











**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 Mirzo Leghari, Sujawal

<p>District</p>  <p><b>Sujawal</b></p>	<p>Union Council</p>  <p><b>Mirzo Leghari</b></p>	<p>Date of Formation</p>  <p><b>2016</b></p>	<p>Total Households in Union Council</p>  <p><b>2,446</b></p>	<p>Organised Households</p>  <p><b>1,650</b></p>	<p>Coverage</p>  <p><b>67%</b></p>
	<p>Number of Community Organisations (COs)</p>  <p><b>83</b> <small>(all women's)</small></p>	<p>Number of Village Organisations (VOs)</p>  <p><b>9</b> <small>(all women's)</small></p>	<p>Number of General Body Members</p>  <p><b>26</b> <small>(all women)</small></p>	<p>Number of Executive Committee Members</p>  <p><b>15</b> <small>(all women)</small></p>	

(LSO Profile as of March 2018)

LSO Mirzo Leghari from District Sujawal was formed in November 2016 by 1,650 member households organised in 83 COs and 9 VOs. Women leaders of LSO Mirzo Leghari are planning and executing development activities both on self-help basis as well as in collaboration with Government agencies. 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.

### Social Accountability of Government Education Department

The Poverty Score Card Survey of UC Mirzo Leghari under the EU funded SUCCESS Programme revealed that 80% girls of school going age and 64% boys of the same are out of schools. Several government primary schools are closed. The mothers and leaders

of the Local Support Organisation were made aware of this by the SUCCESS staff during meetings and trainings. LSO representatives also reiterated the importance of basic education to their children during the awareness raising session conducted by Community Resource Persons (CRPs) at Community Organisation (CO) level. This motivated them to take some action and increase enrolment in their communities. The women leaders also realised that causes for such low enrolment were multifarious – unlike popular perception that parents don't want to send their girls to school, these reasons included lack of schools in or near the villages, absenteeism of teachers, non-functional government schools and lack of interest of teachers in proper education of the students. In other words, these were supply-side issues, not demand-side. Therefore, they rightly concluded that the root cause is the “lack of accountability from Government Education Department”. Therefore, unless the Education Department is convinced to act against the corrupt teachers who are relatives of land lords and other influential families, matters were unlikely to improve. The LSO leaders took their demands to the Taluka Education Officer, a member of Taluka Joint



Development Committee (JDC) during its very first meeting. The Taluka Education Officer said that he cannot take any actions unless he receives a written complaint from the LSO supported by verified data and information. The LSO complied and went on to collect information about closed schools, absent teachers and villages and settlements without government schools through its Village Organisations. Once this information is compiled, they will meet the Taluka Education Officer and submit their written complaints to him.

### Coordination with Government for Polio Vaccination

The Sindh government has been running a monthly Polio campaign in the LSO's jurisdiction. The LSO has been working closely with the Polio vaccination teams for coverage of 100% children in each round. In this regard, VO and LSO members have taken responsibility to timely inform families about the date of visits of the Polio teams to their villages. They also identify unvaccinated children in remote areas and inform Polio teams to carry out follow up visits to vaccinate them. In village Arablothio, around 20 families refused to allow the Polio workers to visit their children to deliver Polio drops. The LSO leaders tried their best to convince them but they were armed with their axes and threatened the Polio team for dire consequences in case they tried to go inside their sub-village area. The women leaders then went to the Deputy Commissioner (DC) and informed him about the refusal. The DC visited the area soon with three Police Mobiles and the men agreed to vaccinate their children. They told to the DC that they had been refusing vaccines to protest absenteeism of teachers of local government schools.



Polio vaccination in progress in Sujawal

### Civic Registration

There was no trend of making Computerised National Identity Cards (CNICs), registering new born babies and marriages in the LSO area before EU and RSPN intervention. According to the LSO leaders, there were two main reasons behind the lack of interest for

civic registration. Firstly, people had very little idea about the importance of these documents and secondly, these registrations cost money, for example birth registration costs Rs. 200. After the formation of peoples' institutions of COs, VOs and the LSO, the community leaders learned about the importance of registrations through the awareness raising sessions conducted by the Community Resource Persons (CRPs) in the CO monthly meetings and during various interactions with the SUCCESS staff. The LSO leaders had started educating their members about the benefits of timely registration of birth, death and marriages. As a result of their efforts, 323 people including 215 women have prepared their CNICs, over 200 babies have been registered with the UC office and around 25 couples have registered their marriages with the NADRA office.

### Plantation of Trees in the Village Settlement Areas

The quality of soil in the UC is mostly saline and with the exception of some wild bushes plantation is limited. There were no ecologically useful trees present in the area. Therefore, the entire UC area looked like a desert. There are wide patches of barren land in and around the village settlements. Due to lack of green cover, the weather conditions become very harsh during the summer season. When the women LSO leaders learnt about the importance of trees from the SUCCESS staff, they were extremely motivated to plant trees in and around their village settlements to create courtyards. However, they knew that mainstream trees are not grown in their area, therefore, they brought this issue in the notice of the SUCCESS staff. The SUCCESS staff consulted the Government Forest Department for advice. The Forest Department said that two plant species namely eucalyptus and conocarpus can grow well in their area. The LSO leaders motivated their members to buy 330 plants from the Forest Department for Rs. 10 per tree and plant them in their courtyards. The trees grew successfully. The LSO is planning to plant over 4,000 trees during the next planting season provided they can get hold of planting materials in time from the Forest Department.



Women members of the LSO are planting tree saplings in their village



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