



Sindh Union Council and Community Economic
Strengthening Support Programme
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REPORT

EXPERIENCE SHARING & LESSONS LEARNING WORKSHOP

13 – 14 March, 2018
Sukkur, Sindh, Pakistan

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INTRODUCTION

As part of the European Union funded Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support (SUCCESS) Programme's Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN) component, representatives of the National Rural Support Programme, Thardeep Rural Support Programme, Sindh Rural Support Organisation, Rural Support Programme Network, P&D GoS, UCBPRP, district government, councillors, technical partners - EY, Enclude, IRM, ZABtech, and SDPI, Radio Pakistan and independent media observers undertook an experience sharing and learning visit to Sukkur, Larkana, and Kamber Shahdadkot on 13 March, 2018.

The objective of the learning visit was to observe and understand the ways in which the SUCCESS Programme is contributing to improve the lives of rural women in the targeted areas through a well-planned out Community Driven Local Development (CDLD) approach – in collaboration with the Government of Sindh and the Union Council Based Poverty Reduction Programme (UCBPRP). The visit was aimed at sharing experiences and learnings of the communities and SUCCESS implementing partners in the second year of the implementation of the programme. The field visit was followed by an Experience Sharing and Learning Workshop on 14 March, 2018. The participants interacted with the beneficiaries of the programme at grassroots and gained insight into how Community Institutions (CIs) work synergistically to trigger change at various levels. Particular attention was given to interaction with community members, formation process of CIs, success stories, technical and vocational trainings, and meetings with Government of Sindh officials.

This report provides an overview of the visit and workshop, background information and objectives, a summary of the presentations and discussions, and suggestions for next steps. Copies of presentation slides and other support material can be found on the SUCCESS Programme website: www.success.org.pk

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Overview

On March 13, 2018, a delegation of representatives from the National Rural Support Programme, Thardeep Rural Support Programme, Sindh Rural Support Organisation, Rural Support Programme Network, P&D GoS, UCBPRP, district government, councillors, technical partners - EY, Enclude, IRM, ZABtech, and SDPI, Radio Pakistan and independent media observers gathered in Sukkur, at SRSO Office, which became a base point for the lessons learning and experience sharing activity. The visit programme was divided into two parts: (a) a one-day field visit to Larkana and Kamber Shahdadkot, and (b) a half-day lessons learnt and experience sharing workshop and progress review of the SUCCESS programme.

The day one of the learning visit commenced with travel to different villages in Larkana and Kamber Shahdadkot to observe and participate in various activities undertaken by the Community Institutions under the SUCCESS programme. The delegation travelled to their first destination - LSO Lashari, Village Sajjan Hakro, Taluka Ratto Dero, District Larkana, where the esteemed guests Mr Shoaib Sultan Khan, RSPN and SRSO Chairman, and Mr Athar Hussain Mirani, Additional Secretary Finance Government of Sindh, inaugurated the newly constructed LSO office. The LSO leaders gave presentations about the achievements and strengths, and the challenges faced by the community institutions (COs/VOs/LSO) formed under the SUCCESS programme. The LSO leaders also talked about how the SUCCESS Programme has empowered them to undertake local development efforts outside of the programme's scope. The second stop of the field visit was Village Wahid Bux Gopang, UC Thoof Chousool, District Kamber Shahdadkot. The community there had successfully implemented a Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) scheme of street pavement. The community members requested Mr Shoaib Sultan Khan to inaugurate the scheme. After the inauguration, the entire community and the delegation gathered in a beautifully set up tent, which the members had filled up with their handicrafts to welcome the guests. The Deputy Commissioner of Kamber Shahdadkot, Mr Shah Mir Bhutto, also joined the gathering of women community members. As part of the programme, the various COs, VOs, and LSOs from Larkana and Kamber Shahdadkot, gave presentations about their institutions, their achievements to date, followed by success stories and various self-help initiatives they have undertaken - such as tree plantation, raising awareness about education and early age marriages, reproductive health and family planning, and hygiene and street cleaning, among others. Mr Shoaib Sultan Khan addressed the audience and said that he was grateful to all the people who had gathered to meet the delegation. He expressed his appreciation to all the CI leaders for their devotion towards the cause of rural development, poverty alleviation, and most importantly – self-help. The delegation moved on to Circuit House Larkana, for a stakeholder session and to meet the Commissioner Larkana Division where he and his team arranged lunch for the participants. Mr Khan briefed the government representatives about the SUCCESS Programme's achievements and urged to the commissioner that his support was crucial to the cause of rural development in his districts. To which the Commissioner promised that his undying support is there for the programme and to the cause. He claimed that the doors of his office are always open to the RSP teams and they would be happy to help in any way possible. The next stop for the delegation was the Szabist ZABtech - Institute of Technical and Vocational Education, Larkana. The training component of the SUCCESS programme has been contracted to the ZABtech and IRM – the former has active centres in six of the eight SUCCESS districts. The delegation members met the different beneficiaries of the trainings in tailoring and

embroidery, beautician, and computers' courses. The SUCCESS partners decided to meet after the visit to discuss the possibilities of expanding the scope of trainings to ensure employability and marketability.

