



Sindh Union Council and Community Economic
Strengthening Support Programme
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LESSON LEARNING AND EXPERIENCE SHARING REPORT – 2019



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Every effort has been made to verify the accuracy of the information contained in this report. All information was deemed to be correct as of March 2019. Nevertheless, the Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN) cannot accept responsibility of the consequences of its use for other purposes or in other contexts.

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Overview

As part of the European Union funded Sindh Union Council and Community Economic Strengthening Support (SUCCESS) programme, representatives of the National Rural Support Programme, Thardeep Rural Support Programme, Sindh Rural Support Organisation, Rural Support Programmes Network, P&D GoS, UCBPRP, district government, local elected representatives, technical partners - EY, IRM, SZABIST and independent media observers undertook an experience sharing and learning visit to Hyderabad, Tando Muhammad Khan and Tando Allahyar on 19-20 February, 2019.

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. The Rural Support Programmes SUCCESS implementation component completed its 3rd year on 31 January 2019. After two lesson learning visits in previous years, the third visit was aimed at sharing experiences of the community and implementing partners in the third year of the implementation of the programme.

The visit was divided into two parts: day one included a field visit to districts of Tando Muhammad Khan and Tando Allahyar, where NRSP implements the SUCCESS programme and day two that included an experience sharing and learning workshop from the SUCCESS programme in Hyderabad.

The first day of the lesson learning visit consisted of mainly field visits in Tando Muhammad Khan and Tando Allahyar to participate and observe in the Community Institutions formed under the SUCCESS programme. The second half of the day the delegation participated in a “Community Activists Conference” that was attended by 500 women in UC Ghulam Khan Sanjrani, Tando Allahyar. The chief guest was Syeda Shela Raza, Pakistan People’s Party elected MPA in the Sindh Assembly, who currently serves as the Provincial Minister for Women Development. As the last item of the agenda of the first day, the delegation travelled to UC Usman Shah Huri in Tando Allahyar, to visit an IRM-TVST centre that had opened 22 days ago.

The second day of the SUCCESS lesson learning visit, consisted of an experience sharing workshop at Hyderabad. Representatives of Community Institutions from SUCCESS and Peoples Poverty Reduction Programme (PPRP) districts shared their experiences, followed by progress review and key lessons from the SUCCESS and PPRP implementing partner RSPs and the Technical Assistance Component of SUCCESS.

The challenges and lessons learnt have been categorised in different topics at the end of the report. Some of the key challenges included finding literate community office bearers and CRPs in some areas, which could be solved by hiring men or pairing CRPs (husband/wife). The presence of district administration and line department officials in activist workshops remained effective in establishing linkages and raising awareness on CAT issues. Certain issues regarding the interventions included, limited opportunities for employment after undertaking TVST. Selection of panel hospitals, at tehsil level and even at the district level remained a challenge resulting in less coverage of MHI beneficiaries. Drinking water was the need identified most, by communities as CPI scheme, however, water treatment is costly. The CIF and IGG committee of LSOs and VOs consisting of all women members were found to be more responsible in making decisions regarding these funds and grants. This should be encouraged further.

Day one – field visits

The first day of the lesson learning visit consisted of mainly field visits in Tando Muhammad Khan and Tando Allahyar to participate and observe in the Community Institutions under the SUCCESS programme. National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) is implementing the SUCCESS programme in these districts along with Matiari and Sujawal.

The visiting team participated in a meeting of an LSO at Union Council Lakhat in District Tando Muhammad Khan. The session comprised of over 100 women in the audience, that included Community Resource Persons (CRPs) and beneficiaries of CIF, IGG, TVST and MHI.

After introductions the LSO meeting began, with Ms. Amina the General Secretary of the LSO presenting the progress of LSO Lakhat to the audience. LSO Lakhat was

formed in 2017 covering 1,509 households out of 2,517 in the union council. The LSO has 78 Community Organisations (COs) and 9 Village Organisations (VOs) as their members. Their overall savings was Rs. 391,000. The LSO received Rs. 3.49 million Community Investment Fund (CIF) from the SUCCESS programme. 236 households received loans from CIF and 41 households had received Income Generating Grants worth Rs. 0.63 million to start income generating activities. Most of the beneficiaries invested their CIF and IGG in purchasing livestock or establishing small village level business.

