



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 Aitmad, Kambar Shahdadkot

 District Kambar Shahdadkot	 Union Council Hazawah	 Date of Formation 2017	 Total Households in Union Council 3,951	 Organised Households 1,823	 Coverage 46%
	 Number of Community Organisations (COs) 95 (all women's)	 Number of Village Organisations (VOs) 17 (all women's)	 Number of General Body Members 24 (all women)	 Number of Executive Committee Members 9 (all women)	

(LSO Profile as of March 2018)

LSO Aitmad from District Kambar Shahdadkot was formed in October 2017 by 1,823 member households organised in 95 COs and 17 VOs. Women leaders of LSO Aitmad 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.

Installation of Hand Pumps for Drinking Water Supply

Availability of clean drinking water was a huge problem in the villages of Waryal Brohi, Miran Brohi and Dhani Bux Brohi of Sindh. There were only two hand-pumps available and fetching water took two to three hours for the women of these villages. Moreover, disputes among women were common due to long queues.



The General Body members of the LSO expressing their consent for the installation of Hand Pumps

Once all-women Local Support Organisations were formed, this issue was one of the first to be raised during its meetings. The women leaders of the LSO decided to contact their UC Chairman to seek his help. They surveyed the villages and identified 11 locations for installation of additional hand-pumps in these villages. They

invited the UC Chairman to their LSO office and briefed him about the water issues and took him through a plan to install 11 additional hand pumps at various locations in four villages. The UC chairman was impressed to see how organised the female LSO representatives of his UC were - not only in identifying their needs but also in developing a practical plan for resolution. He promised his support to them and put up their plan for approval with the district government. Within 6 days, he informed the LSO leaders that their project has been approved but the government will provide only the hand pump-materials. The drilling and installation work will have to be done by the community itself. They organised meetings with the concerned Village Organisations and motivated them to contribute free labour and cash donation to pay for the drilling charges. The VOs agreed, and 7 hand pumps have been installed to date. The VOs managed the funds from savings of the Community Organisations' members and donations from the better off community members.

Electricity is another problem in the area. There are long hours of load-shedding and people suffer a lot in the hot summer weather. On the demand of the LSO women, the UC Chairman provided four sets of solar panels and promised to arrange more once he receives additional funds. The LSO gave these solar panels to four very poor families identified through SUCCESS poverty score cards.

Provided Zakat to Eligible Members

The women of the area had never heard about the government Zakat programme. However, during their meetings with the SUCCESS staff, they learnt about the Zakat system in place. The LSO decided to work and obtain Zakat fund for their eligible members. The women formed a five-member committee including the President, Manager and Treasurer and two General Body members. The committee, in consultation with member VOs, prepared a list of 125 eligible members, which include families whose heads were widows, persons with disabilities and elderly persons. The committee went to meet the Zakat Chairman of their UC and handed over the list after briefing him about the criteria and process they followed to identify them. The Zakat Chairman



The Executive Committee Members of LSO holding their monthly meeting

appreciated their efforts. He soon informed the Committee that he had arranged Zakat funds for 32 members. The women leaders informed the selected members and took them to the house of the Zakat Chairman. He gave Rs. 7,000 to widows and persons with disabilities, and Rs. 5,000 and 4,000 to other eligible families according to the rules set by the government Zakat body. A total of Rs. 180,000 was distributed among 32 families. The Zakat Chairman has promised to pay Zakat fund to the remaining members when he receives additional funds from the government.

Ensured Proper Utilisation of School Management Committee (SMC) Funds

There is a School Management Committee (SMC) in each government school in Sindh. SMC is the governing body of the school with the participation of parents and communities. The roles and responsibilities of the SMC include development of school management plan and proper utilisation of school funds provided by the government on an annual basis. The women LSO leaders had never even heard about the system before they were organised into COs, VOs and the LSO. They learnt about SMCs during their training under the EU supported SUCCESS programme. The LSO leaders met with the head teacher of a school in village Abdul Karim Brohi and asked about the status of utilisation school fund. They were told that the local land lord has chosen himself as the Chairman of the SMC and he gives some money to the school teachers while he himself takes major part of the fund. The LSO leaders called a meeting of the SMC members and asked them to utilise the school fund for purchase of benches for the students as there were none in the school. The SMC purchased 18 benches in a week time. They also noticed that the roof of the school building is damaged and it has holes at several places. The second plan suggested by the LSO leaders was to repair the school building roof properly. This was also done very quickly. The school fund was not enough for the repair of the roof, so the LSO leaders asked the teachers to contribute some funds from their own pockets, which they did. The LSO leaders also noticed that the ground level of the school is very low, and in rainy seasons, this becomes a pond, therefore, the school needs to be closed for 7 to 10 days. So the third plan the LSO leaders had proposed was to fill in the ground. The SMC had accepted it and thus promised to carry it out when they receive the year's funds from the government.

The LSO leaders visited four more schools in villages Pasand Kot and Kot Jhouro and managed to buy solar panels and fans for these schools from SMC funds. Existing SMC members were warned that they would be replaced in case of non-compliance of LSO recommendations. The LSO women now plan to revamp all SMCs of schools in their UC by next year, so that people representing interests of the children are honest, and perform their due roles in improving the school education facilities and quality of learning available.



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