On day-two, a half-day workshop took place in SRSO Office, Sukkur, to discuss the lessons learnt with the participants. Moreover, the SUCCESS partners presented their respective organisations' progress review up to January 31, 2018. Mr Dittal Kalhoro, Chief Executive Officer – SRSO, officially commenced the workshop by welcoming all the guests. He gave a brief introduction of the SUCCESS programme and explained the main objective behind the learning visit and the experience-sharing workshop. Mr Jai Prakash from Thardeep Rural Support Programme (TRDP) presented the progress of his organisation for the second year of the SUCCESS programme. Mr Jamal M Shoro presented the progress review of SRSO and highlighted the challenges in detail. Mr Ghulam Mustafa Jamro presented the progress review of NRSP for the four districts of Tando Muhammad Khan, Tando Allahyar, Matiari, and Sujawal. Mr Ghulam Rasool Samejo presented progress of UCBPRP expansion phase to the participants, highlighting the new districts and initiatives taken. After the progress review by each implementing partner, representatives of various CIs in SUCCESS shared their experiences with the guests. Community representatives from the UCBPRP expansion districts also talked about their experiences. Lastly, the esteemed guests gave their speeches. Mr Shoaib Sultan Khan addressed the audience, thanking every member of the delegation for being a part of the learning visit. He also expressed his gratitude towards the Government of Sindh for their hospitality and support. Speaking on the occasion, Athar Hussain Mirani, Additional Secretary Finance, Government of Sindh, expressed his admiration for the organisation of community institutions and especially mentioned the importance of Vocational Trainings to strengthen the poor people of rural communities, which will in turn improve the service delivery of the government. The challenges and lessons learnt have been categorised according to different topics and are a part of the lessons learnt section of the report.



Day One – Field Visits

The day one of the learning visit commenced with travel to different villages in Larkana and Kamber Shahdadkot to observe and participate in various activities undertaken by the Community Institutions under the SUCCESS programme. These programme districts are managed by the Sindh Rural Support Organisation (SRSO).

The delegation travelled to their first destination - **LSO Lashari, Village Sajjan Hakro, Taluka Ratto Dero, District Larkana**, situated at a distance of 83kms from Sukkur. Mr Shoaib Sultan Khan, RSPN and SRSO Chairman, and Mr Athar Hussain Mirani, Additional Secretary Finance Government of Sindh, inaugurated the newly constructed LSO office.

After the ribbon and cake cutting ceremony, Ms Farida Meher, Ms Saeeda, and Ms Munawar Begum – Chairperson, General Secretary, and Treasurer of LSO Lashari, respectively, gave presentations about the achievements and strengths, and the challenges faced by the community institutions (COs/VOs/LSO) formed under the SUCCESS programme. They presented in detail about the households organised into CIs and claimed that the newly formed LSO Lashari comprised of 13 VOs and 82 COs. They highlighted the number of trainings (153 CMST, 27 VO LMSTs, 3 LSO LMSTs, 6 Book Keeping trainings and CRP trainings) they had successfully conducted. The presenters also told the participants that 194 Micro Health Insurance (MHI) cards



were given to members under the SUCCESS Programme.

The LSO leaders also talked about how the SUCCESS Programme has empowered them to undertake local development efforts outside of the programme's scope. They gave examples of their efforts such as the setting up of free medical camp by the LSO to support the local Larkana health practitioner, and dialogue with local councillors and relevant government line departments about local development plans. The presenters also highlighted the challenges they initially faced when the CIs were being formed, especially the resistance given by the male counterparts and local community leaders.

Mr Shoaib Sultan Khan questioned the presenters about the various concepts in the process of effective community mobilisation and formation of the community institutions to gauge their understanding about the programme and its efficacy on ground. He quizzed the members about knowledge of the exact number of Micro Investment Plans (MIPs) that they have helped develop and the ideas generated by the beneficiaries to reduce poverty. He also inquired about the challenges they were facing and suggested viable solutions and stressed that the leaders of the LSO should have hands-on knowledge of the MIPs that they have developed, their savings, the facilities available in their area, and their plans. He motivated them by saying that they were doing a great job but still had a long way to go to amplify their voice to the higher levels in the government.

The LSO members also presented success stories and the participants were greatly impressed by the enthusiasm with which the LSO was working towards improving the conditions of their communities. The media personnel recorded interviews of the Social Organisers, Community Resource

Persons (CRPs), and the beneficiaries of the programme.

