

LSO Initiatives

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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 mobilise rural communities 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.

Institutional Development

Social mobilisation was started in the Union Council in 2007, and almost 25 Community Organisations (COs) were formed under the Government funded Livestock Development Project. However, when the Government abruptly closed the project at a pre-mature stage, the COs gradually lost their interest, and became inactive. With the start of the EU funded Baluchistan Community Development Programme (BCDP), not only were the old COs re-activated, but more than 90 new COs, including 38 women's COs, were formed across the UC. The 118 COs federated to form 28 Village Organisations (VOs). Later on, the VOs formed their Local Support Organisation at the UC level.

This three-tier institutional landscape has opened up multiple opportunities for the local communities in terms of improving their socio-economic conditions through integrated approaches. The VOs support their member COs, and the LSO supports its member VOs in planning and execution of development initiatives at the household and communal level. Currently, all member VOs have developed their Village Development Plans (VDPs), and are in the process of implementing them. The LSO has also developed a Union Council Development Plan (UCDP). The LSO also plays key monitoring roles to ensure that the VOs are functioning well and the programmes and projects implemented by them are running properly. Under BCDP, 10 Community

Date of Formation:			
28 November, 2015			
District:		Union Council:	
Zhob		Badanzai	
Total Households in Union Council:	Organised Households:	Coverage:	
1,544	1,244	81%	
No. of Community Organisations (COs):	No. of Village Organisations (VOs):	No. of General Body Members:	No. of Executive Committee Members:
118 38 women's	28 all men's	120 all men's	11 all men's

Physical Infrastructures (CPIs) have been identified and approved. The LSO leaders have been able to create effective linkages with Government and donor agencies. In a nut shell, the institutional development has been proved instrumental in mobilising not only the local communities but various other stakeholders for poverty reduction of the people of the UC.

Improve Health Facilities and Services

The LSO's area of operation is known for the lack of access to basic health care services, infrastructure and personnel. There is only one Basic Health Unit (BHU) and one Dispensary to serve the 11,981 people living in the Union Council. On top of that, due to misconceptions, there was an overwhelming opposition to the vaccination of children and pregnant women. During the Union Council level planning process, health issues ranked top of the list. The LSO, therefore has been trying to address the health issues on priority basis.



Distribution of hygiene kits among school students

The LSO has conducted several awareness sessions on health related issues across the UC with the technical and financial support of donor agencies. They support government's vaccinators and have managed to vaccinate around 800 children in the area. They also support polio vaccinators and helped convince the households that refused anti-polio vaccinations for their children and pregnant women. The buildings of the BHU and the Dispensary were in very poor condition. The LSO arranged funds from People's Primary Healthcare Initiative (PPHI) and not only constructed new buildings for both facilities, but also arranged a freezer and solar electrification system for the BHU. The LSO conducted personal hygiene sessions at local schools and distributed hygiene kits among students.

Improved Educational Facilities and Services

The condition of educational facilities and services in the area was also very poor. There were only 7 Government boys' primary schools and one girls' primary school in the UC; there was no middle and high school. Basic facilities, like furniture, washroom, drinking water and electricity, were none existent in majority of

these schools. There was a huge question mark on the quality of the teachers, both in terms of their professional skills, and commitment. The catastrophic state of education is reflected in the literacy ratio among the UC's men and women, i.e. 18% and 4%, respectively.



A Community Enterprise School run by the LSO

The LSO members are aware of the state of affairs, and they are trying to change it for better. They have, so far, been able to carry out various programmes to promote the cause of education. The most significant achievement, probably, is bringing the issue to the limelight, by prioritizing it in the UC Development Plan. They are trying to raise awareness about the missing facilities, and the impact it has on the quality of education and quality of life.

In addition, they are also working to fill the gap by arranging resources for the missing facilities. They have constructed buildings for three boys' primary schools with the financial support of UNICEF. Up to 70 children are enrolled in these schools. They have also arranged furniture for four schools, by approaching the Government Education Department; 139 students of these schools now have proper desks. They organised enrolment campaigns and were successful in convincing parents to send over 400 children, mainly girls, to schools. They also established five Community Enterprise Schools with the technical and financial support of Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF). PPAF has conducted a 10-day training session for the teachers of these schools, and will also pay salaries of the teachers for the first six months. The parents have agreed to pay Rs. 200 per child per month to remunerate the teachers of these schools after the PPAF salary support comes to an end. PPAF also trained 10 teachers of government schools.

With the technical and financial support of National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), the LSO members have established three adult literacy centres to provide basic literacy and numeracy abilities and vocational skills to adult women. These initiatives are not enough to tackle the wide-spread, multi-pronged issues of education. But they have boosted the community's confidence, and given them hope, and an actionable way forward, for gradual and steady steps that will help them overcome the issues in the near future.



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