While sharing her experience Zeb-un-Nisa, said she received Rs. 12,000 as IGG and purchased a *rickshaw*. Rashid Bajwa, CEO NRSP, asked why she chose a *rickshaw*, she mentioned she saw a need



for it in her village to travel to the main city. When asked how the IGG had changed her life, she replied that her household income had increased and in turn the nutrition and health of her eight children had considerably improved. Most Community Institution members were questioned to gauge their understanding of the interventions and impact on their lives.

CIF beneficiaries were asked about their experience in great detail. This included the experience of Fatima who had borrowed Rs. 14,000, to buy livestock, as the rest of the family were labourers. She had already returned Rs. 11,000 and planned to return the rest through gardening for people (then using the cut grass as feed for her livestock) in addition to contribution in returning the loan by her husband. With a large number of people opting for livestock in their grants and loans, the RSP representatives added that they have also provided livestock management training to the community members.

Women from the audience also presented their accomplishments through their respective Community Institutions.



Jamna (a VO head) got up from the audience confidently, to list the accomplishments of her VO. She mentioned how they had enrolled most children in her village, formed dustbins for cleanliness and cleaned water, marking the drinkable water with a green tap and the non-drinkable with red. Now people are only using the water sources with a

green tap, this had reduced incidences of diseases such as diarrhoea in their village.

Government representatives from health, education and livestock departments also attended the LSO meeting. Assistant Director Health, Hafiz-ur-Rehman Pasha, acknowledged the LSO and CRP facilitation with the health department in achieving its targets of vaccination. He mentioned how organisations such as the World Bank and UNICEF had termed UC Lakhat as a high-risk union council, in terms of lack of vaccinations, which had led to a measles outbreak. Through the LSO and CRPs they were able to convince the District Commissioner (DC) to set up a dispensary with three vaccinators closer to the village. With the help of the LSO, a routine vaccination route had been established, increasing the coverage to 80-90% in this union council.

Along with the SUCCESS programme, the WISE (Water, Immunisation, Sanitation and Education) programme has been piloted in Tando Muhammad Khan as well. Programmes such as WISE, that target these four indicators have been termed by the UN as essential, especially in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It directly targets SDG 3 (good health and well-being), SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation). The WISE programme uses social mobilisation through the three-tier structure that directly targets SDG 1 (poverty).

An update on the WISE programme and its impact was presented to the audience as well. The WISE programme covers the whole *tehsil* comprising of 7 LSOs, 28 villages and 20,624 households. By December 2018, considerable improvements were witnessed in safe water consumption (from 11% to 50%), immunisation of children (from 60% to 93%), sanitation (a reduction of throwing solid waste outside houses from 21% to 59%), enrolment of 5-12 years children (increased from 31% to 62%).

A detailed presentation was given by Community Resource Person (CRP) Allahdeti. Overall CRPs were highly appreciated for their efforts, however, it was noted that other members in the Community Institutions should try to work at the same capacity as CRPs. When asked how she became a CRP she replied "My VO chose me, they could not find anyone so Allah sent me. Despite my name, I have not been given anything unique from Allah, but I do feel the pain and hurt of others. Those that hurt the most are poor people, so I have come to help them and ease their pain".