Khalida – an active SO in the area, while giving an interview slot to Radio Pakistan representative, claimed, *“These are women who were not allowed to go out of their homes and today I feel proud when I see them gathered here to inaugurate our office. I myself was not allowed by my brother to go out of my house, and the community people used to talk negatively about me, but I did not stop because I knew that somebody had to take initiative for mentalities of people in our community to change, and today, I am a successful and respected woman.”*

Mr Inam Soomro, Producer Radio Pakistan, was amazed to see the progress made by these rural women after interviewing Khalida and said, *“I myself belong to a rural village of Sindh, but have been base in Islamabad for many years now. I am amazed beyond words to see that these women have come out of their homes and talking so confidently and with so much vigour that it is hard to believe that these are the same women who used to be confined to just household chores like sweeping, cooking, and doing dishes. Their enthusiasm is unmatched.”*

The LSO had also arranged for a tree-plantation activity where the visiting



guests planted trees inside the premises of the LSO office. The community members presented the traditional token of gratitude – Ajrak, to the guests and group photos were taken.

The second stop of the field visit was Village Wahid Bux Gopang, UC Thoof Chousool, District Kamber Shahdadkot, situated at a distance of 95 km from Sukkur and 21 km from Larkana. The community there had successfully implemented a Community Physical Infrastructure (CPI) scheme of street pavement. The community members requested Mr Shoib Sultan Khan to inaugurate the scheme.

After the inauguration, the entire community and the delegation gathered in a beautifully set up tent, which the members had filled up with their handicrafts to welcome the guests. Over 200 project beneficiaries participated in the gathering.

The Deputy Commissioner of Kamber Shahdadkot, Mr Shah Mir Bhutto, also joined the gathering of women community members. Mr Bhutto's presence substantiated the extent to which the SUCCESS Programme has effectively strengthened the linkages between Government of Sindh and the Community Institutions of the area.

As part of the programme, the various COs, VO, and LSOs from Larkana and Kamber Shahdadkot, gave presentations about their institutions, their achievements to date, MHI, CIF, IGG, and Trainings under the SUCCESS Programme, followed by success stories. The women talked about the MHI and its importance – especially the consequential reduction in their health expenditure. The saved income can instead increase spending in improvement of their living standards. The enabling of these women to support the family, whether through MHI, CIF, or IGG, has earned them respect and power



within their households and they are supported by their male counterparts.

They also highlighted the classification of MIPs received from the community members and it was observed that livestock rearing was the most prominent and common investment plan. President of LSO Sarwan, UC Mithodero, District Larkana claimed that her LSO had received 4.9m Rupees disbursement, out of which they have given out 870,000 to four villages comprising of 61 households who have invested in agriculture, livestock, and other small enterprises. Moreover, LSO Sarwan has also used its accumulated savings for internal lending to 50 households in time of need.

The CIs' members also talked about the various initiatives that they have undertaken in their respective areas, such as tree plantation, raising awareness about education and early age marriages, reproductive health and family planning, and hygiene and street cleaning, among others.



Nadia – President of VO Nau Shahr Juneja Jogi, UC Sijawal while presenting her VO profile said that after PSC Survey of 161 households in their village, 88 were identified to be within the 0-23 range, out of which 78 were successfully organised. They had given out eleven health cards

out of which six had already been used. She also claimed that her VO has savings of 85,000 Rupees, which they use to help the village people. She gave example of a woman who borrowed 5,000 Rupees to help her husband set up a vegetable stall and after this successful investment and subsequent return; she has returned the money, which has been added to the savings pool again. The savings have helped her husband to start earning a livelihood for the family and has enabled them to climb up the poverty score towards betterment. The savings have also helped a member woman's daughter who was facing major complications during her pregnancy, and with the savings, the CI was able to finance her caesarean surgery to save not only the daughter, but also her newborn baby. Nadia said that her LSO has also undertaken other community development initiatives and has planted 15 trees, sent five girls to middle school by convincing their parents, cleaned 3 streets, and performed a tableau to raise awareness about the repercussions of early-age marriages.

She also highlighted the event of opening of a school in her village, which was inaugurated by Mr Shah Mir Bhutto, and as a result, 100 kids have started going to school which has reopened after nine years. In addition, the VO had received a CPI scheme for water hand pumps worth 302,000 Rupees and as a result, 161 households have benefitted from the installation of eight hand pumps in November 2017.

She also claimed that they have successfully led to the issuance of CNICs to 13 women. Nadia requested the government officials that, *"we community people support you, and you are our reach to the higher level, we request you to support us and be our voice at Government meetings. We hope you will elevate our issues and do the needful. You*

have access to the top-tier and are our representative – we are counting on you.”

The CRPs also shared their achievements regarding the Community Awareness Toolkit (CAT) sessions they have undertaken for outreach and mobilisation. A Larkana based LSO shared that six CRPs have conducted CAT sessions on topics ranging from maternal and newborn health and WASH to environment and education. The CAT sessions are conducted at an interval of 15 days and there are 12 CAT sessions in total. These sessions are aimed at sensitising and capacitating the rural women on crosscutting issues that require attention.

