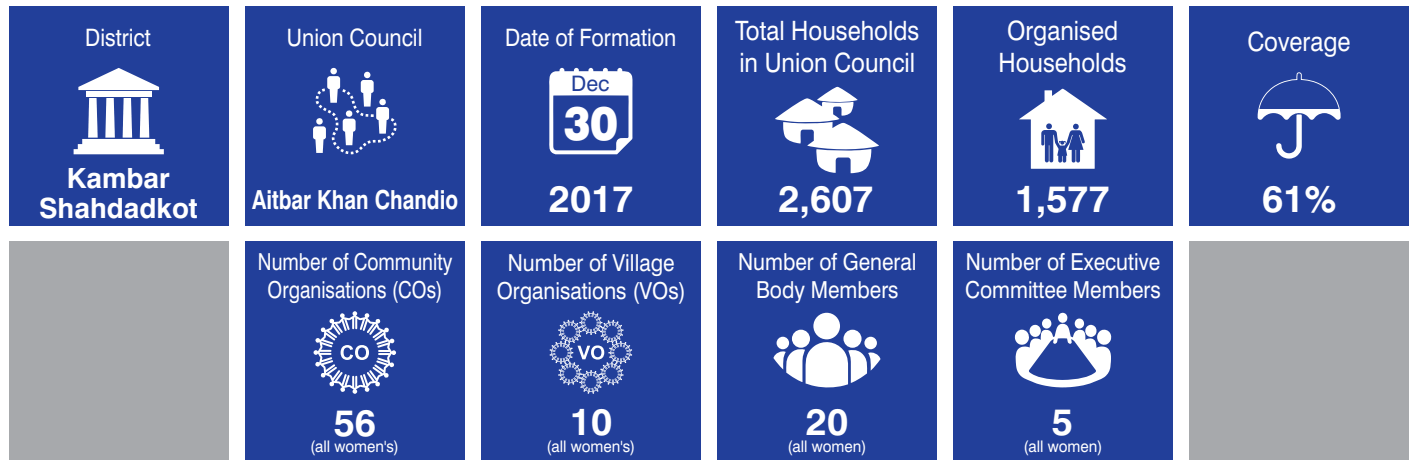


**What are LSOs?**

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 Aitbar, Kambar Shahdadt



(LSO Profile as of September 2018)

LSO Aitbar from District Kambar Shahdadt was formed in December 2017 by 1,577 member households organised in 56 COs and 10 VOs. Women leaders of LSO Aitbar 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.

**Efforts for Rehabilitation of Government Girls' Primary School**

"Before getting organised in COs, VOs and LSO, the UC women never thought of the day, they would be able to contact the Assistance Commissioner (AC) for his support. The organisational support, training and exposures provided to us by the EU supported SUCCESS programme had dramatically changed our vision and



Assistant Commissioner calling TEO from the damaged school building

perspectives in a short span of time" shared Ms Kulsoom, the President of LSO Aitbar. When the LSO leaders attended the meeting of Joint Development Committee (JDC) at Taluka level, they were introduced with the Assistant Commissioner, Taluka Officers of Health, Education, Agriculture, Livestock and Local Bodies and the



UC Chairman. They obtained contact numbers of these officials for future communication.

In August 2018, the leaders of VO Jeand Jarwar informed the LSO leaders that the roof of one of the two rooms in Girls' Primary School had collapsed where over 100 students were enrolled. Fortunately, the roof had fallen down during recess time when the students were playing outside the room. Otherwise it could have resulted in fatal results such as loss of lives. Knowing the situation, the LSO leaders telephoned the Taluka Education Officer (TEO), reported the incident, requested for an immediate response and repair of the school building. Unfortunately, the LSO members did not receive any positive feedback from the TEO office. Without getting disappointed, the community members continued their efforts and approached the Assistant Commissioner (AC) and brought the incident and the non-cooperation by the TEO office into his notice. The AC immediately visited the site of the collapsed school personally and observed the condition of the school building. He telephoned the TEO and asked him to repair the school on urgent basis. Consequently, the TEO also visited the school, estimated the repair cost and included the proposal in the next Annual Development Plan because the cost was quite high and there was no fund available in the current budget.

### Establishment of Adult Literacy Centres

A large majority of the women of the UC are illiterate. The women leaders realised that the consequences of illiteracy are harmful in several aspects. It not only affects illiterate individuals in their daily lives but also has a significant effect on society, both socially as well as economically. Therefore, they decided to get their members educated through adult literacy programmes. They visited the office of National Commission on Human Development (NCHD) located at Kambar Town and put up their request for establishing adult literacy centres in their area. Responding to their application, the District Manager of NCHD offered that his organisation could open 11 NCHD centres in the villages for the time being. NCHD could give training to the adult literacy teachers and pay salaries of the teachers. The LSO would have to identify teachers from within their villages and provide free of cost building spaces for the centres. The LSO leaders discussed the matter with three member VOs and after obtaining their approval, accepted the conditions of the NCHD. Consequently, 11 adult literacy centres were established in these three villages (four in village Shahpur Jamali, three in village Karam Khan Jarwar and four in village Bhofa Jamal). The LSO leaders selected 11 adult literacy teachers from its VO members. NCHD provided teachers' training and paid them salary of Rs. 5,000 per month for six months (February to July 2018). A total of 275 women received basic skills in literacy and numeracy as well as trainings in kitchen gardening, poultry rearing and stitching and sewing from

these centres. The LSO has developed a phase wise plan of adult literacy centres in all the villages of its union council. They submitted a request to NCHD to open adult literacy centres in three more villages (Sahib Khan Bhatti, Suleman Markhand and Arzi Markhand) in the next phase. NCHD promised to open the centres as soon as they receive funds from the government to start the next phase.

### Celebration of International Rural Women's Day

15th October is globally marked as the International Rural Women's Day. When the LSO leaders learnt about this important day, they decided to celebrate it at their union council. However, one major challenge in this celebration was to find a proper venue that could accommodate a large number of participants. After mutual discussions, they decided to approach the local land lord and requested for his guest house premises to celebrate the event. He positively responded to their request and provided them the venue. After finalising the venue and agenda of the event, the LSO members sent invitation letters to the government officials, UC Chairman and members, NGO workers and dignitaries of their UC. They also invited leaders of the Taluka LSO Networks and VOs as well as general members of their COs to the event. As a result of their sincere efforts, the Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Director Women's Development, District Director Women's Development, Regional Manager BRAC Pakistan, Assistant Director Social Welfare and leaders of six Taluka LSO Networks attended the event. Around 200 people, mostly local women participated in the event. Through this event, the women of the area learnt about the important contributions of rural women towards economic and social development of their families and society.



The Executive Committee members of the LSO in their monthly meeting



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