Shoaib Sultan Khan thanked the audience and applauded all the work carried out by the women in the LSO. He also thanked the government representatives present at the event, working closely with the community. He claimed that NRSP was established by the government. He asked the audience, why they thought the government felt the need to do so, when they have departments dealing for each sector such as education, health, sanitation, agriculture etc. As a reply he claimed that he used to work in the government and their job is to provide services to everyone. When the Aga Khan

Foundation started working in Gilgit, Baltistan and Chitral they wanted to reduce poverty for the one million people living in the region. The World Bank evaluated the project after five years and claimed that "the first five years of AKRSP are the missed years for all development projects of World Bank across the world", because AKRSP used a "process approach" whereas all the World Bank projects used a "blueprint approach". AKRSP had clearly managed to develop what would be later termed as Community Driven Development (CDD). Foreign governments like the Philippines awarded AKRSP with the Roman Magsaysay Award that got media attention and the Prime Minister then asked to establish NRSP. The government clearly saw that poverty existed at the household level. However, the government could not reach each poor household, therefore, they formed RSPs to organise the poor households to form their own Community Institution. These Community Institutions are institutions of the people and are an essential part of grassroots level democracy. For governments to have true democracy and reduce poverty these institutions of the people need to be recognised and used as conduit to provide their services to the poor.

The second half of the day consisted of a "Community Activists Conference" that was attended by 500 women in UC Ghulam Khan Sanjrani, Tando Allahyar.

The chief guest was Syeda Shela Raza, Pakistan People's Party elected MPA in the Sindh Assembly, who currently serves as the Provincial Minister for Women Development. She arrived earlier than scheduled to interact with the women and since they were prepared, see their presentations of the update on interventions (MHI, CIF, IGG and Trainings) along with their success stories. The "Community Activist Conference" consisted of presentations by LSO leaders, VO leaders, CRPs and beneficiaries of CIF/IGG/TVST/CPI/MHI with their personal stories.

Shoaib Sultan Khan in his speech thanked the Minister and the community leaders. He mentioned how he had presented the three-tier social mobilisation to Benazir Bhutto who termed it “revolutionary”. However, she had told him that people would fight amongst each other, hence, she did not see this happening. He now wished she was here to see all the women present today at this event.

Shela Raza praised the work and efforts carried out by the women community activists for the betterment of their communities. She claimed that she first heard of the work carried out by the Rural Support Organisation when they were working in partnership with the Sindh Government in Kashmore and Shikarpur in 2008. Even back then, she was intrigued by the programme, reading a study on it and discovering that it was a woman-led initiative. She felt that the Sindh Government needed to take more ownership of the programme.

She proceeded to list all the achievements and services provided to women by the Sindh Government. “The Women Development Ministry has set up a complaint centre where women can call as required. All Sindh departments will be covered by the centre and they have the jurisdiction to interfere in any department if

a complaint is made. Sindh is the only province, where they do have laws to protect women, with the minimum age for marriage set at 18. They have a law set against domestic violence, which would be trialled in a criminal court instead of family court. They have also created awareness on breast cancer and reproductive care (which includes family planning).” She claimed that women cannot be confined at home and must be involved publicly in order to achieve economic empowerment. Men in the family should support their women in this endeavour. Maybe their daughters can become politicians as well.

Narrating her life’s struggles and tribulations that she had to overcome she claimed, “You people are not the only ones with success stories, even I have a success story. I come from a poor household and went to a government school. I used to go to university in a bus and most days I would only take Rs.30, making it difficult to afford to eat there...I then joined the PPP student federation, and in 1990 got arrested, went to jail and was also detained at the detention centre. When I came out, I was considered dangerous by my family members, so I could not marry within my own family and married outside. Thank god, I have been happily married now for 27 years. ”



While motivating the community members she said, "Women can do everything they want. Just ask yourself what do you want to do? Then you can do anything. I survived with a lower-middle class background in politics in Pakistan. I do not have any property or car under my name and yet here I am as a minister for women development having served as the first women deputy speaker in the previous term in the Sindh Assembly."



The District Chairman of Tando Allahyar, Makhdoom Ali Muhammad Walhari, thanked the visiting guests and praised the programme in providing awareness and empowering rural women. He assured

the community representatives that they had his full support.

The delegation after having lunch and conducting networking session with local government authorities and local elected representatives at the circuit house travelled to UC Usman Shah Huri in Tando Allahyar, to visit an IRM -TVST centre that had opened 22 days ago. At the time 18 women were under training in applique work. Fauzia an instructor at the centre provided updates to the delegation. With a training diploma of two years, she had been training the beneficiaries in applique work, providing designs and aiming to link them to the market in the 30-day training course.

