



European Union



# Visit Report

European Union Ambassador  
H.E. Mr. Jean-François Cautain

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SUCCESS

Sindh Union Council and Community Economic  
Strengthening Support Programme

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## ***Acknowledgement***

Sindh Rural Support Organization (SRSO)

[www.srso.org.pk](http://www.srso.org.pk)

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## Preamble

SRSO is among three Rural Support Programmes (RSPs) who are implementing the European Union-funded Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support (SUCCESS) Programme. SRSO is implementing the SUCCESS Programme in Larkana and Qamber-Shahdadkot districts, while two other RSPs namely NRSP and TRDP are implementing in six districts i.e. Dadu, Jamshoro, Matiari, Tando Allahyar, Sajawal and Tando Mohammad Khan. The Programme commenced its activities in February 2016. The Programme aims at reducing poverty through innovative income generating activities in rural areas of the above-mentioned districts, by enhancing the role and capabilities of rural women through their institutions. As this is a women-oriented Programme, it also aims at promoting women empowerment in rural areas of targeted districts. The SUCCESS Programme is fully aligned with the approach of Union Council Based Poverty Reduction Programme (UCBPRP), which was initiated by the Government of Sindh (GoS) in year 2009 and implemented by the SRSO. The UCBPRP was later expanded to other districts i.e. Jacobabad and Tharparkar by the GoS with additional funding. Based on the splendid results, the programme has also been replicated in other parts of the country by other RSPs.

In this regard, the European Union Ambassador H.E. Mr. Jean-François Cautain and his wife Mrs. Sonia Cautain visited the Shikarpur district for the interventions of UCBPRP and in district Larkana for the activities of SUCCESS Programme from December 9-12, 2016. In addition to the field visits, the EU ambassador also participated in different meetings/events, such as, meeting with Commissioner Sukkur and Mayor Sukkur, and also had an exclusive dialogue with women leaders who came from various VOs, LSOs and their networks, which were formed under the UCBPRP.

### Day-01

The Ambassador's trip commenced with a ceremonial dinner followed by a musical night program at the Commissioner House, Sukkur. Mr. Khursheed Ahmed Shah Leader of the opposition, National Assembly of Pakistan was also present at the event. Among participants were other notable dignitaries, local leaders, elected representatives and officials from the government line departments.



### Day-02

On the second day, at 8:00 am, the Ambassador left the SRSO complex and arrived at the Basic Health Unit (BHU) Abdo, being managed under the EU-funded WINS project, implemented by Save the Children. The Save the Children representatives gave an extensive presentation covering the significance, performance, facilities provided and the outreach of this BHU in rural areas. At the location, the Ambassador visited various portions of the BHU and appreciated the facilities being provided for the rural masses.

Followed by this visit, the Ambassador visited the villages under the UCBPRP, currently being implemented under the maintenance phase in all three districts. In addition to the GoS funded districts, SRSO with its core funding also started UCBPRP in some selected union councils of Sukkur and Khairpur districts.

### Meeting with LSO Mehran

The EU ambassador along with his wife reached village Morani, UC Bhirkhan. CEO SRSO Mr. Mohammad Dittal Kalhoro along with district Shikarpur team also accompanied him. In this village, the women were present who represented the LSO Mehran formed in Union Council Bhirkhan. The LSO Chairperson and General Secretary gave a detailed presentation on the achievements, initiatives and future plans of their LSO. They specifically covered the portions which have tremendously worked and have brought significant changes in the lives of rural poor households. They articulated about the amount and utilization of community investment fund (CIF) which was given to them under the UCBPRP in 2009, which later, further recycled in subsequent years. LSO office bearers described the concrete linkages their LSO has developed with other organizations and Government line departments for the betterment of service delivery and awareness purposes. In addition to this, they also mentioned about the efforts and endeavors which they have taken through their LSO for 100% coverage of polio and other vaccines with core support by the government health department and other organization's projects duly working for these purposes. In the meantime, the Ambassador and his wife asked different questions pertaining to the activities and initiatives of LSO in their area. Based on the questions asked, the LSO office bearers provided satisfactory answers with adequate clarifications where required.



The Ambassador spoke to the LSO members and applauded their crucial role in rural context. The EU Ambassador said that he had worked in Afghanistan, where they tried to mobilize the communities. He added that the philosophy of SRSO including all RSPs with its broadly documented successes in northern Sindh, have convinced and attracted the European Union to recognize the multiple opportunities extended to rural households through three-tiered social mobilization approach in fields, like promotion of a culture and tendency of participation, inclusiveness and solidarity, direct provision of front-line services, planning and development, business and asset creation, savings and capital formation, conflict resolution, dialogue and interaction in form of active engagement of rural women leaders with local authorities. Ambassador categorically urged the LSO members to sustain and maintain the impacts brought in result of many interventions and efforts together.

