

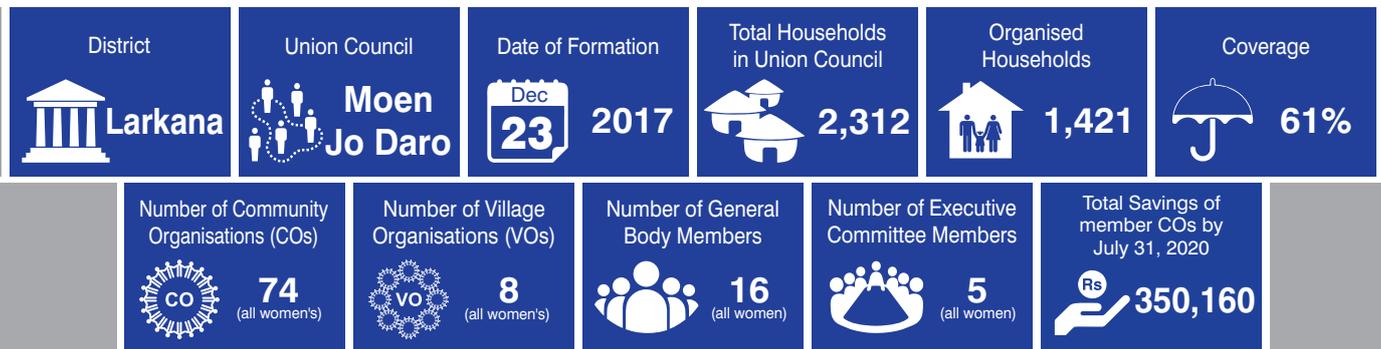


### What are LSOs?

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

### Moen Jo Daro, Local Support Organisation



(LSO Profile as of July 31, 2020)

LSO Moen jo Daro, from District Larkana, was formed on 23rd December 2017, by 1,421 member households organised into 74 COs and 8 VOs. Women leaders of LSO Moen Jo Daro are planning and implementing development activities both on a self-help basis as well as in collaboration with government agencies. The EU-funded SUCCESS programme is empowering rural women of Sindh by realising their inner capacities and strength of unity. Organised women are now gaining awareness about their rights, making the service providers accountable, and also taking initiatives to improve their lives.

### Response to COVID-19

During the lockdown imposed by the Government to prevent the spread of COVID-19, many people lost their livelihoods and could not provide bread for their family members, even once every day. In such a situation, the LSO leaders came forward and started supporting its members. The women leaders of the LSO approached the representatives of local government, civil society organisations, and philanthropists to support vulnerable households. LSO Moen Jo Daro distributed ration among 47 needy households with support of community notables and local philanthropists. With the efforts of LSO Leaders, a philanthropist distributed PKR 10,000 among 10 needy members of the LSO. A social worker, Ms. Asma Abro, contacted LSO Moen Jo Daro and asked for nominations of poor households for food ration. The LSO provided a list of needy households who could not earn due to the lockdown situation. Thus, LSO Leaders helped 65 poor households in receiving food ration. They also supported the provision of precautionary items to people, such as soaps, masks and sanitisers.

The Leaders and Community Resource Persons (CRPs) of LSO Moen Jo Daro received training on awareness raising about precautionary measures against COVID-19 from the Government health staff. They conducted awareness sessions among LSO members and educated them about the severity, symptoms and preventive measures of COVID-19. They conducted such sessions in 74 Community Organisations (COs).



LSO Leaders distributing ration bags among its disadvantaged members

The LSO Leaders also provided facilitation in the registration of almost 800 poor families under the Federal Government's EHSAAAS Emergency Cash Programme. All registered members received PKR 12,000 each from the Programme. Thus, the LSO Leaders facilitated receipt of PKR 9.6 million by the poor members in such a time of financial crisis.

### Supporting a Poor Family to Start a Cultural Food Stall

The family of an LSO member, Ms. Hakimzadi, was very poor and experiencing financial difficulties. The LSO Leaders decided to provide the family with an income generation opportunity to overcome its economic hardships. In consultation with Ms. Hakimzadi and her husband, the Leaders proposed to establish a food stall at the historical site of Moen Jo Daro. They selected the historical site for the stall because people from all over Pakistan visit Meon Jo Daro all year. Therefore, the stall would get customers from these visitors on a regular basis. The couple was provided with basic business skills and training. The LSO Leaders then collected money from its well-off members through its member VOs and provided the required financial support to the couple. The couple cook food at their home and sell at the stall. They earn a modest and regular income and are quite happy.