In order to commemorate the event, four of the beneficiaries had made a piece of applique work that welcomed Shoab Sultan Khan with his name. The piece was put up for bidding, which resulted in sewing machines for each of the four beneficiaries involved, worth Rs. 10,000. Subsequently a few days after the lesson learning visit, there was an event where the sewing machines were provided to them, as seen in the picture given below.



Day two - experience sharing and learning workshop

The second day of the SUCCESS lesson learning visit, consisted of an experience sharing workshop at Hyderabad. Representatives of Community Institutions from the SUCCESS and Peoples Poverty Reduction Programme (PPRP) districts shared their experience, followed by progress review and key lessons from the SUCCESS and PPRP implementing partner RSPs and the Technical Assistance Component of SUCCESS.

A total of 145 participants, including community activists from the SUCCESS and PPRP districts, government officials, local elected representatives, RSPs board members, management and field teams of RSPN/RSPs and SUCCESS TA Team members participated in the workshop. From the government, Director General Research and Training Wing P&D, Additional Deputy Commissioner Tando Muhammad Khan and Director General Livestock spoke at the event.

Welcome note

After the recitation, Rashid Bajwa, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NRSP officially commenced the workshop. He firstly thanked the delegation, government representatives, RSPs and community leaders in the SUCCESS programme for participating in the event. He appreciated the work carried out by the community organisations working in the field. He believed that more important than the RSPs field staff was the work carried out by activists such as CRPs. He felt that the SUCCESS programme was producing results because of the women of Sindh, who become empowered and economically stable through Community Institutions.

Referring to the first day field visit to the Community Institutions he said that there were three things that were important to consider. The first was that CIF is directly contributing to increasing the household

income and thus counteract household income poverty in the short-term while Technical Vocational and Skills Training (TVST) is designed for medium-term benefits. The third point referred to the WISE programme being carried out in Tando Muhammad Khan, targets multi-dimensional poverty instead of simply focusing on income like the previous interventions.

Talking further about the feats of Government of Sindh in supporting RSPs in the province he says, "Sindh will be the only province that will create a dent in multi-dimensional poverty if the WISE programme is supported in scale. It will take time to eliminate poverty, but it is important that this is the way it is carried out. The people present in this room will achieve this feat". Therefore, for Rashid Bajwa it was important to first tackle income poverty through the SUCCESS programme and then multi-dimensional poverty through interventions like the WISE programme.

Experience sharing by community members

The Community Institution members who shared their experience from SUCCESS programme and PPRP districts included, Ms. Maria Partab, General Secretary of LSO Digh Mori in Tando Muhammad Khan; Ms. Rehmat from LSO Soormi, Badin; Ms. Zeenat, LSO Goah, Dadu; and Ms. Kulsoom Baloch, Chairperson of LSO Aitbar Chandio, Kambar Shahdadkot. Due to the shortage of time, other speakers planned were not able to speak on the day of the event. They were, however, recognised for their efforts.

Maria Partab provided a profile of her UC and then LSO Digh Mori which was established as early 27 October 2016 with 8 VOs, 107 COs and 16 CRPs. She went on to list the successful interventions that had taken place through the SUCCESS



programme in her LSO. The LSO provided MHI cards to 348 households, IGG to 40 households, CIF to 110 households, vocational training to 18 households and 7 CPI schemes. Tando Muhammad Khan also had a pilot WISE programme in the district that includes her LSO as well. She presented a breakdown of the WISE programme in the region and its impact. She claimed that in her LSO region, the immunisation coverage had increased to 86%, enrolment of children to 58% and access to safe water 61%. In addition to this, each village had established mechanism for village cleanliness. She concluded that for the future, they need to link UC level organisations at the district level. In order to have facilities such as gas, electricity, water and quality education they need the government to reach every household. "Therefore, the government should help us".

