



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

Local Support Organisation Koshish

District  Kamber Shahdadkot	Union Council  Thouf Chousol	Date of Formation  Sep 27 2017	Total Households in Union Council  1,745	Organised Households  1,396
Coverage  80%	Number of Community Organisations (COs)  64 (all women's)	Number of Village Organisations (VOs)  10 (all women's)	Number of General Body Members  20 (all women)	Number of Executive Committee Members  6 (all women)

(LSO Profiles up to 31 March 2021)

Activities implemented through the EU funded SUCCESS Programme



PKR 6,272,747
LSO managing CIF Amount



Disbursed CIF loans worth of PKR **11,527,120** to **690** poor households out of total eligible HHs of **915 (74%)**



113
poorest households, out of **174** total eligible HHs (65%) benefited from Income-Generating Grants worth of **1,489,900**



446
poorest households and **3,530** number of people have Micro Health Insurance coverage



58
women received Technical-Vocational Skills Training (TVST)



7
community physical infrastructures implemented

Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI)

The LSO has implemented **7 different Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI)** schemes in the union council **Thouf Chousol**, under the SUCCESS programme. The total worth of these schemes is **PKR 4,811,228** and a total of **640 households** have benefited from these schemes. There are **3,897** beneficiaries of these schemes which include **2,728 women** and **1,169 men**. The schemes include Brick Pavement of the streets and RCC Culverts. The schemes have improved the basic infrastructures and productive assets used by, and services delivered to, the targeted communities. The improved community infrastructure has been beneficial for the community members to meet their basic needs and gain better access to public services.



A street pavement scheme under construction under SUCCESS funds

Activities implemented through self-help and in collaboration with Government and other development agencies:

1. Stopped **Child Marriages** across the UC
2. Distributed **Food Packages** among **70 Indigent Members** with the Help of Jafiria Disaster Cell (JDC) Welfare Organisation
3. Screened **70 suspicious people** and identified 4 HIV positive cases with the Help of Bridge Consultant Foundation and linked them with the relevant Govt. department
4. Provided **Awareness Sessions and Tests during Covid-19 Outbreak** to local people and a total of **250 men and women** have been facilitated in conducting Anti-Bodies test and **50 men and women** in conducting PCR test
5. Registered around **1,500 people under the EHSAAS Programme**, out of which a total of **1,200 people** received **PKR 12,000** Cash grant of **PKR 14.4 million**
6. Provided **Zakat** to **20 eligible members**
7. Provided **dowry to 3 brides** of poorest families from the Deputy Commissioner
8. Re-opened **3 closed schools** and renovated one school building with the help of the local Assistant Commissioner
9. Supported **20 members to construct a fish pond** to provide fish meat to the villagers at a cheaper price
10. Vaccinated **1,500 domestic animals** and provided **4 goats and 1 cow to 34 poorest families** and vegetable seeds to establish kitchen gardens with the Help of SAFWCO
11. Arranged NADRA Mobile Van for preparation of **400 CNICs of poor people** at their doorsteps
12. Planted **1,000 forest trees** and **400 fruit trees** across the UC
13. Supported **10 member VOs** in opening of their **bank accounts**

The EU-funded SUCCESS programme is empowering rural women in Sindh through the realization of the power gained from collective action. Women leaders of LSO Koshish are planning and implementing development activities, both, on a self-help basis as well as in collaboration with government agencies. The organised women are now gaining awareness about their rights, making the service providers accountable, and also taking self-initiatives to improve their lives.

LSO Koshish, from District Kamber Shahdadkot, was formed in September 2017 by 1,396 member households organized into 64 COs and 10 VOs.



LSO leaders holding their monthly meeting

Stopped Child Marriages across the UC

Child marriage is banned in Pakistan, because it denies girls their right to make decisions about their sexual health and well-being, forces them out of education and into a life with an increased risk of violence and abuse. According to the law, if a person performs, conducts, directs or abets any child marriage, he/she shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment and fine. Despite that, child marriages still happen in remote villages of rural Sindh. The main reason is that nobody takes notice of child marriages in rural areas, therefore, the culprits easily escape legal punishment.