During the presentations, a young woman narrated an interesting story of her empowerment and competition with her brother. She said that it had been over a year that her brother had been going to the bank to get an account opened for his mother, but his efforts ended in vain and he told the family that he could not put in any more effort. She said that, *“I told my brother that I will get the account opened and he just laughed at me and said that I have been running back and forth to the bank for a year and have been unsuccessful, what makes you think you can do it? This was a challenge for me so I went to the bank manager and told him that if you do not open my account I would not leave. I said there for the whole day and by 4 pm., they had to take notice, so they called me and told me to fill the forms so they can open the account. When I called my brother, I was so happy, because not only had I achieved an almost impossible task, but also more because I was able to do what he could not. My triumph impressed him and he appreciated me. That day onward, he always respects my opinion and never shuts me down.”*

Mr Shoaib Sultan Khan addressed the audience and said that he was grateful to all the people for attending the activity

and to meeting the delegation. He expressed his appreciation to all the CI leaders for their devotion towards the cause of rural development, poverty alleviation, and most importantly – self-help. He claimed that if was not for their own initiatives, the community would not have been able to progress as much as they have. He gave examples of similar works from different parts of the world and explained how the communities’ own efforts have helped pull them out of poverty – for good.

Mr Bhutto appreciated the efforts of the community members and the RSPs for their hard work to reduce poverty in the province of Sindh. He expressed his support towards the cause and said that his team would do whatever is possible to support the SUCCESS Programme and the community in their movement towards eradicating poverty. He said that these women coming together is like a social tsunami, tsunami can be a bad thing, but this tsunami is good, it hits poverty, and will bring real societal change. Mr Khan and Mr Bhutto also presented CIF cheques to community members.



The delegation moved on to **Circuit House Larkana**, for a stakeholder session and to meet the Commissioner Larkana Division where he and his team arranged lunch for the participants. The participants, led by Mr Khan expressed their gratitude and Mr Khan briefed the government representatives about the SUCCESS Programme's achievements. He urged to the commissioner that his support was crucial to the cause of rural development in his districts. He requested the Commissioner and his team to look into the issue of closed schools, absentee teachers, and dilapidated conditions of existing schools because negligence towards education is the biggest hurdle in the way of development. He appreciated the support received from the Government of Sindh in the various activities of SUCCESS Programme and other projects being undertaken by the RSPs in Sindh and especially thanked the GoS in supporting the notification of the LSOs. He acknowledged the participation of Government officials in the activities undertaken by SUCCESS Programme and claimed that their presence is a motivation for the community members. To which the Commissioner promised that his undying

support is there for the programme and to the cause. He claimed that the doors of his office are always open to the RSP teams and they would be happy to help in any way possible. He assured his full support to the civil work requests by the women leadership of SUCCESS Programme's CIs and appreciated the efforts being undertaken by Mr Khan and his team to formalise the Joint Development Committees (JDCs) at Taluka Level. He also acknowledged the European Union's support through technical assistance for the CDLD policy and appreciated the efforts undertaken by SZABTECH in the TVST component of the SUCCESS Programme. The commissioner appreciated the SUCCESS programme's efforts for poverty reduction and emphasised that education reforms should be tied to these efforts at the grassroots to initiate reform, as quality education will address this problem in the future.



The next stop for the delegation was the Szabist ZABtech - Institute of Technical and Vocational Education, Larkana. The training component of the SUCCESS programme has been contracted to the aforementioned institution, which has active centres in six of the eight SUCCESS districts. The director of the institute, Ms Waheeda Mahesar, was also a part of the delegation and she led the tour. The delegation members met the different beneficiaries of the trainings in tailoring and embroidery, beautician, and computers' courses. The TVST training comprises of both men and women beneficiaries. However, the participants observed that the trainings' topics have been restricted to conventional areas. There is potential for advanced training areas, which the participants can be a part of, but these areas need exploration. The SUCCESS partners decided to meet after the visit to discuss the possibilities of expanding the scope of trainings to ensure employability and marketability rather than run-of-the-mill topics.





Day Two - Workshop Proceedings

Welcome Note

Mr Dittal Kalhoro, Chief Executive Officer – SRSO, officially commenced the workshop by welcoming all the guests, learning visit delegation, the community members, government officials and elected representatives for participating the event. He also gave an introduction of SRSO and explained that the organisation is currently working in ten districts of Sindh, namely Sukkur, Khairpur, Ghotki, Naushero Feroz, Sh. Benazirabad, Shikarpur, Jacobabad, Larkana, Kashmore-Kandhkot, and Kamber-Shahdadkot.

