













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 Ajrak, Jamshoro

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| <p>District</p>  <p>Jamshoro</p> | <p>Union Council</p>  <p>Unerpur</p> | <p>Date of Formation</p>  <p>26 2017</p> | <p>Total Households in Union Council</p>  <p>3,235</p> | <p>Organised Households</p>  <p>2,270</p> | <p>Coverage</p>  <p>70%</p> |
| | <p>Number of Community Organisations (COs)</p>  <p>132 (all women's)</p> | <p>Number of Village Organisations (VOs)</p>  <p>15 (all women's)</p> | <p>Number of General Body Members</p>  <p>32 (all women)</p> | <p>Number of Executive Committee Members</p>  <p>15 (all women)</p> | |

(LSO Profile as of October 2017)

Networking with Government Agencies

A key objective of the LSO is establishment of linkages with local government authorities and other line agencies. These linkages are imperative for the LSO in seeking collaboration and cooperation, as well as accessing the government services to implement the planned development activities of the LSO for socio-economic progress of its members.

The office-bearers of LSO Ajrak contacted the local Social Welfare office to seek guidance on the registration of the LSO. For registering any entity, the Social Welfare Department charges Rs. 10,000 as registration fee. As this was a large amount that the LSO could not afford at this initial stage of formation, the LSO contacted the Chairman of the Union Council for help. The UC Chairman aided the LSO in getting registered by paying for the fee from the UC funds.

After being registered, the LSO started tackling the issues that the members were facing. There were complaints from the members about the Government Vaccinators not regularly performing their duties in far off villages of their UC. In collaboration with the Health Department, the LSO ensured regular visits of the vaccinators in those areas. In addition to this, the LSO also observed that there



Shoab Sultan Khan Chairman RSPN, CEOs NRSP, SRSO and TRDP inaugurating the LSO office



were no teachers in three of the public schools in their UC. The LSO brought this in the notice of the Education Department and ensured appointment of teachers in these schools.

The LSO leaders are also establishing development links with the private sector entities. For instance, member VOs of the LSO were experiencing difficulty in getting their bank accounts opened in the commercial banks. The LSO leaders met with the Branch Manager of the bank and convinced him of opening organisational bank accounts of their member VOs.

Celebration of National Green Day

The Federal Government celebrates 9th February as 'National Green Day' to increase Pakistan's forest cover to mitigate the adverse effects of deforestation and climate change. During the National Green Day, around 100 million indigenous species saplings are planted. On 9th February 2017, LSO Ajrak also celebrated the National Green Day in collaboration with Government Forest Department, where the Director of Forest Department was the Chief Guest. On this occasion, the Chief Guest and other speakers highlighted the importance of plantation of trees across the country. They said that trees play a vital role in mitigating the adverse effects of climate change as they control temperature and are helpful in the elimination of pollution from the surrounding environments. Trees are a source of oxygen for human beings, and are a major source of wood in the rural areas for various purposes. Most importantly, trees provide fruits and food for human, livestock and other living organisms, and have medicinal purposes too. The LSO members were given 200 rooted plants which they distributed among their members for planting on their lands. In addition to that, the CO members planted a large number of trees on their own.



The LSO celebrates National Green Day on 9th February 2017

Campaign for Enrollment of Children in Schools

A key problem in the education of the children in the LSO area is the fact that people do not enrol their girls and boys in schools. There are multiple reasons behind this, including a lack of availability of teachers and other missing facilities in schools. However, these could only be resolved once parents send their children to schools, and then demand from the Government Education Department for

provision of teachers and other missing facilities. Therefore, the LSO first initiated enrolment campaign in each village by their respective VOs and at the UC level by the General Body members of the LSO to increase the enrollment of girls and boys in schools. As a result of that, a large number of new students were enrolled in the local schools. The LSO leaders then contacted the Education Department and demanded to appoint teachers in three schools where there were no teachers. Upon seeing a large number of students already enrolled in the schools, the Education Department immediately arranged three teachers for those schools.

Civil Registration

The LSO, realising the importance of civil registration, is practicing it as an ongoing activity. The emphasis is on preparation of CNIC of newly eligible men and women as well renewal of expired CNICs. The added benefit of CNIC is that according to the new electoral rules, the holder becomes eligible for casting vote in local, provincial and national level elections. The LSO also motivated and supported over 100 members to obtain birth certificates of their new born. The registration of marriage with NADRA is a difficult task, therefore, most couples do not register their marriages. However, after the awareness raising of the LSO, 10 couples have registered their marriages with NADRA.

Awareness Raising on Maternity Issues

The rural women face serious health problems due to mishandling during pregnancies and deliveries. The most common causes of maternity related health issues include a lack of practice of birth spacing measures, delivery at homes in the hands of inexperienced local women, lack of vaccination of pregnant women and no timely check-up of pregnant women by a professional health worker. The LSO, through its CAT awareness programmes, conducted by the Community Resource Persons (CRPs) in monthly meetings of COs is providing knowledge and awareness to its members on these subjects. As a result of these efforts, women are now increasingly adopting birth spacing measures, and getting vaccinations.



LSO meeting in progress



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