When the women of UC Thouf Chousol were organised into COs, VOs and LSO under the EU funded SUCCESS programme, the Community Resource Persons (CRPs) provided them awareness about child marriage abuse and the role of the community leaders to stop it. During a monthly meeting of LSO Koshish, the women community leaders came to know about the marriage of two young girls in their UC. They decided to take actions to stop these marriages by all means. Therefore, they approached the guardians of the girls and explained to them that those marriages were illegal and they should refrain from organising them until their daughters reach the age of 18, which is required for a legal marriage. However, the elder family members of the girls did not like their interference and expressed their displeasure. However, the women LSO leaders did not give up and clearly told them that they would never allow any child marriage to take place in their UC any more. In case of

any negligence from the guardians of the girls, the case was said to be reported to the law enforcement agencies. Looking at the firm stance taken by the women leaders, the family elders of the two girls stopped the marriage ceremonies. The message quickly spread all over the place and as result of that, people do not dare to conduct child marriages in the UC area.

Distributed Food Packages among Indigent Members with the Help of Jafiria Disaster Cell (JDC) Welfare Organisation

During the Government's imposed lockdown period to stop the outbreak of Covid-19, the poor families, especially the daily wagers faced financial and nutrition crises due to loss of their daily income all of a sudden and therefore, were unable to seek any alternative source of income. Realising their worries, the leaders of LSO Koshish decided to come forward and support such families. They first identified these families across their UC with the help of their VO leaders, and then contacted Jafaria Disaster Management Cell (JDC), a charitable and nonprofit organisation, and briefed them about the economic issues of the vulnerable families. JDC agreed to provide ration bags to needy households which were distributed to 70 families identified by LSO through the facilitation of LSO leaders. This timely support saved these families from falling into nutrition related crises.



Distribution of rations among poor families during COVID-19 lockdown period

Medical Camp with the Help of Bridge Consultant Foundation

2019 Sindh HIV outbreak refers to a Grade II Emergency as declared by the World Health Organisation in the Ratodero area of Larkana District, Sindh, Pakistan. It was the first of many outbreaks of HIV in Pakistan in which the majority of those infected were children. The causes of the outbreak were identified by health officials as "unhygienic practices" including re-use without sterilization of medical syringes and needles in doctors'

clinics and blood banks, barbers' razors and dental instruments. The LSO leaders received awareness sessions on HIV from SUCCESS staff. The LSO leaders approached the Bridge Consultant Foundation (BCF) and submitted the request for arranging a medical camp in their UC for screening people in HIV. The BCF, with the help of the LSO leaders arranged a camp at UC Thouf Chousol. A total of 70 individuals were screened and tested for HIV, out of which 4 people from the same family (father, mother and two children) were tested positive. BCF helped the family members get registered with the relevant Government Health Department where ERV medicines are provided to the effected family members free of cost. Fortunately, the father of the family has recovered from HIV.

Conducted Awareness Sessions and TTQ to Control Covid-19 Outbreak

When the COVID-19 pandemic spread fast and wide in Pakistan during the first quarter of 2020, the women LSO leaders of Koshish realised that due to limited access to the electronic, print and social media, majority of the men and women of their UC have neither any proper understanding about the real danger of the novel disease nor they had any idea about taking preventive measures. On the other hand, a number of rumors proposing that it was not a disease but a conspiracy against the Muslims in general and Pakistani Muslims in particular added on to their confusions. Therefore, the threat of the pandemic was not considered seriously by the community members. So, the women leaders of LSO Koshish decided to spread awareness among the community members about the pandemic which was already knocking at their doors and educate them to take preventive measures to protect themselves, their relatives and neighbours from infecting by the deadly virus. A 4-member committee was formed on COVID-19. The committee members received training on awareness raising and Trace, Test and Quarantine (TTQ) procedures from Government Health and SRSO staff and then delivered awareness sessions on the pandemic across the UC using the platforms of their member COs and VOs. They briefed the community members on the common signs and symptoms of the corona disease and taking precautionary measures like avoiding crowded places, keeping social distances, washing hands with soap and quarantining the suspected persons at home.

They also guided and facilitated the suspected corona patients in conducting Anti-Bodies and PCR Test from Civil Hospital Larkana. So far, a total of 250 men and women have been facilitated in conducting Anti-Bodies test and 50 men and women in conducting PCR test. In

this way, the LSO leaders made their effective efforts in helping the Government control the spread of the fatal disease.

