



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 under SUCCESS, mobilise rural women 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 Bisima, Dadu

District Dadu	Union Council Allahabad	Date of Formation Jan 26 2017	Total Households in Union Council 2,702	Organised Households 2,078	Coverage 77%
	Number of Community Organisations (COs) 122 (all women's)	Number of Village Organisations (VOs) 7 (all women's)	Number of General Body Members 28 (all women)	Number of Executive Committee Members 15 (all women)	

(LSO Profile as of December 2017)

LSO Bisima, founded in December 2017, represents a total of 2,078 organised households from the district of Dadu. Women leaders of LSO Bisima are actively engaged in forming linkages with their local government, and raising awareness in their communities on social issues such as maternal health, education and child marriages. The EU funded SUCCESS programme is empowering rural women in Sindh through realising the power they gain from collective action. The organised women now are gaining awareness about their rights and making the service providers accountable and also taking self-initiatives to improve their lives.



Female leaders of LSO Bisima brief male community members on the progress of their LSO

Engaging with Government and Other Development Actors

During the social mobilisation processes under the EU funded SUCCESS Programme, the women leaders of LSO Bisima learnt about the roles and responsibilities of local government authorities, line departments and other development actors. They also realised about the importance of establishing institutional linkages with them to access the services of local government authorities and line departments and their resources for implementation of development activities. As a result, the women leaders are actively contacting the government and non-government agencies to seek their support. For example, the women office-bearers of LSO Bisima contacted the Social Welfare Officer to seek guidance on the registration procedures and registration fee etc. and the access of the official forms for registration of their LSO. Subsequently, they completed the documentation process, paid the registration fee and applied for the registration.

The LSO leaders also utilised the knowledge of the importance of forming linkages with the government departments when they received complaints from the member COs/VOs that the teachers in the remote villages were not performing their duties on regular basis. They raised the issue with the Education Department and the department ensured to take action against the absentee teachers. As a result, the attendance of the teachers has improved in two government schools.



A majority of the people of UC Allahabad did not have a National Identity Card (NIC). After learning that having a NIC is a civic right of every citizen of the country, the LSO office bearers approached NADRA to obtain CNICs for the community members. The LSO and NADRA arranged for NADRA's mobile van for preparation of CNIC cards for their members. As a result of this 150 women and men received their CNICs at their doorsteps. This not only saved their valuable time of traveling to and from the town centre but also saved around Rs. 2,500 per person, which they would have had to pay on travel cost and documentation.

In another instance, the local Branch Manager of the First Micro Finance Bank was reluctant to open bank accounts of member VOs only on the basis of the notification certificate issued by the Deputy Commissioner. The Manager was asking for registration certificate from Social Welfare Department or any other authorised government body. The LSO leaders held a meeting with the Bank Manager and explained about the notification facility provided to COs/VOs/LSOs established under SUCCESS programme by the Government of Sindh and finally convinced him to open organizational bank accounts of VOs. All 7 VOs have opened their bank accounts with the bank.



NADRA mobile unit preparing CNICs for the LSO members in their village

Actions on Maternity Issues

Due to a lack of awareness and misperceptions and mishandling during pregnancies and deliveries, the women of UC Allahabad face serious health problems. Very few women in the re-productive age adopt birth spacing measures. The pregnant women are reluctant to take vaccination and carry out timely check-up by a professional health worker. The LSO is raising awareness among the community members through its community awareness sessions using the Community Awareness Toolkit (CAT) by the SUCCESS programme. These sessions are delivered by Community Resource Persons (CRPs) in monthly meetings of COs, and are focused on twelve different topics. The first topic is about mother and child health, and includes all the relevant information about vaccination during pregnancies, as well as vaccinations for the new-borns. As a result of these efforts, women are now increasingly adopting birth spacing measures, and getting vaccinations. So far, around 30 women have visited health centres and obtained birth-spacing measures. In addition, 31 pregnant women have been immunised and 25 children have been vaccinated.

Plantation Campaign

On the occasion of Green Pakistan Day, celebrated by the Government of Pakistan, to increase tree plantation across the country, the women LSO leaders met with the Government Forest Department and offered their cooperation. The Forest Department issued 200 rooted plants to the LSO on April 21, 2017. The LSO distributed them among its member VOs and the VOs gave them to CO members who planted them on their land and took responsibility for their protection.



LSO members planting trees on the occasion of Green Pakistan Day

Actions Against Early and Forced Child Marriages

The practice of child, early and forced marriage occurs in all regions of Pakistan with the highest prevalence in the province of Sindh. The practice disproportionately affects the girl child. The LSO leaders learnt about the existing government laws about protecting children from the abuse of early and forced marriages through the CRP awareness raising sessions and decided to take firm steps for controlling such practices in their area in future. They decided to first convince the parents and family members to abstain from practicing such unlawful acts, if however, they wouldn't stop the practice they will tell them that such cases would be reported to the local Police Station through the UC Chairman.

Enrollment of out of school Children

Education is a basic right for every human and has now become a standard to measure the social progress of nations. However, a large number of school aged girls and boys in UC Allahabad are still not enrolled into schools. To address the issue, the LSO first raised the awareness of the members about the importance of education of their children through community meetings and CRP sessions in COs. The LSO then launched an enrollment enhancement campaign in their union council. Resultantly, 137 children including 85 girls and 52 boys have been enrolled in government schools of different villages in their UC.



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