Food Stall of Ms. Hakimzadi at Moen Jo Daro

Ms. Hakimzadi said, "I got the idea of this Cultural Food Stall from my LSO 'Moen Jo Daro' meetings and discussions. Showing the cultural background of Sindh with delicious Sindhi food, our stall is becoming a source of income for us and perhaps an inspiration for other women who want to begin their startups. My husband and I are thankful to the LSO who made us realise our potential for this self-initiative".

### Vaccination of Animals

Domestic animals are a very important income generating asset of the members of LSO Moen Jo Daro. Apart from providing milk, they can be sold to get cash in times of financial crisis. However, contagious diseases are common in the area, and affect the entire livestock population, resulting in loss of milk, animal weight and even animal death. Therefore, when the EU funded PINS-3 started in the area, the LSO nominated a member to be trained as a Community Livestock Extension Worker (CLEW). After training, the LSO Leaders conducted a meeting in which they decided to initiate a campaign for the vaccination of livestock. They visited the Government Livestock Department and requested them for their support in vaccinating the animals. The Government Livestock Department agreed and provided staff and vaccines to the LSO. The Community Resource Persons (CRPs) of the LSO shared the benefits of animal vaccination in their awareness raising sessions with Community Organisations (COs) by saying that the chances of diseases among animals will reduce after regular vaccination. So, the community members brought their animals for vaccination at a central place of the village and the Livestock staff vaccinated them without delay. Almost 1,200 animals have been vaccinated till now.

### Tree Plantation

Under the EU funded SUCCESS Programme, the LSO engaged CRPs to deliver awareness sessions regarding various cross-cutting themes, including the benefits of tree plantation at the village level. Through these sessions, they learnt that trees play an important role in the lives of rural communities. They provide shade for people and animals, fodder for domestic animals and fruits for household consumption as well as sales. Therefore, the LSO Leaders decided to do tree plantation through its CO members and planted 500 trees in collaboration with the Natural Resource Management (NRM) section of SRSO.



Nursery of Moringa Trees

In addition to this, LSO Moen Jo Daro has established nurseries of Moringa plants, in which 4,950 plants have germinated and will be distributed later among poor members to plant them in their courtyards or any other safe place. According to health research, Moringa has

many important vitamins and minerals including vitamin C, potassium, calcium, protein, iron, and amino acids, which help the human body heal and build muscle. Therefore, consumption of Moringa leaves by the families will improve their nutrition status and health conditions.

### Coordination with Local Government to Assist COVID-19-Affected Families

A key role of an LSO is to develop and maintain linkages with Government Departments, NGOs and stakeholders to access their services and resources for the development of its members. During the lockdown to contain spread of COVID-19, a significant number of poor families were adversely affected due to loss of jobs, daily labour and other sources of income. In this regard, LSO Moen Jo Daro conducted meetings with representatives of local government at Union Council and taluka level and briefed them about these economic hardships and requested for support from Government resources. The LSO leaders also listed extremely needy households to the Government representatives for provision of food ration. The Government nominated leaders of LSO Moen Jo Daro as the members of Relief Committees formed at taluka level under the instructions of the District Government. The LSO Leaders nomination deserving households from their UC area to the Assistant Commissioner of respective talukas, and also played a role in the monitoring of food ration distribution in different areas. As a result of these coordinated efforts, maximum deserving households received ration bags from Government sources.



LSO Moen Jo Daro Leaders meeting with Local Government to Assist COVID-19-Affected Families

### Celebration of "Elimination of Violence against Women" Day

LSO Moen Jo Daro along with LSO Sindhu Darya organised a workshop to celebrate the day of "Elimination of Violence against Women". More than 100 women community leaders from different LSOs participated in the workshop and shared their experience regarding their struggle to raise awareness among rural women about their basic rights. The women community leaders delivered speeches and highlighted the types and means of violence against women in rural areas by referring to their personal experiences, and proposed practical solutions to uproot the problem. They suggested that both men and women should be given awareness about the root cause of violence against women, its adverse effects on the tortured women, family members, children, and the larger society. The women leaders of the community institutions pledged that they will try their best to eliminate violence against women in the organised households under their LSOs. All participating women marked their handprints on a banner to symbolise the saying "Stop Violence against Women".



Rural Women celebrating the Day of "Elimination of Violence against Women"



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Reported by: Mohammad Ali Azizi, RSPN  
 Edited by: Meha Pumbay, Knowledge Management Officer, SUCCESS, RSPN  
 Acknowledgment: Ms. Shaiwana Pathan, Program Officer- Documentation & Reporting, SUCCESS, SRSO  
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