Registration of Eligible Families under EHSAAS Emergency Cash Grant Programme

The EHSAAS Emergency Cash Grant Programme was launched by the Prime Minister of Pakistan on April 1, 2020, in the context of the economic hardship being experienced by the vulnerable families due to the ongoing coronavirus crisis. The Leaders of LSO Koshish decided to facilitate their members in registering themselves with EHSAAS Programme in coordination with the Community Bookkeeper and other literate members of their VOs and COs. They registered around 1,500 people under the EHSAAS Programme through SMS service, out of which a total of 1,200 people received PKR 12,000 cash grant. Thus, they were able to provide a sizeable amount of PKR 14.4 million to their poor members from the Federal Government. During the cash distribution events among their members, the LSO Leaders helped the Government Authorities in organising the events by fully observing the COVID-19 related SOPs announced by the Government.

Registered Eligible Members under Zakat Fund

Before getting organised into COs, VOs and LSO under the EU funded SUCCESS Programme, the people of UC Thouf Chousol had never heard about Government Zakat Fund. However, it was only after getting organised into community institutions and interacting with the SUCCESS staff that they learnt about the Zakat programme. Therefore, the LSO leaders decided to register their eligible members under the Zakat system and prepared a list of 20 destitute members with the consultation of VO members. Then, the Head of District Zakat and Ushr Department was briefed about their community institutions and was handed over the list of 20 members to be included in the Zakat beneficiaries list. These efforts were appreciated by the Head of Zakat and Ushr Department and the beneficiary list by LSO was promised to be considered for the Zakat Fund. Upon the arrangement of Zakat funds for those 20 members, the women leaders took the members to the office of Zakat and Ushr Department, where they were paid PKR 3,000 per family. In this way, the LSO leaders accessed PKR 60,000 from Government funds for their poor members. Now that these women have been registered with Zakat and Ushr Department, they will be receiving funds in future as well, till they are graduated out of poverty as per the assessment of the Zakat Department.



Provided Dowry to Brides from District Government

Dowry is a term used for the things which are necessary for a girl who is going to be married and are given by parents to their daughter. The dowry system is a great evil. Dowry related violence and abuse, bride burning and wife murder, constitute some of the detrimental ills perpetrated against women. Therefore, even the poorest families need to provide a decent dowry to their girls.

Some poor families in the LSO area had fixed the date of marriage of their daughters but were unable to provide dowry for them. Therefore, they were under tremendous social and economic pressure and had requested the LSO leaders for support. The LSO leaders investigated their cases through their own sources and found their requests to be genuine, therefore, they decided to support them. A committee was formed comprising of Executive Committee members of the LSO which visited the office of Mr. Javed Jagirani, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Kambar Shahdadt and submitted an application with the request of dowry for the poorest families. The DC arranged dowry for 3 girls and Mr. Jibran Kaleem, the representative of the DC office distributed the dowry items amongst the parents of these girls in the presence of the LSO office bearers.

Re-opening of Three Closed Schools and Renovation of one School Building

The leaders of the member VOs of LSO Koshish brought into the notice of the LSO leaders that three Government Schools are nonfunctional in UC Thouf Chousol. The women leaders of LSO Koshish formed a committee including the President, Manager, Treasurer, and two General Body members in consultation with the members of the relevant Village Organisations. This Committee went to the Assistant Commissioner (AC) Sujawal's office and briefed him regarding the issue and requested for the re-opening of the closed schools and to carry out the required renovation of the school buildings. The AC appreciated the efforts of the LSO leaders in raising the issue and assured them that the issue will be resolved as early as possible. With the directions of the AC, the schools were reopened and one school was renovated as per need. So far, approximately 500 Students have been enrolled in these schools.

Construction of Fish Pond as a Collective Enterprise

Fish plays an important role in fighting hunger and malnutrition. Fish is not only a source of proteins and

healthy fats, but also a unique source of essential nutrients, including long-chain omega-3 fatty acids, iodine, vitamin D, and calcium.