Mrs. Sonia Cautain, also spoke to the LSO members. She said that it is an immense moment to see and know the achievements of rural women through their own institutions. She highly admired the active participation, mobility, and empowerment of women at the local level. She encouraged women members to continue putting their efforts in a direction they have set out, as the future generations

could be well aligned and prosperous. At the conclusion of visit in this village, the Ambassador planted a tree in the corner, as a foundation and sign for a prosperous future.

### Visit and Meeting with VO

Followed by the meeting of LSO members, the Ambassador also visited village Samano, UC Bhirkhan. The local women leaders from the community institutions welcomed the Ambassador whole-heartedly and invited him and his wife to have a detailed visit of their various stalls set out within the village. The Ambassador took a massive interest in the visit of all stalls set out for him. One by one he visited the stalls that included CIF intervention stall, HCP activities stall, HelpAge international, Save the Children-WINS project stall, SRSO education activities stall, SRSO-Brooke project stall, SRSO-PITD model stall, Social welfare Department stall and National TB control program stall. During the visit at each stall, the Ambassador was briefed by concerned team members on the specifications and functions of each stall and its importance in the rural perspectives. The Ambassador appreciated the efforts being made by rural communities and advised some key modifications in respect to the features and functions of models shown in form of stalls in rural context.



Subsequently, Ambassador attended a meeting with VO Samano in the village. The VO leaders gave a presentation on the overall achievements made and initiatives taken by their VO. VO leaders extensively briefed the Ambassador about the outreach and current activities. They also shared their successes and stories, that how they did what was being shared with the visitors. VO leaders told the Ambassador how they have managed to establish concrete linkages with Government line departments and other organizations duly working in district Shikarpur. H.E. Mr. Cautain and his wife showed great interest and appreciated the women of village Samano for their remarkable achievements. EU Ambassador said that he finds himself very glad to be here among the women who have set out an example for other women to follow them.



On the way to the meeting with Deputy Commissioner, Shikarpur, the Ambassador visited the Taluka Hospital Lakhi under EU funded WINS project, implemented by Save the Children (SC). Ambassador appreciated the efforts of SC team and hospital staff for the work they have been doing in order to provide prompt health services to the masses with dignity and care.

### Brief Meeting with Deputy Commissioner Shikarpur

A brief meeting was held with the DC Shikarpur, in which the developmental activities, role, efforts of rural women and impact of UCBPR Programme was discussed. The Deputy Commissioner Shikarpur briefed the ambassador about the working relation with community level institutions in various union



councils and proactive engagement with women members for efficient services delivery, such as in education and health. Followed by the briefing, the Deputy Commissioner arranged a lunch in honour of respectable guests. The Ambassador highly praised the working relation between District Government and the SRSO for the vital cause of poverty reduction.

### Meeting & Dialogue with CO/VO/LSO members

After the field visits, the EU Ambassador reached back at SRSO complex, Sukkur. Around 3:00 pm, a meeting and dialogue were organized with CO/VO/LSO members and leaders to discuss the community driven development. Meeting & dialogue started formally with the recitation of the Holy Quran. As per content, the CEO SRSO Mr. Mohammad Dittal Kalhoro welcomed the members who arrived from



various community institutions. He said that the development which we observe at the grass root level is the sheer result of efforts and initiatives taken by rural women under their institutions. Then, CEO formally started the proceedings.

Ms. Gulshad Soomro, President LSO Network Khushhal District Shikarpur, gave a detailed presentation of their network at taluka level. She mentioned the various activities and achievements of LSO network. She particularly focused on the recoveries and CIF disbursement being carried out under the umbrella of LSO network in taluka Lakhi. In addition to these achievements, Ms. Soomro, also updated the audiences on the overall progress made through concrete linkages with local government departments and other organizations duly working in the area through various interventions and activities, like education and health purposes. She further shared, about the overall annual plan of their LSO network with special priorities set out for education and health related activities, which promote the enrollment of out of school children and will cover the vaccination of unvaccinated children in the area.