He gave a brief introduction of the SUCCESS programme and explained the main objective behind the learning visit and the experience-sharing workshop. He said that in his opinion there are three main reasons why the European Union has invested in the programme: a. RSPs' leadership, b. Government of Sindh, and c. the organised community members of UCBPRP. He said, *"I, on behalf of SRSO, am thankful to GoS, Shoaib Sultan Khan, and community members for their undying support to eradicating poverty from Sindh. I am thankful to our guests for taking out time and visiting Larkana and Kamber Shahdadkot yesterday to observe the activities being undertaken in the field and interacting with the community members. I am hopeful that this visit and workshop will give you all an insight into the SUCCESS programme and its two years of effective and efficient implementation."*

Progress Review

Thardeep Rural Support Programme

Mr Jai Prakash from Thardeep Rural Support Programme (TRDP) presented the progress of his organisation for the second year of the SUCCESS programme. He highlighted that TRDP is responsible for programme implementation in two districts: Dadu and Jamshoro.

He claimed that out of the 248,537 households (HHs), TRDP has reached out to 60% (149,148), 54% and 63% in Jamshoro and Dadu, respectively. He also highlighted that TRDP has reached 75% settlements, 100% Union Councils (UCs), and 93% Revenue Villages (RVs). The outreach in terms of Community Institutions for TRDP at the end of year 2 stands at 85% COs, 94% VOs, and 60% LSOs formed, against the targets. Moreover, as a percentage of the targeted trainings, 84% CMST, 95% LMST, and 103% Activists Workshops have been conducted. Total 77% of Micro Health Insurance target for year two has been met with 5 panel hospitals, 305 member claims, and 2 medical camps formed. He explained the concept of MHI in SUCCESS and highlighted that a coverage of 25,000 Rupees for each individual was available against a premium of only 1,000 Rupees. He claimed that 3.6m (12.19%) claims have been made against a premium of 29m Rupees.

Sub-granting to the LSOs and VOs has, however, been behind the plans due to long drawn out issue of bank accounts not being opened for the CIs as they are considered to be high-risk accounts, this issue has now been resolved to some extent by opening accounts in NRSP and UBL banks, while talks are in process with

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NRSP
National Rural Support Programme



Allied Bank. CIF disbursed to 15 LSOs was 52m (28.8%) against targeted 180m, similarly IGG disbursed to 47 VOs was 10m (7.3%) against targeted 141m, and CPI given was 15m (16.8%) against planned 87m. Mr Prakash also talked about the bank accounts' status of the CIs.

Mr Prakash highlighted the achievements of TRDP in year two of SUCCESS Programme as:

- CIs exist in 75% settlements/villages of the two districts
- Refusals and unwilling communities have now been approached to participate in the programme
- Scaled-up Visibility of the programme has boosted its image among communities and other stakeholders
- Strong linkages with government have been formed
- All JDCs at taluka and district level have been notified and have conducted meetings
- PSC has been validated by DC Dadu, VO/LSO have been notified and DC

has directed to all departments to have a formal MoU with TRDP

- CRPs and LSOs support in polio campaign and training by health department on polio
- Sharing of list of 217 schools to be renovated by government (it will give support to 22 VDPs)
- TRDP shared list of closed schools identified by CIS as per decision of district JDC Dadu
- Enrolment of out of school children has commenced
- Election commission and NADRA in collaboration with CIs have registered women voters and given them CNICs
- As per decision of JDC both Agriculture and Livestock departments will conduct sessions at community level with field officers and/or extension workers

Sindh Rural Support Organisation

Mr Jamal M Shoro presented the progress review of SRSO, covering the second year of the SUCCESS Programme. He started with claiming that SRSO's outreach under SUCCESS Programme is 267,823 HHs, in

3,800 Settlements, in 429 RVs, and in 99 UCs in the 2 SRSO Districts: namely Larkana and Kamber Shahdadkot. He further highlighted the score-wise breakup of the Poverty Scorecard (PSC) Survey results for the two districts and claimed that 12% of the population of the areas fall between 0 – 11, 23% in 12 – 18, and 19% between 19 – 23, while 46% fall between 24 – 100. He further gave breakdowns for the two districts as well.

Mr Shoro explained the detailed graphs about the organised versus the targeted HHs, according to poverty score bands and districts. For the second year of the programme, SRSO had targeted to organise 75% of the HHs, which were reached out i.e. 200,867 out of 267,823. However, they successfully organised 71% of the targeted HHs, i.e. 141,740. He also claimed that against the targeted number of Community Institutions to be formed, 80% COs, 84% VOs, and 62% LSOs had successfully been established. Moreover, under the capacity building head, Mr Shoro said that against the targets, 78% CMST, 83% LMST VO, 77% LMST LSO, 80% Activists Workshops, 48% CRPs' trainings, and 64% CBK trainings were successfully conducted.

Mr Shoro also talked about the successful formation of 100% Joint Development Committees (JDCs) against targets and 10 out of 26 target for meetings had also been achieved. However, the capacity building of Local Government Officials and Community Representatives of District strategic planning (committee members) trainings plus exposure visit was not undertaken at all while the target was 26. In addition, the TVST head remained considerably behind targets with only 5% of planned numbers being achieved.