Fish is a common diet across the UC. However, the people had to go to Mero Khan market located at a distance of 10 km to get the fish. Moreover, the price of fish was expensive and could not be afforded by many people. Therefore, 20 members of organised women in Village Organisation Paniya, decided to establish a fish pond and raise fish in it to provide food for their families. . Additionally, they could provide fish to their neighbours on relatively fairer prices. So, the 20 women pooled resources for the construction of the fish pond and for buying fish saplings. The men from these 20 families knew how to prepare and manage fish ponds, therefore, they constructed the fish pond, filled it with groundwater, purchased fish seeds and put them in the pond. They also arranged and provided them with feed. The LSO leaders hope that the initiative will promote nutrition and will reduce the stunting and malnutrition among children in their village.



Vaccination of Livestock and Provision of Livestock to Poor Families with the Help of SAFWCO

A large number of the people of UC Thouf Chousol rear a mix stock of domestic animals, including cows, buffaloes, and goats. They not only consume their milk at household level, but also sell the extra production of milk in market. The offspring of their cows, buffaloes, and goats are also a tangible source of income for them. They sell their extra animals and earn a significant cash income on annual basis. However, viral diseases are common in the area, which reduce the milk production of effected animals, reduce their body weight and even kill the weaker animals. Therefore, viral diseases have caused huge economic loss to the poor families.

Sindh Agricultural Forestry Workers & Coordinating Organisation (SAFWCO) envisions sustainable communities achieving equitable economic, social, political, and cultural development through grassroots development institutions. The Office bearers of the LSO Koshish attended a seminar organised by SAFWCO at Taluka Sijawal and learnt about their activities. The women leaders of LSO Koshish introduced their community institutions and the development work they are doing under SUCCESS Programme and also briefed them about the socio-economic needs of the people of their area. The LSO leaders offered SAFWCO their voluntary services and support to implement their activities in their UC area. The focal person from SAFWCO admired their development work and promised to collaborate with them in future. SAFWCO also needed such support, therefore, they approached the women LSO leaders and started their activities in the UC. They first surveyed the villages and identified the common type of viral diseases in domestic animals. Then, the trained staff was sent with the medicines who vaccinated domestic animals across the UC. So far, SAFWCO has vaccinated a total of 1,500 existing livestock in collaboration with the LSO and VO leaders. They have also provided 34 members with a set of livestock, including 4 goats and 1 cow per beneficiary family. These are the extremely poor households who have pregnant or lactating women and children below the age of five years. In addition to that, SAFWCO provided vegetable seeds to 8 members for kitchen gardening. The main purpose of these support is to improve the nutrition of the mothers and children of these families. SAFWCO's field team surveyed other eligible members in the UC, in consultation with LSO and VO leaders for provision of set of livestock and vegetable seeds in future.

Arranged NADRA Mobile Van for preparation of CNICs

In collaboration with NADRA, the LSO leaders launched a campaign for the preparation of ID cards for eligible women and men. The poorest members of the LSO Koshish were not able to register and prepare the CNIC Cards for the eligible women and men members.

Therefore, the LSO leaders identified poor eligible women and men lacking a CNIC and prepared a village wise list in collaboration with its member VOs. The list was submitted to NADRA and was requested to send NADRA Mobile Van to these villages for preparation of CNICs at the village level. The NADRA Van visited 7 VOs and around 400 CNICs, mainly of women members, were prepared during this activity.

Plantation of Fruit and Forest Trees

During the lockdown period to control spread of Corona disease, the rural people experienced shortage of food items, both for people and domestic animals. This made them realise their vulnerability against such shocks in future. As part of countering strategy, the LSO leaders of Koshish decided to plant fruit and forest trees across their UC, so that fruits can provide food items to the people and forest plants can provide fodder for their animals.

So far, the LSO members have planted over 1,000 forest plants across their UC. The interested members have planted these trees in their courtyards and other free spaces near their houses so that they can take care of them properly. They have also planted around 400 fruit trees of different species, including mango and berry. On the other hand, the plantation drive is improving the environmental status of the local settlements as well.

Opening of Bank Accounts for 10 Member VOs

Due to the strict regulatory procedures for opening of organisational bank accounts for NGOs and civil society organisations, the member VOs of the LSO were facing difficulties in opening their bank accounts. Therefore, the LSO leaders supported the VOs and managed to open institutional bank accounts for their 10 member VOs.



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