Followed by Ms. Gulshad, the office bearers (Ms. Moomal & Ms. Razia) of LSO Shahbaz UC Karampur, District Kashmore also presented the overall achievements. Ms. Razia LSO chairperson shared that she is teaching in a Non-formal education center located in their union council. While sharing about their future plans of their LSO, they said, our plan is to enroll all children who are currently out of school in their UC and to ensure their proper education with effective follow-ups. They also shared on the linkages they have established for various activities in their union council.



Ms. Rukina, General Secretary of LSO Roshani, District Kashmore, shared about the women empowerment that they and other women members are experiencing, after the formation of their community institutions in different areas of three districts. She said it is the social pillar which enabled them to frequently move, interact with anyone, and raise voice for their rights and fulfill the plans while addressing the needs by ensuring the community driven local development in their remotest areas.

Other proactive rural women, Ms. Aisha Khatoon, Ms. Mirzadi Chairperson LSO Bukhari, Ms. Arbaili from LSO Falak, UC Mirpur, and Musarrat Abro from LSO Anmol UC Dashti, also spoke at the occasion and shared the details of their stories and successes through self-based initiatives, activities and concrete

linkages, they have developed from the platform of their organizations to expedite the community level local development initiatives for a viable and sustainable development. Ms. Zeenat from VO Qadirpur District Jacobabad who got TBA training under UCBPRP, also spoke and shared her story that how she became able to bring change at the household level and how she converted the miserable days into the happy days.



Ms. Shireen Mustafa Narejo (BoD-SRSO) also addressed the occasion she urged on rural women to ensure that all the children of school-going age should be in schools. She further said that it is the core responsibility of women to take adequate care of our children in terms of their health and education. She appreciated the passion and ample efforts of rural women.

Mr. Nazar Hussain Mahar (BoD-SRSO) also spoke at the occasion. He said the work and efforts of women are highly appreciable from all aspects. He added that there is need to sustain these efforts and make



the best use of innate potentials for poverty reduction. He thanked the European Union and the Government of Sindh for the financial support that enabling women to bring such results which is being witnessed in the field.

While speaking at the occasion, Ambassador Cautain congratulated the women for their dedication and commitment to the cause of local level development. He said that work continuously being done by the women is inspirational, and it should be continued. Mrs. Sonia Cautain, also expressed her regards to the community women leaders for their role and efforts. She also said that the energy and motivation of the women are phenomenal and that must continue in coming years for future generations.

### Social Gathering at SRSO Complex

Followed by the entire activities of the whole day, the H.E. Mr. Cautain and his wife also participated in a social gathering event at night, which was duly organized in their honour by SRSO. In that gathering, the Commissioner Sukkur, Mayor Sukkur, Deputy Commissioner Sukkur, ADCs, elected representatives, representatives from District Government line departments and other local political figures participated.

### Day-03

The day-three started with a couple of activities i.e. Visit and participation in Programme Introduction Dialogue, and Meeting with VO leaders in District Larkana, under EU funded SUCCESS programme.

### Participation in Programme Introduction (PI) Dialogue

After two hours journey, the European Union Ambassador along with his wife and SRSO/RSPN teams reached in village Karani UC Moen Jo Daro, District Larkana. In this village, a programme introduction dialogue was organized by SRSO team, in which a large number of rural women from various villages gathered and attended the dialogue passionately. The programme started formally and UC Chairman on behalf of local communities welcomed the distinguished guests in their village.

A detailed presentation was given by Union Council Chairman revealing the statistics about the area in light of recently conducted poverty scorecard survey. He shared the statistical profile of area in terms of total households, population, facilities, infrastructures and source of livelihood etc.



Trailed by the presentation of UC Chairman, Mr. Jamal Mustafa Shoro -Team Leader SUCCESS Programme, SRSO initiated the proceedings of the first dialogue with rural women. He explained the concept, scope of three-tiered social mobilization approach and objectives of the newly launched SUCCESS Programme. He said that based on decades of learning and practice, it is widely considered that without coming together and creating synergies at the local levels, the masses cannot make the journey out of the trap of poverty. He urged the women to use their innate potentials by forming community organizations, and start saving money, to be able to defeat poverty in a systemic and organized manner.

He said that after the formation process, the formed community organizations will be supported by SRSO in multiple ways, by building leadership and management capacity, imparting vocational and technical skills training, providing Micro Health Insurance and income generating grants for the poorest members of the community.

Speaking at the occasion, the CEO-SRSO Mr. Muhammad Dittal Kalhoro, thanked the European Union and the Government of Sindh for their continued financial support and efforts for the cause of poverty reduction in the areas. He urged the women to save more and more money, and use it for creating small enterprises. He said that SRSO will not only help the community organizations in terms of building their capacity but also provide them financial resources for poverty reduction. He assured the women members for extending possible support which will enable them to chalk out their plans as well as its practical implementation.