Kalsoom Baloch, Chairperson LSO Aitbar Chandio, from District Kambar Shahdadkot, presented the achievement of her LSO. When prompted further by Shoaib Sultan Khan about her personal experience with the RSP, she said "I had passed my matric from Karachi, but got married in a rural region of Sindh. Here the people were much more conservative and my in-laws would not let me go out of the house. However, the social mobiliser prompted me to go out and interact with

women and men of the community. I feel that if I'm standing here today it has only been possible through SUCCESS. I have been given respect and feel empowered because of them".

Progress review by Implementing Partners

The implementing partner RSPs presented their progress and lessons learnt during the last three years. The following section presents the progress followed by the lessons and challenges faced during the implementation of the programme. Most of the lessons and challenges were common thus to avoid repetition they have been consolidated in a later section of the report.

Thardeep Rural Support Programme

Jai Prakash, the Programme Manager for Thardeep Rural Support Programme (TRDP) presented the progress and lessons learnt from his districts in the SUCCESS programme.

He provided a detailed account of TRDP's outreach, with progress update as of January 2019. Out of 248,560 households (HHs) in the two districts, they had covered 71% (177,126 HH). TRDP had a

100% coverage in target rural union councils, 95% in target rural revenue villages and 82% in rural settlements of Jamshoro and Dadu. At the end of year three, the progress on Community Institutions (CIs) stood at 79% COs, 103% VOs and 93% LSOs formed against the planned targets.

Previously TRDP struggled to open bank accounts for CIs as those were considered high-risk accounts, making sub-granting behind schedule. Almost all VOs and LSOs have been notified, however, only 46% of VOs and 89% of LSOs have managed to open bank accounts. Progress on community capacity building was presented as 85% community members trained in CMST and 85% in LMST. They also managed to carry out 94% of the planned Activists Workshops.

TRDP struggled with TVST, as they managed to train 21% of the targeted beneficiaries. Majority of those trained were for tailoring (64%), followed by hand embroidery (10%). Against a planned Rs.237 million, LSOs and VOs received Rs.211 million in CIF, benefitting 79% of the targeted households. Rs.122 million worth of IGG was disbursed to VOs against a target of Rs.180 million, benefitting 69% of the targeted households. Majority (66% of the CIF and 78% in IGG) funds and grants continued to be utilised in livestock.

TRDP outperformed against the targets set for MHI for year three, with 42,486 households insured against a target of 41,600 households. The overall claim ratio against the premium paid has been 62%. Against a target of 377 projects, 154 CPIs (41%) were initiated, with 46 completed.

Mr. Jai Prakash went on to list the successful synergies with government and other stakeholders carried out by TRDP. Scaled-up visibility of the programme had boosted its image among communities and other stakeholders. Some of the achievements in this regard included:

- 10 sewing machines provided by UC Chairman Unerpur to the LSO

- UC Chairman Lattan established a culvert scheme
- 44 schemes had been approved and called for tendering by the District Council Jamshoro
- 22 Union Council offices provided space for LSO offices
- 10 JDCs meetings had been successfully conducted
- 8 MoUs were signed with line departments in both Dadu and Jamshoro
- CRPs role was recognised as an extension for government service delivery, as 183 CRP were involved and trained by health department for vaccinations and the Polio Campaign
- The CIs were recognised by other civil society organisations
- Networking sessions were carried out with Chairman Karachi Chamber of Commerce, TDAP, ENI, Khaadi, Lucky Cement Factory for TVST linkages, employability and marketability
- 217 schools were shared with the education department to be renovated by the government
- After a decision taken by District JDC Dadu, TRDP shared list of closed schools identified by CIs
- Enrolment of out of school children
- Providing missing facilities in schools through CPIs, identified by VO and referred by the education department
- Election commission and NADRA in collaboration with CIs, registered female voters and provided CNICs
- Both agriculture and livestock departments conducted sessions at the community level for better production
- Livestock vaccinations were carried out after the issue was raised in a JDC meeting
- One of the biggest achievements was the announcement that the Government of Sindh in partnership with TRDP was to pilot Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) in Tharparkar through establishing 538 integrated rural growth centres.

