











**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 Fateh Muhammad Shah Ajnani, Matiari

<p>District</p>  <p><b>Matiari</b></p>	<p>Union Council</p>  <p><b>Fateh Muhammad Shah Ajnani</b></p>	<p>Date of Formation</p>  <p><b>2017</b></p>	<p>Total Households in Union Council</p>  <p><b>3,360</b></p>	<p>Organised Households</p>  <p><b>1,565</b></p>	<p>Coverage</p>  <p><b>47%</b></p>
	<p>Number of Community Organisations (COs)</p>  <p><b>87</b> (all women's)</p>	<p>Number of Village Organisations (VOs)</p>  <p><b>9</b> (all women's)</p>	<p>Number of General Body Members</p>  <p><b>28</b> (all women)</p>	<p>Number of Executive Committee Members</p>  <p><b>15</b> (all women)</p>	

(LSO Profile as of March 2018)

LSO Fateh Muhammad Shah Ajnani formed on January 2017, represents a total of 1,565 organised households from the district of Matiari. Women leaders of LSO Fateh Muhammad Shah Ajnani are planning and executing development activities including among others enrolment of out of school children in schools, preparation of CNIC for members, ban on sale of Ghutka in their area and tree plantations. 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.

### Saving Youth from Health Hazardous Ghutka Addiction

Ghutka is a type of local Paan, made of a mixture of areca nut, lime, tobacco and wrapped in betel leaf. People of all ages chew ghutka for its known nicotine effects and affordability. Due to its health hazardous effects, the Sindh Government had banned its preparation and marketing. However, the shopkeepers continued to sell it all across Sindh including in the UC Fateh Muhammad Shah



Ajnani area. Within last few years, the Ghutka affected over 1,000 boys in the UC. With an average rate of Rs 10 per Ghutka, an addicted teenage boy would chew more than 5 Ghutkas a day, costing a family Rs 50 per day and Rs 1,500 per month. In addition to loss of income, the Ghutka is known to cause oral ulcer and cancer.





5 female members of the School Enrolment Committee

Before getting organised into CO, VO and LSO, the poor families had no agency and voice to stop shopkeepers from selling Ghutka. However, after the formation of the LSO under the EU supported SUCCESSSS Programme, the women leaders resolved to stop Ghutka selling in their UC to save their youth. They approached local shopkeepers but none of them listened. The women leaders did not give up and approached the Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) and lodged a complaint with him. The DSP himself visited the shopkeepers in civil dress and saw for himself all the shopkeepers who were selling Ghutka. Next time the DSP came with a contingent of Police and red handedly arrested all shopkeepers involved in Ghutka selling. He also deployed a Police Officer in the area to keep a close eye on the shopkeepers to ward them off from selling Ghutka again. Now the use of Ghutka by the teanaged boys had reduced to almost zero in the UC area.

### Enrolment of out of School Children to Schools

Despite establishment of primary schools in most of the villages of the UC and free education, a large number of children of school age are out of schools in the area. There are multiple reasons behind not sending children to schools. According to the LSO leaders, one key reason was lack of awareness among parents about the importance of getting their children educated. The LSO, therefore, formed a five-member women's committee from its General Body members and made them responsible to motivate parents of the out of school children to enroll their children in the school. The women committee members visit villages during the school times. The committee members meet with the parents of the out of school children and convince them to send them to school. So far, the committee has managed to enroll 125 out of school children to schools, and majority of them are girls.

### Getting Women Citizenship Documents

A large number of adult people, mostly women, did not have Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs), the citizenship document. Those not having CNICs, were unable to access health facilities from the Union Council level Basic Health Units and Taluka Hospital. The LSO took this seriously and resolved to motivate all such women without CNICs to get their CNICs. The LSO members took these women to the NADRA office and helped them prepare

their CNICs. Some women were reluctant to go with the LSO leaders for preparation of CNICs fearing misuse of their CNICs to get loan in their names. However, this trust deficit was overcome with time and most were willing to accompany them to the NADRA office. Noticing the interest of the LSO leaders and the number of women without CNICs in this area, NADRA officers asked for a list of women without CNICs. The LSO leaders prepared a village wise list of 555 women and submitted to NADRA for arranging a mobile CNIC issuance van. NADRA officials have promised to send mobile vans soon.

### Improve Village Environment

The community women were sensitized and motivated during the awareness raising sessions by the Community Resource Persons about numerous benefits of growing trees like good quality trees can provide healthy forage to their domestic animals; grown up trees could be used as timber for construction of their houses or could be sold in the market to earn money at a time of urgent need etc. The LSO leaders, therefore, decided in their meeting to grow good quality trees in their courtyards as well as in other free spaces available in the village. They collect donations from CO members via their respective VOs, buy good quality tree saplings from the private nurseries and give them to the interested families who ensure to protect the plants from animals and children. The family constructs a boundary wall around the newly planted tree to protect it from domestic animals and children. They had planted 187 trees during the last spring plantation season and are now planning to plant more trees in the next planting season.



Newly planted trees protected with boundary walls

### Application for the Post of LHV

The LSO leaders learnt from advertisements given by the Government of Sindh in the local newspapers and FM Radio that nine posts of Lady Health Visitors (LHVs) are open to be filled in their UC. The LSO leaders discussed the matter amongst themselves and realised that the role of LHV is very crucial in improving health status of the local people. In the past, influential families used to induct women of their families as LHVs from the town areas, whose interest was only in the salary, and therefore did not perform their duties properly. The LSO thus decided to motivate their women members to apply for the post. As a result of their awareness raising about the importance of LHVs and encouragement to apply for the positions, six LSO members have applied for the posts of LHVs.



"This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union"

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 Acknowledgement: Mujeeb Nizamani, NRSP  
 Designed & Printed by: Masha ALLAH Printers

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