Mr Shoro also said that only 4% of the targeted amount of CIF was disbursed to the CIs i.e. 14m out of 371m, while none of it has been recovered so far. He also highlighted that out the total amount, the

investments made were 13% in Agriculture, 17% Enterprise, 69% in Livestock, and 1% in other trades. While the IGG disbursement was considerably better than CIF as it stood at 53.91% of targeted amount disbursed. Pertaining to MHI, Mr Shoro claimed that 79% of targeted HHs have been insured and 23% claims have been filed against the premium.

As of March 10, 2018, Community needs were identified through formation of 681 VDPs i.e. 100% target had been achieved, out of which 77% VDPs have been tested for feasibility. The number of CPIs initiated stood at 13% against the target of 542 and the completed CPIs were 6% of 270 targeted.

National Rural Support Programme

Mr Ghulam Mustafa Jamro presented the progress review of NRSP for the four districts of Tando Muhammad Khan, Tando Allahyar, Matiari, and Sujawal. He gave a district wise breakup of the PSC Census, and claimed that 85% HHs had been covered. As far as population is concerned, 100% coverage was achieved. He explained this variation by stating that use of Android and focused monitoring has resulted in controlling artificial splitting of households causing the reduction in household number by 14%. Household size has increased by 16%, which has resulted in more than 100% coverage of target population.

Mr Jamro also gave a district wise breakdown of the poverty bands; with Sujawal have the highest percentage of 0-23 PSC Score HHs i.e. 67%. He also claimed that NRSP's social mobilisation teams have successfully reached out to 179,176 HHs, in 618 RVs, in 119 UCs, in 14 Tehsils.



Mr Jamro also claimed that against the - 96.9% COs, 110% VOs, and 111% LSOs have been formed against the targets till February 2018. As far as bank accounts are concerned, NRSP was successful in 490 Accounts for 9024 COs, 427 Accounts for 978 VOs, and 85 Accounts for 99 LSOs. He also claimed that 95% of VOs and 96% of LSOs have been registered/notified.

When discussing the Local Development Plans, Mr Jamro said that 42% COs had made MIPs for their HHs, 37% VOs had developed VDPs, and 39% LSOs had drafted their UCDPs. NRSP, like SRSO, has successfully met 100% target of creating 18 JDCs, however they have only had eight meetings, which is 22% of the targeted number of meetings to be held by JDCs in the second year of SUCCESS Programme.

NRSP has been considerably ahead in conducting trainings and has successfully achieved targets by 99% for CMST, 113% LMST for VOs, 107% LMST for LSOs, 99% Activist Workshops, 101% field staff trained on CAT, 118% CRP trainings on CIF and CAT. However, the number of

TVSTs remained very low, standing at 6.2% of the targeted number. Mr Jamro also discussed the type of TVSTs they are undertaking in the four NRSP districts and the enrolment ratios for males and females.

Mr Jamro stated that 108m Rupees CIF has been disbursed to LSOs/VOs, which is only 30% of the targeted amount to be given. While for IGG, a total of 6.39m Rupees has been given to VOs only, against a target of 132m Rupees for the year, hence the achievement stands at a meagre 5%. However, the numbers for MHI coverage are very promising, with 99% targets achieved for coverage and 1.35m Rupees of claims paid, which 3.43 ratio to premium investment.

In case of CPIs, Mr Jamro stated that only 13% of targeted number of CPIs have been initiated while none has been completed so far.

Union Council Based Poverty Reduction Programme - Expansion

Mr Ghulam Rasool Samejo presented progress of UCBPRP expansion phase to the participants. He started by giving a

highlight of the programme and its six operation districts with claimed that the project will cover 1,023,605 HHs and presented briefly the PSC Survey results as per score bands, and claimed that 93% of HHs have been surveyed.

Giving a progress review against targets, Mr Samejo claimed that targets had been met by 71% HHs organised, 76 COs formed, 61% VOs formed, and 7% LSOs have been formed. He also talked in detail about the targets achieved for various interventions, stating that 3% IGG and 20% CIF targets have been met. TVSTs undertaken stood at 26% against targeted numbers, 70% CMSTs and CIF Need Identification and Bookkeeping have been conducted. The 25% target has been achieved for management and planned trainings for VOs. UCBPRP has successfully developed its MIS dashboard and has held two district level workshops, against a target of six workshops to be held by February 2018.

A great achievement for the programme was the participation of Chairman People's Party of Pakistan (PPP) Mr Bilawal Bhutto, along with his team of MNAs, MPAs, Commissioner and Deputies, and others at the UCBPRP Provincial Launching Ceremony.

Mr Samejo also talked about the technical issues being faced by the organization in their MIS (ERP & Android).

Experience Sharing by Community Members

After the progress review by each implementing partner, representatives of various CIs were called to share their experiences with the guests. Four women community leaders: Ms Iffat Batool and Marvi from LSO Ibtada and Ms Saeeda - from VO Hamzo Bhatti of Kamber Shahdadkot, and Ms Samreen from VO Gathar of Larkana, and Ms Parveen and Ms Rabia of Co Sindhu in District Larkana

presented about the work they have done through CIs in their communities.