Sindh Rural Support Organisation

The Team Leader of SRSO, Mr Jamal Shoro, presented the progress review of SRSO under the SUCCESS programme. Against a target of 187,476 HHs, 166,968 HHs were organised (89%). This was further elaborated with data demonstrating the formation of COs (93%), VOs (88%) and LSOs (99%) against the targets. Most VOs (95%) and LSOs (99%) were notified, while 96% LSOs and 35% VOs had bank accounts.

Discussing the training component, Mr. Shoro claimed that against the targets 93% CMST, 97% LMST VO, 99% LMST LSO, 71% Activists Workshops, 71% CRP trainings and 44% CBK trainings had taken place. All 13 JDCs targeted were formed, however, only 18 meetings carried out successfully against a target of 39 (46%).

SRSO continued struggling to carryout TVST in their districts, achieving 9% of the total targeted. Like TRDP, majority of the trainings were concentrated in tailoring (39%). There was considerable improvement when it came to CIF disbursement from last year. 37% of households targeted received CIF, with almost all the target amount (99%) repaid or revolved. Most CIF and IGG were invested in livestock at 77% and 86% respectively.



When explaining the MHI data, Mr Shoro claimed that 77% of targeted households were insured, with 33% claim ratio to premium investment. 35% of CPIs had been initiated, however, only 14% of those

targeted were completed. The amount disbursed for CPI schemes was 29% of that targeted (at Rs.69 million against the Rs.236 million).

National Rural Support Programme

Mr. Ghulam Mustafa Jamro, presented NRSP's progress under the SUCCESS programme covering the four districts namely, Tando Muhammad Khan, Tando Allahyar, Matiari and Sujawal. He presented a district-wise breakdown of the PSC census, claiming that 84% of the households were covered, and 98% of the population was covered within the four districts.

NRSP managed to form 86% COs, 101% VOs, 100% LSOs against the targets set till January 2019. With regard to bank accounts, 447 accounts had been opened for 10,814 COs, 788 accounts for 1,114 VOs, and 120 accounts for 121 LSOs. Almost all these CIs had been notified (99.5% VOs and 98% LSO).

Since year two NRSP had managed to form the targeted 18 JDCs. However, similar to last year they only had 27% of the required meetings (20 meetings) up until January 2019. 80% CMST, 98% LMST for VOs, 110% LMST for LSO, 98% Activists Workshops, 117% training of field staff on CAT and 136% CRP training on CIF and CAT were given. However, once again TVST remained low at 14% although a slight improvement from last year's 6% was seen. He gave an extensive breakdown of the trades taken up by TVST participants, which like the other RSPs was the highest for embroidery and related products.

Mr. Jamro demonstrated a vast improvement from year two progress, as 46% of the targeted CIF amount was disbursed, benefitting almost half of the targeted households (44%). There was also an improvement in the IGG as 26% of the targeted amount was disbursed,

benefitting 27% of the HH. This was still a massive improvement at the end of year two where it was a meagre 5% of the targeted amount that was transferred to VOs.

MHI coverage continued to be encouraging with 90% of the households targeted insured, claims amounting to Rs. 14 million were paid, with a claim ratio to premium investment at 22%. There was improvement shown in the case of CPI as well, with 44% schemes initiated, while 21% of those targeted completed.

Union Council Based Poverty Reduction Programme - Expansion

The Team Leader Mr. Ghulam Rasool Samejo presented progress of People's Poverty Reduction Programme (PPRP) that covers six districts in Sindh.

Overall, 48% of the households were organised against the target, 51% COs, 41% VOs, 31% LSOs were formed against the targets as of January 2019. He also provided detailed progress of interventions of the programme, with 9% IGG, 24% CIF and 12% TVST provided against the targeted amount. In terms of trainings, 55% CMST, 63% LMST for VOs, 11% LMST for LSOs were carried out against the targets. Further detail was provided for each district.

