining awareness about their rights and making the service providers accountable and also taking self-initiatives to improve their lives.



Provision of Clean Drinking Water Supply

Availability of potable water is a fundamental health problem in almost all rural areas of the Sindh Province. According to reports issued by various organisations, District Kamber Shahdadkot falls in the category of the "Worst Situation Districts" in terms of availability of safe drinking water. The community members of UC Seelra also face the same problem. Before getting organised in COs, VOs and LSO under the EU-funded SUCCESS programme, they had no idea as to how they can play a part to resolve their collective development issues. However, when the women of the UC were organised, they started discussing development issues in their meetings. During these meetings, the members identified lack of clean drinking water as a basic problem. The issue was discussed in a monthly meeting of

LSO Soonhan and they decided to raise the issue with the UC Chairman. The women leaders of the LSO went to visit Mr. Noor Ahmed Brohi, the UC Chairman, at his office. LSO leaders briefed the UC Chairman about their LSO and asked for his support to resolve the problem of potable water in their area. The UC Chairman was pleased to see women organised in community organisations to resolve the collective problems of their members. Hence, the Chairman offered to fund the installation of hand pumps for the provision of clean drinking water. He offered the LSO leaders to identify five locations to install these hand pumps where the community is ready to do the borework on their own as he could only provide the hand pumps machines and required materials.





The LSO discussed the matter in its meeting and finalised names of five locations in three villages where the hand pumps were to be installed. The UC Chairman provided all the material required in installing hand pumps in all five locations while the boring was done by the villagers on their own. Currently, two hand pumps are installed in village Sahib Khan Lashari for 16 families, two in village Soomra Muhalla for 13 families and one in village Benazeerabad for 17 families. All hand pumps are installed at places which are easily accessible for all. The UC Chairman showed his willingness to install more hand pumps and had asked the LSO to identify the deserving villages. The Local Support Organisations leaders have constructed their office on self-help basis and have planned to invite the UC Chairman as the Chief Guest on the opening ceremony of the he will not only announce the installation of more hand pumps but will also affirm his support to the LSO giving the community access to maximum resources and services from the UC office. The women of these villages are very happy as they now have easy access to clean water. Earlier, only a few well-off families had hand pumps in their courtyards, and women from poor families had to beg for water from them on daily basis.

Promoting Education for Children

Under the EU supported SUCCESS programme, the Community Resource Persons (CRPs) conduct awareness raising sessions on various social issues, including education. These awareness sessions were instrumental in widening the LSO members' views on the importance of education of their children. Therefore, the LSO leaders now motivate their members to send all school aged girls and boys to schools. As a result of their collective efforts, 171 boys and 129 girls have been enrolled in various schools of UC Seerla.

Miss Parveen, the Chairperson of LSO Soohan visits Government schools, meets the school authorities and ensures regular attendance of both teachers and students. She observed that female students' attendance is decreasing in the Government Middle School, Sahib Khan Lashari. Upon inquiry, it came to her knowledge that the toilets of the school were reconstructed and the contractor had left them incomplete. Therefore, girl students had great difficulties and they were leaving the school out of frustration. She contacted the contractor and introduced the LSO and her roles and responsibilities within its ambit. She requested him to complete the washrooms as soon as possible. She warned that otherwise, she will register an official complaint with higher authorities against him. The contractor assured her that the work will be completed within three days. As such, the remaining work started the next day and was completed within days. Now, two newly constructed toilets are functional in the school and a separate is available for girl students. The girls who stopped attending the school resumed their classes.



Promoting Health of Members

The LSO leaders guide and support their members in health related matters as well. One such example is arrangement of a health camp at their UC for Typhoid vaccination. Sindh province is the centre of an ongoing extensively drug-resistant (XDR) typhoid outbreak that began in November 2016. Typhoid vaccine can prevent the disease. Pakistan became the first country in the world to introduce the World Health Organization (WHO)-recommended typhoid conjugate vaccine (TCV) into its routine immunisation programme. It is the first typhoid vaccine that can be given to children as young as 6 months of age and confers longer term protection against typhoid. The government of Pakistan launched the vaccine introduction with a campaign in Sindh during November 18-30, 2019 targeting 10 million children aged 9 months to 15 years old in urban areas of Sindh. On the advice of the LSO leaders, awareness sessions were delivered in COs and VO meetings about the typhoid vaccination camp. Over 350 plus children were taken to facility points of Shahdadt city for vaccination purposes.

The vaccination campaign was focused on urban areas, therefore, the vaccination camps were located in Shahdadt city. Since UC Seerla is located next to Shahdadt city, the LSO leaders decided to vaccinate maximum children from their UC. However, it was difficult to motivate poor people to take their children to the city for vaccination. Therefore, the women LSO leaders approached the vaccination team and offered to organise a day long camp at their union council. The LSO leaders assured the health team to provide their full support. The government health team agreed to this offer and sent their vaccinators to the camp site along with medical supplies. The vaccination camp was arranged at Zareen Khan Public School run by Sindh Education Foundation. The health team provided awareness sessions to the participants about typhoid and the benefits of vaccination of their children as a preventive measure. As a result of this good effort, around 91 girls and 83 boys received typhoid vaccine.

The Government of Pakistan had established Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) in 1976 to ensure that infants/children and mothers have access to routinely recommended vaccines. However, in rural areas, most people still do not vaccinate mothers and children due to misperceptions about vaccination. After the awareness sessions of CRPs about vaccination, the misperceptions of majority of members were cleared. Mothers have started to get their children vaccinated to avoid preventable diseases. The LSO leaders have established good working relationships with the Government Health Department and provide their full support for 100% coverage in their UC area. Some 377 mothers and 513 children have been vaccinated with their efforts.



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