Ms Batool said, *"I belong to an educated family of Punjab, and when I got married in Sindh, especially in a rural village of Kamber Shahdadkot, it was difficult for me to adjust. I wanted to do something for my community women but did not know what and how. I first joined the CO, and then established the VO, now I am a representative of our LSO Ibtada, and I feel honoured that I can do something for my sisters. We realised that there was no proper system of blood donation in our community and when somebody required blood in emergency, they were unaware of what to do. Therefore, we have established a network of blood donation – people can reach out to it when they require blood and we maintain the blood group data of our community. This is an example of how, when women get together, they can solve community issues."*

Ms Parveen and Ms Rabia, when talking about their CO Sindhu's efforts to help community members narrated an incident where the superstitious society was carrying out an inhumane act and their CO's intervention saved a life.



Ms Parveen said, *"In our community, people believe in spirits possessing the bodies of those who are behaving against the usual norms. However, our CO believes that this is nothing more than superstition, which is being used to ensure that women stay under strong hold of men in our patriarchal structure. Once, a young pregnant woman of our community was taken to an old man – called a 'pir', to fix a woman who the society believed was possessed because she was outspoken and bold and did not submit to all the demands of her in-laws and used to have epilepsy fits because of stress. She kept calling out to us for help saying that 'I am Safia and not a spirit, please help me!' Therefore, we decided to intervene. We told the people that this woman needs medical assistance and not a 'pir'. We were many women so they could not just send us away and allowed us to help the poor woman. If we were not united and confident, which was only due to our 'tanzeem' (Community Institution), and then this would never have been possible."*

Community representatives from the UCBPRP expansion districts also talked about their experiences. Ms Mehnaz from Shikarpur, Ms Ruqina from Kashmore, and Ms Soomri from Jacobabad shared their work and stories with the participants of the workshop.

Remarks by Guests

Shoaib Sultan Khan addressed the audience, thanking every member of the delegation for being a part of the learning visit. He also expressed his gratitude towards the Government of Sindh for their hospitality and support. Mr Khan said, *"I am thankful to these rural women who have joined us today as representatives of their communities, and all those women who are working day and night to improve their living conditions. They are the diamonds of their communities and this nation, and it would not have been possible to achieve what we have without them. I am also thankful to SRSO, TRDP, NRSP, and RSPN and all other partners who are working diligently on rural development; it is not an easy task. My heart swells with joy looking at how the SUCCESS programme is helping communities at grassroots; this is the crux of rural development. I am especially thankful to the Government of Sindh because if they had not given us the opportunity then all these efforts would have been in vain and nothing would have been successful. We have a team of people who are experts in their fields and have worked with the Government for a very long time; it makes me especially happy that they are working so that development reaches the people who actually need it. I would specially like to thank the media personnel present here with us today, they are our voice and they are the ones who will amplify the communities' needs and demands at a higher level, and create the adequate pressure and hype needed to achieve the anticipated results."*

Speaking on the occasion, Athar Hussain Mirani, Additional Secretary Finance, Government of Sindh, expressed his admiration for the organisation of community institutions by saying that, *“The idea of forming Community Institutions is very effective and efficient in organising people from rural poor households into units which enables them to raise their voice as well as work on self-help initiatives. I believe that these people can be strengthened with our support and the guidance of the rural support programmes, especially with the training and capacity building system that is being implemented under SUCCESS and UCBPRP. It gives us the opportunity to harness the potential of the communities and it will translate into improvement of government’s service delivery system as well. I am impressed by the progress made and hope that these efforts would reap multi-fold rewards.*



Lessons Learnt

Poverty Scorecard and MIS

- The MIS has led to accurate Poverty targeting with focus on 0-23 poverty band.
- MIS has resulted in more transparent and accurate programme implementation. However, it has been realised that households falling above 23 PSC score are left out of the programme. The lesson learnt is that they should be made part in some way, it could be TVST etc., CPI is for everyone in the community so all benefit from it.
- Data entry at Field Unit level has helped in data management at field level and this has helped the field teams to plan their daily activities based on the real time results from MIS
- Data connectivity (internet) and electricity at Unit offices are challenges, which at times cause delays in data submission on daily basis.