Mr. Samejo also provided detailed information on Managerial Activists Conferences carried out. One of the major achievements of the programme was the inauguration of low-cost housing. A detailed meeting with Dr. Nafisa Shah was carried out where she provided her support and recommendations for the programme. Numerous case studies were provided during the presentation to further explain the achievements.

Technical Assistance

In addition to the RSPs, Ms. Kathryn Ennis, Team Leader of the SUCCESS Technical Assistance (TA) Team also provided

updates on the Poverty Reduction Strategy of the Government of Sindh. She first provided a brief account of the poverty reduction efforts carried out by GoS since 2009 till 2017. As a recap she then explained the three key strategies of Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) namely, Community Driven Led Development (CDLD) as the foundation, addressing urban poverty, and rural growth centres (in the form of service hubs).



Ms. Kathryn then provided a status of PRS that incorporates the CDLD Policy, approved by GoS Cabinet on 16 October 2018. The Chief Minister (CM) signalled budget of Rs. 72.5 billion for PRS, in addition to funds already approved for poverty reduction. Since then, GoS had allocated funds for PPRP in 2018/2019 ADP. They had also decided institutional arrangements for PRS implementation, determined target districts for Rural Growth Centres (Thatta, Badin, Tharparkar and Sujawal) and allocated initial funds to start as a pilot project. The draft roadmap for PRS implementation was developed. The TA team is now supporting GoS with PRS implementation.

Remarks by guests

The Director General Research and Training at the Planning and Development Department, Mr. Rafiq Chandio, thanked the organisers and expressed his admiration for the members of the Community Institutions. Addressing the audience, he said, "As a representative of the government I am proud to be associated with and be a part of the social mobilisation carried out by RSPs. We

need to make poverty history so that it will only be read in history books". He further elaborated how gendered-poverty makes women suffer from poverty a lot more than men. He quoted Amartya Sen and claimed that "by financially empowering women, it improves their bargaining position at the household level, increasing their leverage". This concept seems to clearly apply to the RSPs work. He goes on to say "A quiet revolution is happening. We do not have the luxury of a lot of time. However, change is happening through women, and the Government of Sindh is with you".

ADC-1 of Tando Muhammad Khan, Junaid Hameed Samoo, sharing his remarks mentioned how initially he was apprehensive of the reach of the programme. "Kambar Shahdadkot was a tribal region where participation in such programmes was difficult. Yet SUCCESS managed to perform this feat [of involving women]. The second major impact that SUCCESS has had is multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional. I believe participation of women would enlarge this scope. I have not seen any other programme with this sort of reach. This is a moment of pride for me". Describing the Community Institutions leaders that he witnessed today, he declared, "One can see the confidence and self-sufficiency that is oozing from their talk. This is the basic essence of this programme. Once the programme winds-up, it will still leave this essence of community participation."

Mohammad Nazar Memon, member Board of Director RSPN, mentioned how livestock is essential to the rural economy and choices made by women to invest their CIF and IGG in livestock makes great sense. Witnessing the WISE programme, he considered it essential to sustain the basic needs of the community.

Abdul Qadir Jenojo, DG Livestock also spoke of the importance of livestock as a source of revenue in the rural regions of Pakistan. Therefore, the SUCCESS programme providing animals to people greatly increases their revenue. "We can jointly work together and work for future sustainability".



Closing remarks

The closing remarks and vote of thanks was given by Shoaib Sultan Khan. He thanked the audience, and gave a brief introduction to the work carried out by RSPs to the guests from the government departments and community activists. He emphasised the importance of the three-tier social mobilisation approach of RSPs.

He said, "Why did we make these organisations? It was to reduce the poverty at the household level. Hence, the COs were formed at the settlement level that includes all poor households and is considered as the foundation of the structure, the VO is like the walls of the structure, and then eventually LSO which is like the roof of the structure. It is important that the foundation should be strong to make the whole structure sustainable. Now that these structures are in place, the government have to adopt the LSOs, VOs, COs, and work through them. My wish is that in every district there be COs, VOs, LSOs and every department of government is linked with them". He went on to give closing remarks on the SUCCESS programme, "There are three things which are important to the SUCCESS programme. First is community development that includes people in the community organisation being honest and loyal to each other. The second should be government personnel who listen to the people of the community. Third point to remember is that, it is not possible to achieve targets without the support of the government".