Ms. Shireen Narejo, Secretary Social Welfare, Government of Sindh, and SRSO Board Member, also interacted with rural women who came from various surrounded villages. She urged women to expand



their indispensable role for various causes including the elimination of extreme poverty. She further added that women are very talented and possess different types of potentials just need is to use the potentials for significant purposes. Ms. Shandana Khan, CEO of RSPN, also shared her comments to rural women. She said we are highly thankful to the Government of Sindh for providing financial resources in form of UCBPRP which uplifted the lives of rural masses and empowered the deprived segments. Likewise, we request the other provincial Governments to follow the Sindh

Government in this regard. She highly encouraged the role of women for social development and urged the women and men to join hands for reducing poverty.

The European Union Ambassador, H.E. Mr. Jean-François Cautain in his address said that the 28 member states of the European Union becoming the richest countries of the world, by maintaining peace and creating synergies, standing together and cooperating, in various spheres of economy and society. He said that the European Union working with an apparent aim to reduce rural poverty in Pakistan. For this purpose, resources are being provided to the federal and provincial governments, to ensure that people live better and improved lives. Mrs. Cautain also addressed the women, sharing her admiration and appreciation for their resilience and urging them to organize and stand up for their rights. She significantly added that it was shared with her that Sonia is Pakistani name, being that name I really

proud to have this name. Mrs. Cautain, most importantly, emphasis on women to come forward like the women of Shikarpur came and did what they planned.

The EU Ambassador and his wife thanked the communities for their hospitality and warm welcome. The honorable guests also planted trees at the end of the session, as to mark the start of a new beginning under the SUCCESS programme.

The women present during the first dialogue expressed their willingness to be part of the process of change and promised to form local level community organizations.

### Meeting with VO Leaders

The European Union Ambassador participated in a VO leaders meeting in village Imam Bux Mallah UC Maen Jo Daro, District Larkana. Mrs. Sonia Cautain was also present at the meeting. The women leaders warmly welcomed the honorable guests in their village. The meeting formally started and the VO leaders gave a detailed presentation on VO profile and their future plans



under the umbrella of their community institutions.

During the meeting, the women leaders explained the guests about the progress and achievements of their organizations in a short span of few months. They additionally briefed on the aspirations and plans, which they intend to execute from the platform of their organizations.

While sharing their recent experiences and stories, the women members expressed that in order to develop their villages, they are highly motivated and determinant because by doing developmental work

they generally feel more passionate, empowered and most importantly confident to fulfill what has been initiated. Women leaders added that after formation of organizations, their capabilities and strengths are enhanced. A number of women unveiled their resilience stories, how they came forward and joined the organizations and changed their rigid social thoughts, which always restricted them to do what was fundamental to be done. Women leaders confidently and positively explained the purpose and significance of the formation of community institutions in their areas which was never done before the EU funded SUCCESS programme. Women further explicitly revealed that now gradually their male members are supporting them, which



was not possible earlier under current circumstances.

Speaking at the occasion, the EU Ambassador expressed great pleasure upon witnessing the progress of women who have been organized a few months ago under the SUCCESS programme. He overwhelmingly remarked that the people of Europe would be quite happy and satisfied to know that their tax money is being utilized by the women leaders who are representing the remotest areas, in order to change the lives of thousands of masses. He added that the work rural organized women leaders are doing in district Larkana is simply inspirational.



Mrs. Sonia Cautain also spoke to the VO leaders, and told them that it was a pleasant moment for her to see the motivation and plans of organized women members. She said that she would love to visit this area again after a few years to observe the change that rural women will bring in their area.

The meeting formally concluded with a vote of thanks from the women leaders to the EU Ambassador and his wife. At this location, the honorable guests also planted the trees, as the foundation of better tomorrow.

The meeting was also attended by Mr. Muhammad Dittal Kalhoro, Ms. Shireen Narejo, Ms. Shandana Khan, Assistant Commissioner, Mr. Fazal Ali Saadi, Mr. Jamal Mustafa Shoro and the SUCCESS Programme team members.

### [Site visit at Moen Jo Daro](#)

After the community meetings, the Ambassador along with his wife visited the historical site of Moen Jo Daro, which is estimated to be 5,000 years old civilization discovered at the Bank of Indus River. The Ambassador firstly visited the site and ruins of the civilization, and later visited the museum where the ambassador was briefed about the history and possible devastation of this civilization.