Social Mobilisation

- Timely registration/notification of CIs from the Govt. of Sindh remained very critical for the SUCCESS Programme sub-granting
- Implementation of programme by RSPs jointly has helped in learning from the experiences of each other
- The community managerial trainings have resulted in confidence building of community leaders
- The preparation of MIPs, VDPs, and UCDPs has helped sensitise the women members towards the implementation of their HHs and village plans. However, MIPs prepared

within 3 months of CO formation and delayed Interventions caused changes in MIPs at the time of appraisal. The lesson was to control delay in interventions so the plans remain time-relevant

- Most of Community Institutions, after formation, have started self-help activities. The collective initiatives are;
 - School enrolment
 - Cleanliness of villages
 - Health related activities
 - Preparation of CNIC and birth certificates
 - Registering of votes
- Majority of the Community Institutions' office bearers are not literate and maintenance of CO, VO, and LSO record is challenging
- Participation of CRPs and LSO staff in immunization campaign for polio and trainings by health department have increased their knowledge and created awareness in the community about health
- CRPs identified so far are also less educated in some areas and do not meet the quality criterion set by organisations. This was tackled by reducing the quality of CRPs required and getting the best possible candidates on board to start the social mobilisation process. Also, in certain cases, where women CRPs are not available at all, men have been involved
- Delays in opening of community institutions bank account and issues of 'cheques' results in delays of sub-granting for programme interventions. In future, planning for targets needs to be rationalised and IT based banking mechanisms needs to be explored.

Micro Health Insurance

- Unavailability of hospitals meeting the criteria to empanel at Taluka level resulting in low coverage of MHI beneficiaries benefiting from MHI.

- The insurance covers the CO member and her dependent household members while the scorecard data is based on household head and relationship of household members with him or her. Data entry and validation of the household members for MHI remain a challenge and time taking. The lesson is that during removal of insurance policy this issue needs to be discussed with insurance company.

Human Resource Development

- In activist workshops, the presence of District Administration and line department officials remained very effective in creating linkages between community institutions and government line department. It helped the community to facilitate the government line departments for campaign on school enrolment, opening of closed schools, preparation of CNIC, registration of votes and health-related activities at community level. The lessons learnt was that effective periodic engagement of stakeholders, especially government departments/officials contribute in mobilisation factors
- Linkages have been strengthened with the line department after they have been notified by the DC to sign MoUs with the JDCs. TRDP is already in process of signing MoUs with some of the line departments such as agriculture and livestock. It was stressed that other partners should also focus on this collaboration as would lead to efficacy in getting community demands fulfilled
- The CRPs have been facing challenges in record keeping at CO/VO level as well as conducting of CAT sessions; Training manuals in local language with pictorial presentation remained

very effective in community managerial trainings

- The poorest households are mainly the labourers/farmers. It is very difficult for them to spare time for TVST for around 30 or more days
- Limited employment opportunities for vocational training participants. The target groups are mostly not literate and landless *harees*. Most of them opt for home/village based skills.
- It was also identified that staff was leaving at a high rate due to low salaries coupled with the emergence of other projects in the community which also attracted the staff with better pays. It was a lesson learnt that staff salaries should perhaps be increased to retain them.

Community Investment Fund

- The CIF committee of LSOs consisting of all women members are more responsible in making decisions regarding CIF
- Women are more reliable and transparent in disbursement, management, and recovery of CIF
- Some of the intended potential beneficiary households, which are ready to get CIF but their CNICs, are expired /unavailable. Collaboration with NADRA is also important to households accessing SUCCESS benefits
- In some cases, if score of President and/or Manager is above 23 then they are not willing to give proper time for meetings and documentation because they were not able to get CIF, as a result, they are reluctant to take guarantee of other members of CO who are taking CIF. The lesson is while selecting the CO/VO managers the role, responsibility, advantage and disadvantage of being president and managers should be considered. Only those willing to volunteer, dedicate and commit to help others be

motivated to take the responsibilities of CO/VO managers.

Income Generating Grant

- Women are more reliable and transparent in disbursement/management of IGG
- Some of the IGG beneficiaries are migrating for labour work and this makes it difficult for the field team to locate them during monitoring and verification visits
- There is a risk of using the IGG grants by beneficiary households for household's consumption purpose instead of income generating purpose as these are the poorest households.

Community Physical Infrastructure

- PSC data helps in proper identification of communities as the village level beneficiary households' data is already available with field teams
- In some cases, land owners are reluctant to provide affidavit which is required for the construction of CPI schemes which causes delays in implementation of CPIs
- There are challenges in prioritizing of schemes as some time conflicts in community force the field staff to go for second priority needs for implementation purpose
- High turnover of engineering staff has resulted in delays in implementation of CPI Schemes

- Drinking water is the priority need identified by most communities. In most parts of the programme districts, the quality of water is not drinkable (on the quality test) and water treatment is costly.

Technical and Vocational Skills Training

- All partners observed that the number and type of trades available under TVST are very limited and focus majorly on tailoring and embroidery work have identified it, predominantly. It is a lessons learnt that the new trades should be introduced and that the CRPs should create awareness about them in their CIs so community members get motivated to enrol in the new trades, because currently they do not realise that any other trades, apart from their usual trades, could be beneficial
- It was identified that people do not let their unmarried daughters participate in the training. More awareness is needed in this aspect because single daughters can contribute a lot towards increasing the income of the family if they are able to learn a skill and become employable or earn from the vicinity of their home even.

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