



Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support (SUCCESS) Programme



## SUCCESS Lesson Learning Visit to NRSP SUCCESS Programme area - Sujawal



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## **SUCCESS Lesson Learning Visit to NRSP SUCCESS Programme area - Sujawal**

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## Overview

As part of the Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support Programme (SUCCESS), Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN) component, a learning visit was planned on the 24th of August, 2016 to NRSP SUCCESS Programme area, Sujawal. The visit team included staff members from RSPN, RSPN/RSPs senior management, officials from GoS, accompanied by Head of Rural Development and Economic Cooperation-EU Delegation to Pakistan, Dr. Amaury Hoste, and Development Advisor for Rural Development and Nutrition, EU Delegation to Pakistan, Mr. Georges Dehoux.

The lesson learning visit was aimed at sharing of experiences from the implementation of the SUCCESS Programme. During the visit, the participants witnessed a Programme Introduction dialogue by Mr Shoaib Sultan Khan, in UC Murad Pur, which is the first step of the programme and is necessary to introduce the RSP and its philosophy to the community members and seek their consent for accepting and adopting the core principles of RSPs' social mobilisation approach. After the programme introduction dialogue, the team went to meet with the Village Organisation (VO) at Village Sheikh Raho, UC Keenjhar.



## Visit to Sujawal

### Programme Introduction at village Allahdino

The learning visit to Sujawal included a Programme Introduction (PI) dialogue by Mr Shoaib Sultan Khan, at Village Allahdino in UC Murad Pur, and a meeting with the Village Organisation (VO) at Village Sheikh Raho, UC Keenjhar.

According to the Rural Support Programmes' (RSPs) strategy, before beginning the process of social mobilization for community driven development, RSPs hold a PI meeting with the community members. At the PI meetings, the principles of social mobilization are shared with the community members. The purpose of PI is to inform the people about RSPs' basic approach and what the programme is about, why is it being implemented and how will it be implemented, and what it can and cannot do for the people. This is important in order not to raise people's hopes and expectations, and it also sets solid and common understanding for the signing of the terms of partnership between the RSP and the community members.



*Team members at the Programme Introduction in village Allahdino*

At the PI in village Allahdino, Mr Shoaib Sultan Khan clearly set out and then undertook the process in a simple yet effective manner. He began by introducing the villagers, around 150 in participation (mostly women), to the SUCCESS Programme, and told them that the programme is funded by the European Union.

Mr. Khan briefed the women present at the occasion about the importance of forming community organisations (COs). He also told them that the COs are their own institutions which can help them in resolving their issues by creating an enabling environment for deliberation, advocacy and resource mobilisation. He emphasised on the importance of holding regular meetings of the COs, and saving money for personal and collective use.

The first community dialogue marks the beginning of a process that leads to, with the willingness and active participation of the locals, the creation of Community Organisation, which forms the base of the three-tiered community development approach practiced by the RSPs.

During the PI, it is important to ask the community members of their willingness and take their consent to participate in the programme, especially in the following three instances: i) Asking people about their readiness and willingness to organize themselves, and to select a leader; ii) Asking people if they have the ability to improve their lives, and take their consent, about their willingness to do so; and iii) Asking people about their readiness and willingness to participate in the training sessions.

The women present at the occasion enthusiastically agreed to form community organisations and work on self-help basis for poverty reduction. Mr Shoaib Sultan Khan also asked the men present at the meeting if they were willing to cooperate with their spouses and women of the village and will support them in forming the community organisations. The men wholeheartedly raised their hands and showed their willingness.



*Men at the Programme Introduction showing their support to the women of the village, by raising hands*

Dr. Amaury Hoste, Head of Rural Development and Economic Cooperation at the European Union Delegation to Pakistan, and Mr. Georges Dehoux, First Secretary, Development Advisor for Rural Development & Nutrition, EU Delegation to Pakistan, were also present at the occasion. Also present, among others, at the occasion was Mr. Attaullah Shah, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Sujawal District, who pledged to fully support the SUCCESS Programme.

## VO Meeting at village Sheikh Raho

After the programme introduction and lunch at Deputy Commissioner Sujawal's office, the team visited a VO in village Sheikh Raho. The VO had been operational for a month, and during the meeting, Mr Shoaib Sultan Khan and Dr Hoste asked various questions from the VO about the issues they have faced so far and how did they cope with them.

A VO is federation of the Community Organisations (COs) for planning and coordination at the village level. The key function of a VO is to ensure mobilisation of maximum number of households into COs, supportive supervision of COs and implementation of village level development activities. The VO membership must comprise of at least two members (preferably the President and Manager) from each CO. Each VO is to be comprised of 10 COs on average but not less than 3 COs. All the members of VO are called General Body of the VO.

The VO at village Sheikh Raho comprised of members from 25 COs in the village. The VO had a president and a manager to run the day-to-day affairs of the VO. The VO leadership was selected with consensus among the VO members. Each VO must have a bank account in the name of the VO with joint signatures of its leaders as it is expected to receive sub-grants from the RSPs under the SUCCESS programme to implement village level development activities.

However, it was found upon inquiring that the VO at Sheikh Raho had not opened its bank account yet, and was facing some issues. The membership fee that the COs submitted was with the president of the VO. The CO members of the VO however said that their respective COs had bank accounts. When asked if the VO would be willing to deposit the membership money in any member CO's bank account, the VO president and manager answered that they were apprehensive of doing that.



*VO Manager at village Sheikh Raho giving a presentation on the VO to the team members*



The VO was in the process of preparing their village development plan (VDP) for its village. The VDP includes development initiatives at the village level as decided by the VO and its member COs in their Micro Investment Plans (MIPs). It consists of activities (large and small, cash and cash-less) which the VO aims to achieve. Social mobilisation outreach, inclusion of the poor, women, disabled and gender mainstreaming will remain common themes in the VDP.

An important factor in the sustainability of the VO is availability of internal resources. The General Body should be briefed on the importance of generating funds for the operational costs of the VO (for example for the cost of stationary, photocopying costs, etc.) and to take small village level self-initiatives (for example organising events for village cleanliness, education campaigns etc). This may be done through collection of membership fee from CO/VO members, donations from local philanthropists and fee for delivery of different services to community. The VO General Body will decide on what sum of amount they should ask for and upon a final decision, the VO should write a resolution (with signatures of all General Body members) stating to this effect what has been decided.

The meeting with this VO proved to be extremely helpful for the team members in understanding the social mobilization process of RSPs and the functionality of the three tiered system.

SUCCESS Programme is based on the Rural Support Programmes' (RSPs) social mobilisation approach to Community-Driven Development (CDD). Social Mobilisation centers around the belief that poor people have an innate potential to help themselves; that they can better manage their limited resources if they organise and are provided technical and financial support. The RSPs under the SUCCESS Programme provide social guidance, as well as technical and financial assistance to the rural poor in Sindh.

SUCCESS is a six-year long (2015-2021) programme funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN), National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), Sindh Rural Support Organisation (SRSO), and Thardeep Rural Development Programme (TRDP) in eight districts of Sindh, namely: Kambar Shahdadkot, Larkana, Dadu, Jamshoro, Matiari, Sujawal, Tando Allahyar, and Tando Muhammad Khan.



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