



EUROPEAN UNION



## Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support Programme

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An update on the work of Local Support Organisations



### 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 Naeen Loat, Kambar Shahdadkot

District  Kambar Shahdadkot	Union Council  Khairpur Juso	Date of Formation  Nov 27 2017	Total Households in Union Council  2,487	Organised Households  1,316	Coverage  53%
	Number of Community Organisations (COs)  94 (all women's)	Number of Village Organisations (VOs)  16 (all women's)	Number of General Body Members  28 (all women)	Number of Executive Committee Members  9 (all women)	

(LSO Profile as of June 2018)

LSO Naeen Loat from Kambar Shahdadkot was formed in November 2017 by 1,316 member households organised in 95 COs and 16 VOs. Women leaders of LSO Naeen Loat 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.

### Carpeting of a Mud Link Road

A road that links three villages home to 380 households i.e. Ghoghari (141 HHs), Ali Mohammad Virkh (68 HHs) and Dhedhar (171 HHs), with the main road was a kachi mud road. The transportation time and cost was quite heavy, but for the rural poor living in these three villages, it was the only option. Furthermore, the mud road became inaccessible during rainy seasons. Before the



Leaders of LSO Naeen Loat in meeting

formation of this LSO under the EU supported SUCCESS programme, villagers never considered approaching government authorities for carpeting the road; they were simply unaware of available government mechanisms and responsibilities. However, through the SUCCESS intervention, local women from the three villages were organised into RSP's time-tested peoples' institutions

and trained on basic human rights, rule of law and government procedures. COs, VOs and LSOs were established. The LSO leaders decided to talk to the UC Chairman about their accessibility and road issue. The UC Chairman promised to take up the issue in the District Council. Unfortunately, soon it became clear that he was not taking the women leaders seriously, and he was not motivated to solve their problem at all. Realising this, the women leaders mobilised men from their villages and sent a delegation to the UC Chairman. After seeing their unity and commitment to the road project, the UC Chairman formally put up a funding proposal with the district government. The project was approved and the road was carpeted. The 380 families of the three villages now enjoy the benefits of the carpeted road. There has been drastic reduction in both their travel time and cost to and from their villages. Moreover, the carpeted road provides easy and fast access from their farms to multiple markets which has helped improve economic opportunities for the area.

### **Ensuring Provision of Clean Drinking Water**

Ghogharo is the main village of UC Khairpur Juso home to 1,100 households. One of their biggest problems was the availability of clean drinking water, as the underground water is salty and unfit for human consumption. Local women had to travel a distance of three kilometres to fetch one basket of water. Once they started their Village Development Planning process, provision of drinking water was flagged as their top most priority. The only solution to the problem was laying a pipeline to bring fresh water from a distance of four kilometres and install water stands in various points in the village. This required significant funds. The women LSO leaders wrote a resolution in their meeting and submitted it to the UC Chairman asking him to secure funds from the district government. As a result of persistence, collective actions and regular follow-ups, the UC Chairman put up their demand with the district government. Subsequently, the district government approved the project and carried it out. Now they get fresh water supply four hours a day. Water stands have been installed at various points where people can easily fetch water. This has dramatically improved not only the



The drinking water supply project provides healthy water to both people and livestock of the beneficiary families

quality of drinking water, but also cleanliness and personal hygiene of the local inhabitants. Another important benefit of the project is saving in the hard and harsh labour and precious time of the women who had to fetch water from several kilometres away. The women LSO leaders iterate and reiterate that had they not been organised in COs, VOs and LSO, they would have never been able to solve this issue so quickly and effectively.

### **Demands Established Leading up to the General Elections 2018**

Inhabitants of these villages in Kambar Shahdadkot are mainly supporters of a large, national level political party, and in the past, they voted for their candidates without any preconditions or demands. RSP designed awareness sessions on basic rights on constituents and the importance of votes – these were carried out by Community Resource Persons under the SUCCESS programme. This made significant impact in attitudes around voting. First, they identified people who had no CNICs or whose CNICs were expired – this was done through the VOs. Next, they requested NADRA to arrange mobile vans to make CNICs. NADRA facilitated our LSO leaders, and prepared 187 CNICs of mainly women. In an LSO meeting, they decided to make two demands to the competing candidates of Provincial and National Assembly constituencies: a) Re-open all non-functioning schools of their UC b) Provide solar panels at household level, because due to long hours of electricity load shedding, they receive electricity only for few hours a day or even worse. They put up their demands to their MPA and MNA at the time of election campaign and received their full agreement and firm commitments. The women leaders of the LSO are planning to follow up their demand in future to ensure that actions are taken on their demands on time.

### **Enrolment of Out of School Children in Schools**

Village Yar Muhammad Magheri is home to over 100 families, but there is no school in the village. Schools in the neighbouring villages are too far which is why none of the girls and boys of the village were going to schools. The Executive Committee members of the LSO jointly visited the village and motivated community members to enrol their children to schools in the neighbouring villages. Following this, 73 children, including 40 boys and 33 girls have been enrolled in schools. In the meanwhile, the LSO leaders are in constant contact with the UC Chairman for establishment of a school in Village Yar Muhammad Magheri. The UC Chairman has promised to help them and they are hoping that soon villagers of Yar Muhammad Magheri will have their own school.



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