











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.

LSO Initiatives

LSO Bhit Shah, Matiari

<p>District</p>  <p>Matiari</p>	<p>Union Council</p>  <p>Bhit Shah</p>	<p>Date of Formation</p>  <p>2016</p>	<p>Total Households in Union Council</p>  <p>1,984</p>	<p>Organised Households</p>  <p>1,187</p>	<p>Coverage</p>  <p>60%</p>
	<p>No of Community Organisations (COs)</p>  <p>61 <small>(all women's)</small></p>	<p>Number of Village Organisations (VOs)</p>  <p>7 <small>(all women's)</small></p>	<p>No of General Body Members</p>  <p>28 <small>(all women)</small></p>	<p>No of Executive Committee Members</p>  <p>15 <small>(all women)</small></p>	

Celebration of International Women's Day

For the very first time in the history of district Matiari, LSO Bhit Shah celebrated the International Women's Day on 8th March, 2017. International Women's Day is all about unity, celebration, reflection, advocacy and action - whatever that looks like globally at a local level. Around 77 women, mainly including LSO, VO and CO leaders, participated in the event. Representatives of Pakistan Baitul Maal, HANDS Pakistan and Alif Ailaan Project also attended. Chairman District Council Matiari was the Chief Guest. The purpose of the event, according to the LSO leaders, was to celebrate the achievements of the LSO, and its member VOs and COs, in organising area's women, and harnessing their individual and collective potentials to improve their socio-economic condition in an equitable manner. The women said that one of their vision was to convince each LSO member to plant at least one tree in schools,



Figure 1: World Women's Day Celebration

health centre and other common spaces. This, they said, would improve the UC's environment. They asked the District Council Chairman to provide saplings for the plantation drive. The Chief Guest expressed his pleasant surprise over the awareness level of the women of the area and promised his full support to the



LSO/VO/CO leaders and members in pursuing their development goals. He also promised to arrange plants for the LSO members from the government nurseries.

Vaccination of Domestic Animals in Collaboration with Livestock Department

Domestic animals, especially goats, play a key role in the economy of the rural families. Goat is a source of milk for domestic consumption. Moreover, people sell goats at times of cash need; hence, it is a valuable household asset. Therefore, a large number of LSO members rear goats. However, viral diseases are common in the area, and these diseases not only reduce the productivity of goats, but often take their lives, leaving the poor families with significant losses.



Figure 2: Government Vaccinators in action

Before organising the people of the area into COs, VOs and LSOs, they had little idea about accessing services of the government departments to resolve their common issues. However, once the community members got organised and received trainings under the EU funded SUCCESS Programme, they realised that they can take advantage of government facilities. The LSO leaders first discussed the issue with member VOs and the VOs discussed in their COs and they jointly decided to contact Government Livestock Department for vaccinating their domestic animals against common diseases.

The Livestock Department offered its full support and constituted two vaccination teams headed by

Veterinary Doctors. A date was fixed for vaccination, and the LSO, through its relevant VOs, informed all community members about the vaccination date three days in advance, so that they keep their animals at home, instead of taking them out from grazing.

A total of 700 animals were vaccinated in two villages, free of cost, with the stock of vaccines available with the Livestock Department. The officials of the Livestock Department were very happy with the joint initiative of the LSO. They have submitted demands for acquiring more vaccines to their management and have promised to vaccinate the remaining animals whenever the fresh stock of vaccines is received.

Monitoring Health Project

The Government of Sindh's Health Department is running Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) in the LSO area, under which pregnant women and children of 0 to 23 months are vaccinated. The LSO listed 19 pregnant women who had not been vaccinated. The list was shared with EPI authorities who sent a team of vaccinators, and vaccinated them all.

In this way, the LSO ensured 100% vaccination coverage in its area. In addition, through this initiative, the LSO indirectly sent a message to EPI authorities that now the LSO is monitoring the project activities in a positive manner. This will hopefully contribute towards increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of EPI and other projects.



Figure 3: Pregnant Women vaccinated by EPI staff



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