Lessons learnt and challenges

Social Mobilisation

- Gradual exposure and community managerial trainings enhanced the capacity and confidence of CI leaders
 - The preparation of MIPs, VDPs and UCDPs has helped sensitise female members towards their implementation of their households village plans
 - Households falling above 23 PSC score have high expectations from the programme, but they do not directly benefit from CIF or IGG. In order to sustain their support, they should be involved in TVST and CPI schemes.
 - Literacy rates in the community, especially for women, is low in the programme districts. Finding literate community office bearers and CRPs in some areas is a key challenge. This increases their reliance on RSPs' social mobilisers. It also affects the quality and maintenance of CO, VO and LSO record-keeping. This issue of finding literate CRPs and book-keepers has persisted since last year. This can be counteracted by hiring men in places where required. In some areas pairing CRPs (e.g husband/wife) has been introduced to overcome the low literacy and unavailability of CRPs.
 - Additionally, it was also identified that there was high turn-over of CRPs, which affects the CIs performance. RSP staff needs to further explore the reasons for the turn-over and try to correct them.
 - To ensure sustainability and maturity of the Community Institution consistent engagement through routine meetings is required. Additionally, timely interventions can turn refusals or lack of participation from the community into positive responses
- MoUs with district health department, education department, social welfare department, agriculture and livestock department have helped in fostering linkages between CIs and these departments. An MoU has also been signed with SIAPEP (Sindh Irrigated Agriculture Productivity Enhancement Project) for the provision of kitchen gardening kits under NRSP. Other RSPs should strive to take up similar MoUs to support the programme.
 - WISE focused interventions contribute in improving social sector indicators of the respective area and contribute in community institutional performance and maturity. Clearly, integration of inter-project and intra-project interventions can increase effectiveness of the programme overall.
 - The presence of district administration and line department officials in Activist Workshops remained effective in establishing linkages and raising awareness on CAT issues. This helped the community to initiate self-help activities through government line departments on education (school enrolment and opening closed schools), preparation of CNICs, registration of votes and health-related activities at community level. Clearly effective linkages with stakeholders especially government departments and officials contribute to greater interventions in the community. However, frequent transfers of district officials DCs/ACs, makes it harder to sustain linkages with the government.

Technical and Vocational Skills Trainings

- The poorest households targeted are mainly labourers/farmers. It becomes difficult for them to take out time for TVST which can last around 30 days or more.
- There are still limited opportunities for employment after undertaking TVST. There needs to be better linkages with the market.

Micro Health Insurance

- Selection of panel hospitals, at tehsil level and at the district level remained a challenge resulting in less coverage of MHI beneficiaries. There should be greater hospitals to reduce transportation costs.

Community Investment Fund and Income Generating Grant

- The CIF and IGG committee of LSOs and VOs consisting of all female members were found to be more responsible in making decisions regarding these funds and grants. This should be encouraged further.
- Some of the intended potential beneficiaries who are willing to get CIF and IGG cannot avail the opportunity since their CNICs are expired/unavailable. Registering CNICs for community members should be a priority.
- Some of the IGG beneficiaries migrate to get better opportunities for manual labour. This makes it difficult for the field team to locate them during monitoring and verification visits.

Community Physical Infrastructure

- There has been high turn-over of engineering staff. This has resulted in delays in the implementation of CPI schemes.
- Drinking water was the need identified most by communities. In most areas of the programme

districts, the quality of water was not drinkable (as determined by the quality test) and water treatment was costly.

Drought and security challenges

- The government of Sindh declared drought in 35% RVs (88 RVs in Dadu and 67 RVs in Jamshoro). This led to migration of people in the community. One entire UC and 42 villages had restricted access due to security reasons in Jamshoro District. The field staff found it difficult to complete their targets in these regions.



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